

**Service delivery in the City of Cape Town: A case study of water services in Khayelitsha.**

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The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building with a pediment and columns.

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**Supervisor: Dr. K.J Maphunye**

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*Has the gov succeeded in setting up effective water*

## **Abstract**

Based on the recognition of apartheid capitalist injustices, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA Act 108 of 1996) envisaged the establishment of a new democratic South Africa founded on human dignity, the achievement of equality and advancement of human rights and freedom. The Water Services Act of 1997 recognises water as a necessity for human livelihood and that water service institutions must take all the necessary measures to ensure the provision of this basic human right.

Contrary to such noble legal injunctions, water provision in Khayelitsha appears to be fraught with dubious debt scandals, inconsistency of the billing system and the adverse implementation of the cost recovery measures of the City of Cape Town. The above outlined factors have more than often led to water cut-offs and evictions. It is against this background that the mini-thesis has sought to investigate accessibility, affordability of water provision in Khayelitsha, examine the relationship between the residents inability to pay for services and the implementation of cost recovery measures and factors that have led to water cut-offs.

A case study has been used as a methodological approach, complemented by a survey procedure and perusal of government policy and legislative frameworks that directly deal with water service delivery. Questionnaires have been developed and random interviews conducted in all the informal settlements and selected areas (Site C, Site B and Green Point) of the informal areas of Khayelitsha. Selected interviews with senior leadership (councilors and officials) of the City of Cape Town, labour unionists

(SAMWU) and Khayelitsha Anti-Eviction Campaign were conducted. The mini-thesis located water provision in Khayelitsha within the new liberal democratic South Africa, as contemplated in the new promulgated policy and legislative frameworks. To this end the mini-thesis has established the extent to which such current frameworks have been able to facilitate the establishment of equity, accessibility and affordability of water provision in Khayelitsha. Based on the fact that Khayelitsha was established as a dormitory suburb with no economic base, it is argued that Water the Services Development Plan and the Integrated Development Plan of the City of Cape Town Must take into cognizance the economic realities of the historically disadvantaged community of Khayelitsha, in order to render water services in an affordable and sustainable manner.

The ideological shift (from RDP-GEAR) of the national government, in terms of basic municipal services had a profound influence on how municipalities conduct service provision particularly water. This is no more relevant than in the City of Cape Town Municipality, where it is argued that the municipality must be run along business practices. In the context of high-level unemployment, the mini-thesis has argued that running a municipality along business principles is doomed to fail and that the Implementations of cost recovery measures only serve to perpetuate that failure. It is against this background that the mini-thesis maintains that water cut-offs in Khayelitsha are not a genuine response to a financial crisis nor are they panacea to the issue of the unwillingness to pay for services. The problem seems to lie with the ability to pay.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this mini-thesis to Terry and Barbra Bell



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## Acknowledgements

My highest gratitude goes to the following people through their different assistance and support they have made this piece of academic work a reality.

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Last and by no means least, a special thanks goes to my supervisor Dr. K.J Maphunye for his intellectual and academic prowess that are indispensable in the final product of this mini-thesis.





## Declaration

I declare that this mini-thesis: “Service delivery in the City of Cape Town: A case study of water services in Khayelitsha”, is my own work, except where due acknowledgement is given using appropriate references in the text. This mini-thesis has not been submitted anywhere at any university, college or institution of higher learning for any degree, diploma or any other qualification.

Name

Date: March, 2003

Student

Signed



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## Definition of key concepts and abbreviations used in the text

ANC	African National Congress
AEC	Anti-Eviction Campaign
Basic Municipal Services	A service necessary for ensuring an acceptable and reasonable quality of life, which if not provided would endanger public health or safety or the environment.
Basic Water Supply	The prescribed minimum standard of water supply service necessary for the reliable supply of the sufficient quality and quantity of water to households, including informal households to support life and sound hygiene.
Block Tariff	The amount of money charged on water per unit consumption. In other words the consumer pay according to the amount of water consumed.
Commercialization	Basic municipal services are provided on market principles, while under the ownership of a public entity.
Cost Recovery Measures	All the instruments and mechanisms that a municipality put in place to ensure that the full cost incurred while providing services is fully recovered from the service users.
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CMIP	Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme
DA	Democratic Alliance
DP	Democratic Party

DWAF	Department of Water Affairs And Forestry
GEAR	Growth Employment And Redistribution
GNU	Government of National Unity
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
KDF	Khayelitsha Development Forum
NNP	New National Party
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RDSN	Rural Development Service Network
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers Union
SANCO	South African Nation Civics Organisation
URS	Urban Renewal Strategy
UWAF	Unaccounted For Water
WSDP	Water Service Development Plan



# Chapter One: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

## 1. Introduction

This study arose as a result of this researcher's desire to closely examine the problem faced by, especially, communities in historically disadvantaged areas of Cape Town. The key questions for this study were therefore (a) What are the factors that have lead to water cut-offs and evictions in Khayelitsha? (b) What has been the response of the community in this regard? and (c) What are the mechanisms in place to deal with water cut-offs and evictions in Khayelitsha? Closely related to this is whether these mechanisms have been successful.

*is*  
*Does unemployment*

The 27 April 1994 constitutionally negotiated democratic breakthrough brought an end to an institutionalized apartheid capitalism. Under this vicious inhumane system, access to water and other basic human needs for the black majority of South Africa remained a distant dream. Understanding that water is a pre-requisite for any community's socio-economic well being, the apartheid regime made sure that the black majority were degraded socially and exploited economically. This was a necessary condition for the development and sustainability of the apartheid ideology. It is for this reason that the struggle for water in South Africa cannot be divorced from the broader struggle for a genuine liberation. The unjust policies and practices of apartheid capitalism went on to establish both one of the most shameful and one of the triumphal chapters of human experience.

The constitutional democratic dispensation with which the country prides itself today, is a mirror image of that triumphal human experience. According to section 1 of the

Republic of South Africa Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) the “Republic of South Africa is one democratic state founded on human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom”. The country is in its eighth year of constitutional democratic dispensation. Therefore it is worth investigating the extent to which human rights and dignity have been advanced and consolidated with particular reference to water service delivery in the historically disadvantaged community of Khayelitsha. “Amanzi yimpilo! Water is life and sanitation” (Kasrils, 2002:3).

In its analysis the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994: 28) recognized water as a natural resource, that should be made available in a sustainable manner to all South Africans. In 1994 RDP estimated that “12 million people did not have access to clean drinking water and 21 million people did not have adequate sanitation”. Since then, legislative and policy reforms have taken place to change this situation. Such reforms are said to be based on “fairness and equity principles, values which are enshrined as cornerstone of our new society” (White Paper on National Water Policy for South Africa, 1997:2).

However, the reality on the ground seems to contradict such noble principles. The distribution of South Africa’s water across the population is even more unequal, measured in class, race and gender terms than the distribution of income. “Only 27% of South African households have running tap in their homes. Only 37% of homes have access to flush toilets. Excessive water (13 liters per flush) is used in virtually all middle and upper class areas. Mass pit latrines in urban and peri-urban areas remain factors in the spread of bacteria. More than half of the country’s raw water is used for

commercial agriculture, of which half is wasted due to poor irrigation techniques and crop choices. A quarter of the available water is consumed in mining and industry. Only households of which about consume about 12% of available rural households consume water 1%. About half of the available domestic water is used in garden maintenance and suburban swimming pools” (RDSN2000: 6-7). At the heart of the current reality seems to lie blurring disparities in terms of accessibility, affordability and consumption. A case in point is the community of Khayelitsha; Khayelitsha is a dormitory suburb with extremely limited employment opportunities. According to 1996, census information, only 27% of the workforce was formally employed. Most of the workers work in low economic categories, as unskilled and underpaid. Ever since 1996, foreign direct investment and job opportunities as anticipated by Growth Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) has remained an unfulfilled dream for the people of Khayelitsha. Instead more workers have lost their jobs, and some are victims of the casualisation and underpaid strategies of the employing agencies. Parallel to this the Rand has depreciated tremendously; consequent to this has been the soaring inflation with adverse effects on food and municipal service prices.

blurring

In terms of water provision, this effectively means the poor and the unemployed community of khayelitsha are not be in a possession to pay exorbitant City of Cape Town’s water charges. As Smith in Mcdonald (2002:18) puts it “customers who could not afford to make an arrangement with service providers and resorted to non- payment altogether as they were unable to negotiate the terms of payment. This then made it impossible for them to manage household expenditures”. The response of the City of Cape Town council to this unfortunate situation has been and still is water cut- offs. As

from 1999-2001 Khayelitsha alone had 14 355 water-cutoffs. Amidst water cut-offs in Khayelitsha, the Minister of Water and Forestry Department contends that his department and the national government are advancing human rights and dignity and living up to the mandate of the people. "This is a government of delivery" (Kasrils, 2002:2). According to Cottle et al. (2001:8) 'the sad truth is that neither of the benchmarks contained in the legislative and policy frameworks have been met: millions of people are still without water and others are receiving an adequate supply to sustain a full, healthy and productive life. Among South African millions who have difficulty in accessing water in a sustainable and affordable manner, the community of Khayelitsha is no exception to this.

## 2. Statement of the problem

The constitutionally negotiated democratic dispensation of 1994, caused unprecedented expectations among historically disadvantaged communities in South Africa, especially in respect of access to basic services, particularly the distribution of potable water.

The township of Khayelitsha, in the Cape Town Uni City, which is home to about 600 000 residents from such communities appears to be characterized by a crisis relating to water accessibility and affordability along with various related problems. This has been manifest in a large number of denials of service, in the form of water cut-offs to residents and even Evictions and property seizure for the alleged unwillingness to pay for water service charges. These actions have usually been accompanied by claims, from both within and outside the community of consequent social and public health problems. It is for the above reason that the mini-thesis seeks to examine accessibility, affordability,

the impact of cost recovery measures and water cut-offs in Khayelitsha. The key problem for this research in this study was to assess whether the community of Khayelitsha had access to water services in an affordable and sustainable manner. The extent to which the people of this community dealt with and experienced service delivery problems was also an aspect for this study to examine.

### 3. Objectives of the study

The Municipal Structures Act of 1998 and Municipal Systems Act of 2000 gave “birth” to a new regime of local government. The White Paper on Local government, March 1998, bestows a developmental character on this new dispensation. Section 152 (1) (b) (c) of the Constitution (RSA, Act 108 of 1996) makes provision for the new local government regime to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; and to promote the social and economic development of these communities. From an academic perspective, the thesis aims to highlight the extent to which policy and legislative frameworks have been adhered to by the City of Cape Town. Political slogans such as “together speeding up change”, “fighting poverty and creating a better life for all”; “the people shall govern”, and “free basic services for all” before and during local government elections in 1996 and 2000, were the orders of the day.

To this end, the thesis seeks to investigate and understand the extent to which promises contained in party political manifestos have been delivered upon. It is hoped that the thesis will highlight any contradictions that may exist in the socio-economic policies of political parties that claim to represent poor working class constituencies. Does the claimed financial crisis of the Cape Town City Council exist and, if so, is it a result of



the alleged “culture of non-payment” or are there any other reasons and, if so what are they? These are some of the questions this thesis will seek answers for.

#### **4. Assumptions of the study**

The thesis assumes that there is still a large number of people in Khayelitsha who have difficulty in accessing water in an affordable and sustainable manner as a basic human right. The aggressive cost recovery measures on water service is imposing tremendous hardships on low-income earners and the unemployed families. This then contributes to a massive crisis in water cut-offs, evictions and further jeopardises the potential for thousands of families to live productive and healthy lives. The macro-economic policy (GEAR) of the country is exacerbating the situation. The argument by the Cape Town municipality should not solely be on the willingness to pay by community, without analysing the capacity to do so. Privatisation and co-operatisation of water services on their own are by no means panaceas to the water cut-offs crisis. A responsive developmental and people driven administration is necessary if the status quo is to change. Peoples’ needs should come before profit and greed.

#### **5. Methodological approach**

Government policies, legislative frameworks, newspaper reports and relevant academic studies (including interviews and questionnaires, see below) were used as primary sources of information. In complementing a case study with the view of materially conceptualizing the realities of the Khayelitsha community a survey procedure was conducted. Questionnaires have been developed with emphasis on water accessibility and affordability, information on water arrears and the ability to settle such arrears,

experience with water cut-offs and coping strategies, and the impact of cost recovery plans of the City of Cape Town on the lives of ordinary people of Khayelitsha.

Based on these questionnaires interviews have been randomly conducted in all the formal arrears of Khayelitsha. The informal settlement of Khayelitsha, particularly certain parts of Site C, Site B and Green Point sections are adversely affected by a lack of water availability. Further, in these for mentioned arrears random interviews were conducted with emphasis on water accessibility, coping strategies were there is no water available, the availability of sanitation facilitates and health implication in cases of no facilitation availability. The selection of the above three areas does not suggest that other informal settlements of Khayelitsha are progressive in terms of water accessibility. Interviews with the Khayelitsha Anti-Eviction Campaign Chairperson (Max Ntanyane), Mr. Vanschalwyk (acting Director Finance for Tygerberg Administration), Mr. Mius Lambreshts (Tygerberg Administration debtors control manager), Mr. Gilliomii (Tygerberg Administration Principal Accountant), Lance Viottii (South African Municipal Workers Unions' National water service co-ordinator) and Mr. De Jager (area water engineer) were conducted.

