UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Service delivery in Local Government: Schulzendal Township in Mpumalanga Province.

By

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May 2003
Declaration

I declare that Service delivery in Local Government: Schulzendal Township in
Mpumalanga Province is my own work and that it has not been submitted before for any
degree or examination in any other University. All the sources I have used have been
indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Mgabhi Enock Shongwe

May 2003

Signed:

Date
Acknowledgements

must begin by expressing my appreciation to Professor C.J.J. Mphaisha for his encouragement, contribution, and advice to my work.

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To Doctor Fakudze, Mom I do not know where to start but for your contribution, guidance, and advice and lastly, for your prayers. Thank you very much. God Bless You!!!

To my grandmother: Nelani Shongwe for the love and support she gave from earlier age until now

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To God almighty, call him: Jehovah Yawheb, Jehovah Adonai, Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah elshadai Jehovah shamma, Jehovah mikadesh, Jehovah mdzikenu. Without you Lord, I could not make it. Thank You Great God!!
Dedication

- dedicate this Master degree to my late Mother Cubile Thabethe for the sufferings she went through and the Love she gave before she passed away.

- To my two daughters: Promise Shongwe and Charity Shongwe for their patience through all this years.

- To my Lovely Lady Ntom'futhi Mahlalela for the patience, love, support, and encouragement through all this years we have been apart from each other, I know it was not easy but God made it happen for us.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLAs</td>
<td>Black Local Authorities</td>
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<td>BP</td>
<td>Batho Pele</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Citizen Participation</td>
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<td>CWSSP</td>
<td>Community Water Supply and Sanitation Programme</td>
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<td>DWAF</td>
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<td>DPLG</td>
<td>Department of Provincial and Local Government</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Integrated Development Planning</td>
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<td>LED</td>
<td>Local Economic Development</td>
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<td>LDTU</td>
<td>Local Government Transformation Unit</td>
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<td>MEC</td>
<td>Member of Executive Council</td>
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<td>Municipal Infrastructure Programme</td>
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<td>Municipal System Act</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
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<td>RSA</td>
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This study examines service delivery such as housing, water, electricity, roads, and garbage removal in local government with specific reference to Schulzendal township. The main objective of the study is to investigate the services mentioned above in Schulzendal township, (1) to assess the satisfaction of Schulzendal community in services delivered by Nkomazi municipality. (2) to examine and identify factors impacting on the Nkomazi Municipality's ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently. (3) and to assess the ability of the Schulzendal community to pay for services delivered.

The main objectives of local government as identified in the RSA Constitution of 1996 are:-

Promoting democratic and accountable government for local communities;
Sustaining the provision of services to communities in an efficient and effective manner;
Ensuring social and economic development;
Promoting a safe and healthy environment; and
Involving communities and community organizations in the matters of local government to promote democracy.

In this regard the main findings of the study shows, however, that: (1) Schulzendal community is not satisfied with the quality of services delivered by Nkomazi municipality due a long period of time to attend to a problem;
that the lack of resources such as personnel, office equipment and finances impacts significantly on the municipality's ability to provide services efficiently and effectively and; (3) that the Schulzendal community cannot pay for services due to the high level of unemployment in the community.

The study further demonstrates the need for the Nkomazi Municipality to enter into a partnership with another organization better able and equipped to deliver services. The Integrated Development Plan also will play a very important role in improving knowledge and skills (such as management skills, budget preparation, financial management, and customer relations) of Councillors and Officials through workshops and seminars.
CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. Introduction

With the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 specific focus was on redressing past imbalances. This encompassed a multitude of dimensions, one of which focused on effective and efficient service delivery to all South Africans. The past regime had resulted in huge inequalities in this regard with the majority of South Africans not having access even to basic services. This obviously posed a great challenge for the new democratic government. This study will review and examine local government legislation and the implementation of such legislation in ensuring the delivery of basic services. This will be assessed through a case study of the Schulzendal Township.

1.2. Problem Statement

Much time and effort went into debating legislation to ensure the satisfaction of basic needs and services to all South Africans. Local government legislation, focused on improved ways of ensuring that all South Africans had access to basic services. However, as indicated by the Minister of Local Government, South Africa faced major challenges in the arena of municipal service delivery. Reasons for this have been cited as the level of poverty within communities, the level of underdevelopment, a lack of infrastructure and the level of unemployment. In addition a lack of knowledge and skills on the side of
Councillors has also contributed even further to poor need identification and satisfaction. The disparities between previously white and previously black municipalities have also contributed towards ineffective service delivery within the townships. The main problem therefore is to assess whether the Nkomazi Municipality has been able to delivery basic services in an efficient and effective manner.

1.3. Literature Review

Local government functions were characterized by policies of separate development. This led to the unequal distribution of resources and provision of basic services amongst people. According to the constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, chapter 7 section 152 (i) and (6), local authorities have the responsibility of ensuring that local communities are provided with basic services. Section 52 (1) of the Constitution says that the objectives of local government include:

- Promoting democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- Sustaining the provision of services to communities in an efficient and effective manner;
- Ensuring social and economic development;
- Promoting a safe and healthy environment; and
- Involving communities and community organizations in the matters of local government to promote democracy.
The constitution clearly stipulates the functions of local government and also the importance of allowing for public participation in the policy making process.

According to Craythorne (1996: 449), “while it is true that local government is a definite form of government and an essential part of the democratic process, its main purpose is to render services to its community.” Local government ensures the direct involvement of communities in the way in which services are delivered. It also ensures that representatives who are usually popular with and familiar to the inhabitants are elected to perform the government functions. This is the reason why local government is often associated with the concept of “home rule". “Home rule” ensures that there is a large degree of local autonomy for people to decide for themselves about, inter alia, taxation, service delivery and voting. The local level usually consists of people with different ideologies, interests and value systems who are thrown into a melting pot. Eventually solutions emerge as a result of some consensus politics. In other words, the local level of government teaches people about handling the diversity of crucial issues.

Bekker (1996 : 7) states that a local authority might provide all the basic services, which a modern community may require, and many other services as well. Where legislation states expressly that a local authority is to provide a particular service, then the local authority is compelled to do so, but the powers to provide most of the services listed in provincial legislation are permissive. This allows a local authority the choice of whether or not to render a service. Permissive services include services such as roads, electricity,

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1 Home rule implies the right to decide at local authority level about issues such as service delivery, taxation and voting.
water reticulation, storm water drainage, and sewerage reticulation and refuse removal. But even rendering these basic services has shown to be problematic.

The types of partnerships concluded with the private sector as well as the way in which the appropriate contracts are designed and executed will influence their impact on the poor. The challenge is for municipalities to put in place clear policies before entering into partnerships with the private sector. These policies can be used to guide procurement processes and service delivery by the private sector so that conditions of poverty are not exacerbated by the public-private partnership arrangement. The relationship between government, the private sector and the consumers of the services provided is of utmost importance for effective infrastructure development. It should be conducive to responsible governance, effective service delivery and responsible service usage. The latter implies that service delivery must be cost-effective and the services provided must be affordable. (DBSA: 2000: 142).

Not only does unemployment impact on an individual’s ability to meet their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and education but also impacts on their access to basic services such as a water supply, sanitation, an electricity supply, since individuals are now less able to afford these services. The sustainable provision of services depends, among others, on the ability of users of services to pay for the services they receive (DBSA: 2000: 142)
The Municipal Systems Act (1999) addresses the issue of non-payment through ensuring that individual users or consumers pay for services. Maximum cost recovery may not always be possible due to indigent service users’ inability to pay for services. These impacts negatively on local government’s ability to provide services on a sustainable basis.

