

An Assessment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme as a Catalytic
Dimension in Community Development in the Western Cape.

By

Jaen Hess

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Supervisor: Prof I. Ile

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DECLARATION

I declare that the “Assessment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme as a Catalytic Dimension in Community Development in the Western Cape” is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university, and that all sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of the Thusong Service Centre Programme as a service delivery mechanism that offers Government services and information in South African. In 1995 the former President of South Africa, Mr T. Mbeki, appointed Comtask to review Government communications at Local, Provincial and National level (Communication 2000, 1996). The Comtask processes resulted in the launch of Government's Communication and Information System (GCIS), which was formed with the reasoning to improve communication between government and communities. During 1999, Cabinet mandated the GCIS to establish Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs), these MPCCs are now referred to as Thusong Service Centres (TSCs) (Communication 2000, 1996).

These TSCs were seen as the vehicle that will bring service delivery to the community, particularly as a one-stop "shop", offering government products and services. Communities benefit from these centres in various ways, as they serve as civic venues for community meetings, community events, campaigns and exhibitions and act as a link to provide people with various kinds of government information that they may use to improve their own lives and that of the broader local area.

The centres as physical structures have evolved into a powerful service delivery model that provides for community development by going beyond being just another government building, to being more of a service delivery programme that has mobile service provisions capabilities that can provide service delivery to remote, inaccessible rural communities.

To achieve this goal this study has employed a qualitative research approach and collected data from websites, journals, articles, and information on local government in South Africa. The study also utilises exploratory research and does not intend to provide conclusive evidence with this research approach but helps to develop a better understanding of the Thusong Service Centre Programme.

Through utilising the exploratory research approach, the researcher could determine the need for a new funding model for the Thusong Service Centre Programme, utilising Information and Communication Technologies as an TSC enabler and defining and expanding the roles and responsibilities of a TSC Manager as some of the major findings throughout the research paper.

This research will provide insights into the Thusong Service Centre Programme and its application as a catalyst for Government in the Western Cape by providing services to communities to reach their developmental potential.



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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The Constitution of South Africa of 1996 is the supreme law in the land. The Constitution sets the legal foundation for the republic, the rights and duties of its citizens and defines the structure of the government. Chapter 7, S152 (a), provides the objectives of Local Government. The objectives state “to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities; (b) To ensure the provisions of services to communities in a sustainable manner and (e) to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.” According to the White Paper on Local Government (Republic of South Africa, 1997), the paper mentions that “Developmental local government is local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives” (Republic of South Africa, 1997).

The introduction of The Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950, classified South African people into four racial groups namely African, White, Coloured, Indian and created residential areas and business zones for these racial groups. Furthermore, four administration departments were introduced to deliver services to each of these groups separately (The Group Areas Act, 1950). This meant that each of the racial groups was budgeted for differently, non-whites were excluded from living areas that were more developed and those classified as black were forced to live in undeveloped rural areas.

The apartheid system promoted inequality as it provided a lack of service delivery in those areas inhabited by blacks. Predominately, there was poor infrastructure, which had below acceptable service standards, with poor roads, no proper water drainage system, no electricity, inadequate housing, and a lack of proper government facilities such as libraries, health care services or communication affairs such as postal services (Groups Area Act, 1950). Through The Department of Home Affairs facilities citizens could still obtain basic registration documents such as birth certificates and identity documents, but these services were almost impossible to find within rural areas and communities of people had to travel great distances to have access to such services (The Group Areas Act, 1950.).

Prior to the South African democratic government system that was established in 1994, The South African Government Service Delivery System was fragmented. With the abolishment of the Apartheid system and most of the Government’s discriminatory policies post 1994, the newly elected government was tasked to bridge the gap between urban and rural communities

irrespective of race, culture, socio-economic position and location. This is arguably still the South African Government's main objective, nearly twenty-seven (27) years later.

It was in the interest of the newly elected Government to align their interest with the people and bring service delivery closer to the previously disadvantaged. In 1995 the former President of South Africa, Mr T. Mbeki, appointed Comtask to review Government communications at Local, Provincial and National level (Communication 2000, 1996). The Comtask processes resulted in the launch of Government's Communication and Information System (GCIS), which was formed with the reasoning to improve communication between government and communities. During 1999, Cabinet mandated the GCIS to establish Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs), these MPCCs are now referred to as Thusong Service Centres (TSCs) (Communication 2000, 1996).

Cabinet mandated the GCIS, 1999, to establish Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs). These MPCCs are now referred to as Thusong Service Centres (TSCs) (Communication 2000, 1996). These centres were seen as the vehicle that would bridge the gap between service delivery and the community, particularly the poor and previously marginalised communities. From these TSCs, people would be empowered by gaining access to government information, services, and resources. The TSCs would become places that communities could access and act in response to government projects and programmes.

1.1. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The historical background of South Africa provides the context to the pressures of the post 1994 democratic government. The drive to utilise the Thusong Service Centre concept as a vehicle to enhance community inclusiveness and public participation was the reason why the researcher decided to do this research. The question was whether the Thusong Programme has succeeded in being a catalytic dimension of community development?

Thus, the research will explore whether the government has been successful in being responsive and accountable to the vast marginalised communities, through effectively utilising the Thusong Service Centres concept by providing communities with quality service delivery.

The researcher is aware that the objectives for Thusong Service Centres have changed since their establishment and that the various spheres of government are presently utilising these centres mainly as governmental information and communication hubs, which provides for

government services such as pay-outs of government grants and pensions, health services, education programmes, identity documents (IDs) and passports renewals, libraries and the use of computers through e-service initiatives. The researcher is curious if the above-mentioned services still address the vision of the 1996 elected government, which focused on “bringing services closer to the people” or being a one-stop “shop” for rural communities.

With this proposed research the researcher aims to provide perspectives of the Thusong Service Centre Programmes using secondary data and the reasons the Thusong Programme has contributed or not contributed to the development of previously disadvantaged communities.

1.2. THE THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE CONCEPT.

Thusong means “a place to get help or assistance,” if directly translated from the Sesotho language. The Thusong concept is a play on this translation as envisaged by the government as a place where communities receive assistance (Van Niekerk, n.d.).

As stated in GCIS’s Communications Plan (Communication 2000, 1996), Thusong Service Centres are the primary vehicles for the implementation of development communication in South Africa. They are seen as one-stop shops that offer government products and services to all communities. Communities benefit from these centres in various ways, as they serve as either civic venue for community meetings, community events, campaigns and exhibitions and act as a link to provide people with various kinds of government information and services that they may not have otherwise have access to. The Thusong Service Centre Concept of Government had to adapt to the ever-changing socio-economic environment in South Africa and has introduced the Thusong Outreach Programme, a mobile leg of the programme consisting of a team of government workers from all spheres of government that is coordinated to travel to communities within remote locations. The mobile outreach programme provides the Thusong Service Centres with a superior reach into areas that could not normally access any government information or services in the past.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper will consider the following questions central to the research, to answer the research question, the following secondary questions are asked:

- According to the relevant literature, what are the bases for the conception of the Thusong Programme?
- How was the Thusong Programme implemented in South Africa?
- What contributions (if any) has the Thusong Service Centre Programme made in the Western Cape Province?
- What are the challenges the spheres of government have with the Thusong Programme? What best practice methods exist and can be recommended for Thusong Service Centres to promote community development?

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The general research objectives aim to assess whether the Thusong Service Centre Programme is a vehicle for community development within local government in the Western Cape Province. This research will track the following objectives:

- Present the legislative and theoretical basis for the adoption of the Thusong Programme in South Africa;
- Describe the implementation of the Thusong Programme in South Africa since inception;
- Discuss the most important contributions (or lack thereof) that the Thusong Service Centre Programme has made specifically in the Western Cape Province;
- Outline the challenges the spheres of Government have with the Thusong Programme, and
- Identify best practices used in the Thusong Service Centres in the Western Cape Province in the promotion of community development and make relevant recommendations.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research Methodology

The section provides an outline of the methodology that was utilised while gathering the data on the Thusong Service Centre Programme and its relationship with community development. According to Jilcha, 2019, this section will, therefore, reveal the process the researcher will use to conduct the research and the manner which the researcher will use to formulate the problem, objective and the results of the data obtained during the research. Furthermore, this section will address issues such as (a) the rationale for a qualitative study, (b) the research design, (c) exploratory research, (d) the case study, (e) the research sample (f) the research method, (g)

the data analysis and synthesis, (h) the ethical issues and (i) the limitations as well as a chapter outline of the thesis.

1.5.2 The Qualitative Research

In this study the researcher chose to use a qualitative research method to gather the data needed. Qualitative research is defined as research that uses methods such as participants, observation or case studies, which result in a narrative, descriptive account of a setting or practice (Parkinson & Drislane, 2011).

Another interpretation of qualitative research explains the research as a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. Denzil and Lincoln, 2005, indicates that qualitative research turns the world into a series of representations, which includes field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. Furthermore, the authors defines qualitative research as “research that involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”.

1.5.3 Research Design

The research design outlines the methods and processes that will be used in a study when collecting and analysing the information obtained. The appropriate research design for this secondary research study is an exploratory design. The researcher is using this design as the focus is on gaining insights into and familiarity with the subject of the research for further investigation. The exploratory research design will be used to establish an understanding of how to best proceed in studying an issue.

1.5.4 The Exploratory Research

The exploratory research design is defined as a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximise the discovery of generalisations leading to a description and an understanding of an area of social or psychological life (Stebbins, 2001). The definition is dependent on the point of view taken and how the explorer topic orientates the study. Exploratory research is flexible and allows the researcher to utilise secondary data

and sources to lay the base of the study. The understanding of the exploratory research is an understanding of the verb 'explore'. Stebbins, 2011, defines exploratory research as something to become familiar with by testing it or experimenting with it. He also states that because the explorer knows what he is looking for, he only needs to methodically hunt for it.

1.5.5 Sampling Method

The sample will include the entire Western Cape Local Municipal landscape, which consists of a total of 29 Municipalities and 1 Metro. Sampling in qualitative research means that a researcher does not necessarily have to collect data from everyone in a study to generate valid findings. "The study's research objectives and the characteristics of the study population (such as size and diversity) determine which and how many people to select" (Readings, S. n.d). The study will utilise purposive sampling. This sampling method groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question. "Sample sizes, which may or may not be fixed prior to data collection, depend on the resources and time available, as well as the study's objectives" (Readings, S. n.d).

Purposive sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources, which involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups that are knowledgeable or have experience with a phenomenon (Cresswell and Plano, 2011) in Palinkas et al., 2016. Purposive sampling strategies move away from any random form of sampling and are strategies to make sure that specific kinds of cases of those that could possibly be included are part of the final sample in the research study (Palinkas et al., 2016.). The research paper will also utilise a smaller sample size of one (1) Thusong Service Centre per District, when exploring the 6 blocks service model, to determine the current basket of services provided at Thusong Service Centres in the Western Cape Province.

1.5.6 Document Analysis

Document analysis refers to the review by the researcher of written materials (Bowen, 2009). A document analysis can include personal and non-personal documents such as archives, annual reports, guidelines, policy documents, diaries or letters. According to Bowen, 2009, document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, which can

include both printed and electronic material. Furthermore, Bowen states that document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge.

In qualitative research, a document analysis is used to combine with other qualitative research methods. “The qualitative researcher is expected to draw upon multiple (at least two) sources of evidence; that is, to seek convergence and corroboration using different data sources and methods. Apart from documents, such sources include interviews, participant or non-participant observation, and physical artifacts” (Yin, in Bowen, 2009)

This study employed a multimethod approach, encompassing data and documents using existing literature and documents such as reports, newspaper clippings, journals, government publications and press releases. The research report utilises vital documents that act as views that needed to be interpreted, as this was the research report’s primary data. My methodical search for relevant documents spanning years revealed that only a handful of data exist that supports the research topic. I reviewed approximately 30 documents, journals, and books, placed them in context, and coded them for analysis. These included the People Centred Development Model and related information and 22 Government appropriate articles (government stories, GCIS features, presentations, and government data and publications).

The most relevant documents the research report made use of were all available online and provided core research findings relating to the topic. The assessment report on the effectiveness of the Thusong Service Centre Programme, The Service Delivery Review (2004) and the Modernisation Blueprint that provided for the face of the Western Cape Province, 2009, were particularly rich sources of data and provided the researcher with invaluable information pertaining to the inner working of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. The Government Acts and pieces of legislation relevant to the Thusong Service Centre stretched across 16 online accessed data articles and publications. These provided the researcher with legislative data that reflects the development of the concept since its inception towards what it is presently. In terms of the document data that substantiated the information of the 6 blocks services model, the researcher requested information from the Thusong Programme team located in the Service Delivery Directorate at the Department of Local Government. The team responsible for the Thusong Programme in 5 Districts of the Western Cape, provided me with the relevant information pertaining to the service offerings at Thusong Service Centres and the example of

an 'ideal' centre, which the information refers to as a Thusong Zone. The researcher treated this information as authentic because, in most cases, it was 'signed' into the official records of the Department of Local Government in the Western Cape Province.

1.5.7 Data Collection

This research is based on secondary data only. This will allow the researcher to collect data by means of books, published sources, journals, newspapers, websites, and government records. The main source of data will be derived from the University of the Western Cape Library online portal, since the physical building is closed due to Covid-19 regulations, the researcher will rely only on online data sources such as online published sources, online journals, websites, free government sources. Since the data will be qualitative data or non-numeric data, the information from the collection will be from previous research and articles that were relevant to the Thusong Service Centres.

1.5.8 Limitations of the Study

This study aims to explore whether the government has been successful in being responsive and accountable to the vast marginalised communities, through effectively utilising Thusong Service Centres by providing communities with quality service delivery. The information and knowledge provided in this study will provide opportunities of further research as it will provide a basis of new ideas or differentiated theories. The limitations of this study will reflect the honest shortcomings because of the difficulties in gathering resources or flawed methodology. Since the research is done on a South African concept, there is already a limitation based on location, which simply means that the research cannot objectively be compared to other countries. According to Johnston, 2014, the availability and access to relevant information is a recognised limitation to utilising secondary data. Data that the researcher will collect for this study is specific and focused on Thusong Service Centres.