The emphasis of such interviews was on the availability of water infrastructure in the area, the rationale behind sky rocketing arrears that resulted in water cut-offs and the coping strategies thereafter, a relationship between non-payment and property attachment vis-à-vis evictions, the impact, applicability and usefulness of the Debt Management Policy (2001) and cost recovery measures amidst abject poverty in Khayelitsha. The questions that appear in the questionnaires on page 84 (appendices) have not been tested

scientifically (e.g. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). However, they were very useful and served as background information to the researcher in conducting the research.

## **6. Literature Review**

Cognisant of the fact that South Africa is a liberal constitutional democracy, the research departs from a legal and policy framework position that is supposed to give effect to a country founded on human dignity, the achievement of equality and advancement of human rights. The White Paper on Local Government of March 1998, Municipal Structures Act, 1998 and Municipal Systems Act 2000 ushered in a new dispensation in local government. These laws give effect to the developmental objectives as set out in section 152 of the Constitution (RSA Act 108 of 1996) and in the ANC-led government's Reconstruction and Development Programme.

Despite the above legal and policy injunctions, according to Cottle and Mettler (2001) the majority of people are still without access to water, as their basic human right. To this end, McDonald and Smith (2002) in investigating service delivery and policy reforms in the City of Cape Town came to the conclusion that "customers who could not afford to make arrangement with service providers resorted to non-payment altogether as they were unable to negotiate the terms of payment". Based on the number of water cut-offs for non payment (1999-2001), as reflected in the City of Cape Town (undated) document, it would appear that the City of Cape Town's Integrated Development Plan of 2002/03, Debt Management Policy, 2001 and the Water Services Development Plan, 2001 leave much to be desired. Smith (in McDonald, 2002), Xali (2000) and ILRG respectively argued that, corporatisation of water services by the City of Cape Town, implementation

of cost recovery measures on basic social services and the advent of Growth Employment And Redistribution all has had disastrous effect as far as the provision of water services are concerned in Khayelitsha.

Despite the fact that the Integrated Development Plan 2002/03, the Uni-City Commission report, 2000 and chapter eight of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, implicitly express the view that municipalities must be run along business lines, Bond (2000, Newsletter for Municipal Service Project, September) is of the view that service cut-offs are not a genuine response to a falsely perceived financial crisis, but rather a political choice.

The study conducted by Dyantyi and Frater (1998) and Foundation for Contemporary Research (1996) as far as the socio-economic status of Khayelitsha is concerned indicate that Khayelitsha is predominantly a dormitory suburb subjected to poverty where the majority have no access to any means of income, hence low economic activity. It is against this backdrop that President Thabo Mbeki, (2001) in his State of the Nation Address identified Khayelitsha as one of the Urban Renewal nodal points. It would seem appropriate that water service delivery in Khayelitsha be located within its socio-economic realities.

## **7. Significance of the study**

South Africa by many, particularly those who are beyond its borders, is regarded as a democratic society founded on human dignity whose fundamental existence is the advancement of basic human rights. The socio-economic realities of Khayelitsha

seem to negate the above-mentioned claim. By and large, historically disadvantaged communities in South Africa are still subjected to poverty and denial of access to basic human needs. Based on the current socio-economic realities of most historically disadvantaged communities, the current government appears to be failing to fundamentally address the legacy of past. Against this background the significance of the study is that, even though a political miracle has been achieved, such a miracle soon became a crying shame and meaningless to the economically and socially degraded people of Khayelitsha; especially if they still do not have access to basic human rights and are subjected to exploitative free market mechanisms (cost recovery measures) by the new regime. After all, it is on this new leadership that the historically disadvantaged community entrusted their aspiration for a democratic and just society based on the will of the people.

## **8. Outline of the study**

### **Chapter One:**

Chapter one is an introduction and focuses on the statement of the problem, research objectives, assumptions about the study, literature review and a description of the manner in which the problem will be addressed and the suggested research methodology.

### **Chapter Two:**

Chapter two investigated the extent to which current policy and legislative reforms have been able to facilitate the establishment of equity, accessibility and affordability of water service in respect of Khayelitsha community.

### **Chapter Three:**

The chapter investigates the socio-economic status of the Khayelitsha community in

relation to its ability to pay for water charges, arrears and debt.

#### **Chapter Four:**

In terms of schedule 4 part B of the Constitution (RSA act 108 of 1996) it is a responsibility of local government to render potable water to its community. The chapter examines the relevance and approach of the City of Cape Town's service development strategy and debt management policy to water accessibility and affordability in Khayelitsha. At the heart of water provision in Khayelitsha is the question of the infrastructure availability. Consequent to this is the question of accessibility. This chapter considers the efficacy of the cost recovery plan. There is a general consensus that the public sector is inherently inefficient. To this end the vision statement of the City of Cape Town espouses a smart globally competitive city, whose mission is to focus on the citizen as a customer.

The chapter investigates competitive and customer oriented strategies of the Uni-City and their impact on the Khayelitsha community amidst abject poverty. In an area savaged by appalling living conditions, abject poverty and a high level of unemployment, it seems to be a fallacy to expect people to pay exorbitant water service charges and sky rocketing debt arrears. The chapter seeks to understand the rationale behind such huge water arrears and debts that people of Khayelitsha find themselves in and the consequences thereof. The extent to which debt management policy of the City of Cape Town alleviates or exacerbates water related crisis in Khayelitsha is discussed in this chapter.

## **Chapter 5:**

This chapter establishes whether water-cutoffs and evictions in Khayelitsha are a genuine response to an alleged financial crisis or just a political choice. In an attempt to address the legacy of apartheid capitalism, in 1994 the ANC -led government championed social democratic strategy in the form of the Reconstruction And Development Programme (RDP). The extent to which a shift from RDP to GEAR has facilitated or exacerbated accessibility and affordability of water services is discussed in the chapter. Lastly, the chapter investigates the rationale and impact of sky rocketing arrears, disconnection and evictions on the poor community of Khayelitsha.

## **Chapter 6**

The chapter establishes whether there is a water related crisis in Khayelitsha and whether this directly flows from the alleged “culture of non-payment” by the Khayelitsha community or whether the City of Cape Towns’ legislative, policy frameworks and administrative shortcomings are to be held liable for water crisis in the area. Lastly, the chapter will forward certain recommendations both to the City of Cape Town and the Khayelitsha community in terms water related crisis in Khayelitsha.

## Chapter Two

### 2. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR WATER SERVICE DELIVERY

In this chapter legislative and policy frameworks for water service delivery and the extent to which they facilitate water service delivery to the communities of Khayelitsha in an affordable and sustainable manner will be discussed.

“The history of water in South Africa cannot be separated from the history of the country as a whole and all of the many factors that went to create both one of the darkest and one of the most triumphal chapters of human experience. The history of water is a mirror image of the history of housing, migration, land, and social engineering and development” (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, 1994). Water is a necessary basic human right, both in terms of social and economic development. “Water is life and sanitation is dignity” (Kasrils 2002:2). According to Cottle et al. (2001:1) in South Africa, lack of access to this basic human need is part of the unjust division of resources bequeathed on the majority of South Africans by the policy of the past.

“More than 12 million people do not have access to clean, drinkable water and 21 million people do not have adequate sanitation (toilets and refuse removal).

Communities have had little say in the provision of water, sanitation and decision-making in the water delivery. Agencies have reflected broader apartheid ideology.

Access to water is dominated by privileged minority, while the majority of the Populations enjoy little or no water security” (RDP 1994: 22). Inaccessibility to water is



a major impediment to the development of poor communities. “Statistics indicate that only 27 percent of African households have running taps inside the households and only 34 percent have access to flush toilets. While almost 12 percent of South Africa’s water is consumed by households, less than one tenth is consumed by black households” (RDSN 1999:10). In an attempt to remedy the above scenario, certain legislative and policy measures have been put in place by the ANC-led liberal democratic regime. For instance section 1(a) of the Constitution (RSA Act 108 of 1996) recognizes “the Republic of South Africa as a democratic state founded on human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom”. Section 27 (1) (b) of the Constitution qualifies this by stating, “everyone has the right to have access to sufficient water”.

This principle is also communicated in the RDP and section 3(1) of the Water Services Act respectively, it refers to “water necessity for all and everyone has a right of access to basic water supply and basic sanitation”. Section 27 (1) (b) is consolidated and advanced by section 3 (2) of the Water Service Act, of 1997. This section states that “every water service institution must take reasonable measures to realise this basic human right”. One of the fundamental programmes of the RDP were to meet the basic needs of which water is part. The Municipal Systems Act, of 2000 defines a basic municipal service as “a service necessary for ensuring an acceptable and reasonable quality of life, which if not provided would endanger public health or safety or the environment”.

The Water Services Act of 1997 goes a long way in defining basic water supply as “the prescribed minimum standard of water supply services necessary for the reliable

supply of the sufficient quality and quantity of water to households, including informal households, to support life and hygiene. The legislative and policy guidelines as far as water provision is concerned are indicative of the fact that water is indispensable in a person's livelihood. The Water supply and Sanitation Policy White Paper of 1997 defines basic water as a "quantity of 25 liters per person per day. whether this amount of water is sufficient to cover duties such as personal hygiene, direct consumption and nutrition preparation is addressed in this paper. In respect of the quality and quantity of water provision the World Health Organization (fact sheet no.112 of 1996) advances the following principles:

- Every person must have access to 50 liters of water per day with proper sanitation.
- Water supply must be located within a reasonable distance from the household.

In realising the economic and environmental value of water, the RDP aimed at providing every person with adequate facilities for health, through the establishment of a national water and sanitation programme. The aims of this programme were to: "provide all households with clean safe water supply of 20-30 liters per day, within 200m adequate, safe sanitation facility per site and a refuse removal system to all urban households" (RDP 1994:29). In the current political dispensation the RDP envisaged to provide an on site supply of 50-60 liters of clean water; improvement on site sanitation, and an appropriate household refuse collection system.

## 2.1 Water services within the context of developmental local government

The apartheid government designed a system whose intent and purpose was to ensure under investment in municipal infrastructure in the former black areas. Consequently, the South African black majority was denied access to basic services, among others clean water and sanitation. In terms of Schedule 4-part (b) of the Constitution, provision of potable water is the responsibility of local government. The White Paper on Local Government, bestows a developmental character to the new local dispensation.

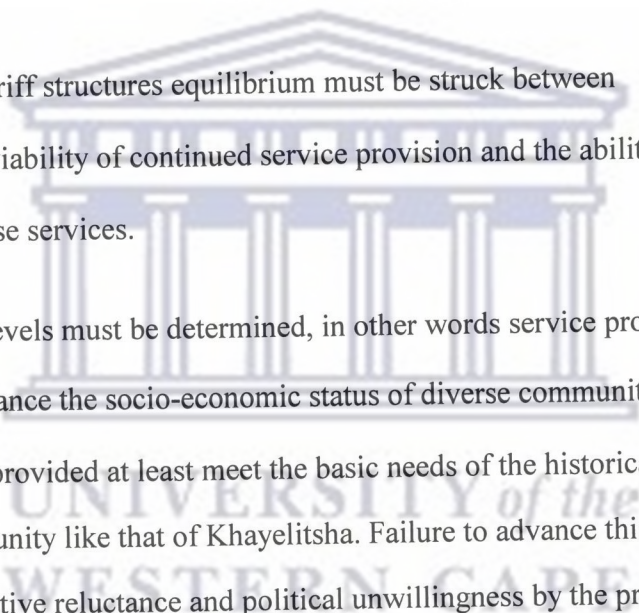
“Developmental local government is local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve quality of their lives”(White Paper on Local Government). According to section 152 (1) (b) of the constitution “local government must ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner”.

The White Paper on Local Government assumes that this will then give rise to the promotion of safe and healthy environment. In terms of the White Paper on local government, March 1998, whenever a municipality is considering delivery options and mechanisms for its territorial jurisdiction it must take into cognisance the following principles:

**Accessibility to services:** It is the responsibility of a municipality to ensure that all the members of its community have access to at least minimum essential services. Any imbalances that exist in terms of access to these minimum essential services must be addressed through the establishment of a new infrastructure and renovation of the already existing one. The Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme (CMIP) under the auspices of the Department of Provincial and Local Government has been established for

this purpose.