Hampton (1970-71: 346) says, the process of planning begins with the determination and establishment of a need. It is important that, before any planning can be undertaken, the needs that exist in society have to be established. This implies that information regarding the relevant need must be collected. The ensuing steps in the planning process should be built upon the needs of the people affected by it, even if those do not always agree with the personal views of the public officials involved in the planning process.

According to Jackson (1972: 16) planning in this context involves mainly two parties, namely, the local government and the community. This implies that meaningful planning can be accomplished only if there is co-operation between these two parties. Another important aspect of the process of planning is that goals, and the means of achieving them, should win approval from the society. To achieve this, public discussion and the involvement of the public at the different stages of the planning process should be mandatory.

Atkinson (1992: 17) states that participation should reflect careful attention to the design and facilitation of the process. An important facet of the process is to determine the focus of participation. The focus of participation refers to the question of who should
participate in the planning process. It is argued by Atkinson that the focus of participation is likely to depend on whether the planning process is focused on an institution, a programme, or a community. If the focus is an institution, then the participants are more likely to be insiders, with less involvement by outsiders. If the focus is on a programme, then more public participation with less inside participation is likely. If the focus is on a community, then extensive citizen participation is almost obvious (Bryson 1993: 3). The participation may be based on a geographic locality or in terms of a shared interest, or on a service-oriented basis. Participation may be the response to a threat, and thus relatively transient or may develop by means of long-standing memberships and relationships with local government authorities.

1.3.1. Segregated Local Institutions

1.3.1.1 White Local Government Institutions

As alluded above, the previous system emphasized separate development based on race. This resulted in segregated local authorities as well. The legislation passed since 1910 has resulted in the creation of municipalities in all four provinces, divisional councils in the Cape Province, village councils and village management boards, town boards, health committees and local boards. These bodies had varying powers but were all corporate bodies, mostly with elected members (Craythorne 1996: 2).
1.3.1.2. Coloured and Indian Local Government Institutions

In terms of section 28 of the former Group Areas Act 36 of 1966, the legislative powers of the former provincial councils were extended to local legislation for management or consultative committees. The consequence of the establishment of a management or local affairs committee would be that the residents of the area concerned could no longer be voters for the election of municipal councilors, but that from then on they could only vote in elections for members of these committees with no real powers and functions. Consequently, their franchise was restricted to a particular group area.

1.3.1.3. Black Local Government Institutions

Service delivery to blacks rested in the hands of the white local authorities. White local authorities did, however, decentralize certain functions to black local government institutions, called Development Boards (Craythorne 1996: p2-7). These boards were responsible for the supply of local services and development in Black areas outside national states and self-governing territories. All Development Boards were abolished in terms of the Abolition of Development Bodies Act 75 of 1986.

The administrator determined the number of councillors, who were directly elected by persons competent to vote in an election of members for that local authority. Councillors and voters had to be qualified according to criteria laid down in the act and the regulations made there under (Craythorne 1996 : 7). What was important was that some
Black local authorities were given a general competence in the form of permissive powers to perform a number functions which were truly municipal, for an example, the employment of staff, the acquisition and disposal of movable property, the power to contract. The administrator can increase the functions, which may be carried out by a council. Another piece of legislation, which affected Black local government, was the Black Communities Development Act 4 of 1984, which was replaced by the Abolition of Racially Based Land Measures Act, 108 of 1991. The new dispensation brought about changes to all of these. But how effective are these changes in ensuring effective and efficient delivery of services to all South Africans?

1.4. Research Objectives and Questions

In examining the level of service delivery for Schulzendal township by the Nkomazi municipality, the research paper considers the following questions:

➤ Is Schulzendal community satisfied with the service delivered by Nkomazi municipality?

➤ Are the resources in the Nkomazi municipality adequate for service delivery?

➤ What is the state of affairs regarding the payment of services at Schulzendal township?
1.5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

In seeking answers to the above questions the following statements will guide the researcher:

- A lack of knowledge and expertise on the part of local councillors impacts on their ability to identify and appropriately satisfy the needs of Schulzendal community.

- A lack of resources negatively impacts on the Nkomazi municipality’s ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently to the Schulzendal community.

- Service delivery is affected by the Schulzendal community’s ability to pay services and their satisfaction with services delivered by the Nkomazi Municipality.

1.6. Research Methodology

1.6.1. Research Design

The researcher used the case study approach to provide qualitative data in terms of: (1) determining the quality of service delivery. (2) Analyzing the state of affairs of payment of services. (3) Investigating the provision of resources at Nkomazi municipality.
1.6.2. Research Instruments

The study was based on the collection of both primary and secondary data. Documentary sources such as relevant books, journals, articles, official publications, newspaper clippings, reports and seminar papers were utilized to present the facts and to substantiate the arguments. Two interview schedules were successfully used. One was used for the government officials and one was used for the community members.

1.6.3. Samples

The researcher managed to conduct structured interviews with ten people, six government officials occupying positions within the Municipality that were strategic in gathering information necessary to conduct the research and four residents from community members due to their availability. Questionnaires were not used because they limited respondents in discussing the problems. Questionnaires tend to channel answers towards either Yes or No. Another reason for not using questionnaires refers to time constraints and financial limitations of the researcher in having to go and circulate the questionnaires, and then to go back to collect them or make follow up calls to enquire about the state of completion of the questionnaires.
1.7. Significance of the study

The study was important for various reasons. Firstly, it contributed to the existing literature on service delivery in South Africa. Secondly, it was conducted at a time when local government underwent significant transformation in the area of service delivery. In the light of the study’s focus on the Schulzandal township therefore it highlighted key factors still impacting on effective and efficient service delivery. Thirdly, the study examined the possibility of an integrated and co-operative approach to local government service delivery.

1.8. Limitation of the Study

There are unique issues in various provinces that might be important for Mpumalanga Province, but might not be that significant for other provinces in South Africa. Secondly, the research was to be conducted over a short period of time, thus, it cannot be as comprehensive as it would have been done over a long period of time. Lastly, Service delivery is not an event, but it is a process. At some point, new needs can manifest itself after one has been delivered.
1.9. Definition of Major Terms/Concepts

Local government is the sphere of government that interacts closest with communities. It is responsible for the services and infrastructure essential to people’s well being, and is tasked with ensuring growth and development of communities in a manner that enhances community participation and accountability. Bekker: 1996 (7).

Basic municipal Service means a municipal service that is necessary to ensure an acceptable and reasonable quality of life and, if not provided, would endanger public health or safety or the environment (Municipal System Act, 32: 2000).

Citizen participation can be defined as purposeful activities in which people take part in relation to a local authority area of which they are legal residents. That can enable an organization to display its products or services before important target audiences (Bekker: 1996: 19).

Local community in relation to a municipality means that body of persons comprising: the residents of the municipality, the ratepayers, non governmental, civic organisations and visitors and other people residing outside the municipality who, because of their presence in the municipality, make use of the services or facilities provided by the municipality (Municipal System Act, 32: 2000).
Integrated Development Planning is a process undertaken to establish a development plan for the short, medium, and long term to improve service delivery in local government (DBSA: 2000: 142).

Public-Private Partnerships is a contract entered into between two sectors to assist the municipal councils to fulfill their responsibility of ensuring that all citizens have access to basic services (DBSA: 2000: 42).

Local Government Councillors are defined as the highest policy-makers at local government level; they are elected by the people in areas where they live to represent them (Municipal System Act, 32: 2000).

Local Government Officials are the highest policy-implementers at local government level; they are appointed on a permanent basis according to their merit or qualification. Permanent in the sense that they are not removed with a change in government (Municipal System Act, 32: 2000).

