



SAMEA ANNUAL REPORT
June 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	1
INTRODUCTION: A WORD FROM THE CHAIR.....	2
CORPORATE LIAISON.....	4
EDUCATION AND TRAINING/ ACCREDITATION PORTFOLIO.....	5
ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS PORTFOLIO.....	6
REGIONAL COORDINATION AND SUPPORT PORTFOLIO.....	7
GOVERNANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....	8
INTERNATIONAL LIAISON.....	9
MEMBERSHIP.....	10
COMMUNICATIONS.....	11
EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIOS.....	12
IN SUMMARY: A GENERAL OVERVIEW.....	13
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW.....	15

INTRODUCTION: A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Mark Abrahams

The successful inaugural conference of SAMEA in March 2007 catapulted the organisation into the domain of professional associations where considerable attention is given to issues of quality – quality of service, quality of materials and products and quality of personnel. While M&E does not lay claim to being a singular discipline or a well-demarcated profession, for SAMEA the issue of quality of M&E, within the context of its tremendous growth in S.A, has been paramount.

Strategic Goals

The new SAMEA Board emerged from the conference determined to capitalise on the positive energy generated during and after the conference. The mixture of old and new Board members ensured continuity but also infused new and fresh perspectives on how the business of SAMEA could best be organised. The first ‘contact’ Board meeting was a strategic planning session that resulted in a ‘Strategic Plan: 2007-2010¹’. The executive summary of this document captures the M&E context as well as the strategic goals identified by the Board Members.

SAMEA is planning for the future in the context of a broadly positive environment. M&E has been identified as a key government priority, including the development of the government wide M&E system. Funding of M&E is being mobilised within government and donor agencies, as well as private companies. With the development of systems of accountability and democratic participation M&E is becoming a socially acceptable and necessary process. Technology is available to enhance M&E practice and make it more accessible and usable.

SAMEA (Board) has identified five strategic goals, these are:

1. **Advocacy and awareness:** Continuous advocacy and awareness-raising.
2. **A platform for interaction:** the provision of a platform for interaction, information sharing and knowledge creation.
3. **Education and Training:** addressing the capacity challenges within the field, by promoting and facilitating high quality and accessible education and training opportunities.
4. **Professional and ethical standards:** the promotion of high standard of professional and ethical practice within the field.
5. **Building the association:** the development of an effective and efficient organisation including sound governance.

¹ This is available on the SAMEA website

This AGM marks the one year milestone of this three year Strategic Plan. It is appropriate that we reflect on and monitor our progress at this juncture. We also acknowledge that other initiatives both national and international affected and influenced our efforts towards the above strategic goals. The Government wide M&E system with its accompanying publications, the work of the Public Services Commission, the proliferation of M&E Units at Provincial and Local government levels, the SAMDI M&E training initiative, various training programmes at Universities and other Services providers as well as international debates around Impact Evaluation are some of the external realities that we engaged with.

For the past year the Board has operated as a collective while individual members were expected to provide leadership and direction for specifically assigned portfolios.

CORPORATE LIAISON

Angela Bester

There has been little movement in this portfolio but Angela has provided us with guidance and very important questions to consider as we pursue the strategic and potential benefits of this portfolio.

Potential objectives for corporate liaison:

- To increase membership of SAMEA in the corporate sector
- To promote good M&E practice in the corporate sector
- To raise funds/sponsorships from the corporate sector for major events and specific projects

Analysis of current situation in corporate sector

- M&E is not part of general corporate sector discourse.
- Use of Balanced Scorecard, some M&E in the ERS environment
- Corporate sector practitioners mostly have public sector clients
- Use of M&E in CSI environment (Zenex Foundation, Implats), but not widespread
- Introduction of BEE codes represents an opportunity for promoting good M&E practice in corporate sector.