**Affordability of services:** Accessibility is informed by affordability. “Even when service infrastructure is in place; services will remain beyond the reach of many unless they are financially affordable to a municipality” (White Paper on Local Government 1998). In an attempt to ensure that indeed basic services are accessible and affordable to the historically marginalised, economically vulnerable and socially degraded black majority of South Africa, this White Paper on Local Government suggests the implementation of the following mechanisms:



- In establishing new tariff structures equilibrium must be struck between municipal economic viability of continued service provision and the ability of the poor to access these services.
- Appropriate service levels must be determined, in other words service provided must take into cognizance the socio-economic status of diverse community to ensure that services provided at least meet the basic needs of the historically disadvantaged community like that of Khayelitsha. Failure to advance this call will only mean administrative reluctance and political unwillingness by the present leadership of the City of Cape Town to recognize and fundamentally address the socio-economic injustices of the past. In the final analysis such a situation can only serve to eternally perpetuate the spatial division of apartheid capitalism.
- Cross-subsidation: Cape Town like the rest of South Africa is characterised by stark inequalities in terms of income and the ownership of the means of production. To this end, the rich must subsidise the poor because they can easily

afford to pay for services.

- Accountability for services: Evidence suggest that the City of Cape Town is responsible and accountable for the provision of affordable water service in an accessible manner to the people of Khayelitsha.
  
- Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and water service: All of the above mechanisms and principles must be developed within an integrated strategic development of the City of Cape Town. Such an approach will ensure that the city of Cape Town does take into cognisance the socio-economic impact of service provision in relation to municipal policy objectives, such as spatial development frameworks, poverty alleviation programme and strategies and local economic development plans.

To this end, in April 2002, the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry has prescribed the following standards for basic water supply, in regulations relating to compulsory national standards and measures to conserve water:

“A minimum quantity of potable water of 25 liters per person per day or 6 kilolitres per household per month, within 200 meters. Water provision must be effective to an extent that no consumer is without a supply for more than seven full days in a year”.

Amidst looming water cut-offs, evictions, property attachment and lack of water access particularly in the informal settlement of Khayelitsha this study investigates the extent to which these benchmarks have been achieved. Indirectly. Even though six million people are still without access to piped water we are clearly on track to make the constitutional

right of access to basic water supply a reality for the people” (Kasrils, 2002:3). Cottle et al. (2001:8) are of the view that neither of these benchmarks have been met. Instead, millions of people are still without water and others are receiving an inadequate supply just to survive. The content and character of any community is judged by the nature of its socio-economic circumstances. It is for this reason that the question of water accessibility affordability and cut-offs in Khayelitsha must be conceptualised and understood within the prevailing socio-economic circumstances of the area. Like the rest of South Africa’s’ black community Khayelitsha has long been subjected to social degradation economic exploitation and abject poverty. The advent of the constitutional liberal democratic dispensation of 1994 has done little work to fundamentally address socio-economic ills of apartheid capitalism.

It is against this background that President Thabo Mbeki in his State of the Nation Address (Parliament) February 2001, identified khayelitsha as one of the nodal points for urban renewal strategy. The following chapter investigates water accessibility, affordability and cut-offs within the socio-economic context of the Khayelitsha community. In other words the chapter seeks to establish whether the prevailing socio-economic circumstances of the area, allow people to easily pay for water services, as is the case with their white counter parts in the affluent areas (Constantia, Pinelands, Camps Bay) that falls within the territorial jurisdiction of the City of Cape Town, or whether such socio-economic conditions entrench, consolidate and advance lack of accessibility, affordability and water-cut- off in the area.

# Chapter Three

## 3. THE SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS OF KHAYELITSHA

This chapter examines the socio-economic status of the Khayelitsha community, with a view to understand whether water cut-offs and evictions are direct results of unwillingness to pay for services or the inability to do so.

Khayelitsha is predominantly an informal settlement. The area or “township” is a product of segregationist policies of the apartheid regime and was established as a mono-functional dormitory town, with no economic base. Khayelitsha is characterized by predominantly low-income housing, isolated from the economic and social opportunities; its residents experience poor health conditions and lengthy commuter trips to places of employment and opportunities. Following years of disparities in the levels of social and economic development, inequitable access to basic services, high levels of unemployment and high level of crime are the order of the day in Khayelitsha.

In his State of the Nation Address (2001), President Mbeki pronounced the establishment of a National Urban Renewal Strategy. The intent and purpose of such a strategy is to invest in economic and social infrastructure, human resource development, and business development, poverty alleviation the establishment of good governance ethos and the strengthening of the criminal justice system. Certain nodal points were identified by the President, for this developmental purpose of which Khayelitsha is part.

### 3.1 Population

Given the population density and the cumbersome informal settlement arrangement, it is virtually impossible for one to estimate the population size of Khayelitsha. In respect

of the 1996 Census estimates, there were approximately 410 000 inhabitants living in Khayelitsha. The census survey estimated that by year 2000, the population size would have grown up to about 600 000.

**Table 1: Population of Khayelitsha**

	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
African /black	119 746	124 349	244 095	99
Coloured	309	475	784	
Indian/ Asian	15	15	30	
White	4	3	7	
Unspecified	796	855	1651	1
	12 0870	125 697	246 567	100

Source:MCA Planners (2002)

**Table 2 Areas where people reside in Khayelitsha**

	<b>Number of people</b>	<b>% of total population</b>
Urban: formal	44 385	18%
Urban: informal	202 182	82%
Total	246 567	100%

Source: MCA Planners (2002)

Both tables 1 and 2 support the assertion that Khayelitsha is predominantly an informal settlement. The cumbersome settlement patterns are making it more difficult to estimate the exact population size of the area. To this end, it is also very difficult to identify people who have no access to basic social services.

### **3.2 Employment**

Khayelitsha as a mono-functional dormitory township has an extremely limited economic base. Among other things the area was established to accommodate the unskilled and semi- skilled workforce who had to service the business interest of the white capitalists in the city centers of Cape Town's former white suburbs (Claremont, Wynberg Constantia etc.). According to the Khayelitsha Retail Study (2001) the overwhelming majority of shack dwellers (90%) and formal house dwellers (83%) are employed as unskilled and semi-skilled labourers. It should be borne in mind that a



Substantial number of Khayelitsha residents are from the former homelands of Ciskei and Transkei. Both these former homelands are the victims of the lack of infrastructure, no socio-economic base, no accesses to basic services and are subjected to abject poverty.

The 1996 census survey indicated that only 27% of the workforce was formally employed. Contrary to this, in 1997 the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) conducted a socio-economic survey and founded that only 24% of the workforce was unemployed. Against this background Khayelitsha is made up of different residential sections and therefore employment ratio will vary from one section to the other.

According to the Foundation for Contemporary Research (FCR) (1996) “Griffiths Mxenge recorded 43% of unemployment, Macassar 37%, Harare 37% and Green Point 39%. Although only 24% of the population is considered to be unemployed, 43% of Khayelitsha residents are not earning an income as they are: disabled (2%) pensioners (5%) housewives (4,1%) seeking employment or unemployed (23,8%)”. According to the Khayelitsha Retail Study (2001) for those who are fortunate to be working they are only serving in the lower economic categories and work as unskilled workforce.

### **3.3 Employment Status**

With no economic base, in essence this means that a substantial income in Khayelitsha is generated outside its jurisdiction, “only a small proportion of formal employment opportunities are offered in Khayelitsha with 4% of the employed population working inside the township” FCR (1996). According to Khayelitsha Retail Study (2001) the average income is R 1 499 per household per month, but this does vary from area to area.

The 1996 census data indicates that approximately 53% of the individuals have no income at all.

**Table 3. Individual incomes in Khayelitsha**

		100%
None	129 464	53
R1- 200	5 444	2
R201- 500	15 066	6
R501- 1000	24 242	10
R1001- 1 500	16 606	7
R1501- 2 500	7 636	3
R2501- 3 500	2 242	1
R3501- 4 500	974	-
R4501- 6000	669	-
R6001- 8000	345	-
R8001 11 000	236	-
R11 001- 16 000	96	-
R16 001- 30 000	35	-
R30 001 or more	15	-
Unspecified	43 493	18
NA: Institution	0	-
Total	246 563	100%

Source: MCA Planners (2002)

**Table 4 Employment status in Khayelitsha**

Employed	67 284	27
Unemployed, looking for work	45 399	18
Not working- not looking for work	6 385	3
Not working- housewife	3826	2
Not working – scholar/fulltime student	31 881	13
Not working – pensioner/retired person	4 583	2
Not working – disabled	1 512	1
Not working – not wishing work	2 017	2
Not working none of the above	5 340	2
Unspecified	132	
NA: age<15	78 204	32
NA: Institution	0	
Total	246 563	100%

Source: Urban-Econ Development Economist (1999)

Table 5 Income earning activities

Types of activities of households heads	Workers living in free standing shacks	Formal houses
Unspecified	2%	4%
None	24%	17%
Unskilled labour	12%	
Unskilled service	34%	29%
Semi- skilled labour	12%	12%
Semi-skilled service	6%	20%
Skilled labour	10%	4%
Skilled service	-	13%

Source: Urban- Econ Development Economist Plan (1999)

In terms of table 3, it is evident that the majority (53%) of Khayelitsha do not have access to the means of income. This then brings forth the question of whether the current water rates levied against the poor majority, in the context of tables 3,4 and 5 of Khayelitsha are affordable or not. The question is later responded to in chapter four of this mini-thesis. In terms of table 5, those who are lucky to be in any form of employment are only occupying low paying jobs, hence they are a low skilled work force. It is against this background that water provision in Khayelitsha must be contextualised.

### 3.4 Education

According to MCA Planners (2002:21) approximately 27% of the community of Khayelitsha is illiterate, 41% have secondary education 1% have tertiary education. The Khayelitsha population is young, therefore the increase in unemployment and lack of recreation facilities forces more youth to roam around. Most of these young people resort to criminal activities as means of income. With a dense population like that of Khayelitsha, the existing education facilities are by no means enough to cater for a large number of students. Subsequent to this more students travel to outside areas to attend school.

### 3.5 Health

The health system of Khayelitsha seems to be in shambles. This can be attributed to poor and inadequate health services, lack of professional personnel and theft of medicines. The socially degrading living conditions that people of Khayelitsha find themselves in are exacerbated by the debilitating health conditions. A study undertaken by MCA Planners (2002:22) revealed that the poor and inadequate health services, lack of personnel and overcrowded facilities subject patients to long waiting periods virtually with no hope of being attended to. "Aids, undernourishment, tuberculosis and inadequate health facilities in the area are matters of serious concern" (Dyantyi and Frater 1998:14). HIV/AIDS seems to be a leading disease in the area. According to Dyantyi and Frater (1998:14) a test made at anti-natal clinics showed that 3,4% were HIV positive in 1994, and 5,4% in 1995 and 10% in 1996. Health facilities in the area are in poor conditions. Medicines are never enough, the necessary equipment not available, bad treatment of patients by nurses and doctors and poorly administered clinics. There is not even one secondary health facility for a population of between 600 000 to 900 000.

### 3.6 Transport

An overwhelming majority of people in Khayelitsha use public transport for mobility purposes. According to Dyantyi and Frater (1998:19) 52% use rail, 17% taxis, 12% bus and 18% private vehicles (including bakkies and lorries). The transport system of Khayelitsha cannot be separated from the broader apartheid policies. In other words the people of Khayelitsha were deliberately placed away from places of work, school, recreation facilities and city centers. The public transport system is "overcrowded and ramshackle with unhygienic, debilitating train coaches". The train service is overcrowded

with 54 030 people boarding and 57 194 alighting daily at the three stations (Nolungile, Nonqubela and Khayelitsha). Even though taxis are available as relatively efficient mode of transport, however they are too expensive for low paid and unemployed communities of Khayelitsha.

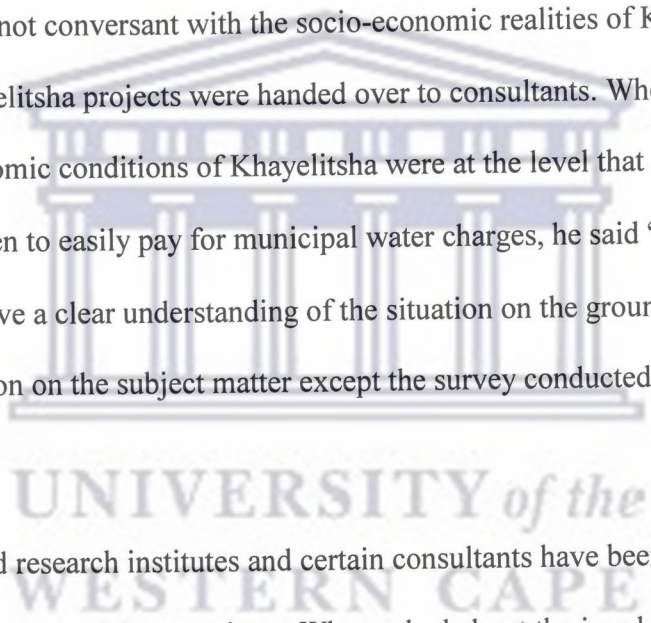
### **3.7 Khayelitsha Urban Renewal Strategy: set to succeed or poised to fail?**

The establishment of a National Urban Renewal Strategy as announced by President Mbeki (February 2001) aimed at alleviating poverty, facilitate human resource development, and assist in the establishment of Small Micro Medium Enterprises and the establishment of good governance in the identified nodal points. The resilient massive socio-economic infrastructure backlog and spatial imbalances of Khayelitsha led to the identification of this area, as one of the nodes declared by President Mbeki. In his Parliamentary briefing on 14 February 2002, Minister Sydney Mufamadi emphasized That the urban renewal strategy rests on three principles:

- The mobilization of people so that they can become active participants in their own development.
- Public sector investment needs to be complemented by private sector investment.
- The inter-governmental relations must form the basis for this urban renewal Strategy.