Johnston, 2014 argues that in any research it is important to conduct pre-planning and research to ensure that there is relevant and adequate information for a research study. Furthermore, Johnston, 2014 makes another key statement towards the limitation of this study by stating that secondary data is data that the researcher did not participate in collecting and thus the

researcher does not know how the data was collected or processed. The data that the researcher finds is from already published findings from either primary researchers and authors or even secondary researchers. The researcher needs to ensure that this study will correspond to the research questions and the existing data so that the limitation of this study do not hamper this study's ability to address the problem statement.

1.5.9 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data will be based on qualitative research. Qualitative research involves data that is non-numerical, and it allows for in-depth and further understanding to derive to a conclusion. Since the data that will be collected is only from secondary data sources, the researcher will rely on multiple forms of secondary data to solve the problem statement.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The conceptual analysis offers a clarification of the key concepts in the problem statement and research objective, which are briefly discussed.

1.6.1 The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

The RDP is a policy framework for integrated and coherent socio-economic progress. It seeks to mobilise all our people and our country's resources toward the eradication of the results of apartheid.

1.6.2 Apartheid

Apartheid was introduced in South Africa in 1948. Apartheid called for the separate development of the different racial groups in South Africa. Apartheid made segregation part of the law.

1.6.3 The Thusong Service Centres

These were established as multi-purpose community centre or MPCCs and later refined and referred to as Thusong Service Centres. They are regarded as one of the primary vehicles for

the implementation of the government's two (2) way communication and information by utilising community participation. The Thusong Service Centre concept is defined as one-stop, integrated community development centres that are characterised by community participation and quality service delivery that are relevant to the needs of a developing community.

1.6.4 People-Centred Development (PCD)

This is a theoretical concept that places people in the centre of the development process by taking control of their own development.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The chapters in this research will be structured chronologically in the following manner:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Research background. This chapter covers the research background, problem statement and the rationale for the study. The chapter gives a brief overview of the Thusong Service Centre Concept, the research questions and research objectives, research methodology and conceptual clarification.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature review: This chapter deals with the theoretical framework, literature review and conceptual discussions applicable to this study including the policy context for implementation in South Africa.

Chapter 3: Legislative Framework: The provisions of the South African Constitution and other Acts that enforce the principles of People-Centred development.

Chapter 4: This chapter deals with the challenges the spheres of government have with the Thusong Programme. Current practices, processes, applications and methods by all spheres of Government are discussed. This Chapter also deals with the research findings and interpretations of the study.

Chapter 5: Summary, recommendations and conclusion. This chapter deals with the summaries of all chapters, the conclusion and the recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter introduced the study and provided a contextual background to the study. The current chapter will examine the literature for the adoption of the Thusong Programme and theory based on a people first principle. This section addresses the theoretical framework to provide a conceptual platform for this research. This section discusses the People Centred Development theory and its themes.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1. The Thusong Service Centre Programme

The word “Thusong” refers to “a place to get help or assistance”, which is directly translated from the Sesotho language. The Thusong concept has been a vehicle for government to carry out its mandate of bringing services closer to the people (Van Niekerk, n.d.).

Thusong Service Centres are the primary vehicles for the implementation of development communication in South Africa. They are seen as a “one-stop shop” that offers government products and services to their respective communities. Communities benefit from these centres in various ways, as they serve as civic venues for community meetings, community events, campaigns and exhibitions and act as a link to provide people with various kinds of government information that they may use to improve their own lives and that of the local community.

The success and failure of a Thusong Service Centre is determined by the degree to which it becomes an integral part of the community it serves. This means that the centre should be able to offer a range of services and information that the community can utilise on a day-to-day basis or enough for the individual’s own development (Seopela, 2019).

2.1.2. The History of Multi-Purpose Community Centres (Thusong Service Centres)

In pre-1994 South Africa democratic elections, South Africans had to travel long distances to access basic government services such as applying for identity documents & birth certificates. After the democratic elections in 1994 the national government adopted a Multi-Purpose

Community Centre (MPCC) strategy to promote access to government information and services. With the establishment of the MPCC programme throughout Provincial Governments, Provinces established their own MPCCs that could assist their citizens with government information. The establishment of MPCCs could be categorised into 3 programmes. (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004: 32).

- MPCCs providing government information. All the MPCCs in this category provided government information to the community. In these centres both Provincial and National Departments have offices where officials provide information on the services rendered by their respective departments (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004: 33).
- MPCCs rendering integrated services. The MPCCs in this category provide integrated services to the community. These integrated services include community development projects. These include health and welfare services and home affairs and police services (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004: 33).
- MPCCs focusing on capacity building programmes. The third category of the MPCCs is those that focus on training and development programmes. These centres provide for education services where communities can also receive information, use the information to get services and receive training services. (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004: 33).
- MPCCs are points of a two-way communication between government and citizens (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004: 90). These centres are promoted to citizens as a space to share views on government programmes, policies, and activities, and make their needs for services known to the government. MPCCs could also accommodate community events such as community meetings, church services, workshops and training areas. MPCC as a space for community participation was marketed as a point of service where communities can interact with all spheres of government (National, Provincial and Local) information and services. The MPCCs were also used by communities as points of information and pay points for social grants, pensions and health services that normally had little to no space to accommodate very rural communities.

The very first centre that was launched came through an intersectoral initiative by Government, which was supported by then President, Thabo Mbeki. As one of three Provinces marked as a

priority region for Government, The Kei District in the Eastern Cape received the first 'Centre', which comprised of several Government services close to each other allowing for easy access by citizens. With the Launch of the MPCC, government touted the centre as a one-stop shop for government services and information and part of President Mbeki speech stated that the role of the MPCC will be "to Provide Government with a Human Face" (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004: 90). It can be seen as a platform for government representatives of all spheres to interact with communities and respond to community concerns on a face-to-face basis.

2.1.3. MPCCS and the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS).

The Apartheid government's culture revolved around providing restriction on the media and press and having a high reliance on state secrecy. Post the 1994 elections, the newly elected Government promoted the expression of freedom and implemented a constitution that guaranteed the right to freedom of expression. The problem was that the Government had no idea how to operate within a framework of modern communication systems and information delivery. (Communication 2000, 1996).

The establishment of "Comtask" by the then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, was a necessity. This task group was to review government communications at the local, provincial, national and international level. Comtask had to make recommendations on how government communication should be structured in line with the constitutional principles of freedom of expression and transparency and openness of government (Communication 2000, 1996).

The Comtask processes and recommendations resulted in the launch of the Government Communications and Information System (GCIS) on 18 May 1998 during the Communication Budget Vote in the South African Parliament (Communication 2000, 1996). The GCIS was formally established in terms of Section 7 (subsection 2 and 3) of the Public Service Amendment Act, 2007.

2.2.THE GENERATIONS OF THUSONG SERVICE CENTRES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

2.2.1. The First Generation Thusong Service Centre (1999 – 2004)

Cabinet then mandated the GCIS to establish a One-Stop Government Centre (OSGC) in each district in the country. The first phase of the establishment of the MPCCs was a way to improve

access to government information and to integrate government services into rural communities and under serviced urban areas.

Cabinet further mandated that the OSGC should empower the poor and disadvantaged to become involved in programmes to improve their lives. The Government set a target of establishing a MPCC in each district by the end of 2004. In the President's state of the Nation Address in 2004, the then President Thabo Mbeki announced that the MPCC Programme would be extended to 284 local municipalities.

The MPCC would endeavour to use existing community centres or halls to serve as OSGCs, as these was already integrated into communities and within reach of most citizens.

According to the National Cabinet Memorandum 15 (Department of Justice, 1999), MPCCs were referred to as "first-generation" Thusong Service Centres. The first-generation business plan, MPCCs were "identified as the primary approach for the implementation of development communication and information".

2.2.2. The Second Generation Thusong Service Centre (2006 – 2014)

Since the first phase of the MPCCs now known as "Thusong Service Centres" was established to lay a foundation for the Government to interact with its citizens, the second-generation business plan was approved in 2006.

The second-generation business plan incorporated new formalised structures, roles & responsibilities and guidelines on the sustainability of existing TSCs. The business plan also included a host of objectives, which amongst others, included the Government's commitment to build a responsive state for all citizens, plans to improve service delivery and a new six block service model.

The Government promoted the second-generation centres by emphasising the provision of certain government services (I. Ds, birth certificates and social grants) in addition to services such as vocational training, skills development, literacy and computer classes and community gardens. Some of these services could also be provided at or from these centres, which was included in the second-generation business plan.

2.2.3. The Third Generation Thusong Service Centre (2016)

The Department of Public Service and Administration in conjunction with GCIS undertook a study with the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC) in 2016 to conduct a situational analysis and assessment in relation of future locations, funding and coordination of the Thusong Programme. Through this study and in comparison, with the Public Service Commission (PSC) assessment of the effectiveness of a TSC in Integrated Service Delivery, the assessments indicated that the Programme suffered from a poor state of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), a lack of clarity regarding the roles, policy oversight, coordination and ownership of these centres (Public Service Commission, 2014). In 2019 the Cabinet provided a response to the difficulties experienced at TSC's, by launching a new model named the District Development Model (DDM). This model was introduced to enhance the integration of service delivery across the three spheres of government and coordinate and facilitate intergovernmental joint planning in the district and metro spaces (Public Service Commission, 2014).

The DDM hubs had the responsibility to facilitate the implementation of local government capacity building programmes in the district and metro. As such the roles and functions of the DDM hubs mirror those of the TSCs, therefore they can be seen as strengthening the Governments Third Generation TSC plans. The Third-Generation business plans include areas that have previously not had any access to Thusong Service Centres and had to travel to other towns to access Thusong Services. In the Western Cape these areas include the Kannaland Municipal area and the Ladismith area. There is very little information pertaining to the newly constructed third generation centres since capital funding has been a real concern for the Provincial Government team in the Western Cape. The third-generation centres included most of the services a citizen would typically find in the second-generation centres.

2.3.PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT AS A CORNERSTONE FOR THE THUSONG PROGRAMME

In terms of Section 59 of the Constitution of South Africa (1996), the post-Apartheid government has an obligation towards participatory development. Through this section government was expected to uphold consultative practice as evidence between their post elected responsiveness and the engagement of the citizens in public policy (Booyesen, 2009)

In searching to define what participation means, the researcher found that there is a difference of opinion depending on the application thereof. The most common agreement is that

participation involves the mobilisation of people that involves social inclusion of inputs that eliminate hierarchies of knowledge, power and economic distribution (Naidoo and Fourie, 2013). As participation involves the ordinary citizen and the actual inputs of the people and whether this relates to the overall objective of community development.

The root of participatory approaches in South Africa can be traced back to the early 1970s when communities of people questioned the Government's predominant top-down approaches from the 1950s (Msibi, 2010). The need for participation has a key role to play in the reconstruction and development of post-Apartheid South Africa and in the transition towards a democratic system, which brought about the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was an integrated socio-economic policy framework that sought to mobilise South Africa towards one democratic, non-racial goal. The goal for the ANC led government was the demise of Apartheid and the segregated sectors that were established (The Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994). The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was designed to be Government's answer to the many obstacles our nation faced post-Apartheid. The challenge and expectation of the programme would not be realized without both the Government and the People jointly and realistically overcoming the obstacles. The creation of the RDP is the first indication post-Apartheid that Government would need all citizens to be determined to bring about change. As part of RDP's basic principles, the "people-driven process" principle emphasised that the Government recognised that people will be the most important resource in shaping the future of South Africa. "Development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about active involvement and growing empowerment. In taking this approach we are building on the many forums, peace structures and negotiations that our people are involved in throughout the land" (The Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994).

The concept of public participation throughout this research has a pronged a variety of meanings. The researcher finds that Bekker, 1996, explains it best when he states that public participation can imply either that there is an existing relationship between local government and the community or it can be described as the extent to which the community influences decisions that directly affect their lives.

The principle of public participation according to (Yvonne, 2010,1), is that those affected by or influenced a decision should have the right to be involved in the decision-making process.

Since the overall notion is that public participation creates openness and promotes transparency in government, people can be actively involved in the decisions regarding programmes and projects that will influence their communities. Public participation, therefore, provides the opportunity for people to not only participate in the development of projects and programmes, but also to understand the inner working of the decision that is to be made (Yvonne, 2010,1).

As has already been alluded to, participation has a different meaning to different people. Breuer (2002), states that community participation can be different depending on one's understanding of the concept. A politician may focus on community participation defined by political constituencies. An urban planner may focus on communities as agreed geographically boundaries. A person might focus on community of which he /she is a part of whether that means the person relates to the local neighbourhood or not. Breuer (2002) describes his working definition of community participation as a "process by which people are enabled to become actively involved in defining the issues of concern to them". He mentions that these issues might influence decisions regarding factors affecting their lives.

Modern day democracy requires citizens to be active members of their communities. In building participatory democracy, citizens should be provided with a framework or tools that allow efficient participation in public issues.

2.3.1. Tools for Public Participation

According to Yvonne (2010:3) tools to build different types of participation range from stakeholder consultations, public hearings, community watchdog groups and public-private partnerships. The Government's commitment to the process needs to stem from their ability to share information and engage the community openly. Community decisions should not just be heard but reflected in the decisions that make government responsive. "The make-up of a community and its perception of local governance will influence the level and arrangement of public participation." (Yvonne, 2010:3).

Since MPCCs are considered by government to be the tool to bring government closer to the people, it is only logical that MPCCs play a crucial role in citizen participation. MPCCs are established to enhance the communication between government and the people and therefore

act as a participatory space for citizens to get information about and be informed of the Government's actions.