Service delivery in relation to the provision of a municipal service, means the provision of a municipal service in a manner aimed at ensuring that; the risk of harm to the environment and to human health and safety is minimized to extent reasonably possible under the circumstances (Municipal System Act, 32: 2000).
Public servant refers to people employed by the departments and administrations of central and provincial government. This includes former own and general affairs, administrations, provincial administrations, and local authorities administrations (Cloete and Mokgoro: 1995:91).

1.10. Structure of the study

This study is organized into four chapters.

Chapter One

This chapter sets out inter alia the aims and objectives, the significance of the study and the guiding hypothesis.

Chapter Two

This chapter reviews the legislative, constitutional, and legal policy framework of local government in service delivery in South Africa.

Chapter Three

This chapter focuses on the case of Schulzendal township. It examined the role of the Nkomazi Municipality in service delivery, the ability of the community to pay for such services, and the level of satisfaction with service delivery.

Chapter Four

This chapter summarizes the study, proposes recommendations, and concludes the study.
CHAPTER TWO
A REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1. Introduction

This chapter examines local government legislation enacted after the democratic elections in 1994. The primary objective of this legislation is to ensure that all South Africans have access to basic services. The chapter will examine in particular, the RSA Constitution Act 108 of 1996, the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, and the White Paper on local government. Together these establish the legal and policy framework for the new municipal systems.

2.2. THE RSA CONSTITUTION ACT 108 OF 1996

The powers and responsibilities of local government in democratic South Africa are clearly outlined in chapter 7 of the RSA Constitution. Section 151 (1) of the Constitution refers to the establishment and status of municipalities, which form part of the local sphere of government. The objectives of democratic and accountable government; the provision of sustainable services to communities; the promotion of social and economic development; the promotion of safe and healthy environment; and the involvement of communities in local government matters require the establishment of municipalities.
The municipalities have "the right to govern, on its own initiative, the local government affairs of its community subject to national and provincial legislation" (RSA Constitution, section 151 (3)). The Constitution continues further by stating that neither national nor provincial government have the power or right to compromise or interfere in a municipality's ability to exercise its powers or perform its functions (RSA Constitution, section 151 (4)). This demonstrates that local government has now been transformed into an autonomous sphere of government. In the past, however, local government was a dependant organ of the state whose powers and functions were constituted or disbanded by a 'competent authority'.

2.3. THE RSA WHITE PAPER ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT (1998)

According to section 53 of the Constitution of 1996 a municipality has three key functions. These are:- ensuring that basic needs of communities are met; promoting the socio-economic development of communities; and participating in national and provincial development programmes. In this regard municipalities have to ensure that processes of administration, budgeting and planning are structured accordingly. However, these responsibilities and functions cannot be accomplished without the support of national and provincial government. The Constitution illuminates this by stating that both "National and Provincial governments must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions" (RSA Constitution, Section 154 [2]). For example, before legislation is enacted, Parliament or the provincial legislature must ensure that municipalities or any
other interested parties have an opportunity to make representations before it. In this manner cooperative governance is emphasized.

The policies of separate development created a system whereby black local authorities were deprived of financial resources necessary to meet the needs of the local communities. Financial pitfalls were built into policies governing industrial development in areas. These policies prevented the establishment of retail businesses and factories within or surrounding areas near black communities. Naturally, this limited the tax base of black local authorities since residents were forced to spend most of their money in white areas where most of these businesses and factories were located. As a result white local authorities were able to provide quality services at reasonable rates to white communities. On the other hand, black local authorities were unable to provide even basic services to black communities. Eventually this resulted in the boycott or non-payment of services by local residents. With the advent of democracy in 1994 therefore there was the dire need to bring about equity through transformation.

The socio-economic development of previously disadvantaged communities was the key priority of the new democratic government. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) therefore focused on the development of communities through the provision of basic services. Emphasis is placed on household infrastructure and service provision and the creation of integrated cities, towns and rural areas. It provides for three approaches in assisting municipalities in its delivery of services. These include integrated development planning and budgeting, performance management and community involvement.
2.4. THE ROLE OF IDP IN IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY

Integrated Development Planning is simply a single process of planning that incorporates sectoral phases and has been adopted specifically for municipalities. Prior to 1994, local government was mainly concerned with service provision and the implementation of regulations. The value of integrated development planning for municipalities lies in the formulation of focused plans based on developmental priorities. This approach will assist in avoiding wasteful expenditure and perpetuating past spending patterns. In addition to ensuring that all citizens have access to at least a minimum level of basic services, municipalities must now also take a leading role in addressing poverty and inherited inequities and in promoting local economic and social development. They must not only deliver on present demands for services, they must also anticipate future demands and deliver in an efficient and sustainable manner over the short, medium and long term.

Integrated development planning provides an opportunity to establish and prioritize the needs to be addressed by the municipality. It provides the municipality with an opportunity to inform the community and all stakeholders about the resources available, and to involve them in prioritizing services and service levels. It enables the municipality to allocate resources like human and financial resources in order of priority. The vision of the future that the community sets for itself may be quite idealistic. However, by involving all stakeholders in the planning process and empowering them with knowledge about the municipality’s weaknesses and strengths, its resources and responsibilities. IDP enables the municipality to develop a realistic, achievable plan for future development


2.5. PRINCIPLES OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

Batho Pele\textsuperscript{2} illuminates eight key principles in the transformation of local government and its role in service delivery.

Consultation: citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of public service they receive, and where possible, should be given a choice about the services, which are provided.

Service standards: citizens should know what standard of service to expect.

Access: all citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

Courtesy: citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.

Information: citizens should be given full and accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

Openness and transparency: citizens should know how departments are run, how resources are spent, and who is in charge of particular services.

Redress: if the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy, and when complaints are made citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

Value-for-money (VFM) public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value-for-money.

\textsuperscript{2} Batho Pele meaning ‘People First’ is a policy document that focuses on local government transformation.
Municipalities face great challenges in promoting human rights and meeting human needs, addressing past backlogs and spatial distortions, and planning for a sustainable future. Local government can only meet these challenges by working together with local citizens, communities and business, and adopting a developmental approaches which: (i) enhances their capacity as policy and planning centers, able to mobilize and manage a range of development initiatives, resources and processes through a coherent vision and integrated planning framework for their local area; and (ii) focuses their own institutional and financial capacity on the delivery of affordable and sustainable services relevant to the needs of local communities.

2.6. MUNICIPAL SYSTEMS ACT, ACT No. 32 of 2000

The municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 has the following objectives:-

(a) to ensure universal access to essential services that are affordable to its recipients;

(b) to ensure and encourage community participation;

(c) to empower the poor through such community participation;

(d) to ensure that service tariffs and credit control policies are structured with needs of the poor in mind and;

(e) that service delivery agreements are in place.

The objectives of the Act stated above emphasise that South Africans have access to basic services. Local authorities have to work with the communities to produce policies with the needs of those particular communities. They have to empower the poor through community participation such as job training, and workshops.
Provision of Services

However, citizen participation is not solely about closer relations with communities aimed at better identifying and satisfying their needs. But it is also about creating an awareness of the importance of services provided. The Agreement on Local Government Finances and Services emphasizes, among other things, municipal finances, tariffs and payments for services and the provision of services through partnerships with private organizations. These clearly impact on the service tariffs and the ability of communities to pay for such services (Municipal System Act, Act No. 32 of 2000).