Next steps

- SAMEA Board needs to confirm the relative importance of the corporate liaison portfolio
- SAMEA Board needs to confirm the objectives of corporate liaison
- Responses to the above will determine whether and how to proceed with developing the strategy and operational plan for the portfolio

EDUCATION AND TRAINING/ ACCREDITATION PORTFOLIO

Fanie Cloete

This portfolio was initially assigned to Sarah Howie who resigned due to work pressures. Fanie Cloete gladly accepted the challenges related to this portfolio and he has been co-opted as the SAMEA representative on the SAMDI task-team working on the training framework/curriculum.

Purpose of the Portfolio

- To ensure that SAMEA members are informed about training opportunities
- To identify possible training opportunities for members and non-members
- To engage with M&E training curriculum debates and discussions
- To survey the training opportunities at HE institutions
- To link training to accreditation framework

Progress in the past year

Fanie has been in regular communication with SAMEA members regarding SAMDI's plans for M&E training. SAMDI intends to roll out an orientation pilot course for experienced M&E trainers to pave the way for a formal tender for training other less experienced M&E trainers. "Massified" training is scheduled to start in August 2008 at national and provincial levels and later local government level. He has submitted a list of 40 M&E practitioners (mostly SAMEA members) who expressed interest in participating in this exercise.

Fanie Cloete also inherited the accreditation task team as part of this portfolio. This initiative was started more than a year ago and chaired by Christel Jacob.

Looking forward

Fanie reports that in future the Accreditation task team will work very closely with SAMDI, DoL, DoE and CHE for purposes of the development of curriculum and training principles and standards for benchmarking them against international good practices.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS PORTFOLIO

Kevin Kelly

The proposal for a journal for M&E had tremendous support at the inaugural conference. Kevin Kelly shouldered the bulk of the responsibility in pursuance of this objective.

Through this portfolio SAMEA aims to:

- Ensure that academic and research interests are highlighted in SAMEA activities and objectives
- Develop linkages with academic and research communities concerned with evaluation
- Develop opportunities for publishing research and theoretical work on evaluation in Africa.

Progress in the past year

The focus of this portfolio during the past year has been on the possibility that SAMEA might promote or otherwise support the development of a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to monitoring and evaluation in Africa.

Initial discussion was conducted with key members of AfrEA (African Evaluation Association), to assess their perspectives on the need for a new journal, perhaps closely allied with AfrEA. SAMEA offered to adopt a developmental role in pursuing possibilities for such a development. This activity has been led by Board Member Kevin Kelly, who is managing editor of an academic journal and acquainted with current developments in academic publishing.

Looking forward

SAMEA plans to continue pursuing this project which is still in its early stages. A meeting with AfrEA is needed to discuss information gathered to this point and to explore a next phase of action. A reference group will need to be formed to guide this initiative should it prove feasible and should there be adequate interest and consensus to move forward.

It must be noted that this is a long-term project and one which may yet take a year or two to take shape. Starting a journal would be a long-term commitment for SAMEA and/or AfrEA, and considering that SAMEA is a young organisation, it would need to enter into any commitments with due caution.

Other plans include hosting a meeting of higher education representatives involved in M&E teaching, to consider the current status of M&E teaching in higher education in South Africa and how best to promote high standards of scholarship and practice. It is hoped to include a stream on this at the 2009 SAMEA conference

REGIONAL COORDINATION AND SUPPORT PORTFOLIO

Sefiso Khumalo

Purpose of the portfolio

- To provide strategic, advice and support to members in the regions, with a view to building strong regional SAMEA Chapters.
- The portfolio is linked to strategic goal number 5, that is Building the Association: the development of an effective and efficient organization, including sound governance.

Progress in the past year

Chapter meetings took place in Gauteng, Western Cape and Eastern Cape. Two of these meetings were part of the SAMEA Seminar Series in Western Cape (16 May 2008) and Eastern Cape (21 May 2008). The attendance was 80 in the Western Cape and 20 in the Eastern Cape.