2.4.THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY AS A CORNERSTONE FOR THE THUSONG PROGRAMME

There have been various approaches developed to indicate what community development ought to be. The World Bank and the international labour organisation developed the basic needs approach (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2016), which was a broad approach to community development that centred on the concerns of poverty eradication. The organisations defined poverty eradication as the “inability to meet certain basic human needs on the part of identifiable groups of human beings. Poverty is characterised by hunger and malnutrition, ill health, a lack of education, safe water sanitation and decent shelter. Therefore, securing access to these services is essential for the previously segregated communities (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2016).

The researcher understands that basic human rights cannot be directly influenced by the building of a centre or (MPCC). It is the purpose of a community centre that can assist communities to participate in the development of their basic needs and access services that are fundamental in the development of communities.

The researcher finds the definition of (Roberts 1979:39 in Swanepoel and De Beer, 2016), suitable, where community development is defined as a process in which local groups take the initiative to formulate objectives involving changes in living conditions. The empowerment of citizens with the right information will go a long way towards assisting citizens to formulate their opinion of their own communities. Communities that are empowered in this way will make their own opinion and develop their own decisions on how they should be run their lives and in turn develop their own communities. (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2016), “Through MPCC's, which are one-stop shop centres for government services and information, communities are being assisted to take charge of their own lives by using the power of information, unlimited media that is, also serviced with crucial 'government services at their doorsteps (Communication 2000, 1996).

2.5.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1. Conceptualisation of People Centred Development

In the public services space, there exists a broad variety of theories, paradigms and approaches, which are concerned about the meaning of community participation and community development. The concern in this paper has to do with the development of paradigms that intentionally and actively involve local people, especially those that have been bypassed by previous development strategies.

Therefore, this section focuses on the ‘theory of a people-centric approach’, i.e., people's participation in development decisions that affect them. To understand the interpretation of this theory and the picture that the South African Government is portraying, the researcher will have to discuss and explain the strategic significance of the understanding towards people-centred development.

“It has been argued in development literature that people-centred or human-driven development is not possible without community participation and a strong state. A strong state should, in this sense, not be top-heavy with an arrogant and cumbersome bureaucracy. It should rather be an agile and responsive state, accountable to its citizens. Such a state should rest on the strong support of an inclusive democracy in which the power to manage problems best has been devolved from local units of governance and given to the people themselves, organised within their own communities” (Turok, 1999).

The concept of People-Centred Development is about improving the lives of women, men and children. Interventions must therefore be measured on how it influences people's lives, in ways that are meaningful to the people concerned. “Development is the process by which vulnerabilities are reduced and capacities are increased. If equality and equity are the goals of development, then interventions must address the causes of people's weakness and recognise their sources of strength and understand the dynamic relationship between these (Eade, 1997:13). Eade, 1997, reaffirms this belief by saying that people develop themselves and they do not need external agencies to help them develop. Strengthening people's capacity to determine their own values and priorities and to organize themselves to act on these, is the basis for development (Eade, 1997:9)

2.5.2. Evolution of PCD Theory

the author, Talcott Parsons is considered the founding figure of the modernisation theory (Kyianytsia, 2021). The idea is that human society develops in accordance with evolution. “The main differences between a ‘modern society’ and a ‘traditional’ one is the dominance of the industrial sphere over agriculture, individualism over collectivism, secular science and philosophy over mythology and religion, the presence of a developed division of labour and the predominance of individual social status over hereditary ones, as well as of universalism over particularism (Kyianytsia, 2021). Within Modernisation Theory context, Traditional societies are encouraged to give up their traditional practices and customs. Through this practise communities will see progress with economic growth by adopting political, social and technological features from modern society (Kyianytsia, 2021). Due to its failures to bring towards transformation and addressing poverty in specifically Third World Countries (Such as South Africa), led to the emergence of the Dependency Theory.

The Dependency Theory emerged in the late 1950s, as a response to concerns of the gap between rich and poor countries (Ferraro, 2008 in Agbebi & Virtanen, 2017). The theory as a model explains how wealthier countries are directly responsible for underdeveloped countries. The dependency that is mentioned is that developed countries directly or indirectly exploit poor nations through their appropriation of their resources. The researcher finds that dependency is developed through exploitation, which means that developed countries has built their wealth on the expense of underdeveloped countries.

The failure of the modernisation and the dependency theories in terms of their inability to address poverty led to the emergence of the people-centred development approach.

2.5.3. The Modernisation of PCD (the PCD approach).

The failure of the above-mentioned theories (modernisation and the dependency theories) in terms of their inability to address poverty led to the emergence of the people-centred development approach. Historically, person-centred theory was derived from and developed by the author Mr C. Rogers, as a person centre - therapy in the 1940s. The therapy, based on

Rogers's belief that every human being strives for and has the capacity to fulfil his or her own potential" (Murphy et al, 2013).

The Person-centred therapy has had a tremendous impact on the various fields of disciplines including the shaping and understanding of people-centred development. (Murphy et al, 2013).

(Cormack, 1993:6) explains that a people-centred perception emphasises the people, their qualities, boundedness and interaction especially within a community. He furthermore says that the people in the community must be trusted and respected and their skills, abilities, potential and values appreciated. To unpack the People-Centred development theory (PCD) further, Thompson, 2015, refers to the PCD as people being active in the development of programmes and processes, contributing ideas and taking initiatives regarding their needs and problems.

The PCD theorist argues that "development needs to be about giving people independence so they have real power and choice over their day-to-day situations, it shouldn't be 'top down' coming from the west, via governments and then trickling down to the people" (Thompson, 2015). To be poor often means that people do not know what to do. Often being poor means not having, seeing, or being allowed to pursue a person's options (Aspalter, 2014). In addition, he mentions that a People-Centred development approach goes hand in hand with social development, which he defines as an "outcome of a series of factors, that include responsive government, socially friendly economic policies, universal provisioning of social services, and well as an array of social policies. Pursuing a People-Centred development approach does not simply focus on the physical side of people alone but also on the social and cultural side of the individual as well.

White (2000) refers to Human Centred development as a means for enlarging people's skills, productivity and capabilities. The action gives people empowerment that allows them to participate actively on their own. White, 2000, refers to this type of development as the right to develop on one's own without an entity directing participation. The right to develop was adopted by the United Nations which emphasises the point that people are entitled to "participate in, contribute to, and enjoy social, cultural and political development". (White, 2000:15).

Furthermore, Aspalter, 2004, clarifies that a People-Centred approach becomes a social individual through communication, as communication determines an individual's choices and behaviour. McLeod et al., (1999) summarises the researchers' thoughts on the importance of communication in a People-Centred development approach by stating "through communication, citizens acquire information about issues and problems in the community and learn of opportunities and ways to participate" (McLeod et al., 1999)

Schenck & Louw (1995) strengthens the researcher's theoretical perception regarding the utilisation of PCD by introducing what they call a 'People-Centred paradigm shift'. This paradigm shift refers to a different way of looking at PCD. Schenck et al., (1995:82) refers to three aspects of a people centred paradigm shift. These are: a people-centred perception of development, which simply means that a development worker facilitates the process for learning, growth and development as an individual. Secondly, a people-centred perception of people (individuals and communities), which means that a paradigm perception exist that people are capable and have the potential to develop and make their own decisions, and finally, a people-centred perception of the development worker, which simply means that a development worker allows the community to guide him/her on what the community's values, knowledge and skills are, and how to get to know the people and environment, establish with them the needs of the community and decide with them the ways to deal with these needs or community issues (Schenck et al., 1995:82).

Anyidoho's (2010) position on what a people-centred development approach is differs slightly from those of the writers above. He defines and describes the individual within a community as "people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area". Anyidoho (2010) adds that every individual action and interaction involves a process of meaning making. Essentially, participating in a community involves the making of meaning. The researcher finds that the commonality with all these authors' opinions on a people-centred and development approach is the ability to identify that a collective need exists, and the individual has the potential to influence development.

2.5.4. PCD as a public service transformation concept

In a South African context, the transformation principles are referred to as 'Batho Pele' principles, with the main focus on putting the citizen first in transforming service delivery in South Africa. It is generally accepted that improvement to service delivery cannot happen by simply issuing government circulars and prescripts to citizens. The 'putting people first approach' seeks to introduce an approach to service delivery, which puts pressures on systems, programmes, procedures and behaviours in the public service so that the Government realises that citizens needs are indeed first. (Kroukamp,1999).

The PCD theory is regarded as a bottom-up initiative, which placed local people or communities at the centre of their own development. The bottom-up approach is developed specifically with the focus on the poor and disadvantaged in society (Thompson, 2015).

2.5.5. PCD and the Thusong Programme

Since the inception of MPCCs and the evolution into the Thusong Programme, the vision has always been to provide every South African citizen with access to government information and services. (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004:32). The Thusong programme is designed as a space for Local, Provincial and National government together with NGOs, CBO and the private sector to offer these services to the identified community it serves. (Communications 2000, 1996:8).

The PCD theory is designed to put people at the centre of the development process. The rational being, that ordinary people have the right to be participants in decision- and policy- making processes. The PCD approach and the Thusong Programme are therefore objectively related. This is further strengthened by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) explanation of the PCD theory, which refers to PCD as an expansion of the choices available to people.

The UNDP states that, "through expanding the choices available to people to live valuable lives, a fundamental part of expanding human choices is building human capabilities that range from what people can achieve in their lives. Peoples' well-being and their quality of life is the most important measure of whether development is successful" (United Nations Development Program, 2010:2). This researcher accepts this rationale that both the PCD theory and the application of the Thusong Programme provide people with a range of choices that can build

on their human capabilities. This researcher would therefore argue that The Thusong Programme and the PCD approach are interrelated, as theoretically, the PCD approach and the Thusong Programme both strive to improve the quality of life for the ordinary citizen.

2.5.6. PCD as a self-reliant concept in rural South Africa, international cases and examples

Shortly after the first democratic election in 1994, there were significant changes for South Africa. The newly elected government would face great challenges since there was little to no resources, capacity constraints and non-existent rural development initiatives. Government strove towards implementing the RDP and created associated rural development strategies that were focused on economically strengthening the poorest of the poor areas, which to date is arguably an even bigger challenge.

There have been many success stories of rural communities that have adopted a self-reliant approach that strengthens the community. Binns & Nel (1999), indicate that communities that displayed their ability to manage and implement sustainable and economic processes will improve their own socio-economic conditions in the community overall. Binns & Nel (1999), makes an example of 3 success stories relating to communities that are self-reliant in rural South Africa.

- The Philani ('making a living') Community Development Project.
This rural community in the small rural service centre of Balfour has created their own food supply and tourism projects. The community project has uplifted the community while bringing much relief to their own economic standing.
- The Zamukphila ('trying to survive') project. It is mainly a woman-driven initiative. The project was established at Upsher village in the Eastern Cape. The community works to supply vegetables for themselves and their neighbouring communities.
- The Hertzog Agricultural Co-operative (HACOP) project. The project involves local farmers' and intensive irrigated agriculture. The project has to date significantly improved the quality

of life all the participants. The HACOP project has been a catalyst project that has inspired neighbouring communities and emerging farmers towards self-reliance.

The examples that Binns & Nel (1999) makes proves that communities can be self-reliant in rural South Africa. “The development process clearly displays the ability of communities to identify, implement and manage a sustainable and self-perpetuating process of Local economic development, which can lead to an improvement in overall socioeconomic conditions”.

2.5.7. PCD advocated internationally (India)

PCD in nature is based on advocacy and the theory is shaped by political culture, social systems and ultimately the constitutional frame of the country which it is practiced in India (Samuel, 2007). As a form of social action, PCD is influenced by the ways in which decisions are made through public policy or in a public interest context.

“As the lives of ordinary Indians are increasingly affected by economic liberalisation, so there is a growing realisation among social-action groups of the need to empower the people to influence public policies”. In India, public advocacy is sought for from grassroot level as the land has major challenges with marginalised communities that need to resist political agendas. These communities are constantly under treat by multinational corporations and oppressive value systems that subjugate public policy (Samuel, 2007).

2.5.8. PCD on the G77 International Agenda

The following stems from the annual United Nations gathering in 2013 that focused on People-Centred Development. Tee Group of 77 or known as the G77 is based on seventy-seven countries signatories (developing countries), a permanent institutional structure that developed as a large intergovernmental organisation of developing countries in the United Nations. Their aim is to promote their collective economic interest and enhancing their joint negotiating capacity within the UN system. (G77, 2021)

The following areas of concern were discussed under the G77 Agenda of 2013. The researcher has chosen the following focal areas as essential to demonstrate international focus on PCD.

- The G77 indicated that employment growth strategies are essential for “achieving sustainable, sustained, and inclusive economic growth”. The G77 argued that employment growth is an important factor in combating the poverty in developing countries. (G77, 2021)
- The G77 indicated that youth unemployment is a matter of concern and would need special attention. Youth unemployment threatens a generation of young people to migrate, which will aggravate developing countries ability to keep skilled people and resources. Youth unemployment also leads to insecurities and violence as social ills increase. The focus on youth is crucial to the continued sustainability of developing countries’ socio-economic plans. (G77, 2021)
- The G77 indicated that culture acts as both an ‘enabler’ and ‘driver’ of sustainable development. "Development approaches should be adapted to local contexts and should therefore rely on the cultural resource while respecting cultural rights. Culture also drives development within several cultural sectors including the creative industries, cultural tourism, and heritage, both tangible and intangible" (G77, 2021)

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a historical background of Multi-Purpose Community Centres and their role in the development of Community participation. The emphasis was on the finding of the centres and the discussants that involved the establishment thereof. Then the chapter discussed the people-centred development approach as the theoretical framework for this research paper. The chapter concluded with a brief look at the PCD theory from a South African and international perspective.

3. CHAPTER THREE: LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Telecommunications and information infrastructure were mentioned in the ANC's election manifesto of 1994. The intent was to improve the quality of information available and provide communities throughout the country with access to usable data (Snyman and Snyman, 2002:95). The ANC as an organisation recognised early on that ICT will have a role to play in disseminating information to disadvantaged South African communities and be a possible catalyst for social change. During 1996, the then newly democratically elected ANC Government hard-pressed the importance of the emerging Information Society. In the same year the Government launched the National Information Technology Forum (NITF) and hosted, The G7 Information Society and Development Conference (ISAD) (Snyman and Snyman, 2002:95). At this conference one of Government's proposals made was the establishment of country wide MPCCs. The proposal was in response to the Government finding ways of empowering communities, as the Government saw MPCCs as a viable channel for development information and the implementation of their communications strategy (Snyman and Snyman, 2002:95).