It is perhaps still early for this paper to assess progress thus far and the socio-economic impact thereof on the Khayelitsha community. However the research findings of this

thesis indicates that most projects are still in their conceptualisation phases. These phases are continuing without the knowledge of the Khayelitsha community on renewal strategy let alone the proposed projects. The entire process is spearheaded by the elite clique of technocrats from the City of Cape Town and self elected “community leaders” whose interest is to meet their own socio-economic ends. Even though projects exist on paper, it is not spelt out as to how these projects will alleviate the socio-economic plight of the people of Khayelitsha. In the interview conducted by this writer with Mr. Mani Sotomie (Area Urban Planner) on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2002, it became self evident that the City of Cape Town technocrats were not conversant with the socio-economic realities of Khayelitsha, hence most of the Khayelitsha projects were handed over to consultants. When asked whether the socio-economic conditions of Khayelitsha were at the level that allows the ordinary women and men to easily pay for municipal water charges, he said “The City of Cape Town does not have a clear understanding of the situation on the ground and there is no existing information on the subject matter except the survey conducted by Census in 1996”.



Against this background research institutes and certain consultants have been consulted to facilitate the establishment of these projects. When asked about the involvement of the broader community in the Khayelitsha renewal programme, he said, “Workshops were held with key stakeholders at various levels”. However out of two hundred random interviews conducted with the people of Khayelitsha not even a single person was aware of the Khayelitsha urban renewal programme.

This therefore suggests that at the moment Khayelitsha’s renewal strategy is an exclusive

affair of the few selected technocrats of the City of Cape Town with a privileged clique of Khayelitsha “community leaders” serving as the appendage of the City of Cape Town leadership. If the people on the ground are intentionally left behind at these early phases, it appears as though it will be difficult if not impossible for them to meaningfully partake in other phases of the programmes. As already alluded to, these are the early days of Khayelitsha renewal strategy; the future is only a matter of gossip for now. Like any other township in South Africa, Khayelitsha is a victim of segregationist, divide and rule strategies of the apartheid regime. The advent of the new constitutional dispensation and subsequent local government legislative and policy frameworks heralded a developmental local government model in South Africa. The extent and purpose of this new model is to “work with citizens and groups within a community to find sustainable ways to meet their socio-economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives” The White Paper on Local Government.

It is against this background that the following chapter locates water accessibility, affordability and cut-offs in Khayelitsha within strategic development plans of the newly established Uni-City of Cape Town. The aim is to establish whether such policy frameworks reflect water related problems in places like Khayelitsha or not.

## Chapter Four

### 4. CITY OF CAPE TOWN'S WATER SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN CONTEXT

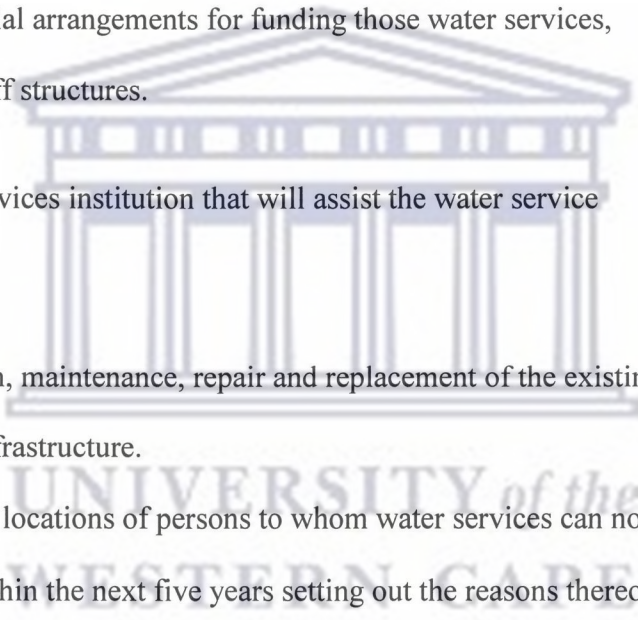
This chapter seeks to establish whether the City of Cape Town's Water Service Development Plan, contextualises the issue of water service affordability or whether it is just exacerbating what appears to be a crisis that manifests itself in the form of evictions and water cut-offs.

In terms of section 12 (1) Water Services Act of 1997 every water service authority as part of the process of preparing its Integrated Development Plan as encapsulated in chapter five of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, must draft a water services development plan for its area of jurisdiction. Among other things, section 13 of the Water Services Act of 1997 provides that such a plan must encapsulate the following factors:

- Physical make up of the area to which it applies.
- Time frames for the plan including the implementation programme for the following five years.
- Number and location of persons within the area who are not provided with water supply and basic sanitation.
- Details of the of the existing water services.
- Information regarding future provision of water services and the water for industrial use and the future disposal of industrial effluent, including –



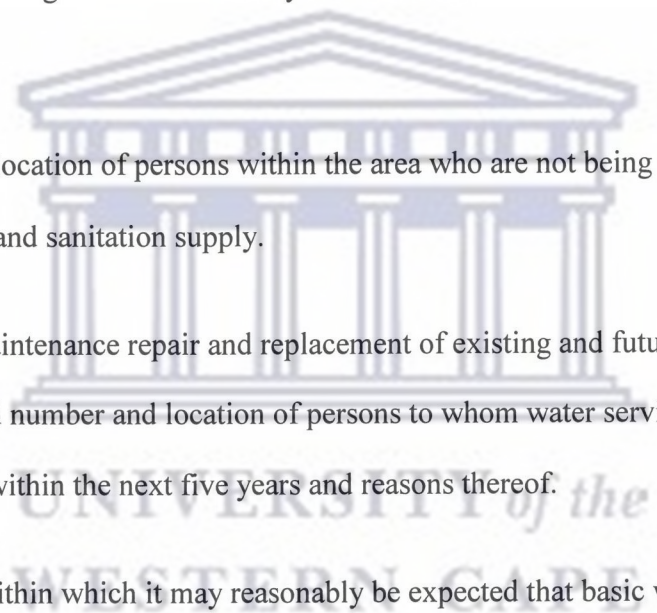
- (i) Water services providers, which will provide water services.
- (ii) Contracts and proposed contracts with the water service providers.
- (iii) The proposed infrastructure necessary.
- (iv) Water services to be used and the quantity of water to be obtained from and discharged into each source.
- (v) The estimated capital and operating costs of these water services and the financial arrangements for funding those water services, including tariff structures.
- (vi) Any water services institution that will assist the water service authority.
- (vii) The operation, maintenance, repair and replacement of the existing and future infrastructure.
- (viii) Number and locations of persons to whom water services can not be provided within the next five years setting out the reasons thereof and the timeframe within which it may reasonably be expected that basic water and sanitation supply will be provided to these persons.



At the nerve center of the new local government dispensation lies a philosophy of people centered governance as propagated by chapter four of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000. To this end, sections 14 and 15 of Water Services Act of 1997 provide that the

drafting and adoption processes of the water services development plan must take into cognizance views of its customers, potential customers, industrial and water service institutions within its area of jurisdiction.

The City of Cape Town's water service development plan is nowhere near close in complying with the above outlined Water Services Act injunctions. In cases where attempts have been made to comply; they are often generic, vague and lack content. The council's water development plan as it stands now is meaningless in terms of materially conceptualizing the following factors about Khayelitsha's water service delivery circumstances:

- 
- The number and location of persons within the area who are not being provided with basic water and sanitation supply.
  - The operation maintenance repair and replacement of existing and future infrastructure and number and location of persons to whom water services can not be provided within the next five years and reasons thereof.
  - The timeframe within which it may reasonably be expected that basic water and sanitation supply will be provided to these persons.

As a chief infrastructure and comprehensive plan (IDP) of the council, the plan is silent on water provision in the City of Cape Town in general and on historically disadvantaged communities in particular. At this juncture it is rather impossible to pinpoint strategic policy framework within which water provision in Khayelitsha

can be materially conceptualized.

#### 4.1 Water infrastructure availability in Khayelitsha

A survey and interviews conducted suggest that water and sewer infrastructure is by no means in acceptable conditions hence it is persistently debilitating. Pothole fibre pipes in the sewer system that were designed with a ten year life span have been underground for more than fifteen and are persistently collapsing at an unprecedented pace. Pipe leakages, blocked drainage system and low pressure during peak water demands are indicative of the constantly collapsing infrastructure. “Lack of information in as far as water conservation is concerned in the area, culture of non-payment and lack of resources are the major contributors to the collapse of the infrastructure. It is against this background that the automated pressure-reducing valve has been installed, educational workshops on the importance of saving water and the meter systems installed” said De Jager. The approach outlined by De Jager appears not to be proactive but reactive hence the approach is addressing the symptoms and not the cause. In other words, the fundamental cause of block drainage and pipes leakages is cheap infrastructure installed that has outlived its usefulness.

The negligence of the council in terms of fixing leaking pipes and blocked drains has to some large extent exacerbated the situation. Almost all the respondents in the formal settlements have complained about leaking pipes and meter systems. “The council does not care about these conditions, all what they want is money at the end of the month. How do you expect us to pay consistently if they do not listen and respond to our complaints? These leakages have been going on for some years; we reported the issue to the council and they promised to come and they have not and we are still waiting.

Who must account financially for the unused water?” bitterly complained one respondent (20 July 2002).

In an interview with De Jager he contested that the council does send people to the reported cases to fix the leaking pipes, however, the following process must be followed to effect water pipe fixing. Firstly, if the inside taps (kitchen, bathrooms) and the outside taps are leaking it is the sole onus of the house owner to fix them at his/her expense. Secondly, in cases where council employees are sent to a reported case the house owner is responsible for the purchase of the material required to fix the leaking taps, pipes or a meter box. Thirdly, the council will only fix the meter box if there is something wrong with it directly, however in the event of a pipe(s) leakage(s) leading to or from a house to a meter box, the house owner bears all the fixing cost. Fourthly, the council has embarked upon a water pressure reduction, particularly during nighttime. “We have discovered that water leaks in Khayelitsha happen during night time”, said De Jager. Fifthly the council has decided to embark upon educational workshops to educate people about the value of using and saving water.

What is puzzling about the outlined measures by De Jager is the fact that leaking water meter boxes, pipes, taps, drain blockage and infrastructure dilapidation are not the case in the historically white areas that fall within territorial jurisdiction of the City of Cape Town. To this end, it appears that upgrading infrastructure in Khayelitsha to a level commensurate to that of these historically white areas is not necessary or is perceived to be a waste of time and resources hence it is not mentioned in the Integrated Development Plan 2002/03 and City of Cape Town Water Service

A study done by RDSN (2000) revealed that about half of the available domestic water is used in garden maintenance, suburban swimming pools, washing machines, washing cars and domestic animals. Based on the findings of this study it appears that more educational workshops on the value of saving and using water effectively is more urgent in the historically white areas. Compared with formal settlements, the informal settlements do not have adequate infrastructure to receive adequate water supply, in fortunate cases where infrastructure does exist, it is clear that it is not in the state of desirability as envisaged in the Water Service Act of 1997. When asked why this was the case, De Jager said “in Khayelitsha illegal settlements have been established on the land earmarked for other purposes, therefore the council does not have strategic water plan for such areas”. What even makes matters worse is the fact that the council does not show any attempts or interest to address lack of infrastructure in the informal settlements.

#### **4.2 Accessibility and affordability of water**

Notwithstanding the dilapidated infrastructure and persistent water cut-offs in Khayelitsha, all the people in the formal settlements and certain parts of the informal settlements do have access to potable water with yard connections and standpipes. The only areas that do not have access to basic water and sanitation supply are the informal settlements that are deemed ‘illegal’.

In these so-called illegal areas people have to travel long, often dangerous distances to get water. “We do not have access to water in this area, the council is of the view that we have illegally occupied Metro Rail’s private property. On that basis we do not fall under

the council's territorial jurisdiction. In order to get water we have to carry twenty litres buckets on our heads across busy streets, it is dangerous for our children and us. As you can witness we do not even have basic sanitation facilities; my house is located next to sewerage dumping area, as you can see I have sores all over my body and nobody cares about the squalid living conditions we are under here ” said one respondent (18 August 2002).