One meeting took place in Limpopo as part of the Learning Session Network which was hosted by the Department of Public Works in the province on the 21 May 2008. More than twenty people attended the meeting and seven of the members joined SAMEA on the spot.

On the 30 May 2008, an initial meeting was held with Dr N Ngobese from Mangosuthu University of Technology with the view of organising and formulating a SAMEA Chapter in KwaZulu-Natal Province.

While communication with membership through e-mail is more convenient and quicker, it continues to inadvertently alienate members who experience difficulty with their e-mail service e.g. Limpopo.

Key accomplishments:

- A new SAMEA interim structure has been established in Limpopo and awareness has been created about the existence of SAMEA.
- A SAMEA Draft Strategy for growth has been developed and circulated for inputs to the entire membership. The Strategy is expected to be finalised during the AGM or immediately thereafter.

Looking forward

It is envisaged that SAMEA will have 2 more regional structures. This will increase the number of chapters to six.

Regional Chapters will be encouraged and supported to initiate and conduct their own M&E workshops and seminars which are expected to contribute to growth and development of SAMEA members.

GOVERNANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Octavia Mkhabela

Key accomplishments

A comprehensive draft policy and procedure manual was developed for SAMEA. Only one Board member made inputs that were incorporated and the Manual is therefore still at a draft stage.

A training needs assessment questionnaire was developed but was not circulated to SAMEA members

Key challenges

- Inability of the Board to dedicate time to see various initiatives through
- Engage Historically Black Universities (HBUs) in SAMEA activities
An attempt to get HBU s involved in SAMEA activities was hampered by the fact that none of the HBU s offer Monitoring & Evaluation courses. As such academic staff interest in M&E and by extension to SAMEA is casual and not linked to areas of responsibility.
- Training needs assessment
Lack of follow up on the part of SAMEA

Recommendations:

- Circulate the questionnaire to members as soon as possible so SAMEA can begin to address real training needs of members
- Adopt an operational mechanism that keeps items on agenda until concluded
- SAMEA should begin to play M&E advocacy role in HBU s

INTERNATIONAL LIAISON

Donna Podems

Purpose of the portfolio

This portfolio required that SAMEA encourage linkages with other international institutions and the larger monitoring and evaluation field outside of South Africa. For this portfolio we sought to share and collaborate with other entities in order to broaden SAMEA's relationships and to broaden the general knowledge surrounding M&E.

The portfolio's link to the strategic plan is to encourage recognition of SAMEA as a strong and solid M&E evaluation organisation located in a developing country. Further and as part of that, this portfolio sought to bring in resources outside of South Africa to assist SAMEA to (1) achieve its goals, and (2) better serving its membership.

Key Accomplishments

- Identifying potential partners for SAMEA for collaboration
- Identifying international trainings, conferences, speakers and meetings
- Identifying various funding sources for collaboration efforts
- Participating as a SAMEA Board Member in two international conferences
- Being identified and invited to participate on an online international forum for International Evaluation Organisations
-

Looking forward – the SAMEA conference

While this year a majority of time was spent on writing proposals and negotiating and presenting those ideas to AEA, the next year this portfolio will mainly focus on the SAMEA CONFERENCE. Thus our focus will be on:

- Identifying and inviting international speakers for KEY NOTE addresses
- Identifying and inviting international speakers for workshop and seminars
- Locating funding to support the conference and international speakers

MEMBERSHIP

Marlene Roefs

Purpose of the portfolio:

The purpose of the Membership portfolio is to build and maintain a vibrant membership for SAMEA. Importantly, SAMEA is striving to build a broad membership spanning a range of disciplines and inclusive of both the public sector and the private sector. We believe that this diversity in membership will contribute to richness in ideas, stimulate debate on important issues in the M&E field and help to expand and deepen the knowledge base for M&E in South Africa.