This chapter will explore and present the legislative and theoretical basis for the adoption of the Thusong Service Centre Programme regarding the Western Cape Province. The Chapter will explore the historical processes that led to the establishment of the programme and showcase what policy framework was needed to contribute to the establishment of a Thusong Service Centre Programme. This chapter will mention all the key pieces of legislation and documentation that led to the Government utilising its MPCC's as a vehicle towards community outreach, development and participation. The chapter will conclude with what the Local Government role is in promoting participation through the Thusong Service Centre Programme.

3.2 POLICY FRAMEWORK CONTRIBUTING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE PROGRAMME

Initiated in 1999, the MPCC programme was showcased as a government vehicle for communication and governmental information. The Government was adamant that MPCCs

would be a primary source for rural communities to interact with government services through access to information and participation. The Government established MPCCs for all South African citizens to access information and services without having to travel excessive distances to be within reach of said service (DPSA Service Delivery Review, 2004:90). It was not easy for the Government to reach the understanding of bringing the Government closer to the people. Through policy development and strategic issues and several critical leadership decisions lead to shaping the Government's development communication and participatory approaches and ultimately the establishment of the MPCCs. The following chapter will highlight the legislative groundwork that provided for the shaping and establishment of the MPCCs and the renaming and rebranding of the programme to the Thusong Service Centre Programme by mapping out the critical legislative policy frameworks that contributed to the establishment of the programme.

3.2.1 Comtask Report, 1996

Within the historical overview of MPCCs, the post-apartheid government established a task group on Government Communications, which was known as Comtask. This task group was specifically established to examine government communications at the local, provincial, national and international level, and to make recommendations on new policies, structures and budgets (Communication 2000, 1996). The task team provided cabinet with 83 recommendations based on the premise that there are savings to the public purse, if the Government adopts a more modern, streamlined and effective communication system. Recommendation 65 specifically dealt with the development of MPCCs to improve public access to information as guided by section 32(1) (a) and (b) of South Africa's Constitution (Communication 2000, 1996).

The recommendation was based on numerous thought processes. Firstly, S32 of the Constitution addressed the right of access to information (which affirms the Government's perspective that all citizens should have the right to access to Government information). Furthermore, the summarised recommendations show what the researcher believes is an intention of improved public access to Government communication, information and services. The report's central theme focused on the establishment of a Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) with three components; namely e-Media Liaison, e-Communications Service Agency and Provincial Liaison (Communication 2000, 1996). The

recommendation of establishing the GCIS was based on the task team research regarding communication coordination. The GCIS mandate would include mobilising Government departments, not only to provide departmental information, but also to provide a wide range of communication services to MPCCs.

3.2.2 Cabinet Memorandum No. 15 of November 1999

This memorandum mandated the GCIS to provide information to the public to enable them to be active participants in changing their lives for the better. This included facilitating and co-ordinating the establishment of Thusong Service Centres. According to the National Thusong Service Centre Business Plan, 2006, the memorandum indicated that the Government was driving the MPCCs programme forward as the favoured initiative to attain the ideal of universal access to ICT and communication and eventually plans to have one MPCC (Thusong Service Centre) per municipality across the entire South Africa (Snyman and Snyman, 2002:98).

The Memorandum indicated that the GCIS was hoping to establish 60 MPCCs using the National Inter-Sectoral Steering Committee (NISSC) as a vehicle (Department of Justice, 1999). The NISSC's role was to have representatives, which consisted of "government departments, parastatals, non-governmental organisations, research agencies and tertiary institutions. The role of the private sector and other stakeholders was to ensure the sustainability of the MPCC concept, quality service delivery and to play a role in the implementation and performance monitoring of MPCCs" (Snyman and Snyman, 2002:102).

This was in line with a media statement and address by the then President, Mr T. Mbeki, that a total of 20 Multi-Purpose Community Centres will be established across the country in the next year (2001) and a further 55 MPCC's launched country-wide in a three-year period in rural districts, to ensure that the Government's services reach the poorest of the poor (Communication 2000, 1996)

3.2.3 President's State of the Nation Address (SoNA), May 2004

The policy statement made by then President Mbeki, during his SoNA in May 2004, indicated that over the next 10 years, one Thusong Service Centre would be established in each local

municipality. (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2018). President Mbeki indicated that 60 of the proposed MPCCs will have been built by the end of the year (2004) and further plans have been finalised to have one centre in each of the 284 Municipal areas (as mentioned in the Cabinet Memorandum no 15 (Department of Justice, 1999). The President indicated that the Government has learned from their Imbizo programme on the interaction between government and the people. With this experience the Government was confident that they could build the relationship with impoverished communities (State of the Nation Address, 2004).

3.2.4 The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

The White paper on the RDP, 1994, was promoted essentially as a 'people-driven process', focusing on people's most immediate needs. The RDP set out the Government's plans to orientating activities towards macro-economic processes that promotes the RDP as an "integrated and coherent growth and development strategy" (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 1997).

"The central objective of our RDP is to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, and in particular the most poor and marginalised sections of our communities. This objective should be realized through a process of empowerment, which gives the poor control over their lives and increases their ability to mobilise sufficient development resources, including from the democratic government where necessary" (O'Malley, 1994). As the RDP was developed to improve the quality of life for South Africans, the new dispensation arguably had to decentralise the Government to have citizens actively participate in all forms of civil society.

The White Paper on Local Government (WPLG) stressed the need for participation at all levels of the development process. It defined developmental local government (DLG) as 'local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic, and material needs and improve the quality of their lives' (Msibi, 2010). In South Africa pre-1994, basic decisions that concerned any development for South Africans were made for the people. This meant that people became 'passive receivers' of development and no opportunity existed or was created for people to actively interact with plans and programmes that would affect them directly (Msibi, 2010).

In contrast, participatory development communication assumes that individuals should be active in development programmes and processes; they should contribute ideas, take the initiative and articulate their needs and problems while, at the same time, asserting their autonomy (Msibi, 2010).

3.3 THE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE PROGRAMME

3.3.1 The Constitution of South Africa, 1996

“The constitution emphasises the principles of accountability, transparency, and openness. Generally, it imposes an obligation on the Government in terms of public participation. The constitution creates and promotes a climate for citizens and the Government to interact with one another” (Von Lieres, 2003:227).

Chapter 7, Section 152 (e) of the Constitution of RSA, 1996, specifies local government’s legal obligation to promote the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government, as Section 118 of the Constitution acknowledges the fundamental right of all citizens to participate in the system of governance. This means that all spheres of Government take responsibility for citizens to participate in matters of governance. The central purpose of the Constitution and the system of democratic, parliamentary governance that is established was to deliver on social and economic transformation. Public participation is entrenched in the legislature; “Facilitating public involvement in the legislative and other processes of the assembly and its committees: and (b) conduct its business in an open manner and hold its sittings and those of its committees in public”. Therefore, the onus is on the Constitution that the principles of Public Administration as per Chapter 10, must be accountable, transparent and provide the public with accessible and accurate information (Constitution of RSA, 1996)

The Government is obligated by the Constitution to adhere to the involvement of communities in various sections. In Section 151(1) (e), municipalities are obliged to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government. In Section 152 (as mentioned above), the objects of local government are to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government and in Section

195 (e), in terms of the basic values and principles governing public administration; people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking (The Constitution of RSA, 1996).

Historically marginalised groups have had little or no access to formal democratic spaces and at the general and intermediary levels, there may be no political culture of engaging with the state to achieve community goals. As a result, organisations and social movements in the past that represented marginalised communities often struggled to find support for longer term or effective engagement with the state. (Von Lieres, 2003:227). Chapter 9 of the Constitution of 1996 provides for a host of human rights commissions, amongst them the Public Protector and South African Human Rights Commission. However, there has been limitations on the promotion of human rights with these institutions, which emerged from internal problems such as institutional rights, roles and effectiveness.

3.3.2 The Bill of Rights, (The Constitution of RSA, 1996)

As far as knowledge and attitudes amongst the public is concerned research conducted by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry indicated that just over half of the population (approximately 55%) have heard of the Bill of Rights. (Sarkin, 2001:14) This chapter in the Constitution of the RSA places citizenship equally on all South Africans by providing for rights and responsibilities. "The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds. The Bill of Rights includes rights to freedom of religion, belief and opinion and freedom of expression and freedom of language and culture" (De Villiers, 2001:40). The Bill of Rights according to De Villiers (2001), provides socio-economic rights that are enforceable by the courts.

The Bill of Rights constitutionally guarantees that citizens and government have obligations granted to them. The right for citizens to participate is encouraged so that citizens participate in the process of restructuring and governing the country promotes a responsive and accountable Government that makes decisions are accepted and respected by the people. Public participation under the Bill can be seen as a process that will deepen democracy when citizens utilise their right to be a part of the decision-making process. (De Villiers, 2001:40) The figure below depicts the legislative environment needed for the Thusong Programme to function.

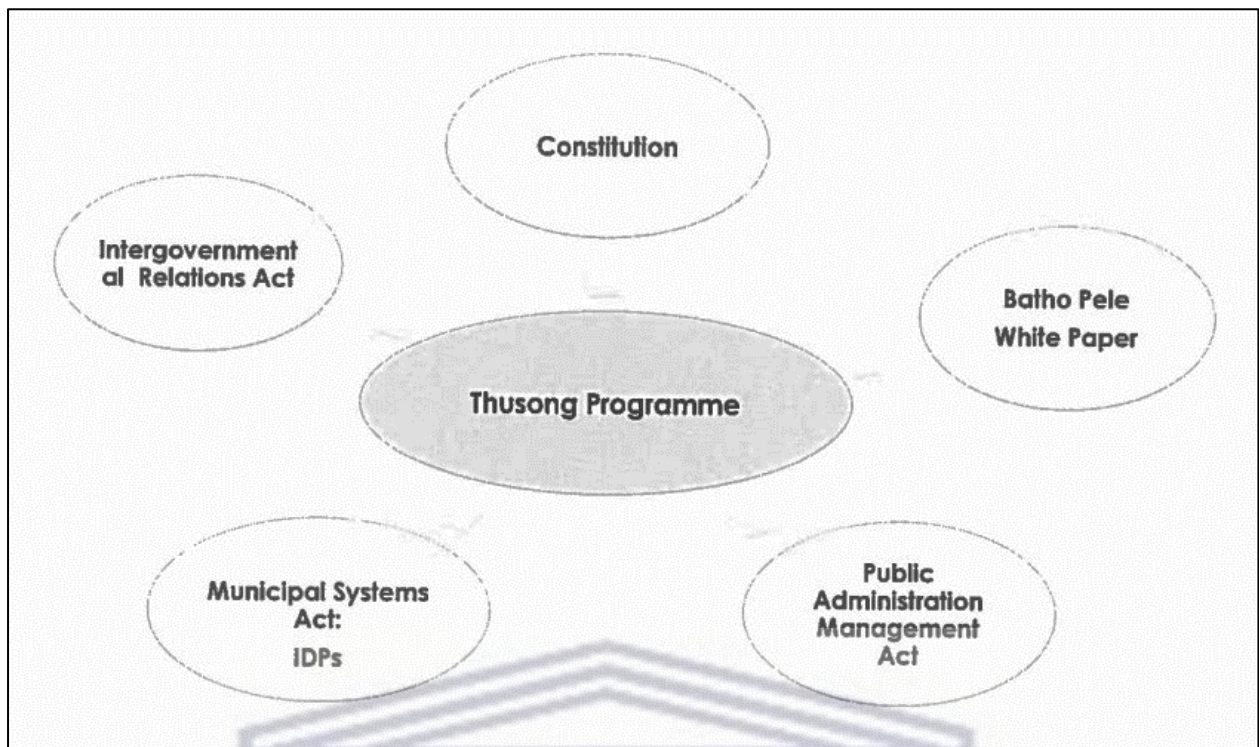


Figure 1. The Legislative environment guiding the Thusong Service Centre Programme. Western Cape Government, (2016).

3.3.3 Co-operative Government, (The Constitution of RSA,1996)

This chapter in the Constitution provides principles of co-operative government and intergovernmental relations. The chapter seeks to initiate the co-operation of all the spheres of Government by promoting mutual trust, good faith and relations fostering matters of common interest. Significant to this paper is Section 41(c), which states that the chapter promotes effective, transparent, accountable and coherent Government for the Republic as a whole. The relationship between the spheres of government is influenced by public participation. Active participation promotes good governance, which simply means that there is less separation between the citizens and the Government.

3.3.4 The Intergovernmental Relations Framework, Act 13 of 2005

The IGR Framework Act provides for the establishment of intergovernmental fora to promote the aims of co-operative governance and the implementation of policies, including effective

service delivery. These fora facilitate the effective co-ordination of services between the different government levels at the TSCs.

The Thusong Service Centre Programme in the Western Cape is utilising the IGR Framework Act to establish the Thusong Programme Forum (TPF), which is a consultative IGR forum aimed at increasing coordination and communication through information sharing, dialogue, capacity building and consultation on matters of mutual interest. (Western Cape Government, 2016).

3.3.5 The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (The Batho Pele Principles), 1997

The South African government's approach to service delivery requires that efforts should not only be directed at serving people, but by doing so in the best possible manner. (Department of Public Service and Administration, 14, 2018). The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS), published on 24 November 1995, sets out eight transformation priorities. As an overarching priority, transforming service delivery is the most essential element to enhance effective service delivery. "This is because a transformed South African public service will be judged by one criterion above all, its effectiveness in delivering services, which meet the basic needs of all South African citizens" (Department of Public Service and Administration, 14-15, 2018). Effective and efficient service delivery is the goal of the public service transformation programme. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery is also widely known as the Batho Pele White Paper and introduced alongside the constitution of South Africa to be the pieces of legislation that will reform and transform the public service. The Government's challenge was to build a public service capable of meeting the challenge of improving the delivery of public services to the citizens of South Africa. The guiding principle of public service transformation and reform is "service to the people" (Department of Public Service and Administration, 14-15, 2018).