The immediate short-term goal is to provide services to satisfy the basic health and functional requirements of individuals. The medium-term goal is to provide services to sustain economic growth in the communities and the long-term goal is to effect equal and equitable access to services for all local residents. Transitional councils must immediately initiate visible, sustained resumption, improvement, upgrading and extension of services in historically disadvantaged areas. Although the primary duty to supply services is that of the local government, regional and national support and finances will be required to help meet community needs (Municipal System Act, Act No. 32 of 2000).

Tariffs and payment for services

Supply of services must be based on the important principle of recovery of costs while
the problem of poverty and unemployment must be addressed in the tariff structures. Where services are inadequate the TLC may determine interim tariffs until the supply of services meets the required standards. Updating records, regular accounting to consumers, making effective offices for payment available and issuing of receipts, must facilitate payments. Failure to furnish accurate statements shall not relieve consumers from the duty to pay for services supplied to them. Payments for services should be resumed on or before the date upon which arrears are written off and TLC should develop a fair default procedure to deal with defaulters (Cloete 1995: 26-27).

2.6.4. Policy framework for internal municipal service district-

A municipality must develop and adopt a policy framework for the establishment, regulation and management of an internal municipal service district. Such a policy framework must reflect at least the following:

the development needs and priorities of designated parts of the municipality that must be balanced against that of the municipality as a whole;

The extent to which the establishment of one or more internal municipal service district:

(i) will promote the local economic development of the municipality as a whole,
(ii) will contribute to enhancing the social, economic and spatial integration of the municipality; and
(iii) may not entrench or contribute to further disparities in service provision

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2.6.5. Provision of services through service delivery agreements.

The Agreement on Local Government Services and Finances further makes provision for municipalities to enter into partnerships with public or private organizations in the event that it is unable to provide a basic service. The remnants of apartheid have resulted in huge disparities between previously black municipalities. Although the Constitution emphasizes basic service delivery to all South Africans, some municipalities may not have the ability to fulfill this responsibility. Reasons for this include a lack of resources, a lack of capacity and poor infrastructure.

Section 76 (b) of Act No.32 of 2000 sets out the basic requirements for entering into service delivery agreements. A municipality may either enter into a service delivery agreement with another municipality or a national or provincial organ of state. Or it may enter into a service delivery agreement with a private institution or entity. However, before such agreements are entered into a municipality has to establish a mechanism and programme for community consultation. Any service delivery agreement considered by the municipality must be communicated to the community. This is important for various reasons. First, that it brings communities closer to local government. Second, that it involves communities in the process of satisfying their own needs. Thirdly those communities are informed of any cost-implications in so far as the provisions of services are concerned.
Entering into a partnership with another institution or entity, however, does not absolve the municipality of its responsibility to ensure the provision of basic services to the community. Therefore the Agreement on Local Government Services and Finances stipulates the followings:

1) the municipality must regulate the provision of services to communities;
2) the municipality must monitor and assess the implementation of the service delivery agreement;
3) the municipality must monitor the performance of the service provider;
4) the municipality must perform its functions and exercise its powers in terms of chapter 5 & 6 of the municipal systems Act 32 of 2000 in the event that the service is of a development nature;
5) the municipality must control the setting and adjustment of tariffs by the service provider; and
6) the municipality must exercise its service authority so as to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of services in the best interest of the community.

The agreements further state that:
1) the municipal council has the right to set, review or adjust the tariffs within its tariff policy. The service provider can therefore adjust its tariffs provided that it is within the limitations set by the municipal council.
2) service delivery agreements may be amended by agreement between the parties. However, where an agreement has been concluded following a competitive bidding process, the local community has to be consulted; and
(b) no councillor or staff member of a municipality may share in any profits or improperly receive any benefits from a service provider.

The conditions governing the provision of services by municipalities through internal mechanisms are less complex than in the case of external mechanisms. The agreement simply states that the municipality has to ensure that it allocates sufficient human, financial and other resources necessary for the proper provision of services; and that the provision of services is in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Act 32 of 2000.

2.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the RSA Constitution of 1996, Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, and the White Paper on Local Government (1998). The chapter briefly demonstrates the impact of apartheid legislation on service delivery to the majority of South Africans. With the advent of democracy in 1994, however, the government of the day faced the challenge of ensuring that the past wrongs were redressed. This therefore entailed the enactment of many pieces of legislation aimed at bringing about equity and service delivery.

The chapter highlights the key roles and responsibilities of local government as set out in chapter seven of the RSA Constitution of 1996. The objectives of local government were enumerated and included the provision of democratic and accountable government for
local communities; the provision of service to communities in a sustainable manner and the promotion of the socio-economic development of communities. Although these objectives were clearly stipulated, it acknowledges that policies of the past made service provision difficult for certain municipalities. Difficulties in this regard referred to the lack of resources, poor infrastructure and the lack of capacity.

Under the Municipal Systems Act No.32 of 2000 a number of issues pertaining to service delivery were raised. These included, the entering into of partnerships, the agreement on local government finances and services and community involvement. The chapter introduced the possibility of municipalities of entering into service agreements with public or private entities or organizations. In this regard, however, several conditions governed this process to ensure, inter alia, the uninterrupted provision of services to local communities at an affordable cost.

The chapter emphasizes the importance of involving communities in the processes of local government. It demonstrated the advantages of as bringing the communities closer to government, creating an awareness of the importance of paying for services and enhancing government’s responsiveness to community needs.
CHAPTER THREE

THE CASE OF SCHULZENDAL TOWNSHIP

3.1. Introduction

This chapter examines service delivery by the Nkomazi municipality to the local community located in Schulzendal township. The chapter firstly provides a background into the socio-economic environment of the township. The purpose for this is aimed at assessing the local community’s ability to pay for services provided to them. Secondly, the chapter examines the Nkomazi municipality with specific reference to its Integrated Development Plans, the services it is currently rendering to the community and the challenges facing the municipality. Thirdly, the chapter investigates the possibility of the municipality entering into partnerships with either public or private entities.

3.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SCHULZENDAL TOWNSHIP

Schulzendal township should be viewed within the context of the province that it finds itself located in. Schulzendal forms part of the South East border of South Africa in Mpumalanga Province. As was typically the case in apartheid South Africa, local communities had very little, if any, power in decision-making that affecting their well-being. A lack of citizen participation therefore resulted in, among other things, poor communication between local government and communities. Communities had no access

Before the 1994 democratic elections Mpumalanga province was called the Eastern Transvaal
to electricity, water, proper housing, refuse removal and roads. In essence the needs of rural communities were severely ignored. As mentioned in chapter two of this study, the advent of democracy brought with it the challenge of providing and ensuring a sustainable and affordable service to all South Africans. However, sustainability is largely linked to affordability since the municipality is dependent on the tax revenues received from local residents.

Three factors impact on local residents’ ability to pay for services delivered by the Nkomazi municipality. The first factor refers to the levels of unemployment within the township. The population of Schulzendal township comprises of 7000 African people with 60% between the ages of 18-45. Approximately 65% of the community members are unemployed. Ironically though, approximately 60% of the residents in Schulzendal township have received some form of education. Interviews conducted by the researcher revealed that 25% of local residents possessed either degrees or tertiary diplomas (the majority are qualified teacher) whilst 35% possessed senior certificates. The reason for high level of unemployment is that teachers are not in demand in that township.

The second factor is primarily cultural. Within this community it is not uncommon for one man to have several wives. As a result the breadwinner has to support larger families on minimal salaries. The third factor relates more to a culture of non-payment within the local community. Before 1994, local residents were self-sustainable. Nature was the main source of them satisfying their basic needs. Residents’ utilized water from the rivers used reeds to build houses and disposed of their refuse through digging holes in the ground.
Now they faced a new system that required not only that government be responsible for satisfying their needs. But also that they pay for these services provided. We now turn to an examination of the Nkomazi Municipality to assess how it has been able to deal with some of these challenges.