In cases where water has been available, hygienic sanitation has remained a serious problem. People are still using ordinary pit latrines, buckets and chemical; toilets which are often unsanitary, overcrowded and always unpleasant. A survey conducted by this writer revealed that up to seven families are sharing one toilet and a standpipe. Often this results in constant fights about the hygienic state of the facility. In comparison to the informal settlements the formal settlements households are far better off in terms of water accessibility.

As already alluded to, the question of accessibility is inextricably linked to affordability. It would be irrational if water infrastructure was available and yet people did not have the financial means to obtain water, on that basis access to water would be denied to them.

The City of Cape Town claim to have affordable water tariffs for its customers including those who are financially disempowered. The consumption levels and corresponding financial charges are reflected in The City of Cape Town's new municipal account and

Budget 2002/2003 explained, as:

0-6 K1	free
7 –20K1	R2, 73
21-40K1	R4, 30
41-60K1	R5, 46
61K1 onwards	R7, 35

It is self-evident that more water consumption equals high price increase. A question that ought to be answered with honesty and integrity is whether the above outlined tariffs are affordable and sensitive to the prevailing socio-economic circumstances of Khayelitsha as outlined in chapter three of this mini-thesis. Sky rocketing debt arrears, exorbitant current accounts and water cut-off seem to suggest that the above outlined tariff charges, notwithstanding those who can afford to pay, are beyond the financial means of the majority of Khayelitsha community. The recent burning of the council cars in Khayelitsha and the Anti- Eviction Campaign's (AEC) march (31 July 2002) demanding a R10 flat rate payment, the scratching off of arrears and a moratorium on evictions and water –cut-offs on the basis that the majority of people were unemployed and those employed were not in financial positions to pay for services as reflected in The City of Cape Town's new municipal account and budget 2002/2003, validate the above claim.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2002 the AEC convened a meeting in Khayelitsha with senior finance officials of the Tygerberg Administration to address water accessibility through affordable means, the scratching off of arrears and the payment of a R10 flat rate. The AEC's Ntanyane said "Water is a natural resource under; apartheid water was free. The poor are getting poorer while the rich are getting richer. The Khayelitsha community is demanding water as a basic human right. We are still poor and free water was promised

to us before the 1994 elections. We are therefore demanding a R10 flat rate for Khayelitsha and we are saying no to water cut-off”.

When asked whether the current water charges were affordable in the context of abject poverty and consistent rise of unemployment in Khayelitsha, all the interviewed Tygerberg Administration senior finance officials were of the view that it was indeed affordable and that the provision of 6Kl free water has facilitated easy accessibility of water in the area in an affordable manner. “The question of water affordability and debt arrears can easily be laid to rest in Khayelitsha if people could consume within 6Kl free water, people would not be bothered with payments at the end of the month,” said Gilliommmii and Lambrech. Even though the city of Cape Town prides itself with being the first city and only municipality in the country to provide 6Kl free of water, the sufficiency of 6Kl in the context of between four to seven family members or more in Khayelitsha poses serious questions. In all the interviews conducted not even a single household was appreciative of 6Kl of free water.

This is attributable to the fact that firstly the community was not informed about 6Kl secondly, if it is provided people do not know how to assess its impact on their consumption patterns hence there is nothing materially informing them and thirdly water bills and arrears are constantly on the rise amid free water provision. “Why do our accounts go up if there is free water, we do not even know how this works, we only heard about this before 2000 local government elections” said one respondent. (interview, 10 August 2002).

Even though the City of Cape Town is adamantly claiming to be a responsive, and



caring city for its customers, a high unemployment rate has resulted in people not being able to pay what the council deems affordable. The response has been and still is water-cutoffs, evictions and property seizure. Against this background, this indicates that this is not how a caring and responsive city should respond to the socio-economic ills of its community. It must be stated categorically, based on the interviews conducted that people do want to pay, however the problem lies with the capacity to do so. As the question of affordability stands there is no clarity in terms of what constitutes affordability in the context of socially degraded and economically disempowered community of Khayelitsha. Based on the mission and vision statements of the City of Cape Town it seems affordability is conceptualized and understood within the free market system. If this is the case the historical development of society dictates that capitalist tendencies flourish unabated in a substantially developed socio-economic environment. To this end the socio-economic realities of Khayelitsha are the anti-thesis to the pre-requisite of capitalist development. Therefore, the current water tariff structure only serves one intention and that is to deny people of Khayelitsha access to their basic human right, water. In essence this translates to mean no money, no water services.

The absence of a comprehensive and coherent water service development plan and the Integrated Development Plan respectively, as contemplated in Water Services Act of 1997 and Municipal Systems Act of 2000 suggest that the people of Khayelitsha have no say in whatsoever in the decision making processes in so far as the provision of basic water and sanitation supply in concerned. To a large extent the City of Cape Town still reflects broader apartheid ideology and spatial plans; hence the white minority enjoy easy access to water compared to their black counter parts.

### 4.3. Block tariffs or blocked access?

As from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2002 the City of Cape Town has adopted a uniform rates and tariffs system for the entire municipal area. This tariff system uniformity comes after a constant increase in water and electricity charges. For instance the 1999/2000 budget reflects substantial domestic water increases from a three step to a five steps tariff system. The rationale behind such tariff increase is said to encourage savings and inculcate a culture of self-management of water consumption. “To those consumers who are heavy users I issue a challenge to manage their water more effectively so that we can conserve this precious resource,” (Mowzer, City Vision 2001). In recognizing tariff disparities that originated from the fragmented apartheid local government system, the RDP vaguely proposed the establishment of a national tariff structure that among other things would encapsulate:

- A lifeline tariff that would ensure that all South Africans are able to afford water services sufficiently for both health and hygienic requirements and
- The establishment of a progressive block tariff system to ensure that the long-term costs of supplying large volume users are met, and that there is cross subsidy to promote affordability for the poor.

It is against this background that section 9 and 10 of Water Services Act of 1997 empowers the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry from time to time to provide compulsory national standards and norms for water services tariffs. The intent and purpose of such norms and standards are said to be the promotion of socially equitable,

financially viable and environmentally sustainable tariffs. In terms of the Water Services Act, in establishing norms and standards the Minister must take into cognizance the need for everyone to have a reasonable quality of life and the need for equitable access to water services. However chapter 8 of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 mandates a municipality to give effect to the provision of the Constitution (152) by giving priority to the basic needs of the community through ensuring that all members of the local community has access to at least the minimum level of basic services. Later on, section 74 of the Municipal Systems Act suggests that a municipality's tariff policy must reflect the amount the individual users pay for services in relation to the consumption quantity and that poor households must have access to at least basic services through:

- Tariffs that cover only operating and maintenance costs.
- Special tariffs or life line tariffs for low level of use or consumption of services or basic level of services.
- Any direct or indirect method of subsidization of tariffs for the poor.

Even though tariff policy is urged to differentiate between different categories of users and debtors, it is beyond reasonable doubt that the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 and the 2002 norms and standards are advocating the implementation of a progressive block tariff. The purpose of this regulation is to ensure that the tariffs set by a water service institution are financially sustainable. This is achieved by ensuring that all costs incurred in providing services are recovered through the tariff. Even though the Water Services Act and Municipal Systems Act alludes to the setting of tariff structures that accommodate the poor, both Acts fall short of defining and setting criteria to determine

who is poor and not. In realizing the implementation of a block tariff system, the City of Cape Town has installed water meter boxes in Khayelitsha. Over eighty percent of the formal settlement houses are in possession of such a meter boxes.

The chief intent and purpose of such a meter box is to know the quantity of water consumed and allow the consumer to pay accordingly. Most of the respondents interviewed have registered their dissatisfaction with the implementation of a block tariff system on the ground of not having the required money to pay for services they have consumed. “All these years we have been paying a R10 flat rate, all of a sudden we are told about a new system. Where does this come from?” asked one of the respondents (17 August 2002). All the respondents expressed the view that they are not aware of how they are charged for municipal services and that the new tariff has not been thoroughly explained to them. There exist virtually no communication channels between the community and the council except the water bill that is issued every month. Even the bill is not easily understood by some officials of the council, “I do not even understand the bill itself”, said De Jager. One wonders whether amid social decay and economic bankruptcy in Khayelitsha, the implementation of a block tariff system is a socially and economically sound thing to do or whether it is just a blocked access indirectly.

Evictions, property seizure, legal threats and water cut-off seems to be direct results of the block tariff system.

The demands of the Anti-Eviction Campaign attest to the fact that the implementation of a block tariff in Khayelitsha is indeed socially and economically disastrous and therefore a blocked access indirectly. “The implementation of block tariff is tantamount to

privatisation, simply put those who possess the financial means to acquire basic services shall do so and those who do not are automatically excluded” (Mdoda). Asked whether payment and service delivery have improved since the implementation of this system, De Jager was of the view that nothing had changed; instead, the council is using more money to hire consultants to effect water cut-offs and people are still not paying their accounts. For instance, in cases where supply was supposed to be eliminated, nothing happens and where elimination has taken place illegal connections are the answer. “If people are dissatisfied with the meter system they must consume within free 6 Kl of water, people are aware of the implications should they consume more than that” said Gilliomii. However as explained earlier, consuming within 6 Kl of free water has proven to be difficult if not impossible for a family of four to seven members. It would appear as if the block tariff system as introduced by the city of Cape Town is exacerbating the debt scandal in Khayelitsha.

#### **4.4 Debts scandal: who is to blame?**

As already explained the introduction of the meter box system laid the seeds for the debt scandal and the subsequent water cut-offs in Khayelitsha. Over eighty percent of the respondents were indebted with no less than R 5000. When asked why this was the case; varying responses were given. The following were common:

- Due to unemployment we have been unable to pay hence the debt arrears have accumulated to where they are today.
- The council does not read meter box, therefore they estimate the amounts they are

sending to us as our debt.

- There is no uniformity in the financial and debt management of the council, hence arrears vary from one month to another irrespective of whether one is paying or not.
- Leaking taps, meter box and pipes have resulted in water wastage and
- Wrong accounts are sent to wrong addresses and the new tariff system (block tariff) is foreign to the community therefore people do not understand their bills and how they are charged for what they have consumed.

Before the dawn of the negotiated constitutional breakthrough of 27<sup>th</sup> April 1994, historically disadvantaged communities were promised that their debts would be scratched off and that has not happened. By implication we have inherited an apartheid debt. It is becoming crystal clear that debt scandal transcends the narrow view that the installation of meter boxes is the sole cause of the debt scandal. Contrary to the reasons given by respondents for debt scandal, all the council officials interviewed cited the “culture of non payment” as the root cause of the debt scandal in the area. “People do have the money but choose to obtain other luxurious goods (cell phones, clothes and cars), but they refuse to pay for municipal services”, said Gilliommi. All the councillors interviewed were in agreement with most problems cited by the community members of Khayelitsha.

However, they have emphasized the fact that unemployment is the root cause of the water debt scandal in the area. “When people are not employed where do you think they will

get the money to pay for services? asked councillor Mdoda. As already indicated that the majority of the khayelitsha community are heavily indebted, and the reasons given were the failure of honoring the 1993 Kempton Park agreement, debt cancellation, and the incapacity of the old and new administrations to collect what is due to them. Based on the interviews and survey conducted, the council officials failed to recognize the following issues as the fundamental contributory factors to the debt scandal of the area:

- Certain houses do not have meter boxes, therefore it is impossible to know and understand how such households were assessed in terms of water consumption in relation to the bills they receive at the end of each month.
- In cases where meter boxes do exist, council employees are hardly seen around taking meter readings to allow the council to charge consumers accordingly. In essence this means the bills that people are receiving are based on estimation.

“Between four thousand and five thousand accounts are estimated monthly. I cannot understand why the council estimates”, said De Jager.

- Leaking pipes, taps and meter boxes are the principal contributors, vast quantity of water is wasted and people are asked to pay for what they have not consumed and incorrect and inconsistent financial statements are sent to wrong addresses.

It appears as though the situation is somewhat beyond the control of the City of Cape Town. What is making things even worse is the fact that people are indebted beyond their financial means. Against this background, a demand of arrears scratching off and the implementation of a R10 flat rate is appealing, but it remains to be seen as to how the council will deal with it. Even though the City of Cape Town has in its Debt Management

Policy introduced certain cost recovery measures. The next section discusses the extent to which such cost recovery has been successful in ameliorating the debt scandal in the area.

#### **4.5 Debt Management Policy: Set to fail or poised to succeed?**

Chapter nine of the Municipal Systems Act mandates municipalities to promulgate credit control and debt collection policy. To this end in November 2001, the City of Cape Town Policy Task Team drafted a Debt Management Policy. Among other things the chief objectives of such a policy are to:

- Focus on all outstanding debt as raised on the debtors account
- Promote a culture of good payment amongst City of Cape Town debtors and install a sense of responsibility towards payment of municipal accounts and reducing municipal debt.