The Batho Pele (a Sesotho saying meaning 'People First') is a policy framework consisting of eight service delivery principles, namely, Consultation, Service Standard, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money. Putting these principles into practice was and still is the ultimate challenge facing the South African Public Sector. The ever-improving public service sector is essential for social development and

economic prosperity in South Africa. Establishing a culture that is service oriented would never be an easy task. However, without the active participation of the community, which includes all private sectors and communities as well, is essential to achieve the transformation of the public service developmental vision for South Africa.

3.3.6 The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 (The Constitution of RSA, 1996)

The White Paper on Local Government was developed as a framework for a developmental local government system. The White Paper mandates that there is a need for local government to work with citizens in an inclusive and integrated manner, to meet their social and economic needs. It affords citizens the right to have continuous input into local political affairs and influence the way services are delivered (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 1998). Through the White Paper, local government is mandated to empower local communities to identify their needs, set performance objectives and outline the extent to which the municipalities can be held accountable for their performance in service delivery (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 1998).

3.3.7 The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998

In the Public Administration space, there are three general laws, which are central to the framework of Local Government and in particular Public Participation. These are the Constitution, the Municipal Systems Act and the Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998 (hereinafter refer to as the Structures Act).

The Structures Act sets out the municipality's constitutional obligations to ensure participatory governance. Section 72 of the Structures Act provides for enhanced participatory democracy through a system of ward committees and/or sub-councils. The Structures Act intends to define what a Municipality is and establish Municipal categories per area to distinguish between Municipalities. The Structures Act also provides functions and powers between the different categories of Municipalities and all concerned matters. With categories in place, the act allows sub councils or a ward participatory system to be in place (Category A Municipalities). In Category B Municipalities, the Act makes provision for a Ward Participatory System, and

Executive Mayor / Executive Mayoral committee, which is responsible to report annually on the affairs of the Municipality to its community (Municipal Structures Act, 1998).

3.3.8 The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000

The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (MSA), places the legal responsibility of local government on municipalities, which carry out the work together with its citizens. The MSA focuses on alignment between local government and plans between the departments of the different spheres of government. Amongst others, the Act makes provision for municipalities to use their powers and functions, which are performed in a manner that allows for community participation. According to Section 4 in the MSA, council has the duty to encourage the involvement of the local community and to consult the community about the level of quality, range and impact of municipal services provided by the municipality, either directly or through another service provider.

The MSA can, therefore, be described as a framework for the support, monitoring and standard setting by other spheres of government to build local government into an efficient and capable entity that integrates governmental activities towards the overall social and economic upliftment of local communities.

3.3.9 Local Government's Role in Participation

Taking into consideration the developmental frameworks of local government, local government as an institution is mandated to adopt a people-centred approach in their areas of jurisdiction. The roles of local government have been institutionalised to enable citizens at the grassroots level to participate in matters of government. The reason for this was to enable local residents to engage in local decision-making and the provision of adequate service delivery at the local level (De Visser, 2009).

To summarise, the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996), the White Paper on Local Government (RSA, 1998), the Municipal Structures Act (RSA, 1998) and the Municipal Systems Act (RSA, 2000), indicate and inform the developmental role of local government. Therefore, Local Government is bound by legislation to encourage and enable communities to

participate in their own development, which it does through the establishment of suitable structures such as the sub-council and ward committee platforms.

3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explored the various pieces of local government legislation for the establishment of the MPCC Programme and ultimately the Thusong Service Centre Programme in SA. The above-mentioned Acts discussed the affairs of Local Government that led to the promulgation and the establishment of the programme but also the Government's drive towards multiple plans to bring the people closer to the Government.

The chapter explains the policy framework contributing to the establishment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. In this section the researcher explores the historical background that led to the post-apartheid government hosting their first NITF and establishing a Comtask Team. This section also mentioned vitally important documents such as the Cabinet Memorandum No. 15 of November 1999 and the State of the Nation Address 2004, which revealed the intention and commitment of the Government towards the building of MPCCs. This section concluded by defining the Government's RDP as a growth and development strategy. The RDP was crucial in the understanding of Government and what is required to improve the quality of life and provide for the empowerment of most poor and marginalised communities.

The Chapter then explored the policy framework for the establishment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme in South Africa. The chapter highlighted the portions of the Constitution that provided the framework for the establishment of the Thusong Programme. The Chapter also highlighted the Batho Pele White Paper, which was introduced together with the Constitution of South Africa as the legislation that brought reform and transformation to the Public Service. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 and the Municipal Systems Act, 2000, together with the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 as the supreme law of the land, informs the developmental role of local government in South Africa.

The study will now transit to chapter four, which will focus on the Thusong Service Centre Programme in the Western Cape, the research findings, the interpretations and recommendations.



4. CHAPTER 4: THE THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE PROGRAMME IN THE WESTERN CAPE AND RESEARCH FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will incorporate a situational analysis of the Thusong Service Centre Programme and reflect on what the GCIS considers to be an ideal Thusong Service Centre. The chapter will also reflect on emerging challenges and opportunities of Thusong Service Centre Programmes. Finally, the chapter will conclude with identifying best practices used in the Thusong Service Centres in the Western Cape to promote community development and make relevant recommendations.

Since the inception of the TSC Programme in 1999, the Government has failed to allocate accountability to a National Department to lead the Programme. The GCIS was allocated the coordination role without a real budget to sustain the programme. Without a budget the programme was set for failure as plans could not be realised and buildings and structures deteriorated over the years (Burton & Nel 2012:4).

The first generation of the Thusong Service Centre Programme as a business plan that mapped out the establishment of 46 Thusong Service Centres, which shows an allocation of one per district municipality, while the second-generation business plan of the TSC Programme envisaged at least one Thusong Service Centre in every local municipality by 2014 (The Public Service Commission, 2010:4). In the Western Cape this was no different. The road to establishing the programme as it is today, i.e., one with many complexities and it was also envisaged to have at least one centre per Local Municipality. The establishment therefore required a whole Government approach.

Various studies have been done to determine whether the Government was effective in promoting integrated service delivery at TSCs. In order to reposition the programme and appoint a lead department this research will measure and establish the status quo of TSCs in the country. The disparities of the programme meant that Government had to proactively manage the TSC Programme and assess whether the TSCs are still doing what they initially set

out to do, which is to be an easily accessible one-stop government information and services shop for disadvantaged communities.

4.1.1 The First Study Conducted by the DPSA and GCIS

The first study done by the DPSA in collaboration with the GCIS was done to determine geographic accessibility and optimum provisioning of Service Centres. The geographic accessibility study was done in two metro Municipalities (namely, Johannesburg and eThekweni) as part of the Government programme of Action (Outcome 12). The Report provided an overview of the findings in respect of the provisioning of TSCs in these Metros. The report and findings assisted the GCIS to refine its geographic access norms and access standards. These had to be applicable and suitable for application in other metropolitan areas as well. This study was very relevant as it refined the distance set for the planning of a TSC location at National / Provincial level. A very important consideration of this study was the initiative to develop a management framework for TSCs. The intention of the framework was to reduce the distances that citizens and communities had to travel to have access to Government services (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2011).

4.1.2 The Second Study by the DPSA, the GCIS, the National Treasury and the DCOG

A second study was conducted by the DPSA in conjunction with the GCIS, the National Treasury and the Department of Cooperative Government. This study was done to develop a business case in relation to possible institutional arrangements for the future location, funding and coordination of the Thusong Programme. The outcomes of the study revealed that a lack of a regulatory framework, administrative oversight and formalised protocols and procedures has resulted in numerous operational challenges and a lack of accountability for the performance of the Thusong Programme (The Department of Public Service and Administration, 2018:28).

4.1.3 The Operations of a Thusong Service Centre

The lack of a regulatory framework stemming from the DPSA study meant that an urgent adoption towards a framework was needed. Seopela, (2019), indicated that the Government

adopted a draft TSC framework that recommended the following: “Thusong Service Centres should receive national government financial and resource-based support which should be directed through the national coordinating department or institution responsible, and it should be delegated with specific responsibilities to provincial and local government and hold them accountable and responsible for such responsibilities” (Seopela, 2019). The proposed framework will provide the centres with a guideline that follows standards and reporting requirements for effective and efficient service delivery.

It was evident that the Thusong Service Centre Programme needed financial support to deliver on daily operational needs. The report of the Public Service Commission, 2010, stated” the lead department should cover costs where local municipalities are not in a financial position to contribute to the operation of their respective TSCs (Public Service Commission, 2010). Furthermore, the PSC report indicated that, an initial grant fund from National Government is available for a minimum of three years to assist with the start-up cost of each TSC and cost recovery from service departments should cover all basic operational costs in terms of lease and rental agreements. (Public Service Commission, 2010:9).

The Department of Public Works (DPW) also proposed an initiative called the green building programme, which prompted centre managers to be more efficient with the resources that are provided. Furthermore, the DPW indicated that maintenance programmes were presently mainly reactive, and that an vital intervention was needed to assist with day-to-day maintenance. (Public Service Commission, 2010:9).

In terms of monthly reporting, the Thusong Service Centre managers are also required to report on the operational activities of their respective centre. However, the PSC study found that centre managers’ report to different institutions, and that many centre managers reported to their respective municipalities and not to the GCIS as the main functionaries of the programme. As a result of the different reporting arrangements, no uniform norms and standards were applied in the management and operations at the TSCs (Public Service Commission, 2010:21).

In terms of responsibilities, the lack of service level agreements and responsibilities that existed in the overall operations and management of TSCs, lead to TSC managers being unable to take any corrective action against officials from the respective national and provincial departments housed in a TSC, should the need arise. The PSC report indicated that TSC Managers that are

employed by local municipalities “were of the view that they do not get the necessary support from the municipalities that have employed them. They further expressed frustrations related to them being municipal employees, while the rest of the officials at the TSCs are employed by other spheres of government over which they have no authority” (Public Service Commission, 2010:22).

4.2 THE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT – THUSONG SERVICE CENTRES

The DPSA conducted a situational analysis (Khoza, 2017), to determine the status quo of Thusong Service Centres in the Provinces. The studies that were done measured the effectiveness of the programme and the DPSA reports aimed to determine the status quo of the centres by determining what was needed for the programme to be revived and what resources were required to facilitate the functionality, efficiency and productivity of the TSC’s in all the provinces.

According to the DPSA report (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2016), the Department collaborated with the Government Communication and Information Systems (GCIS), National Treasury and the Department of Public Works to determine what the developing options were to ensure the most suitable institutional and governance arrangements for the oversight and coordination of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. The situational analysis was assessed against various options, namely: to retain the status quo of the existing units in GCIS or to relocate the function of the TSC to another department such as the DPSA, Another option was to move the TSC function to a ministry or phase the function out completely if the evidence supports it. Finally, to give provinces the ability to develop the programme to suit the needs of either the Province or the Municipality (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2016).

In 2018 the DPSA situational analysis was conducted across the nine provinces with ninety-four TSCs of the hundred and thirty-nine operational TSC’s within the country. During the research the DPSA found that the Thusong Programme does not have a funding model and that it is highly dependent on the financial position of the institution under which it is operating. This was highlighted prior to the DPSA situational analysis by then Deputy Minister of the Department Public Works, Mr Khoza, and the DPSA in an inter-departmental study commissioned by Cabinet on the repositioning and funding model for Thusong Service Centres

(Khoza, 2017). This study conducted in 2017 revealed that the TSC remained a key programme to bring government services to many citizens, specifically to those in the remote areas of the country. The study further revealed that COGTA should serve as the lead department at Provincial level and should be able to cover basic operational cost where municipalities are not able to. Furthermore, grant funding from national level should be available for a minimum of three years (Khoza, 2017).

The DPSA in their situational analysis, 2018, concluded that the TSC should refocus its efforts on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as an enabler that takes advantage of the benefits that the Government provided with its Broadband Strategy. (Department Public Service and Administration, 2018).

The DPSA situational analysis report also indicated the following for the Western Cape TSCs: The Western Cape had the most TSCs in the country, i.e., twenty-three (23) Service Centres were operational in the WC at that time. Of the twenty-three TSCs that were assessed, twenty-one complied with the analysis standards. (Department Public Service and Administration, 2018). “The report indicated that in terms of location and accessibility the Service Centres were located within a reachable distance by most of the citizens within a particular location. Twenty-two of the centres were in good working condition and complied with Occupational health and accessibility standards. Nineteen were safe and provided safety measures for protecting assets and employees within the centre. The centres had the necessary working space for service departments to offer services in line with their user requirement specifications” (Department Public Service and Administration, 2018).

In determining the effectiveness of the programme, the Public Service Commission (PSC) report of 2014 measured the Thusong Service Centres’ efficiency by using essential elements. The accessibility of a TSC, the location, the existence of the required departments and the frequency of service intervals are some of the crucial elements that assisted the researcher to determine whether the programme was indeed a success.

When assessing the accessibility of a TSC, all the elements for accessibility needed to be assessed. The location, the concentration of essential departments, the frequency of service intervals and whether the community participated in the initiative were evaluated. In assessing whether accessibility was improved initiatives to improve accessibility were also evaluated.

The South African Government's main aim with the placement of the centres, was to bring government services closer to the communities. The PSC report indicated that 84% of TSC users reside in the immediate vicinity of a TSCs and the majority of these users (60%) had to travel less than 5 kilometres to a TSC in their respective communities (Public Service Commission, 2014). This means that the placement of TSC was a vitally important consideration for government as it will assist communities greatly with travel costs and time spend accessing services. Furthermore, the report indicated that bringing crucial service departments to TSCs had a 96% positive contribution to improving access to the range of services that the government offers (Public Service Commission, 2014).