3.3. NKOMAZI MUNICIPALITY

There are similarities between municipalities in that they have the same basic components aimed at ensuring the provision of services to local communities. However, their needs, resources, managerial styles, culture and other factors may be quite different. Municipalities have to execute its functions under unique conditions and circumstances. This is apparent upon reflection of the Nkomazi Municipality that serves the interests and needs of the Schulzendal township. The personnel employed within the Municipality possess formal educational qualifications and skills. However, these are not suitably matched for the tasks or responsibilities required from them. In some of the interviews conducted, for example, it came to light that qualified teachers were appointed as officials in the Municipality. In the case of Councillors the interviews brought to the fore that most of them have obtained their Matric Certificates and some even other forms of tertiary qualifications. What is surprising, however, is that they do not have any idea of their expected duties as councillors and officials? This lack of knowledge has impacted negatively on service delivery in Schulzendal. Moreover, the representativeness of both ethnic groups and gender (thought to be important factors in ensuring need satisfaction and identification with communities) has not contributed towards the adequate need
3.4. INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The Municipal Systems Act, Act No.32 of 2000 prescribed that, in the execution of its functions and responsibilities, all municipalities had to have Integrated Development Plans (IDP). These plans emphasise developmental priorities of the municipality. It is specifically focused on avoiding wasteful expenditure and perpetuating past spending practices that may not have resulted in the satisfaction of basic needs. Among its objectives include ensuring that all citizens have access to at least a minimum level of basic services; that the municipality takes a leading role in addressing poverty and ensuring past redress and that the municipality promotes local economic and social development. The Integrated Development Plans of the municipality therefore requires that future needs and demands be anticipated to ensure sustainable delivery of services over the short, medium and long term.

Furthermore, the Integrated Development Plans of the municipality encourages community participation in the decision-making process. It prescribes that the Municipality inform the community and all stakeholders about resources available, service tariffs and possible constraints facing the municipality. According to the DBSA (2000) Integrated Development Plans enable the municipality to develop a realistic, achievable plan for the future.
Below we find the Integrated Development Plan of the Nkomazi Municipality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Support Objectives</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Implement the IDP Process in local authorities in the Mpumalanga provinces</td>
<td>☐ Relevant staff from selected local authorities in the Mpumalanga Province and other relevant institutions upgraded their knowledge on the IDP process through workshops</td>
<td>☐ Reports on workshops conducted</td>
<td>☐ IDP process adopted in the Nkomazi Municipality to enhance service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDP process implemented in the Mpumalanga local authorities</td>
<td>Report on the implementation of the IDP process in the selected local authorities.</td>
<td>Ability of officials to develop and implement IDPs independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of IDPs produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Upgrade the management skills of councillors and senior staff of municipalities in key and relevant management topics such as local government administration; project management; monitoring and evaluation; financial management; budget preparation; customer relations.</td>
<td>☐ Training needs identified and training materials prepared</td>
<td>☐ Report on the training needs assessment and the training materials produced</td>
<td>☐ Number of councillors, senior officials and community leaders trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Councillors, senior officials and community leaders upgraded their skills in selected management topics through workshops and seminars</td>
<td>Report on the improved skills of councillors and senior municipal officials</td>
<td>Number of women councillors and officials trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Improve the management information system of Mpumalanga local authorities</td>
<td>☐ MIS guidelines developed</td>
<td>☐ A document outlining the recommended MIS for LG.</td>
<td>☐ MIS and IT strategy implemented in the Mpumalanga local authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IT guidelines developed</td>
<td>One document outlining the recommended IT strategy</td>
<td>Number of officials using adequately MIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MIS and IT strategy introduced in selected local authorities through seminars</td>
<td>☐ Report on the introduction of the MIS and the IT strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diagram demonstrates the importance of involving all stakeholders in the process of service delivery and need satisfaction. It firstly looks at the implementation of Integrated Development Plans. Through exposing officials to the importance and necessity of having such plans one enhances their knowledge and ability to implement these plans independently. The plan further highlights the importance of training councillors and people in senior positions within the municipality. Such training allows for better management, more accurate need identification, greater responsiveness by the Municipality, better practices of financial management and control and enhanced customer relations. Other areas of focus include the development and introduction of Information Technology and Management Information Systems.

\[ Nkomazi municipality has decided to adopt the following mechanisms to address the problems faced by Schulzendal Township. The Integrated Development Plans (IDP), Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), and citizen participation are recommended as vital mechanisms to ensure the delivery of services in Schulzendal. \]
3.5. SERVICE DELIVERY IN SCHULZENDAL TOWNSHIP

3.5.1. HOUSING

Schulzendal community is not satisfied with the provision of houses in their township. The only houses that were provided by the government are for victims of natural disasters. One of the community members interviewed compared the sizes of these houses to match boxes. He continued by saying that the targets of the housing programme were to provide adequate housing to the poorest of the poor. These poor households were relying on natural resources for building materials and usually dependent on the natural environment to secure a livelihood, as income was limited and irregular. Now they do not have access to the nature because the government wants to make money with this nature.

The provisions of houses in Schulzendal township were not to build houses for people who do not have houses but to assist those who are affected during the disaster caused by heavy rains. The government is in the process of introducing the housing programme in Schulzendal township to provide shelter for those who do not have any place to stay. The main problem for Nkomazi municipality is the financial constraints because there is no contribution from the community only the grant coming from the Provincial and National government said one of the government officials (Interview with government officials, 23 June, 2002).
Housing provides shelter, but it is also a potential asset and income source. Secure housing is a productive asset, which may protect the poor against the most crushing impacts of poverty. The housing shortage has been estimated at a three thousand five hundred units in Schulzendal township. Approximately four thousand people live in shacks, and there is severe overcrowding of much of the formal housing stock. The RDP promised one million houses in the first five years of democratic government.

In 1994, South Africa’s Housing Ministry had inherited a housing backlog that resulted from stifled development initiatives during the apartheid years. The new Government therefore began to seek partners who could begin to institute policies and programmes to help eradicate the country’s large number of informal settlements. The first place they looked for help was within local communities. Through the people’s Housing Process, the Government had organized and mobilized communities around various housing programmes, and then augmented those local efforts with technical support and capital housing subsidies to support the poorest of the poor and the unemployed. Such a joint programme ensured that people really did rise above their disadvantages.

The government focus was on providing services to its people in urban areas and in rural areas. It also tried to look at where people were currently settled, in order to ensure that people in unstable areas were to safety. At the same time, the Government was looking to ensure that, where conditions were satisfactory, people stayed where they were.

According to section 26 (1)(2) and 28 (10(c) of the constitution Act 108 1996 of the Republic of South Africa provides
Section 26(1) and (2) provides

(1) Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing.

(2) The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realization of this right.

Section 28 (1)(c) provides that

Every child has the right-

To basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services.

Respondents had based their claim firstly on section 26 of the constitution (which provides that everyone has the right of access to adequate housing and imposes an obligation upon the state to take reasonable legislative and other measures to ensure the progressive realization of this right within its available resources). Secondly on section 28 (1)(c) of the constitution (which provides that children have right to shelter).

The right of access to adequate housing was not being seen in isolation with the other socio-economic rights. Socio-economic rights had to be read together in the setting of the constitution as a whole. The state is obliged to take positive action to meet the needs of those living in extreme conditions of poverty, homeless or intolerable housing.
3.5.2. WATER

Schulzendal community has access to clean water. But the community is not satisfied with the suppliers of water because they get water once or twice a week. The community's access to water is generally high; they seem to enjoy the advantage of getting access to this resource. Respondents were asked about the maintenance of water service in their township. The community members seem not to be satisfied about the maintenance because it takes long period of time for the problem to be rectified while they do not have other options of getting water.