Gilliommii and Lambretch revealed that the City of Cape Town is in debt arrears of over R2 million from Khayelitsha alone. In an attempt to address this situation, debt management policy 2001 proposed the following guiding principles with the view of accommodating both the interests of the indebted community and the council:

- In implementing this policy human dignity must be upheld at all times.
- Details relating to the debt and the account of the debtor should be correct at all times.
- Debtors and arrangement to pay debts should be treated holistically but different repayment methods may be determined for different types of debtors or area



within the general rule that the repayment period should be in sympathy with the installment that the customer can afford.

- The implementation of this policy should be based on sound business practices. This includes credit worthiness checks when application for services is made as well as debt collection through sanctions of warnings, disconnection, and evictions and other legal processes.

In the context of the above outlined guiding principles, has the council been able to reduce debt and inculcate a culture of payment or has the debt management policy consolidated and advanced water cut off evictions and legal threats? Based on the findings of the interviews with both senior council officials, politicians and community members the answer appears to be that debt management has failed dismally in terms of addressing debt scandal in Khayelitsha. In the face of the policy pronouncement, wrong accounts are sent to wrong people, cases are not treated holistically and with more sympathy on the installment that the debtor can afford, instead the opposite has taken place.

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The only principle that has gained expression in the policy is that of implementing the policy along business practices. Indeed people's inability to pay for services has been met with vicious evictions, water cut-offs, legal threats and property seizure. Is this the upholding of human dignity as proclaimed by the policy? When people are evicted from their homes, property taken from them and water cut-offs effected it is definitely not the respect of human rights and dignity. The majority of the respondents were of the view that the council is not accommodative to their socio- economic realities and that all it

cares about is money.

## 4.6 Negotiable amounts

Section 4.4 of the debt management policy provides that debt and repayment arrangement be treated holistically. However different repayment periods and methods must be determined for different types of services, debtors or areas within general rule that the repayment period should be in sympathy with the installments that the debtor can afford. Section 5.3 negates section 4.4 by providing that some form of payment acceptable to council is forthcoming from negotiations with the debtor. What is acceptable to council is not clear and therefore has resulted in tension between the community and the council official, in the sense that what is acceptable to the council might not necessarily be accepted to the community as well. After the alleged payment defaulters were threatened with evictions and water cut- off they soon went to the council to make some payment arrangement. Most of the respondents agreed to pay between R50 and R100 towards their arrears and further to pay the current account every month. How the council calculates the current account without meter reading is still a mystery. Amid R50-R100 payments, debt arrears seem not to be decreasing. "Each and every month we witness the rise of our debt, what exactly are we paying for? Asked one respondent. (9 August 2002).

The survey conducted discovered that old age people were the most vulnerable to the council's drastic recovery measures as enshrined in the 2001 debt management policy, hence their pension grant is never enough to accommodate their basic needs." Out of the evicted pensioners four have died in 2002 alone and others are living in squalid living

conditions surrounded by abject poverty”, said Ntanyane. The council has often vehemently denied claims that it was evicting and cutting off water supply to the old age people. “We are not evicting old age people, we do have the indigent policy to cater for them they must just come to the front and ask for assistant”, said Van Schalwyk. At the face of the glorified indigent policy, the survey conducted discovered that indeed old age people were and are still evicted, served with threatening legal letters and seizure of property. For one to qualify for the indigent assistance, the policy provides that a combined household income of R800 or less is required. The policy is silent about those who do not have a steady or no income at all. The policy further goes on to ask the indigent debtor who is in arrears to pay a nominal amount within an understanding that arrears debt is not written off. In financial terms the policy put forward R20 as assistance towards the payment of the debtor’s account. Owing to lack of communication channels between the community and the council, very few people are aware of the existence of the indigent policy. None of the respondents was aware of it even though they qualified. In the final analysis the debt management policy has failed to live up to its mandate of bringing about effective and efficient debt management. As it stands the policy is not comprehensive and coherent enough do deal with a cumbersome debt situation of Khayelitsha. The policy is fraught with contradictions and therefore remains largely useless in the face of debt arrears scandal in Khayelitsha. This should not be surprising on the following grounds:

- The policy is the sole product of the bureaucratic elite of the council, who have no clue of the debt arrears dynamics in Khayelitsha. The content of the policy does not reflect consultation with the community of Khayelitsha, hence it does not

reflect holistically on the dynamism of the area in as far as the debt scandal is concerned.

It is explicitly explained in the policy that its implementation is premised on sound business practices. However in the context of high unemployment and squalid living conditions it is not clear what this means.

#### **4.7 The impact of cost recovery measures**

The alleged over R2 million debt arrears in Khayelitsha alone attests to the fact that despite the implementation of cost recovery measure as contemplated in the 2001 Debt Management Policy payment, has not improved. “At the moment I owe the council more than R15 000. I am not working I am a pensioner and I have just buried my daughter who suffered from Aids related diseases a few months ago. I must pay the house rental to the bank; feed my grandchild and myself. I will never be able to pay back debt arrears no matter how hard I try,” said one pensioner Date (24 August 2002). Even though the people came to the council to make payment arrangements, owing to constant increase in unemployment, the agreements agreed upon between individual households do not last. Against this background it seems impossible for the economically disempowered community of Khayelitsha to pay debt arrears of approximately R15 000.

The payment arrangements that the council is advocating have exacerbated non-payment. For instance, the payment arrangement provides that a resident who owes more than R3000 and failed to honor the initial payment agreement, is required to pay 10% of R3000 (R300), the current amount and reconnection fee in the case of disconnected water supply. Thus far this approach appears to have failed.

#### **4.8 Limited access to basic water and sanitation supply**

The preamble of the Constitution recognizes the injustices of the past and therefore provides the establishment of a just society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. The Water services Act of 1997 and the Municipal Systems Act of 2000-regard water as a basic human right. The mission and vision of the City of Cape Town provides that the city is responsive to the needs of the people, delivers affordable services to all and provides every Cape Townian with free basic services. Section 5.3 of Debt Management Policy categorically negates such sentiments and rhetoric of the City of Cape Town by stating that the implementation of this policy must be premised on business practices and that payment arrangement acceptable to the council must be agreed upon. By implication this essentially means basic services must be rendered as a commodity in the private market, therefore it must yield profit. In essence this means no money, no service. This is the principal premise of the block tariff system as implemented by the council.

#### **4.9 Burden on working class women**

Owing to water cut-offs women, because of the patriarchal social relations, are forced to look for other sources of water since they are expected to look after the welfare of their families. “It is women who must look for community taps, schools or churches that can allow them to have access to water. It is women who must be humiliated by requesting water from their neighbours that reluctantly allow them to use their taps. They have to waste their time by walking to alternative sources and standing in long queues”, said Xali. The cost recovery measures deny working class women the potential benefits from

access to water. According to Van Niekerk (2000, Vol.45 p.32) “easy access to water will alleviate the burden based in the performance of their reproductive, productive and community work”.

#### **4.10 Adverse health implications**

“Water is health and sanitation is dignity”, (Kasrils, 2002:3). Asked what will be the health implication in the event of water cut-offs, all the respondents were of the view that this would signal the end of their lives, since they used water in almost everything they did. Lack of access to water is a pre-requisite for unhygienic conditions that result in an increase in common diseases such as diarrhea and dysentery. Although there is no comprehensive information available on the health implications of water cut-offs, the survey conducted revealed that most people in the informal settlements are living in unhygienic environments, and that the bucket system (sewerage) is still prevalent in these areas and therefore people are vulnerable to water borne diseases. Lack of water in such areas have exacerbated the filthy conditions.

#### **4.11 Effects on the constitutional gains**

The Constitution provides that everyone has the right to have access to basic services and that the state must within its available resources take reasonable measures. Asked whether it was constitutionally sound for the council to cut – off water supply, all the respondents were of the view that this is unconstitutional. “We have fought for these rights, and shed our blood and tears for the respect and advancement of our basic human rights we did not vote for what we are getting now,” said one respondent. (25 August 2002).

#### **4.12 Financial implications for cost recovery measures**

As stated earlier and as acknowledged by council officials, the implementation of cost recovery measures (contracting out water cut-offs, installation of yard meters, meter readings, hiring of lawyers to lay charges against “defaulters” and to cope with the effects of water borne diseases) have proven to be a costly project.

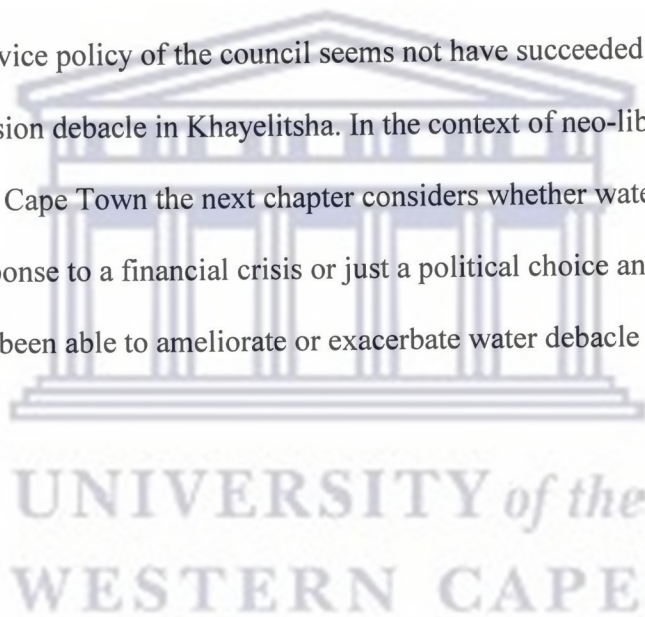
#### **4.13 Community Response**

In the quest to establish egalitarian communities, grassroots politics has been dominated by the emergence of progressive militant social movements (Landless Peoples Movement, Anti-Eviction Campaign, and the Anti- Privatization Campaign.) It appears that the traditional civil movement, South African National Civic Organization (SANCO) has abandoned its historical task of defending and advancing the broader interests of the community.

To this end, the image and status of SANCO has been tainted. It is against this background that the above-mentioned social movements have strongly come to the fore and played a leading role in as far as community struggles are concerned. By contrast the newly established social movements are pro- active in their approach compared to the already existing ones. For instance, in Khayelitsha in cases where the community’s water supplies is cut-off, the AEC reconnects the supply and evicted people are brought back to their homes. However, traditional political parties (ANC, PAC and UDM) and the council have lost credibility within the community of Khayelitsha. “We do not care about party politics, the unresolved housing question and water crisis has been going on for quite some time in Khayelitsha, no progress has been made thus far. These political parties only come to us before election to steal our votes, we are not interested anymore,”

said one respondent (25 August 2002). It is ironical that in the new South African political dispensation service delivery in the City of Cape Town appears to be informed by racist thinking and practices of the apartheid guards who still occupy strategic position within the council. The development plans of council as reflected in the Integrated Development Plan 2002/03 and priorities of the council is by no means directed at fundamentally addressing the socio-economic legacy of apartheid capitalism that have come to engulf the people of Khayelitsha, hence these people are not in a position to pay municipal services.

The neo-liberal water service policy of the council seems not have succeeded in ameliorating water provision debacle in Khayelitsha. In the context of neo-liberal tendencies by the City of Cape Town the next chapter considers whether water cut-offs are indeed a genuine response to a financial crisis or just a political choice and the extent to which the council has been able to ameliorate or exacerbate water debacle in Khayelitsha.





## Chapter Five

### 5. WATER CUT-OFFS: A RESPONSE TO A FINANCIAL CRISIS OR A POLITICAL CHOICE?

Cognisant of the fact that water has been commercialized by the City of Cape Town, in the milieu of high unemployment and poverty in Khayelitsha existing opposite to the sky rocketing salaries and bonuses paid out to top Council officials, this chapter seeks to establish whether water cut-offs are a response to a financial crisis or a political choice.

Over R7 Billion of the Council's budget goes towards operating expenditure every financial year, of which a substantial amount of this money is used to pay council staff salaries. According to Ntabazalila (Cape Times, 9 September 2002) top city officials are receiving R1, 3 million in bonuses, in the face of water cut-offs, evictions and seizure of property. However, the Deputy Mayor (Cape Times, 9 September 2002) saw nothing wrong with this as she argued that the payment of these bonuses was a requirement in terms of the Municipal Systems Act. Against this background, little if any is budgeted for infrastructural development purposes for the historically disadvantaged communities such as that of Khayelitsha. Contrary to this, historically white areas have been and still are improving their already existing infrastructure. The renovations of Ratanga Junction, canal Walk, Convention Center, Cavendish Square and Kenilworth Center attest to the fact the developmental priorities of the council are still concentrating in the predominantly white areas, amid languishing poverty in the former black townships of Cape Town.

It therefore cannot be said that the council does not have the financial means to scratch

off the debt arrears or at least reduce them. This confirms the naked reality of the racially polarized development and prioritization patterns of the City of Cape Town. One of the ANC councilors, Mr. Gabriel has said that “the council does not care about the infrastructure needs of the historically disadvantaged communities, all what they are concerned about is the sustainability of the already affluent white areas. After all this does not surprise us, hence most senior council officials and executive council members are from these areas”. When asked about whether water cut-off has resulted in consistent payment of services, all the politicians and council officials interviewed unanimously said it did not. They further said that the process of water cut-offs was poorly managed and that illegal reconnections have made things even worse.