The PSC Report further indicated that services in some instances are only rendered once a week or bi-weekly (Public Service Commission, 2014). This meant not all TSCs were the same in terms of the services they provided. When departments were not able to provide services on a regular basis, the use of mobile TSCs (as explained later) would be used to increase accessibility. In cases where the community needs outweighed the departmental working hours, some departments would increase their working hours beyond the normal closing time to be accessible to the community for longer periods.

Active public participation is an essential deliverable regarding the effectiveness of the TSC Programme. the PSC report indicated that some departments utilised various approaches to ensure active public participation and consultation at the TSCs (Public Service Commission, 2014). The methods used could vary at TSCs, specifically when it involved creating awareness sessions. With the assistance of the Provincial Governments, active public participation and awareness were encouraged using direct information sessions, meetings, national and provincially based awareness campaigns. These can also be in the form of Thusong Awareness imbizos, and specific programme drives based on the community's needs or even Government programme drives (e.g. Health awareness drives – HIV aids and TB awareness programmes). These initiatives are generally used for providing general information about government services, verifying satisfaction levels, discussing the needs of the communities and providing the public with feedback regarding issues which had been raised at previous meetings. Where the imbizos take place at the TSCs, the specific services rendered at the TSCs form part of the discussions (Public Service Commission, 2014).

4.3 THE THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE PROGRAMME IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE: Utilising the 6 Block Service Model to Determine Best Practice Methods.

The GCIS utilised the well-known building blocks model, known as ‘The Six-Block Service Model’ that reflects what the GCIS considers to be an "ideal" Thusong Service Centre. The community is the driving force of the model and considers the context and the environment of every Thusong service centre. Since TSCs offer a variety of services that is adapted to suit the needs of the citizens, each TSC is different. The TSCs can consist of Government social and administrative services, ICT services, office services, education and skills development, LED services, small business development services and general Government information for communities.

According to the GCIS (2009) the services that are listed should be incorporated into the infrastructure of the various TSCs which would have been developed in accordance with the needs of the various communities. The GCIS also states that the form of service delivery will vary in the form of a centre, hub or mobiles services. Currently there is no ideal infrastructure establishment model and the TSC will allow flexibility in terms of the order, variety and frequency of service provision.

The GCIS has developed business plans for Thusong Service Centres to ensure that the continuity and the rollout of services are maintained. At the same time these business plans ensure that issues are addressed and there is long-term term sustainability of the programme. Figure 2 below depicts the six-block service model (Public Service Commission. 2014:8)



Figure 2. The six-block service model: (Public Service Commission. 2014:5)

The provisioning of “anchor services” alone will not ensure that the objectives of a TSC is realised relating to the empowerment of citizens and the long-term sustainability goals. Therefore, TSC should be able to accommodate this variety of add on services (grouped into blocks above). The combination of the 6 blocks’ services that are offered, and those anchor departments would reflect what an ‘ideal’ TSC is. (Public Service Commission. 2014:5).

According to the GCIS Business Plan (2006-2014) listed in the (Public Service Commission report, the strength of a Thusong Service Centre lies in the clustering of the services it can provide to its citizens, which includes the levels of access and convenience of the range of services it could provide. This is where the Six Block Service Model as depicted above reflects the tailored range of services it should provide as central to the Thusong Service Centre offering.

The GCIS Business Plan (2006-2014) ensures that the continuity and the rollout of services are maintained. At the same time these business plans ensure that issues are addressed and there is long-term sustainability of the programme (Public Service Commission report, 2014:8).

The following information was derived from GCIS and the Western Cape Provincial Government on the Status of each Thusong Service Centre in the Western Cape. The researcher

sampled 1 Thusong Service Centre in each of the 5 Districts in the Province to test whether some or all these general service centre offerings are available.

DISTRICT AREA	THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE LOCATION	SERVICE OFFERING	6-BLOCK SERVICE MODEL
CAPE WINELANDS DISTRICT	Worcester Thusong Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape Access • Municipal Offices • Department Community Safety (DCS) • Community Development Workers (CDW) • NGO's • Department of Labour (UIF) • South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government Social and Administrative Services 2. Office Services 3. Education and Skills Development 6. Information and Communication activities
WEST COAST DISTRICT	Cederberg Thusong Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape Access • Department of Social Development (DSD) • Library Services • Department of Home Affairs • Community Development Workers (CDW) • South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government Social and Administrative Services 2. Office Services 3. Education and Skills Development 6. Information and Communication activities
OVERBERG DISTRICT	Swellendam Thusong Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Social Development (DSD) • Department of Home Affairs • Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government Social and Administrative Services 2. Office Services 3. Education and Skills Development 5. Business Services and Community opportunities 6. Information and Communication activities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South African Post Office (SAPO) • Cape Access • Community Development Workers (CDW) • Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) • South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) 	
GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT	Oudtshoorn Thusong Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Home Affairs • Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) • Community Development Workers (CDW) • South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) • Department of Social Development (DSD) • Youth Advisory Centre • South African Revenue Services (SARS) • Department of Health (DoH) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government Social and Administrative Services 2. Office Services 3. Education and Skills Development 5. Business Services and Community opportunities 6. Information and Communication activities
CENTRAL KAROO DISTRICT	Prince Albert Thusong Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) • Department of Labour (DOL) • South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) • Department of Social Development (DSD) • Department of Home Affairs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government Social and Administrative Services 2. Office Services 3. Education and Skills Development 6. Information and communication activities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South African Police Services (SAPS) 	
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Table 1. Basket of Service offering: (Department of Local Government, 2021).

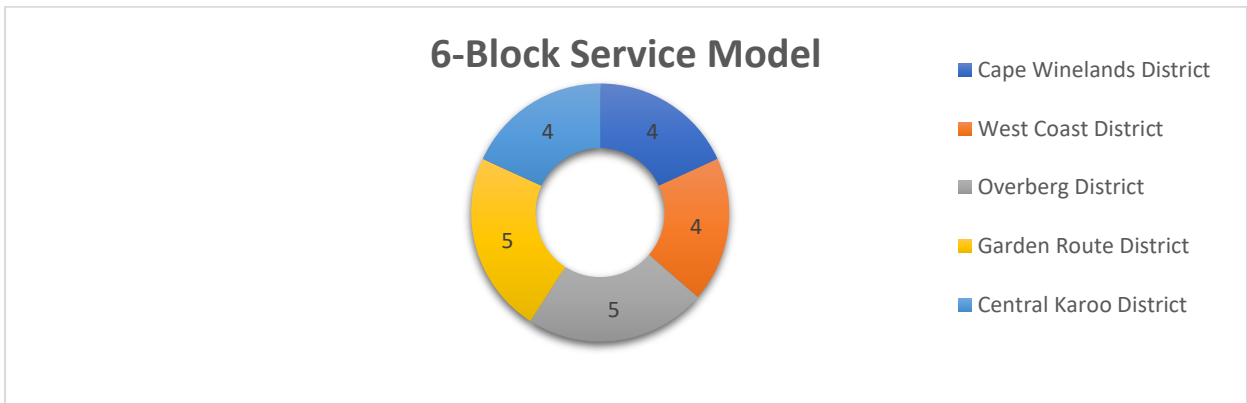


Figure 3. Pie Chart – 6 Block Service Model. Department of Local Government (2021).

The information in the table and chart above shows that all the Districts in the Province provide some of the general service counter offerings reflected in the 6-Block Service Model.

The Cape Winelands District, West Coast District and Central Karoo District provide for at least four (4) of the service offerings. The Overberg District and Garden Route District provide for five (5) of the 6 service offerings regarding the 6-Block Service Model.

This shows that the Thusong Service Centres in the Western Cape Province adhere to the GCIS Business Plan, 6-Block Service Model to ensure TSCs provide continuity and long-term sustainability of the programme.

4.3.1 Thusong Anchor Departments

The Thusong Anchor Departments consist of essential National Departments that provide critical services to citizens. Thusong Service Centres serve as a service hub for communities to access a multitude of government services., It is important that the correct services are available for communities to access. The essential anchor services of Thusong Centres include the following four departments: The Department of Home Affairs (DHA), The Department of Labour (DoL), the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and the Department of Social Development (DSD) (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2009:8).

In discussions with the Department of Local Government, The Thusong Service Centre Unit of the Provincial Government in the Western Cape, it was understood that these mentioned four anchor departments were cardinal in delivering Thusong services within the province. These four departments are usually supported by a variety of secondary services that form part of a TSC (depending on the location and need of the community). Typical service delivery agents include Cape Access, The Department of Justice, Correctional Services, Community Development Worker Offices and Municipal specific offices.

The GCIS indicates that the strength of a Thusong Service Centre is the clustering of services, which provides improved levels of access and convenience to citizens and efficiencies to service-providers. As a minimum these ‘anchor services’ should be present in all TSCs as they form the central component reflects the most basic level of social and administrative services that enables and empowers citizens. These anchor departments include services for citizens to obtain personal documents such as IDs and grant applications and payouts. Furthermore, they provide citizens with an interface for accessing government through direct communication and information services. (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2009:8-9)

In locations where Thusong Service Centres have not yet been developed, these anchor departments form a cluster and act as a proxy for services to be accessed. The Provincial Government of the Western Cape refers to this cluster as a Thusong Zone.

According to the Provincial Gazette Extraordinary, 7079 of 2013 (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2013), the Department of Local Government in the Western Cape was handed the control over the functioning of TSCs in the Western Cape Province. The Department subsequently rolled out a Thusong Implementation Strategy that strengthened the sustainability of TSC in Municipalities. The implementation strategy has been created to strengthen the programme between the Western Cape Government and the Municipalities where these TSCs are located. The strategy includes the implementation of creating partnerships between the spheres of government that facilitate various opportunities such as job creation, training and capacity building that ensures citizens are empowered (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2013). The strategy also focuses on the establishment of public and private partnerships that involves specific government departments, the private sector and various projects that aim to empower citizens, such as capacity building programmes that focus on ICT development or education programmes that provide youth skills development

(Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2013). The WCG also provides accredited training courses and rolled those out to all centre managers in local municipalities to equip themselves with the skills needed to successfully manage these centres.

4.3.2 The Thusong Service Infrastructure Model in the Western Cape

The Thusong Service infrastructure model allows different types of service delivery in the form of service hubs (all services under one roof), through satellite and mobile services. This model depends largely on the location of the settlement and planning with the Municipality. The model also allows provisions to be made for various types of centres to allow flexibility, variety and frequency of service provision, as well as in the associated scale/level of infrastructure provided (Department Communications and Information Systems, 2008). The aim is to use a combination of the model in the most effective manner to ensure equitable access to services across an entire region. It not uncommon to combine a mobile outreach with a Service Centre. The Service Centre can be in a main town and the mobile outreach programme can run in a remote location that is connected to the town or area.

4.3.3 The Thusong Service Satellite Centres

A Thusong Service Satellite Centre is a permanent structure, operated in a remote location. There is no real difference between the Satellite and the permanent Service Centre., However, it is a more congested type of Thusong Service Centre that offers scheduled government services to the community it serves. The Anchor departments establish scheduled service delivery dates, and the structure operates according to these dates (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2009:8)

4.3.4 The Thusong Outreach Programme (Thusong Mobiles)

The Thusong Outreach programme is also widely known as the Thusong Mobiles amongst the communities they serve. The Thusong Outreach Programme is in fact a mobile service, where most of the Thusong Anchor Departments and relevant and needed service delivery agents deliver integrated services in outlying areas (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2009:28).

These remote locations are inhabited by smaller communities, usually in intermittent small settlement clusters and have been deemed not to be financially viable to operate a full Thusong Service Centre or a Thusong Service Satellite centre.

4.3.5 Thusong Zones

Clusters are defined as those locations where the essential service points of the Anchor Departments (Home Affairs, Labour and South African Social Security Agency) are located within a 1 km radius of one another. Currently, the maximum access distance set for the planning of Thusong Service Centre locations is 25 km at the national / provincial level. A prime example within the Western Cape showcasing what a Thusong Zone is, is The Grabouw Thusong Service Centre. This TSC is defined as a Thusong Zone, since the centre is conveniently located next to a library, Social Services department and a permanent Home Affairs office. The centre saves residents time and money by making all the services they would need available in one single location (or hub).

The Thusong Service Centres provide Municipalities and rural areas with many opportunities. These can be capitalised on by communities. The following listed by the researcher are potential opportunities that can be applied by an operational Thusong Centre. The Thusong Service Centre Programme brings with it some essential opportunities that might be beneficial for Government, Community and Businesses alike. In the Western Cape, the following organisations have utilised and partnered with the Government to include various opportunities in Thusong Service Centres.

Figure 4 below depicts a proposed draft architectural layout plan for the Grabouw Thusong Zone. A Thusong Zone incorporates other service delivery sectors such as a public library and community health centre, which makes it a unique 'one-stop shop' for citizens.