The respondents were asked who do not have an indoor tap or a tap on their premises whether their source of water was more or less than 200m from their dwelling. Few houses have the indoor tap, the majority of the community use the street taps. The source of water is less than 200m from their dwelling said one of the community members.

The development of water system in Schulzendal township is coming very well, the only problem that we experience is that we have one engine that is pumping water for many townships. That is the reason they get water once or twice per week in Schulzendal township. But now the government is busy building a big water plant that will assist in purifying and pumping more water to all the townships including Schulzendal said one of the government officials (Interview with government officials, 23 June 2002).

According to section 2 of the Water Act of 1998, the purpose of this Act is to ensure that
the nation's water resources are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and
controlled in ways, which take into account amongst other factors-
meeting the basic needs of present and future generations;
promoting equitable access to water;
redressing the results of the past racial and gender discrimination;
promoting the efficient, suitable and beneficial use of water in the public interest;
facilitating social and economic development;
providing for growing demand for water use;
protecting equitable and associated ecosystems and their biological diversity;
reducing and preventing pollution and degradation of water resources;
meeting international obligation;
promoting safety;
managing floods and droughts

and for achieving this purpose, to establish suitable institutions and to ensure that they
have appropriate community, racial and gender representation.

The National Water Act was passed in 1998. It deals with the protection, allocation and
development of water resources and provides the institutional framework to manage
them. Part of this approach was the development of the Municipal Infrastructure
Programme (MIP), which aimed to rehabilitate, upgrade and provide new municipal
infrastructure to meet the basic needs of communities as efficiently and effectively as
possible. A further objective was to enhance the developmental capacity of municipalities
and promote their financial viability and democratization. While programmes such as the
Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's (DWAF) Community Water Supply and Sanitation Programme (CWSSP) are aimed at rural areas, but they still focuses mainly on urban areas. Water and sanitation were identified as the areas most in need of infrastructure delivery. It still the same in rural areas most of the policies, they aimed at rural areas but, when it comes to delivery, they focus to urban areas.

3.5.3. ROADS

Schulzendal community members are not satisfied with the quality of roads they have in their township. The cost implications of this were concerning to residents. In the event that the buses did not come due to flooded roads residents had to pay taxis to reach their destinations. It is apparent that the poor quality of roads has for reaching implications for residents, both in terms of travel cost and attendance at the workplace. During summer when there is a lot of rain vehicles (even buses) are not able to come in their place and that also affect them to go to work said one of the community members (Interview with Community member, 20 June, 2002).

Respondents were asked how they got to work during flooded roads. They said, they have to travel almost 2km from Schulzendal to the nearest place in order to have a transport.
The roads problem faced by Schulzendal community is true because even myself as a resident of Schulzendal feel the same pain the rest of Schulzendal residents do.

Department of public works has been trying to provide bulldozers to maintain the roads but does not work after heavy rains. Another problem faced by the department is the shortage of resources especially finances to provide tar roads to Schulzendal community said one of the government officials (Interview with Government Official, 22 June, 2002).

The National Public Works Programme (NPWP) was adopted in May 1994 mechanism for implementing some of the goals of the RDP. Public Works Programmes are the vehicles through which most other delivery programmes such as water, sewerage systems, and roads, construction of schools, hospitals and clinics are implemented. The key objective of this (NPWP) was to ensure that the above infrastructures are delivered in equitable manner to the communities in order to empower communities through providing job opportunities, transferring skills and creating community assets; providing relief and temporary livelihood support to threatened communities during times of disaster, through maintaining the local economy by bringing funds into the area and rebuilding infrastructure and building work that reduces vulnerability to disaster (Indicator SA vol. 17 No 2 : 72)
3.5.4. ELECTRICITY

With the provision of electricity by the municipality Schulzendal residents were satisfied. The respondents were asked whether these services were properly maintained, and whether they had noticed development in the area of electrification in their community. Respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the maintenance because problems were not addressed soon enough. They also expressed concern about the poor or lack of notification in the case the Municipality conducted electrical works in the area.

The researcher asked those respondents who said they do receive electricity in their dwelling to specify the source of this electricity. The majority of people receive their electricity from local authority. Electricity remains the main energy source for lighting and cooking few people use heating. Respondents were also asked whether they were aware of any electrification initiatives in their area in the last five years. The majority of residents in Schulzendal township were more aware of electrification projects that were taking place in residences. They were also asked whether electricity was a necessity in their dwelling. Many indicated that it was not. People had become accustomed to using alternative methods.

Government officials responded, they are happy the way electricity supplied to Schulzendal township because each and every year there is a progress. They also have a problem in the maintenance side because it takes time for the Eskom workers to respond to a problem said one of the government officials.
Electricity is a primary service requirement for many South Africans. When accessibility to electricity is improved, quality of life is enhanced, because electricity can be used to different things for example lighting, cooking, and heating. In addition, environmental pollution is reduced. South Africa faces a severe lack of equitable access to electricity especially along class, race, and geographical lines. Local authority normally makes a profit on electricity sales and this enables them to supplement their income from taxation for the rendering of necessary but unprofitable services.

3.5.5. Garbage Removal

Local authorities must provide for the removal of refuse in order to prevent unhygienic conditions and the offensive piling up of garbage. As a town expands, the removal and processing or disposal of garbage becomes a bigger undertaking requiring large capital expenditure and the employment of appropriately qualified personnel. Most rural areas are experiencing environment pollution due to the lack of garbage removal. This service plays a crucial role to keep the environment clean and for individuals. People in rural areas are not familiar with this service; they dig holes in their dwelling to put rubbish in order to maintain cleanliness. In the streets there are no garbage removals to throw rubbish, for example, papers, plastic and glass containers, banana’s leaves and the rest. Immediately after they finish eating their food they just throw down the wastes instead of putting it in the garbage removal. In an interview conducted by the researcher with a community member the following concern was expressed:
But this form of garbage removal has raised concerns by residents. In two interviews, one with a community member and the other with a government official, some of the issues included the contamination of the river water resulting in incidences of cholera, malaria and skin diseases. Clearly this impacts on the economic well-being of members of the community who are prone to these diseases and cannot work. This in turn then impacts on the community’s ability to pay for services provided by the Municipality.

A government official, however, felt that the source of the problem was not with the Municipality but with the local residents. His sentiments below are indicative of what actually happens in the township when bins are provided to ensure the removal of garbage.

3.6. THE CHALLENGES IN NKOMAZI MUNICIPALITY

Nkomazi Municipality has one central office occupied by appointed officials. Councillors, however, do not have any office space, access to photocopying, computers, and fax machines or library resources. Clearly, this impact on the delivery of services in an efficient and effective manner. Firstly, members of the community are unable to communicate with their councillors either through writing to them or visiting them at their offices. Councillors may therefore not be ‘in touch’ with the needs of the community or aware of any community dissatisfaction.

Secondly, councillors are limited in developing knowledge and expertise. This may
Contribute towards an unhealthy dependence on appointed officials (who may not necessarily have the best interest of the community at heart). Finally, the lack of equipment like computers may impact on the successful implementation of Integrated Development Plans in so far as Information Technology and Management Information Systems are concerned.