During the year under review SAMEA conducted the following key activities to build its membership:

- We have further integrated the SAMEA on-line membership application in our administrative systems. Members are automatically subscribed to our listserv SAMEAtalk, which informs them about opportunities, events, training etc.
- We have also used our inaugural conference, seminars and forums to promote SAMEA and encourage delegates to become members of SAMEA.
- Our strengthened relationship with the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI), the Presidency and provincial public sector institutions has contributed to intensified interest in SAMEA and a significant increase in our membership.

One of the greatest achievements of SAMEA over the past year has been the significant increase in SAMEA membership. At 23 February 2006, SAMEA had 121 paid up members. As per 30 May 2008, we have 204 paid up members and over 300 people who registered to become a member.

Although the majority of members are still based in Gauteng, inroads have been made in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Western Cape where members have formed their own SAMEA chapters. This development will certainly enable SAMEA to better address local needs and interest. Across our borders, interest in SAMEA membership has also grown with practitioners from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Swaziland, Namibia, Botswana and Kenya.

However, it should be reported that we struggle with our membership administration. One of the problems we experience is that members forget or postpone to re-new their membership and that we, as SAMEA, do not follow up on expired memberships as we should. Another challenge we face is the processing of payments in cases where the payments are being made without proper reference to the newly subscribed member or members. This relates to the issue of institutional membership. Currently we are only able to process individual membership.

Challenges:

- Improve membership administration
- Increase memberships in other provinces
- Increase membership benefits.

COMMUNICATIONS

Marlene Roefs

Purpose of the portfolio

An important task of the SAMEA's Communications Portfolio and one of the priority tasks of the Association is to publicise the existence of the Association amongst potential members and promote subscription to the Association. These 'marketing' efforts target the public, private, civil society, research, and academic sectors first in South Africa and subsequently in the region.

In addition to marketing SAMEA, the portfolio facilitates internal communication. This entails providing and maintaining proper information systems. This function is shared with the Secretariat, which dissolved when the responsible Board Member resigned.

Some of the targets set last year have not been met. We have not been able to establish the Topical Interest Groups we envisaged last year. 'Fast facts' have not come off the ground yet. We publish updates now and then but a quarterly newsletter has not been developed and published yet. The main reason for this was that the communications portfolio has concentrated on improving the administration of members and improvement of ICT infrastructure.

Key accomplishments

However, as the organisation has grown, the need for adjusting the current ICT structure has surfaced. In response, we have tried to secure funding for upgrading the infrastructure and to select a suitable service provider. Recently, we have succeeded in both. The proposal of Development IT Solutions, which has provided its services for free and against reduced tariffs since our inception, outperformed four other proposals by service providers.

The Royal Netherlands Embassy has committed funding for almost R 70,000. These funds will be used to:

- Revise functional design and implement revised navigation structure
- Revise and implement graphic design
- Create functionality for special interest / geographical groups
- Integrate listserv in webportal.

Looking forward

The upgrading of the website will enhance the communication function. The functionality for special interest and or geographical groups is expected to facilitate the establishment Topical Interest Groups (TIG) and chapter forums.

In accordance with the objectives of SAMEA, however, (1) monitoring and evaluation approaches and methods suitable to a South African and development context, (2) post-graduate education and continuing professional development, and (3) understanding of international developments and trends in monitoring and evaluation form overarching areas of interest.

EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIOS

Mark Abrahams, Indran Naidoo and Benita van Wyk

Purpose of the Executive

The SAMEA Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Treasurer together constitute the SAMEA executive. This was deemed necessary because of the need for and of the organisation to respond rapidly to requests, to provide oversight and support for the various portfolios.

Collectively the executive is responsible for:

- SAMEA Board communication
- Communication with SAMEA membership
- Strategic communication outside SAMEA
- Ensuring organisational responsiveness
- Ensuring governance, oversight and organisational sustainability
- Fundraising
- Managing resources – financial, human and other resources
- Ensuring SAMEA visibility with frequent seminars and the bi-annual conference.