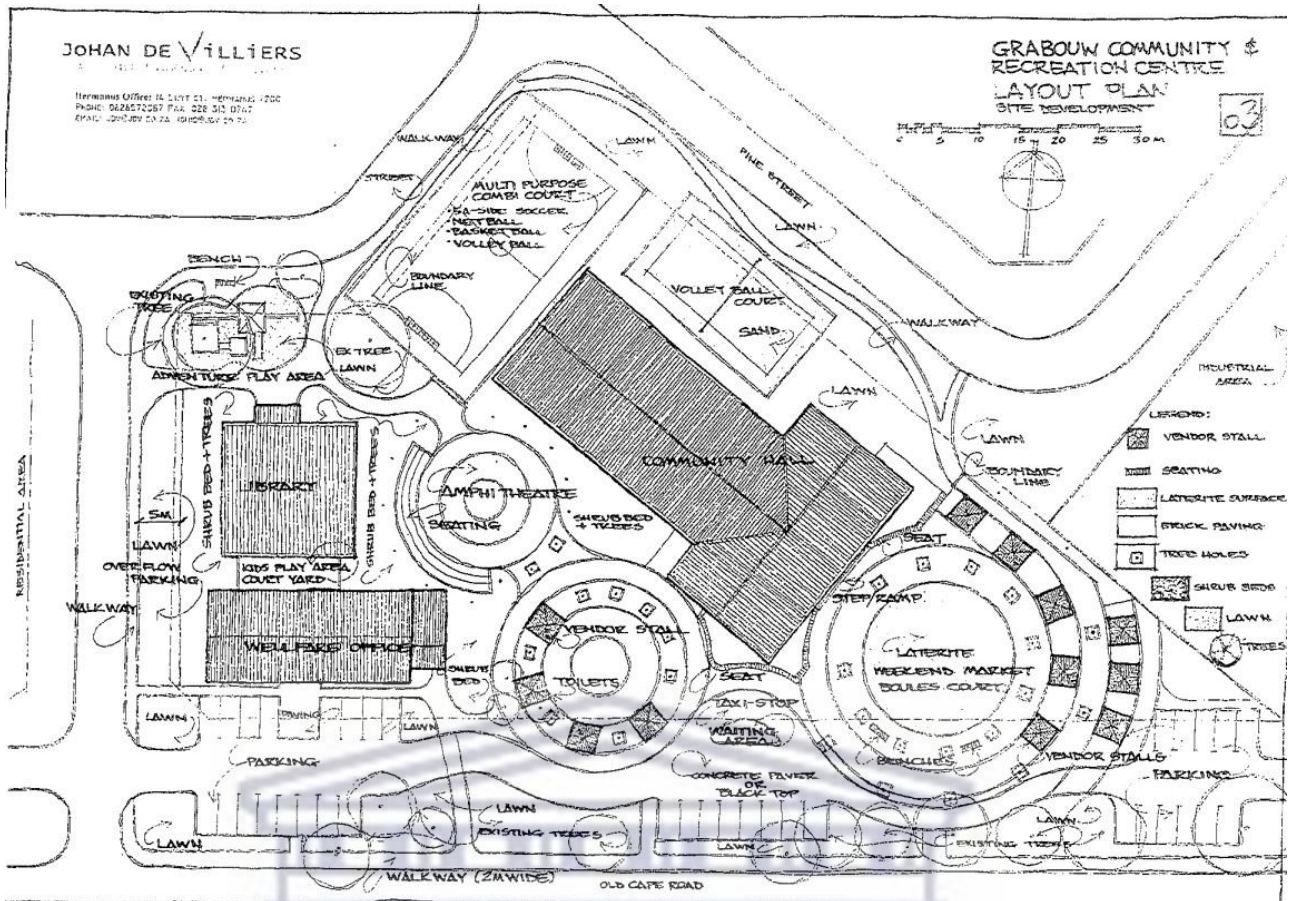


Figure 4. Proposed Thusong Zone for the Grabouw community, (Department of Local Government, 2022).

4.3.6 Thusong Service Centre: Business Opportunities

Centres have the potential to generate business opportunities through making space available and having lease agreements in place for small businesses in the community. These initiatives can include computer training, a crèche, bead work, needle work, sand painting, pottery, cement works, coffin-making, funeral services, steelwork, wire work, woodwork and tuck shops.

At Bloekombos and Kraaifontein, The City of Cape Town has developed a concept vision to address real social gaps such as food security, waste accumulation and destructive family structures through programmes and projects aimed at creating sustainable revenue and relevant solutions. Exploring this initiative in an incremental manner within the Thusong Service Centre concept, without compromising the delivery of anchor services, should be considered,

especially against the backdrop of improving the funding model of the Thusong Service Centres (PGWC, 2009:10-14).

4.3.7 Local Economic Development

The Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) in the Western Cape has a permanently placed branch located at the Mbekweni (Paarl) Thusong Service Centre. They have undertaken to train entrepreneurs in the basic skills of starting up their own businesses. The Thusong Centres in Van Rhynsdorp and Vredendal have beehives located in close proximity to the Thusong Centre.

The Department of Economic Development in the Western Cape, also launched the initiative, titled the Red Door, which operates in twelve (12) Thusong Service Centres. This initiative assists new and existing businesses with support and development by providing business advice and basic business skills and training. Apart from the mentioned LED initiatives, there are no other local economic development services being provided. However, engagement with representatives at the Robertson and Murraysburg Municipalities revealed that emphasis is going to be placed on these LED initiatives (PGWC, 2009:10-14).

4.3.8 Education and Skills Development Services

In the Western Cape, A variety of training programmes are rendered by Thusong Service Centres. These include but are not limited to: the TSC can provide Computer Skill classes through various service providers, centres have utilised a mutual agreement with Cape Access as a skill centre. The TSC can provide Arts and Culture classes, aftercare centres and crèches and after school education programmes. TSCs with community halls could provide communities with utilising indoor sporting codes such as karate, indoor soccer and gymnastics. According to the PGWC (2009:10-14), most education and skills development services differ from TSC to TSC and are mostly operated by non-government organisations, usually organisations that are primarily community based (PGWC, 2009:10-14).

4.3.9 Office Services

The second-generation business plan mentions that office services have become a main attraction within Thusong Service Centres. The business plan mentions that these services include printing and scanning, desktop publishing and postal services. The Swellendam and George Thusong Service Centres have the South African Post Office permanently located within the centre, making it convenient for communities to utilise postal services together with accessing a range of Governmental services. (PGWC, 2009:10-14).

4.4 EMERGING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE PROGRAMME

The challenge of funding for the Thusong Service Centre Programme has been documented frequently. The feasibility of the programme has been on the Government's agenda since the implementation of the MPCC Programme. In 2010 the Cabinet received a recommendation to move the Thusong Service Centre function to the Department of Corporative Governance due to a situational analysis indicating the function experiencing various funding challenges (DPSA, 2018).

In 2014, the relocation of the programme was again discussed within the National Government sphere and another feasibility study was conducted. This research investigated the development of a business case on the institutional arrangement for the management and coordination function was one of the outcomes of the studies done. Secondly the development of a funding model for the centres. A research report on International Best-Practice and Benchmarking of Integrated Service Centres and a Thusong Service Centre accessibility study was done. In terms of a funding model for the programme a funding model was created by the National Treasury in 2016.

The model indicated that the programme coordination and activities should be partially funded by Provincial Premier offices. Since most of the Centres are located in the Municipal space, it was recommended that Municipalities provide for the Operational expenses of the centres. The DPSA business plan explicitly states that the Thusong Service Centre programmes “is not an unfunded mandate” on the grounds that each of the government spheres contribute (PGWC, 2009:10-14).

The funding report does indicate that Provincial Departments that support their Local Government counterparts have more efficiently run Thusong Centres. The funding model supports departments to relocate to Thusong Centres and to enter into lease agreements to support the sustainability of the centre in principle. The model also indicated that the service delivery department can be accommodated by paying rentals and funding via departmental baselines (PGWC, 2009:10-14).

According to the Provincial Gazette Extraordinary, 8730, 2022, the Western Cape Provincial Government through the Western Cape Provincial Treasury Division of Revenue Act, has created a grant to provide for some financial assistance to Municipalities, ensuring that there is sustainability of the Thusong Service Centres in the province. The Provincial Treasury will allocate funds to local Municipalities managing the Thusong Service Centres to support the financial viability of the Thusong Service Centres. For Municipalities to access these funds, there is a criteria range that needs to be conformed to.

Municipalities would need to submit credible business plans to the Department of Local Government which will address intended outputs and outcomes detailing a budget and rollout plan and submit quarterly narrative and expenditure reports. The criteria also state outrightly that the Thusong Service Centre needs to be included in the Integrated Development Plan and Municipal Budget.

Regarding the Challenge for Information and Communication Technology, the TSC Business Plans (2006:35-36) indicate that information and communications technology infrastructure support, which determines connectivity at TSCs, are critical for co-ordination activities and the overall effective functioning of ICT systems at centre level.

The business plan indicates that generally, ICT infrastructure in a Thusong Service Centre comprises of two parts, namely “the telecentre and the Gateway GSC equipment that is provided by the USAASA with access to the Internet, and the ICT infrastructure for specific departments, enabling their service delivery. The first is for public consumption with the GSC using an intermediary, and the second is for specific departmental use in the delivery of their services” (Public Service Commission, 2014:24).

Furthermore, the business plan indicates that the SITA would mainly provide connectivity to TSCs, based on the ICT challenges and location of the structure. Thusong Service Centres have been developed with the approach that each centre is “a Government Face” and therefore it requires “face to face” interaction even if most of the disadvantaged communities are the beneficiaries for mass communication and government information (Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2009). The business plan indicates that “it is critical that an ICT strategy for the Thusong Service Centre roll-out be developed by the relevant role-players”, which is a total contrast to the development for communication information utilising technology as a powerful resource. This researcher finds this a major challenge as the face-to-face approach is outdated with the evolution of the 4th industrial revolution and believes the Government should do more in connecting citizens with Thusong Services, especially those communities that find it challenging to TSCs to access services.

4.5 OPPORTUNITIES OF THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE PROGRAMME

The TSCs open the door for government access to its citizens but essentially provides a platform for communities to engage with government. The table below indicates the following opportunities that can be realised at centres:

Opportunities	Description
Accessing Government Services	Thusong Service Centres have made it easier for communities in urban and remote areas to access government services. For those that are unable to access physical structures, the programme has made it possible to have outreaches through satellite and mobile services in very remote areas.
Job Opportunities	Thusong Service Centres can provide job opportunities. There are more than 14 tele-centres at Thusong centres that are managed by young entrepreneurs. These tele-centres provide job opportunities within communities and helps with a primary goal of government to provide job creation and the empowerment of youth, particularly in the rural areas.

Economic Opportunities	These are economic opportunities aimed at assisting individuals and groups to become active players in the economic life of South Africa.
Information and Communication of Government events	Thusong Service Centres will serve as a base from which information and communication activities take place, including government outreach events around the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign, promotion and an awareness of the government's programme of action and regular Imbizo events. Some of these services include SEDA (the Small Enterprise Development Agency) as well as Youth Advisory Centres established by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund.
	The decentralised service delivery results in people spending fewer resources to access government services. For example, in Augrabies in the Northern Cape, 1 096 people accessed government services from the Departments of Home Affairs, Labour and Social Services from July to September 2007. Prior to the establishment of the centre, they had to travel to Upington at a cost of R54 per trip. This results in a saving of R59 189, which could have assisted the poor in their daily quest to make ends meet.

Table 2. Opportunities of Thusong Service Centre Programme: Department Cooperative Governance and Information Systems (2008).

4.5.1 Repositioning of the Thusong Service Centres

The repositioning and funding model for Thusong Service Centre was a recommendation presented by the DPSA to the National Cabinet. The proposal for provisioning were that COGTA should serve as the lead department at Provincial level. The lead department should also cover costs where local municipalities were not in a financial position to contribute to the operation of the Thusong Centres and grant funding from National Level should be available for a minimum of three years amongst others (Khoza, 2017).

4.6 GENERATIONS OF BUSINESS PLANS AND THE EFFECT THEREOF

4.6.1 The First-Generation Business Plan.

The first-generation business plan stated that a Thusong Service Centre should be operational in each Municipal district by December 2004. A total of sixty-five centres were established by December 2004 (and subsequently a further 21 have been set up, bringing the total to 87 by March 2007). The establishment of these centres meant that more than 700 services provided could interact with communities in areas that were not previously serviced by the Government (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2005:11). The first-generation business plan concerns itself with the continued efforts towards the sustainability of existing centres, as well as providing a basis for the future rollout of new centres (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2005:11).

As previously mentioned, the Public Service Commission (PSC) conducted a study on the impact the MPCCs' (Thusong Service Centres) accelerated service delivery. The assessment provided the PSC with an opportunity to test the operational effectiveness of TSCs and gauge the imbalances at local level to bring government services to the people. The Assessment found that although MPCCs increased access for the rural and disadvantaged communities to a multitude of government services, challenges remained in terms of resources, the number of departments involved in the Centres, the appointment of Centre Managers and co-ordinating the official service hours of the different departments rendering services at the Centres (GCIS, 2008).

4.6.2 The Second-Generation Business Plan

In the second-generation business plan, the PSC acknowledges in its assessment report that with the implementation of the second-generation business plans, Government provided very little guidelines regarding the best placement or location of newly build TSCs and remedies towards the existing TSC that had been placed incorrectly. These centres did not serve the intended disadvantaged communities that had to travel very far to access the facility. With the rollout of the Second generation Thusong Service Centres, President Mbeki in his State of the Nation Address, 2004, indicated that a Thusong Service Centre will be established in every Municipality and this number will increased to a target of 300 Centres in South Africa (State of the Nation Address, 2004).

This new objective for the Government meant that there would be a likelihood of more than one centre per metropolitan municipality. In 2006 a business plan for “Thusong Service Centres”, or second-generation centres, were approved by the Cabinet (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2005:12). The second-generation business plan emphasised the strong need to rollout government services that are critical to the communities they served. The emphasis was on Government services (such as identity documents, birth certificates and social grants) in addition to providing Government communication and information services. The second-generation business plan also provided for additional services to be provided by respective centres. Computer literacy and vocational training, skills development and community initiatives were included as part of the second-generation business plan. (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2005:12).

With the TSC model in existence for more than 10 years, and the Government’s continuous support of the Thusong Service Centre Model, it is hoped that through the Centres, communities would have improved access to information and services provided by the Government, non-governmental organisations, parastatals, and businesses. The Government is always seeking ways to bring services closer to the communities it serves. Therefore, Community Development Workers (CDWs) have been relocated inside Thusong Service Centres.