As alluded to elsewhere in this chapter, the high level of unemployment in the Schulzendal township poses a further challenge for the Nkomazi Municipality. Where other municipalities receive and operate on funds received from tax revenues, Nkomazi Municipality is dependent on grants from provincial government. This gives rise to various problems. Firstly, the municipality is unable to deliver basic services as prescribed by the Constitution and other legislation. Secondly, it creates tension between the local residents and the municipality. Local residents may feel that government is not responsive to their needs. Thirdly, if basic needs remain unmet communities may be exposed to and contract serious contagious diseases. This in turn negatively impacts on the development of the economy since people become ill or even worse die. The Municipal System Act of 2000 clearly states that the provision of services to local communities will be financed from tax base incomes. Clearly this is not forthcoming in the case of the Schulzendal township. The municipality is now dependent on grants.

Furthermore, Nkomazi Municipality is currently experiencing huge staff shortages. This not only refers to appointed but also elected officials. For example, one councillor is
responsible for many townships. Naturally, he/she is unable to travel to all of these townships. Some of them are limited even more since they are unable to drive motor vehicles. More serious limitations relate to the level of education and exposure to the field of public administration of councillors. In many instances these councillors only have matric certificates. There are few who possess teaching diplomas or degrees. Only appointed officials are well educated.

3.7. PAYMENT SYSTEM IN SCHULZENDAL TOWNSHIP

Interviews conducted with government officials revealed that the Schulzendal community is not yet paying for the following services: houses, water, roads, as well as garbage removals. Currently the only service being paid for is electricity. This is largely due to the fact that local residents use the pre-paid system of electricity. This ensures a more economic use of electricity, since it displays the number of remaining units. The problem of affordability limits the opportunities for entering into public or private partnerships. However, PPPs have shown to assist municipalities in areas of financial, infrastructural or staff constraints. And therefore may assist the Nkomazi Municipality in areas where it may be experiencing constraints.
3.8. THE ROLE OF PPPs IN IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY

The number of public-private partnerships at municipal level has increased remarkably in recent years. Government has formulated policies to guide public-service delivery and public-private partnerships in the provision of services. The benefits should, therefore, include access to services, affordability of services, job opportunities as well as participation of locals in economic activities brought about by the delivery mechanisms. A number of municipalities are providing their services to communities via the public-private partnerships route. Their decisions to enter into partnerships with the private sector are guided by clear criteria such as coverage, cost and affordability, quality and socio-economic objectives including local economic development. Public-private partnerships will assist the council to fulfill their responsibility of ensuring that all citizens have access to basic services.

The negative impact of the public-private partnerships from the community response is the increase of prices of the services. The Public-Private Partnerships was introduced as one of the mechanisms to speed up service delivery. The researcher also argues that if the two mix, the quality of services will be reasonable satisfactorily and the payment will increase. Poor people will not be able to pay those services (DBSA, PPPs 2000: 13).
3.9. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN ENHANCING SERVICE DELIVERY

Citizen participation in this context meant that Nkomazi municipality would be able to identify the required needs of the township. Also would be able to satisfy the needs more efficiently. Municipality function is to ensure the universal access to essential services that are affordable to all as it is mentioned above. In order for the municipality to perform this task they need to determine the expectations and the needs of the local community. This can be performed efficiently and effectively through citizen participation. Citizen participation can play a crucial role in improving service delivery in local level because local government is the level of government that is closer to the people and through public participation they can delivery the required services to the people. Citizen participation is likely to increase the responsiveness of the local councils. Citizen participation may lead to an improvement in the quality of policy decisions.

Citizen participation is likely to increase the acceptability of the decisions taken at local level. Citizen participation has the advantage of creating a community commitment in the policy implementation phase. The participation of local communities in the planning and implementation of development plans is important for efficient local government. With extensive community input, plans and budgets will reflect the vision and priorities of communities and build partnership towards implementation. Through water programmes and work with Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Community-base Organizations (CBOs), some councils have realized that they will be
unable to deliver without informed and co-operative communities. This makes citizen participation a key to deliver. Without citizen participation, local authorities may run the risk of facing unnecessary citizen opposition, and protests.

3.9.1. Advantages of citizen participation

In spite of continued opposition to citizen participation, in Schulzendarl township there have been those who have actively committed themselves to establishing increased participation based on it being the democratic right of citizens.

Positive application of citizen powers

Citizen participation can serve as a means of converting dependency into independence that is, converting the poor from passive consumers of the services of others into procedures of those services. By repressing citizen participation, government authorities deprive themselves, and their ability to render services, of a vast source of manpower, information and expertise for the attainment of national and local goals, as well as depriving citizens of the opportunity to grow. As citizens need the local authorities to deliver services to them, the effective delivery of these services may be enhanced by the involvement of the citizens in service delivery.
Willingness to sustain deprivation

Citizen participation because it fosters a feeling of involvement in and ownership of planning, may make citizens willing to accept the eventuality of government not being able to render certain needed services. In the light of scarce and limited resources it makes sense, by means of co-option and co-production, to inform citizens of and include them in the allocation of these resources.

Restraining the abuse of authority

Citizen participation groups, when they have access to information concerning government activities, may constitute an effective check on the exercise of the discretion of public managers, compelling the latter to be more sensitive to the implementations of their decisions to act or refrain from doing so. This may very well be one of the reasons why is not always encouraged by governmental authorities.

Information dissemination

The importance of disseminating information has already been dealt with. The effective and efficient distribution of accurate information is essential for citizen participation, whether it be government-sponsored or citizen-initiated. It is also essential for optimal goal achievement and relationship building.
This chapter examined service delivery by local government with specific reference to the local residents of Schulzendal township. The chapter provides a brief historical background into socio-economic status of the community. Here it focused on the level of unemployment. The chapter demonstrates the negative impact of unemployment on the local residents as well as the Nkomazi Municipality. It is acknowledged that government is responsible for ensuring the provision of basic services to local communities. However, the importance of local communities paying for such services is equally realized.

The chapter then examines the Nkomazi Municipality’s with reference to the Integrated Development Plans, the services delivered and the challenges facing the municipality. The municipality had a clear plan on how it would bring about local economic development and growth. However, it faced huge financial constraints in simply implementing these plans. Where service delivery was concerned it was found that services like housing, refuse removal, electricity, water, and roads were being provided. There were certain areas though where residents had problems. For an example, residents complained about the size of the houses built and the maintenance of other services. The chapter concluded by focusing on the possibility of entering into partnerships with either public or private entities. The resource constraints facing the Municipality tended to lean towards this option. But attitude of the local residents towards possibly paying increased tariffs when they could barely afford to pay existing tariffs was a matter for concern.
CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1. Introduction

The study has examined the delivery of basic services such as houses, water, electricity, roads, as well as garbage removals by local government, with specific reference to the delivery of services by Nkomazi Municipality to the local residents in Schulzendal township. This chapter provides a summary of the findings. Recommendations aimed at improving service delivery in the Schulzendal township will also be proposed. This will be followed by the conclusion.