What the council officials and councillors intentionally omit is to acknowledge that skewed development patterns on racial basis and their sustainability only serve to entrench and advance apartheid style settlements. Based on this, the water crisis in Khayelitsha will not just disappear, but will continue for as long as development is understood along racial lines. The emergency of progressive social movements and the recent hostile relations between the unions (COSATU in particular) and the government have been given impetus by the replacement of the RDP by GEAR. In recent press statements by the COSATU more often GEAR has been cited as an obstacle to equitable distribution of resources and rendering of services in more affordable and sustainable fashion. “GEAR is the problem, ever since the introduction of this macro-economic policy municipalities have been privatizing basic services at an unprecedented rate”, said Viottii.

It is against this background that this chapter considers whether water cut-off has been a genuine response to a financial crisis or political choice in the context of GEAR. In other words, the chapter investigates the impact of GEAR in service delivery and considers whether GEAR has been able to ameliorate water cut-off and facilitate easy access to basic municipal services in an affordable manner or whether it has just the culture of water cut-offs and evictions as the option.

## **5.1 TALKING LEFT BUT ACTING RIGHT: A SHIFT FROM RDP TO GEAR**

In an attempt to establish an egalitarian South African society, socio- economic and legislative frameworks were drafted and endorsed by the ANC- led government. According to Marais (1998:177) the RDP emerged as the most concerted attempt to devise a set of social, economic and political policies and practices that could transform South Africa into a more just and equal society.

The RDP was premised on the understanding that growth must be achieved through redistribution, hence this would lay the basis in terms of addressing the legacy of apartheid capitalism. Among other things, one of the fundamental aims of the RDP was to meet the basic needs of the people particularly the historically disadvantaged communities. Notwithstanding geographic limitations to the availability of water, the RDP was of the view that a careful attention should be paid to the location of the new settlements.

It is against this background that former President Nelson Mandela (Sunday Times, 01 May 1994) said, “ We have emerged as the majority party on the basis of the programme,

which is contained in the reconstruction and development book. The nationalization of the mines, banks and monopoly industries is the policy of the ANC and change or modification of our views in this regard is inconceivable. That is going to be the cornerstone, the foundation upon which the Government of National Unity (GNU) is going to be based”.

In analyzing the prevailing socio-economic circumstances of the post- apartheid South Africa, the RDP came to the conclusion that inadequate supply or lack of basic water services and abject poverty in the urban townships has reached crisis proportions. The high rate of unemployment, water cut-offs and evictions attest to the fact that after seven years of liberal democracy in South Africa very little has improved for the historically disadvantaged communities such as that of Khayelitsha. At the face of the much glorified Constitution (RSA Act 108 of 1996) that recognizes the Republic of South Africa as a democratic state, founded on human dignity advancement of equality, the achievement of human rights and freedom, water cut-offs, evictions and the high rate of unemployment make a mockery of such noble ideals.

Talking left (i.e. supporting a social democratic model of governance) and acting right (the advancement of neo-liberal agenda, in other words when the market forces decide the socio-economic direction of a particular country) has long been a characteristic of the reformist left. Relying on working class support, being sympathetic to the capitalist system, which they merely wish to tinker with and not destroy, they talk the language of socialism while promoting policies that benefit capitalism. Barely two years of the ANC government in office, the RDP lost credibility as a proactive, relevant and necessary

socio-economic policy framework to fundamentally address the injustices of apartheid capitalism.

As time went by, the scope and content of the RDP lost integrity and coherence, particularly within the top layer of the ANC leadership. To this end the RDP became to mean anything any one wants it to mean, within little ingenuity, anything could be made to fit within its goals. “The RDP from the onset faced the ignominy of suffocating love from newfound friends.... Old guards bureaucrats and sundry technocrats across government were mainly given responsibility of policy and programme implementation. Consequently the disaster befell the RDP” (Bond 2000:118). In qualifying Bond’s argument, Marais is of the view that “crisis” ridden co-ordination of the RDP reached its climax where it matters most, in the programmes implementation phase. “At the center of the RDP implementation, the major shortcoming was departmental hostility towards the intrusive role of the RDP office, difficulties in drawing in and keeping on board a wide range of actors throughout the process of project planning and implementation, lack of co-ordination between government departments, the private sector reluctance to engage in potentially risky initiatives and the ineffective performances of some state and the RDP structures” (Marais, 1998:178).

The “death” of the RDP was soon confirmed by the introduction of a neo-liberal macro-economic policy framework, Growth Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) whose intent and purposes are diametrically opposed to those of the RDP. Despite the former Deputy President Thabo Mbeki’s (National Assembly Speech, 14 June 1996) sentiment and rhetorical claims that GEAR aimed at achieving the objectives of the RDP, the fact of

the matter is that the RDP was a people driven socio-economic framework, whose content and character was shaped by the living realities of the ordinary South Africans. In turn the RDP envisaged a just society, while GEAR is a market prone strategy, given content and character by economics of developed countries whose intentions are to liberalize and integrate the South African economy into a global one, irrespective of the immediate pressing socio-economic woes of South Africa.

## **5.2 WATER SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE CONTEXT OF GEAR**

The introduction of GEAR in 1996 has resulted in commercialization of most municipal services, and the City of Cape Town is not immune from this model and therefore water commercialization in the City of Cape Town municipality is dealt with in the following section of this chapter. Privatization in essence requires the rendering of the role of the state in the manner in which services will be rendered. According to Van Niekerk (2000, Vol.45:67) the new local dispensation defines municipalities as administrative entities preoccupied by strategic and policy formulation processes and therefore regulates service delivery. In essence in terms of the definition provided above, municipalities are only service ensurers; the real responsibility of rendering the services is given to another body, presumable the private sector.

The extensive involvement of the private sector in the provision of basic services has come to mean:

- Citizens are turned into customers, based on business relationship with the service provider. It is therefore not accidental for the council to refer to its citizens as

customers.

- Public goods are turned into commodities, in other words business practices Applies: no money, no services. It is on this premise that water meter boxes have been installed and block tariff imposed. Only those who possess the financial means have access to water service and those who are not financially sound, are denied access.
- The introduction of block tariff system. What this means is that the user is liable to pay the full cost of rendering the service. Municipalities have tended to provide those services they deemed financially viable.

All the above factors are to be found in all the policy frameworks of the City of Cape Town, by implication this therefore means council's policies are the extension of neo-liberalism at the local government level. "Services should be provided at levels which are affordable and that municipalities are able to recover the cost of service delivery (The White Paper on Local Government 1998:131). The Municipal Systems Act reflected a different approach to services delivery. For instance, the Act provides as follows:

A tariff policy must reflect that the amount individual users pay for services should generally be in proportion to their use of that service (section 74 (2) (b).

Section 74(2) (c), states poor households must have access to at least basic services through tariffs that cover only operating and maintenance costs, special tariffs for low levels of use or consumption of services or basic levels of services. Section 74(2)(d) provides that tariffs must reflect the costs reasonably associated with rendering the services.

Even though the City of Cape Town claims to be responsive to the needs of its customers and that policy frameworks are in place to deal with defaulters and assist those who are struggling to pay their accounts, more often the current water debt scandal in the Khayelitsha community is attributable to a lack of progressive response and policy frameworks of the council as discussed in Chapter Five of this mini-thesis. For instance the Water Services Act of 1997, provides that municipalities must draw up their Water Services Development Plan reflecting water provision for their areas.

In respect of Khayelitsha, the City of Cape Town's water plan is silent on the number and location of persons in the area who are not provided with basic water and sanitation supply and the reasons thereof, details of the existing water services and the proposed infrastructure. What the council instead has done was to introduce the block tariff system without analyzing water service provision and the socio-economic realities of the community of Khayelitsha. With the persistence of leaking pipes, and the ineffective billing system, the introduction of the block tariff system only served to consolidate and advance the unresolved debt scandal in the area.

Consequently it is not clear how the council calculates each person's consumption patterns, because some houses do not have meter boxes, no readings take place where a meter box exists, and wrong accounts are sent. To this end water provision in Khayelitsha has often been characterised by the debt scandal that the council has declined to own on the grounds that the debt arrears in Khayelitsha are attributable to a 'culture of non payment' in the area. Based on the survey and interviews conducted in this study, it became it must be categorically said that it became apparent that the debt scandal in Khayelitsha is not



attributable to one factor (e.g. culture of non payment) as claimed by the council. Several factors, as discussed in Chapter Four of this mini-thesis, are at play and have contributed immensely to the debt scandal. Even though the council promulgated a Debt Management Policy to address the alleged over R200 million debt arrears owed by the Khayelitsha community to the council, the scandal is far from over, owing to the cost recovery cost measures that it has unilaterally imposed on Khayelitsha. Instead of establishing a sound debt collection system, inculcate a culture of payment and reduce debt arrears, as envisaged by the Debt Management Policy, water cut-offs and evictions have been the answer. The only thing that the council's Debt Management Policy has been able to achieve was to run the provision of basic services along market principles, with subsequent dire results on those who do not have the means to acquire basic services at the market price.

It is against this background that the mini-thesis has argued that water service provision in Khayelitsha must be understood within the prevailing socio-economic realities of the area; failure to do so will only serve to advance the divide and rule strategy in the context of combined but unequal development in the Cape Town municipality. This is precisely what the council seems to underplay; there is a false perception by the council's technocrats that after the 1994 elections all is well in the historically disadvantaged communities of South Africa, and Khayelitsha is no exception. On the basis of water cut-offs and evictions and the inability of the community to pay debt arrears and current accounts, the cost recovery measures as imposed by the council have proven to be a dismal failure.

It defeats one's logic when a city of Cape Town manager alone is paid a R1, 2 million salary and when R1, 300 million bonuses are paid to top council managers including sky rocketing salaries and allowances to Executive Council members whereas the council simultaneously speaks of debt arrears in Khayelitsha. This urges one to ask whether, against this background, water cut-offs are indeed genuine response to a financial crisis or just a political choice. Based on the ideological orientation of the national government and the City of Cape Town in terms of the functions of a municipality, it is apparent that water cut-offs are by no means a genuine response to a financial crisis, but rather a political choice. For instance GEAR, the IDP and Debt Management Policy of the City of Cape Town provide that municipalities must be run like businesses. In the context of Khayelitsha, what this in essence means is that the majority of people would not have access to water as their basic human right on the basis of not having the required amount to purchase the services at the desired price by the council, as most people are unemployed.

To expedite the running of the Uni-City along business lines, the council has embarked upon an aggressive water commercialization programme as explained earlier. In the context of poverty prone circumstances business principles do not stand a chance to survive, and this has been precisely the case in Khayelitsha. Water commercialization has not only dismally failed to address the question of water accessibility and affordability, but it has immensely contributed to misery in the area, particularly to those who could not pay for services at an affordable rate as deemed by the council. It is self-evident that as long as the council negates the socio-economic realities of Khayelitsha, cost recovery

and commercialization measures are doomed to fail. In an attempt to fundamentally address the question of water accessibility, affordability and the impact of cost recovery measures of the council, the mini-thesis provides the following recommendations, not as a panacea to the financial and technical woes of water provision in Khayelitsha, but merely a guide to a comprehensive, coherent and practical approach to the problem at hand.

## **6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Firstly, it is necessary to understand that several factors have immensely contributed to water cut-offs and the adverse effects thereof. Among these are the debt inherited from the apartheid dispensation, pipes leakages which have contributed to massive volumes of lost water, and an inefficient billing system. Secondly, by all means it is necessary that the council recognizes that its strategic development strategy (IDP), Water Service Development Plan and Debt Management Policy are fraught with inconsistencies and are dialectically opposed to the economic realities of Khayelitsha that have given birth to and still exacerbate the debt crisis in the area. Thirdly, the council should be aware that its policies appear to be solely the product of its technocrats and private consultants and therefore fails to reflect the aspirations of the ordinary community of Khayelitsha. In the face of water cut-offs and evictions such policies will not enjoy legitimacy within the community.

It is against this background that this mini-thesis recommends that the first step should be the cancellation of all the debt arrears to allow people to start on a new level. It must be understood that calling for debt cancellation is premised on the understanding that the

In the context of high rate of unemployment and absence of economic base in Khayelitsha, what this differentiated services approach means is that those who do not have the financial resources will have to stay within the 6Kl of water provided for free; should more than this be consumed, a corresponding financial responsibility must be honored and failure will result in disconnection and evictions as usual. Clearly those people who are residing in the affluent historically white areas are not affected as they possess the financial means to acquire the services. In essence this means apartheid style of development and redistributing wealth and resources is still at play but now with the assistance of few black faces, who once spoke the language of the economically disempowered, economically exploited and socially degraded people but who are now advancing neo-liberal tendencies.