The situational analysis and assessment done by the DPSA in 2009 was done to determine possible institutional arrangements for the future location, funding, and coordination of the Thusong Programme. The Assessments highlighted that the centres had poor programme implementation which directly revealed several challenges such as the state of information and communication technologies (ICT) at these Centres, a lack of clarity regarding the centres’ roles, policy oversights, coordination and ownership of these centres. The challenges that are exposed by the assessment corroborated with the findings of the PSC in 2011 in the report, The Assessment on the Effectiveness of the Thusong Service Centres in Integrated Service Delivery. The report stated that “integrated service delivery transcends rendering services in one location or under one roof, it entails the rationalisation and coordination of departments’ resources, service delivery mechanisms, processes and systems used to provide services to citizens to ensure services are provided most effectively and efficiently” (DPSA, 2009)

4.6.3 The Third-Generation Business Plan

In 2019 the Cabinet proposed a new model to enhance the integration of service delivery across the three spheres of government in what is known as the District Development Model (DDM). The role of the DDM Hubs is principally to coordinate and facilitate intergovernmental joint planning in the district and metro spaces. At the core of the DDM Hubs responsibilities will be coordinating and facilitating the development, adoption and implementation of the One Plans, One Budget. The DDM Hubs will also coordinate and facilitate the implementation of local government capacity building programmes in the District and Metro spaces. (Public Service Commission, 2021:9). The roles and the functions of the DDM Hubs are identical to those allocated to the Thusong Service Centres, therefore, the DDM Hubs could be viewed as a third generation TSC Business Plan (Public Service Commission, 2021:9).

In conclusion, the National Government has continually supported the Thusong Service Centre Concept through these generations of Business Plans. The PSC recognises that the National Government should move beyond a mere talk shop under the label of District Hubs without any meaningful improvements. Therefore, “The PSC called on relevant role players to urgently address the following two challenges while conceptualising the DDM Hubs and “reimagining and repositioning” the TSC model including (1) a rethink of brick and mortar-type models that integrate appropriate information technology and (2) the governance of the Centers, in particular the responsibility of managing the Centers being allocated to one national department” (Public Service Commission, 2021:9). Since the inception of MPCC (1996) through to TSCs in 2007, issues and challenges remain. With this third generation of business plan, the PSC hope that the DDM Hubs concept will provide an opportunity to reposition and address the challenges that hampers integrated service delivery (Public Service Commission, 2021:9).

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explored the key contributions that the Thusong Service Centre made in the Western Cape. The researcher outlines various challenges that are faced for the programme and how best practices in the Western Cape can promote an inclusive community.

The researcher explored the various studies that were conducted and specifically highlighted the Situational Analysis that was done by the DPSA. The situational analysis provided the researcher with insight as to what the status quo of the TSC programme is and what it required to change.

The study will now transit to chapter five which will be the concluding Chapter of this Mini Thesis. The chapter would typically have some research findings, interpretations and recommendations, together with a concluding argument.



5. CHAPTER FIVE: THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter examined the Thusong Service Centre Programme research findings and interpretations. This chapter will examine what the research paper has set out to explore. The paper will list the most relevant findings and recommendation towards future efforts that can be implemented and improved upon in making the Thusong Service Centres Programme a success. This chapter summarises the chapters and discuss and outlines the conclusion of this study.

5.1.1 Summary of Chapters

The preceding sections of the study, as it summarises the chapters and reflects upon what has been discussed, provides the researcher with major points and recommended ideas. Looking back into this research, chapter one outlines the research problem, which is to explore whether the Government has been successful in being responsive and accountable to the vast marginalised communities through effectively utilising Thusong Service Centres by providing communities with quality service delivery.

The research objectives are outlined and split into the following specific aims, namely, to present the legislative and theoretical basis for the adoption of the Thusong Programme in South Africa and to discuss the implementation of the Thusong Programme in South Africa since its inception.

The central question of this research is to determine what the crucial contributions are for the Thusong Service Centre Programme and what impact or lack of impact it has had in the Western Cape Province specifically. To further answer the research question, the researcher explored what the challenges were for the Government and if there were any lessons to be learned in promoting the Thusong Service Centre Programme in the Western Cape in order to promote community development.

To achieve the latter, the researcher utilised the Six-Block Service Model that reflected on what is regarded as an "ideal" Thusong Service Centre. The model focuses on the community and considers the context and the environment of every Thusong Service Centre, since each centre

offers a variety of services that are adapted to suit the needs of the citizen in a particular community.

Chapter two outlines the theoretical framework and literature review of this study. The chapter discusses the adoption of the Thusong Programme and theory based on a people-first principle. Chapter two outlines literature that describes the Thusong service centres as the primary vehicles for the implementation of development communication in South Africa.

In addition, the literature includes the history of the multi-purpose community centres (Thusong Service Centres), the establishment of “Comtask” by the then deputy president Thabo Mbeki and how this brought about the launch of the government communications and information system (GCIS), the different generations of Thusong Service Centres and what community development ought to be in the context of the Thusong Programme. The key themes of people-centred development is outlined and the interpretation and the evolution of this theory.

Chapter three outlines the policy framework that contributed to the establishment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. This includes the Comtask Report, Cabinet Memorandum of 1999, The President’s State of the Nations Address and the Reconstruction and Development Programme. Furthermore, the chapter also provides takes into account the South African legislative framework that is needed for the establishment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. These include, the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996; The White Paper on Local Government 1998, The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13, The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (The Batho Pele Principles), 1997, The Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 (as amended in 2000 and 2003) and the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) (32 of 2000).

Chapter four outlines the key contribution that the Thusong Service Centre Programme has made within the Western Cape. The Chapter outlines the research findings and interpretations. It also outlines the challenges experienced with the Thusong Service Centres and identifies best practices used in the Thusong Service Centres in the Western Cape in promoting community development.

The next section presents the findings and recommendations for policy and for future researchers.

5.2 THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following findings and recommendations are made to the South African Local Government sector based on the information that has been collected and discussed in this research paper on the Thusong Service Centres' Programme in the Western Cape.

5.2.1 Finding 1. The Need for a New Funding Model for the Thusong Service Centre Programme

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this study, there appears to be a challenge regarding the funding of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. The feasibility of the programme has been on the Government's agenda since the implementation of the MPCC Programme. A Situational analysis and recommendations were made to the National Cabinet in 2010 to relocate the programme due to experiencing various challenges (DPSA, 2018). The situational analysis indicated that the spending on the programme had increase to a point where the programme's ability to deliver services was affected positively. The DPSA even conducted secondary studies to develop a business case that considered the possible institutional arrangements for the future location, funding, and coordination of the Thusong Programme.

Recommendation

A functional Thusong Service Centre will focus on service offerings, and it has the tools of trade to offer appropriate services to its citizens. Through the monitoring of and evaluating of the Thusong Service Centre framework, the Government can improve on how TSC is functional and it can remain operative. Essentially, the TSC framework recommends "that Thusong Service Centres should receive national government financial and resource-based support which should be directed through the national coordinating department or institution responsible and it should be delegated with specific responsibilities to provincial and local government and hold them accountable and responsible for such responsibilities". (DPSA, 2019) Through the Western Cape Provincial Treasury Division of Revenue Act the Western Cape Provincial Government, has created a grant to provide for some financial assistance to

Municipalities, ensuring that there is sustainability of the Thusong Service Centres in the province.

It is this paper's recommendation that the National Government must take note of the grant created by the Western Cape Provincial Treasury to assist with the TSC responsibility placed on Municipalities, to provide for a more sustainable TSC Programme in the Western Cape. National Government could adopt a similar approach to assist municipalities in the rest of the country.

5.2.2 Finding 2. Utilising Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as an TSC Enabler.

The situational analysis in chapter 4 and the assessment done by the DPSA in 2009 to determine the institutional arrangement for the TSC Programme, highlighted poor programme implementation and a lack of clarity, oversight, coordination and ownership of these TSCs.

The assessment on the effectiveness of Thusong Service Centres determined that integrated service delivery transcends the rendering of services in one location or under one roof. This research paper explores the many challenges and subsequently the many opportunities TSCs can provide, to alleviate service delivery issues by embracing the Information Communication Technology (ICT) environment as an enabler of service delivery.

Recommendation

The notion of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and its contributing factors to the ICT environment contributes and enables government to offer and provide services to its citizens in a much broader spectrum. "The need for a strategy towards e-services, and how citizens will access such services using technology is critical in deciding what type of service centres to establish, and how citizens will get access to such centres in accessing government services" (DPSA, 2019).

The creation of a virtual Thusong Service Centre is seen by this researcher as an innovative and new initiative with no current research available to reflect whether such an idea could work. The challenge for accessing a virtual TSC would be similar to accessing other e-government

services, which among other would-be networks and connectivity, data access and platform integration. However, the benefits would outweigh the challenges if the Government would invest in zero rated data access for disadvantaged communities to access government services by the means of a cell phone or a social platform. The paper recommends that the Government do a cost benefit analysis, to determine the feasibility of a virtual Thusong Service Centre. Furthermore, the researcher's aspirations are that a Virtual TSC would be piloted in the Western Cape and if successful it can be replicated by the National Government in the rest of the country.

5.2.3 Finding 3. Defining and Expanding the Roles and Responsibilities of a TSC Manager

The researcher found that in the PSC report, 2010, no measures existed for a full-time TSC Manager to utilise the appointed role in applying corrective measures to other departmental officials that reside within the TSCs or TSC jurisdiction. This finding suggests that Thusong Service Centre Managers cannot manage officials from the departments they have no jurisdiction over, and with whom they do not have performance agreements. The management reporting lines seem to be different due to the lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved. Perhaps this challenge raised by the Thusong Service Centre Managers is a further indication of the lack of a single department that has the overall responsibility to co-ordinate the necessary frameworks and legislative arrangements for uniformity at the TSCs.

Recommendation

According to the PSC report, 2010, it is recommended that the national department assigned with the responsibility to co-ordinate TSCs and ensure that Thusong Service Centre Managers are appointed in all TSCs in accordance with the 2006 GCIS Thusong Service Centre Business Plan and that they are provided with a clear job description on appointment. (Public Service Commission, 2010).

This however does not include the challenge that Thusong Service Centre Managers experience relating to the management of other departmental staff that makes use of the Thusong Service Centre. This paper is recommending that TSC Managers enter into a service

level agreement (SLA) with each Department utilising its centre to provide for powers delegated to the management of each centre.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There are several gaps in this researcher regarding the financial aspects of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. Throughout reading about and exploring the research topic, the researcher found mentioning of the poor financial sustainability of the Thusong Service Centre Programme. The researcher would recommend that extensive research be done to increase the understanding of the financial troubles and the assistance needed to keep the programme afloat and successful.

The researcher could briefly deduct that the responsibility does not just lie with one managing department, since the programme houses and provides services for all 3 spheres of government. Therefore, joint responsibility is needed to work together every time a centre is proposed until it is fully operational. However, in many of the sources consulted by the researcher it seemed that the financial burden is always shifting between the entities, with local government bearing the brunt of the burden.

The researcher would further recommend a full cost-benefit analysis be made on the actual expenditure per government sphere. Through the Western Cape Provincial Treasury, the Western Cape Provincial Government adopted a grant approach to provide for assistance to the Municipalities. However, the researcher questions the sustainability of this approach and merely sees it as a 'stop gap' until a much more financial and sustainable solution is provided (Public Service Commission, 2010:9).

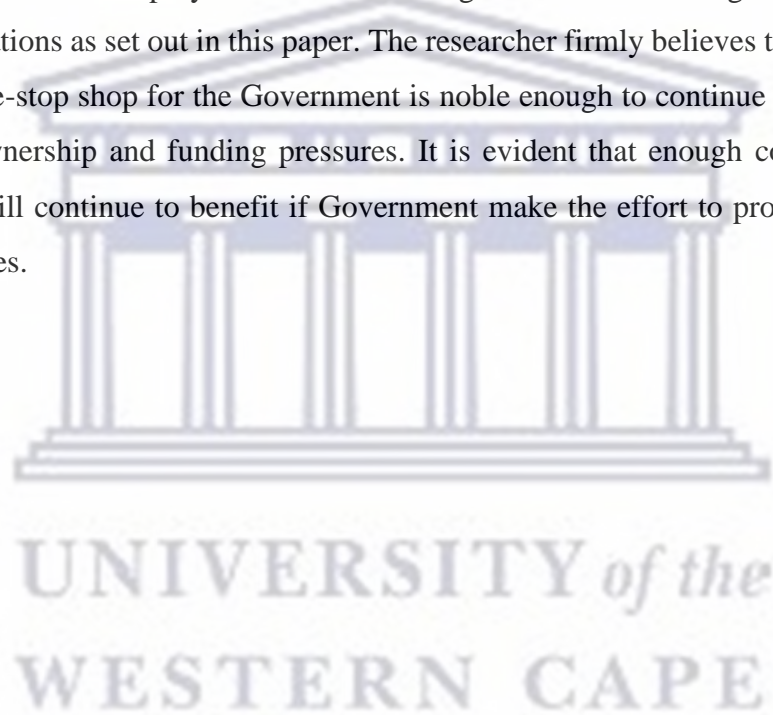
5.4 THE CONCLUSION

This research has explored whether the Government has been successful in being responsive and accountable to marginalised communities through utilising the Thusong Service Centre Programme. The Thusong Service Centre Programme has been the Government's attempt to bring a one-stop shop, offering of the Government's products and services to previously disadvantaged communities. These service TSCs were seen as the vehicle that would bring service delivery closer to the community, not just through a physical structure but as a

programme that provides mobile and satellite deployment, even if communities are located remotely or are not able to access services otherwise. This research by no means aimed at providing a definite conclusion, but merely informs the reader of the significance of the Thusong Service Centre Programme, the continuous challenges the programme has faced and the opportunities it brought in terms of community development.

In Chapter 1 of this study, the research objectives and research questions are outlined. The research explored the Thusong Service Centre Programme as being the vehicle to enhance community inclusiveness that provides citizens with the space to actively participate in the affairs of local government, in particular government planning and decision-making.

The research therefore proposes that the South African Government learns from the many challenges it faced in the deployment of the Thusong Service Centre Programme and explore the recommendations as set out in this paper. The researcher firmly believes that the intentions of creating a one-stop shop for the Government is noble enough to continue the practice even while facing ownership and funding pressures. It is evident that enough communities have benefited and will continue to benefit if Government make the effort to provide a vehicle to access its services.



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