4.2. SUMMARY

The study has provided an examination of the various acts, legislation and the constitution of 1996 with specific reference to local government service delivery. It has demonstrated that significant legislative and constitutional changes endowed significant powers on local government. However, municipalities like that of Nkomazi municipality still face problems relating to resources (for example, human and financial resources); and knowledge and skills. These have impacted negatively on its ability to deliver services in an effective and efficient manner. Thus, the local authorities have to ensure that services are delivered to the communities in an equitable manner.
The study reveals that local residents were provided with basic services such as water, electricity, housing and refuse removal. However, the point of concern for local residents was the provision of a sustainable and quality service. The interviews conducted with local residents showed their dissatisfaction with regard to service delivery by the Nkomazi Municipality. In housing for example, residents expressed concern about the size of the dwellings. The interviews revealed that the houses could not accommodate people comfortably. The dwellings were single rooms in which entire families were expected to live. Water restrictions were also imposed on residents. Residents were only allowed access to communal taps once or twice weekly. Furthermore, in the event that damage was done to a water pipe municipal workers would take their time in responding. Access by public transport was another area highlighted by residents. The poor condition of public roads restricted access of public buses or taxis into the Township. As a result parents could not go to work or children to school. Garbage removal also proved to be problematic. The main problem pertained to environment pollution. No suitable provision was made for the removal of plastics; containers and bottles. As a result these were simply dumped anywhere. The supply of electricity appeared to be somewhat less of a problem, except in the event those technical problems arose.
The examination of the Nkomazi Municipality reveals serious constraints with regard to finances, resources and infrastructure. The lack of office space, office equipment and resource facilities were but some of the things mentioned in the study. Also, the high levels of unemployment and poverty of residents negatively impacted on the ability of the Municipality to provide services in an effective and efficient manner.

The lack of skill, knowledge and expertise on the part of elected officials was raised in the study. The impact of this on accurate identification of community needs and technological advances and developments was apparent. Furthermore, it created an unhealthy dependency on appointed officials. It was realized that the latter might not always have the interests of the public at heart.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Most local authorities can standardize the provision of such services and charge the consumers a fixed rate, use some sort mechanical or electronic meeting device to calculate consumption. Moreover, if services are standardized, the minimum quality of the goods or services can be set, monitored and maintained. To ascertain what these communal needs are once again requires concerted consultation with Community-Based Organizations. There may also be differing norms, values, and standards about which it is difficult to reach consensus. What may be a good quality service to some may be inferior to others.
The focus on service delivery provides insight into power relations in society; how societies are organized; and how they change over time. If the South African government seeks greater popular legitimacy, it should ensure that poor and low-income rural households benefit more from infrastructure and service delivery. One of the constraints is the lack of government skills capacity, which has delayed service delivery in local government. For the communities in rural areas the provision of basic services is a lifeline. Moreover, from them service delivery signals that the state could be an ally in their struggle to make ends meet. It is also encouraging that equal proportions of men and women felt that ordinary people had the ability to change the country.

Citizen participation as it is stated above is one of the purposeful activities that bring democracy and make local government effective and efficient to the communities. Without citizen participation it will be impossible for the government to deliver the services that are required within that specific area. The Schulzendal community appointed a person during the course of 2002 to manage the projects in citizen participation. From the project manager’s viewpoint, citizen participation should be guided by the following principles:

- No individuals or groups should be excluded from participating if they wish to do so.
- Any citizen who is a taxpayer has the right to contribute to the governing process.
- Project managers should ensure at all times that citizen participation is articulated in a significant manner, and that the necessary channels are created to utilize their input.
whether it be in the form of complaints, planning or evaluative statements. Project managers should ensure that constant feedback is provided, and that information about the performance, the future plans and schedules, as well as the resource requirements, is available on demand.

In South African local government does not have a history of project management, or of citizen participation in providing goods and services. It is, however, necessary for local authorities to take note that public pressure for the delivery of electioneering promises and consultative management styles will persist.

The establishment of effective structures and processes for sound local governance, coupled with the successful application of developed monitoring and evaluation guidelines will ensure a positive impact of this intervention. The increased participation of women in training programmes to be provided and local government affairs in general will illustrate a significant impact on the local government transformation process. It is envisaged that institutional constraints impacting on LED will be eliminated and twinning arrangements entered into between local authorities at different levels of development and institutional capacity.

Public-Private Partnerships was introduced as one of the mechanisms to speed up service delivery. The Nkomazi Municipality will benefit from the infrastructural support, resources and finances of another partner in its quest to deliver services in a sustainable manner to the community. However, entering into a partnership could possibly result in
increased prices for services. Due to the high levels of unemployment and apparent inability of the community to pay for services currently delivered by the municipality, government is faced with the challenge of finding alternative means of subsidizing such services. This could possibly happen through identifying who is able to pay for services and who is not able to pay for services. In this way a system whereby the former subsidizes the latter could be introduced.

4.3.1. PAYMENT OF SERVICES

In order to improve the payments of services the government should open a strong partnership with the traditional leaders especially in rural areas. The residents in rural areas believe and respect their Chiefs. In some cases this belief and respect is greater than for the politician. The relationship between the traditional leaders and local government officials need to strengthen so that the residents will believe in the politicians as well. If the Chief wants his/her people to pay for something that money will be paid in a short period of time. At the moment those people they paying only electricity because it is pre-paid electricity.

They are not prepared to pay water because their Chiefs never said that to them and they have been getting water from the river free now the government want them to pay. They are not happy with the municipality because they do not have money to pay the services although others they see the development come with the municipality. To avoid this the government need to convince the traditional leaders first then they will come and talk to
their people because even them they are not happy with these system of government because their powers is questionable to local government.

4.4. CONCLUSION

Citizen participation may mean different things to different people. For the purposes of this chapter, citizen participation can be defined as purposeful activities in which people take part in relation to a local authority area of which they are legal residents to improve service delivery. Participation is a means of obtaining information about local conditions, needs, desires and attitudes. This information may be important to achieve informed and implementable decisions in the planning process. Participation is a means of involving and educating the public. The benefit of involvement is that people are more likely to be committed to a project or programme if they are involved in its planning and preparation. The studies have indicated that the quality of life is better in a local authority area with a well-developed sense of community. The benefit of education is the enhancement of the quality of citizenship in that the educated citizen is enabled to exercise judgment and contribute to the debate about policy and is also aware of societal problems and the difficulties of finding solutions to them.

The results of the research tell us that there is development take place in Schulzendal township although there are still some problems of the maintenance of the services provided by Nkomazi municipality. As we all know, the government cannot provide all
these services in few a years because of the costs implication. The resources in Nkomazi municipality are not adequate for service delivery therefore there is a need for the addition of those resources. The capacity building was not done at all because the results still show that there is a need for capacity building workshop for the human resource in Nkomazi municipality. Financially there is need for more funds coming from the Provincial and National governments for the provision of services in Nkomazi municipality.
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RSA: http://www.localgovt.sa.gov.au/-I8k

RSA: Govza: System-Local Government-Microsoft Internet Explorer


§.5. APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW

SECTION A

What is your name?

What is your position?

3. When did you start working in this department?

4. Since 1994, what are your views about service delivery in this department?

5. Since you have started working in this department is there any changes took place?

6. What criteria do you use to see which area mostly needed the service?

7. What difficulties do you experience in this department in terms of service delivery?

8. Do you think the government fulfills what they promised during 1994 election if

   Yes or No, why?

SECTION B

1. What is your name?

   Are you working, if yes, what is your occupation?

3. What are the service do you need the most in your area?

4. Since 1994, what are the changes in this area, if yes what are those changes?

5. Are you paying the services that you already receive from government?

6. In your own opinion, what is the problem of a government in service delivery?

7. Do you think the government fulfills what they promised during 1994 election if
$6.$ APPENDIX B

NAME OF THE INTERVIEWEES

Mr. Patrick Nkambule  
Ms. Thandi Klou  
Ms. Nomvula Klou  
Mr. Sipho Lubisi  
Mr. Simon Thabethe  
Mr. Dan Shabangu  
Mr. Andries Khoza  
Ms. Minah Sifundza  
Mr. Masephula Nkambule  
Mr. Muzi Shongwe  

Community member
Community member
Community member
Community members
Government Official
Government Official
Government Official
Government Official
Government Official
Government Official