Progress in the past year

- Quick decision-making was facilitated by executive
- Availability of other Board members minimised need for superfluous executive meetings
- Developed a sense of shared responsibility.

Looking forward, opportunities and challenges

- We may need to consider attracting Board members with particularly legal and financial skills.
- A part-time organiser, leading to a full time position should be considered for the future
- A full time administrator, both office and website would be ideal
- A successful conference is essential to the sustainability of SAMEA

IN SUMMARY: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

As far as creating awareness of the importance of M&E, SAMEA has certainly contributed at national and local level. We have managed to maintain the interest of our initial membership and expand our influence through the increase in membership and structures in different provinces. The recent seminar series, focusing on 'Institutionalisation of M&E in Government' saw direct involvement of Ronette Engela of the M&E Unit in the Presidency in commenting on proposed content of the seminars. Regular contact with this unit has been established and a Board member, Marlene Roefs agreed to maintain and sustain this partnership. The seminars themselves proved to be a very worthwhile exercise and highlighted the importance of, and need for constant and constructive engagement with policy documents.

The seminar series also allowed for SAMEA members and non-members to meet and network with each other. Sefiso Khumalo has also actively engaged with expressed interests in the provinces and his support of local initiatives has resulted in formal structures emerging. Our main platform for interaction however remains the listserv. Members and non-members are informed of job-opportunities, tender opportunities, SAMEA updates, M&E training opportunities, seminars, international conferences, M&E resources available and other information that can be found on the SAMEA website. These crucial tools for communication and interaction are set to be revamped to improve our ability to engage with members and for members to engage with each other. The point that some members or potential members are unable to access any of these sources because of a lack of infrastructure is a cause for concern and should be addressed by the new SAMEA Board.

The SAMDI training initiative is huge, unprecedented and most certainly ambitious. It could result in a large mass of well-informed M&E practitioners (potential SAMEA members) and opportunities for the development of local, new or illuminating theoretical approaches to M&E challenges. Or it could not. Either way, SAMEA will provide support and guidance where requested and where needed. SAMEA member have agreed to act as trainers for this initiative. Our central concern and it is also the concern of SAMDI, is that of the quality of the training. SAMEA will continue to advertise training opportunities offered by other service providers. SAMEA supported training will again accompany the next conference.

The promotion of specific professional standards and ethics has stalled during this cycle. One reason is that this was not identified as a specific portfolio by the current Board. This will have to be revisited by the new Board and the portfolio will have to look at some of the principles promoted and outlined in government M&E policy documents. There needs to be synergy between what we as SAMEA promote and the guidance provided by the policy documents.

SAMEA has grown in term of numbers, grown in terms of status, in terms stature and recognition on an international level. This growth can be attributed entirely to the quality, abilities, integrity, and commitment of the current Board Members. As individuals they have contributed above and beyond what was initially planned. More and more tele-conference meetings and more email requests for input occurred because certain tasks needed to be performed. Collectively the Board members responded with no complaints and provided their valued input. Without the crucial support and assistance of our part-time administrator, Nomvuzo Mamabolo our current growth would not have been possible. SAMEA's current physical home is that of Feedback Consultancy, thanks to Benita Van Wyk (treasurer). Without this inexpensive and convenient home, growth in SAMEA would be difficult to sustain – the future home of SAMEA and the need for a general secretary/organiser will need to be considered by the new Board. Despite our best efforts, some things did fall through the cracks because all the Board Members are in full time employ elsewhere. The issues of improved management of membership and the development of a constitution come to mind.

Allow me as chairperson to thank all the current Board Members for their sterling efforts and valuable contributions. All SAMEA members and myself have been enriched by your commitment and dedication. To those members leaving us, Angela and Octavia, thank you and good luck. To the incoming Board members, lots of luck and best wishes.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

BVW ADD PDF OF AUDITOR'S STATEMENT HERE