To this end, water provision in the City of Cape Town has been informed and guided by neo-liberal tendencies that manifest themselves in cost recovery measures (e.g. commercialization of water, and meter installation). Based on the survey and interviews conducted it became clear that at the center of service payment, unemployment was and still is a major problem. As one interviewee said “We are not working, where do you think we will get the money to pay for those services? We even struggle to put a slice of bread on our tables”, asked one respondent (22 June 2002).

Based on the policy documents perused and responses given during the interviewing sessions to this writer, it is apparent that the council officials negate the socio-economic realities, hence in their simplistic analysis and incorrect understanding concluded that the people of Khayelitsha did not want to pay. It is therefore necessary to ask: What guides

the city of Cape Town when it comes to the rendering of services to the historically disadvantaged communities like that of Khayelitsha. Based on the high level of water cut-offs and evictions, in the historically disadvantaged that fall within territorial jurisdiction of Cape Town it would appear that the council does not have any particular approach.

### **5.3 COMMERCIALISATION OF WATER IN THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN: WHO BENEFITS?**

The dawn of the new liberal democratic dispensation in South Africa heralded at an unprecedented pace a fundamental shift away from the “statist” service delivery models of the apartheid capitalism (where the state subsidized and delivered municipal services although on the basis of racism) towards a neo-liberal service delivery model. In this regard the municipal services are running along business practices. In other words the state in the latter model act as service insurer rather than as the ultimate service provider.

According to Smith in McDonald (2002:36) one of the key motivations for water commercialization in Cape Town has been the drive to improve cost recovery. Unaccounted For Water (UWAF), poor billing system in low income areas and non payment of services rendered have contributed in the progressive operational under-recovery of R100 million a year in the water sector alone.

### **5.4. The evolution of commercialization policy**

The evidence of the shift to commercialize service delivery in Cape Town emanates from policy frameworks by the Uni-City Commission and interviews conducted. The Uni-City Commission was composed of five councillors from ANC and NNP, and each from DP. It is against this background that policy recommendations (Discussion Document and

Strategic Recommendations) of the current council leadership were forwarded by the multi-party Commission. The multi-party of the Commission in turn meant that recommendations forwarded were broadly supported across political lines and went to the new Unicity councillors with a stamp of approve from major political parties. It is on these bases that neither the DA nor the ANC as the leading political forces in the council can claim innocent in the aggressive implementation of services commercialization.

### **(a) The Discussion Document**

Even though the document does not explicitly refer to commercialization, a strong case is made to allow the council to render basic services along business lines. For instance, section 3.1 of the document alludes to move boldly beyond the current emphasis on service provision issues to a position where the new Uni-city council understands its role as service ensurer. The following sections strengthen the view that the City of Cape Town must be run along business lines:

3.3 Stresses the need to modernize the way local government operates.

6.1 Calls for greater competition in service delivery.

6.2 Calls for a strong emphasis on partnership approach in service delivery

8.1 States that the current modus operandi of the council must be dismantled and be replaced with business units.

8.2 Calls for the creation of small and focused corporate centre to manage the activities of service delivery.

8.3 Calls for the establishment of ring-fencing of business units.

What is obviously missing in the discussion document is the reference to capacity

disadvantaged communities of Cape Town easily fit in within the water commercialization scheme. As has been and still is the case in the policy document development processes of the City of Cape Town, the Discussion Document in no way reflects the aspirations and ideas of the economically disempowered communities. Even though public hearings were held, however Macdonald (2002:22) is of the view that inputs were largely post facto with virtually no opportunity for the public to participate during the course of developing the document.

### **(b) Strategic Recommendations**

“All the stakeholders acknowledge the reality that a significant proportion of local government service delivery responsibilities are already outsourced and that this proportion is likely to increase in future” (Strategic Recommendations ,November 2000). The following recommendations in no way changed the commercialization stand of the council as encapsulated in the Discussion Document.

Briefly, the recommendations are:

- Service delivery ring fencing, this should include competitive incentives
- Ring fencing should always assist in revealing true service delivery cost and that all the services should therefore be ring fenced from a financial accounting perspective.

Particular attention is given to addressing the aspect of industrial relations, which inhibits

## 5.5 IS THIS WHAT WE VOTED FOR? 2000 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

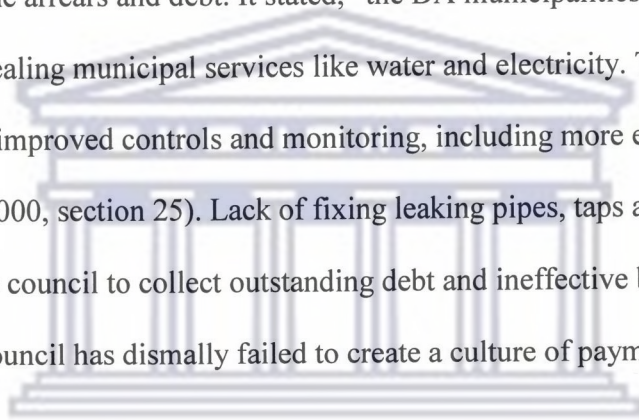
To no surprise the elections were won by the NNP who later formed an alliance with DP and later established DA. The Uni-City was and is still under the leadership of the DA, while the ANC were second runners- up and therefore were given four seats in the mayoral executive committee. Based on the analysis that should the ANC take those four seats its ability to act as an effective opposition would be compromised and that the ANC policies and approaches were different to those of the DA, this section discusses the perceived differences and both parties' ideological orientation in terms of water service commercialization. "In DA controlled municipalities, cost savings through competitive outsourcing and privatization will be instituted in an ongoing drive to provide better value for money.

The Democratic Alliance in its Local Government Election Manifesto of 2000 has argued that "local and international experience has shown that the introduction of businesslike approach, competition, and private sector involvement in the delivery of municipal services, in other words commercialization leading to appropriate outsourcing and privatization, leads to significant savings and improvement in the quality of service delivered. Privatization and outsourcing also creates new opportunities for employment in the private sector and increases job creation in new projects financed with the resultant cost savings. The eventual effect is more overall employment in the city and town, and more wealth for all the people".

As earlier stated, water cut offs and evictions in Khayelitsha attest to the fact that the



introduction of business like approaches in the delivery of water denies access to those who do not have the financial means to acquire such services. It is therefore not correct to say that water commercialization has improved the quality of service delivered and that employment opportunities have been created. The reality is that council's intentions to restructure its labour force have resulted in job losses and the few lucky employed staff is employed on contractual basis. What the DA is not saying is that the so-called employment opportunities have been created for its own supporters. In its manifesto the DA promised to create a culture of payment for all services consumed above lifeline level by strictly collecting all the arrears and debt. It stated, "the DA municipalities will also clamp down on people stealing municipal services like water and electricity. Towards this aim we will institute improved controls and monitoring, including more effective metering systems" (DA 2000, section 25). Lack of fixing leaking pipes, taps and meter systems, incapacity of the council to collect outstanding debt and ineffective billing system suggest that the council has dismally failed to create a culture of payment in Khayelitsha.



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Beyond any reasonable doubt the DA is in favor of water commercialization. According to a DA council member Neilson (Cape Times, 10 November 2001) only competitive service delivery through outsourcing and privatization will achieve cost saving in municipal services. In a far as the pronouncement on service delivery commercialization, the ANC is much more subtle compared to the DA. Throughout its 2000 local government election there is a reference to the public sector as the preferred bidder for service delivery, but this is refuted by the ANC's reference to the involvement and

engagement in partnerships with other sectors. By logic one was expecting the ANC as the liberation movement turned ruling party, to understand that the public sector does not have the required skills and resources to address the legacy of the past and therefore capacity building is urgent in this regard.

The substitution of the public sector by the private sector in no fundamental way addressed the legacy of the past in terms of access to basic municipal services in a sustainable manner. Based on the perusal of both parties' election manifestos and attitudes towards the implementation of water commercialization measures, it is not possible for one to assess the claim that ANC policies and approaches are diametrically opposed to those of the DA.

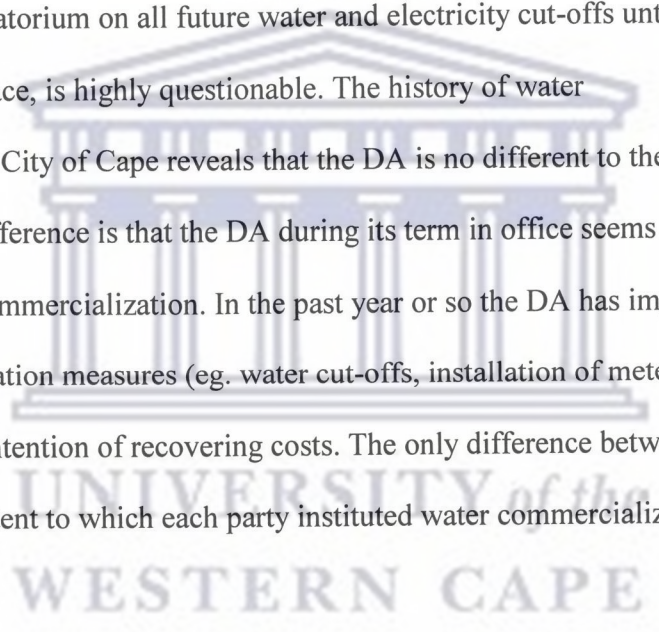
### **5.6 Water Commercialization in Practice**

At the local government election forum held in Gugulethu on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2000, Peter Marais (Former Mayor of the Unicity) alluded to a lengthy list of municipalities in South Africa that are under the political leadership of the ANC and where municipal services are been commercialized.

Marais point was that even though the ANC professed public sector as the preferred option for service delivery, in practice their actions suggested otherwise. "It is the ANC, not the DA that has been behind the most ambitious municipal service privatization programmes in the country –with Johannesburg's iGoli 2002 being but the largest and most controversial example. The DP and NNP have been supportive of all these initiatives and have even rebuked the ANC for not going far enough or fast enough with the privatization agenda" argues McDonald (2002:20). During the reign of the ANC

leadership in the two substructures (Tygerberg and City of Cape Town from 1996-2000) the outsourcing of municipal services gained credibility to an extent that there were 75,400 water cut-off in the period between 1999-2000.

It is an irony that the ANC during the 2000 local government election was calling for a free lifeline supply of water and electricity, while the organization has been responsible for the implementation of cost recovery measures during its reign. Against this background, the ANC's insistence at the first Uni-City council meeting of 15 December 2000, that there be a moratorium on all future water and electricity cut-offs until a lifeline policy has been put in place, is highly questionable. The history of water commercialization in the City of Cape reveals that the DA is no different to the practices of the ANC. The only difference is that the DA during its term in office seems to expedite the processes of water commercialization. In the past year or so the DA has implemented aggressive commercialization measures (eg. water cut-offs, installation of meter system and evictions) with the intention of recovering costs. The only difference between the two political parties is the extent to which each party instituted water commercialization in Cape Town.



## **5.7 WHITE RULES ENDS, BLACK POVERTY GOES ON**

Fanon (1963:152-153) argues, “The national middle class discovers it’s historic mission: that of intermediary. Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation, it consists prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today outs on the mask of neocolonialism. The national bourgeoisie will be quite content with the role of the

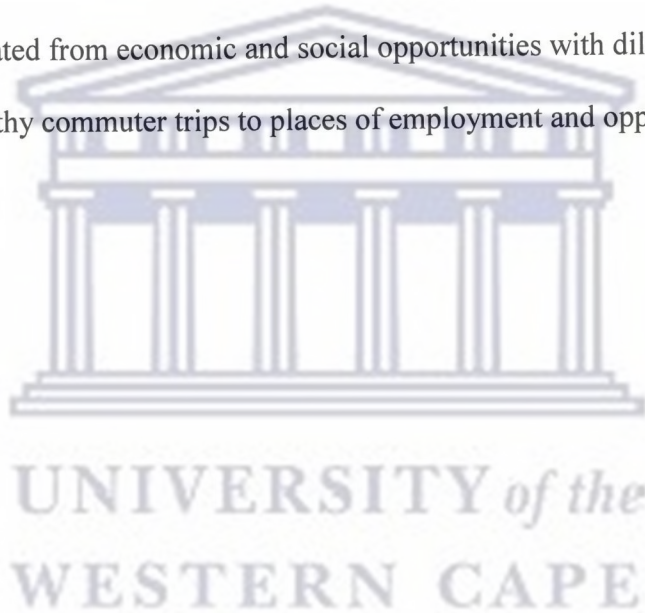
Western bourgeoisie's business agent, and it will play its part without any complexes in a most dignified manner. But this lucrative role, this cheap-Jack's function, this meanness of outlook and this absence of all ambition symbolize the incapacity of the middle class to fulfill its historic role of bourgeoisie.

Here, the dynamic pioneer aspects, the characteristics of the inventor and of the discoverer of new worlds, which are found in all national bourgeoisies, are lamentably absent. In the colonial countries, the spirit of indulgence is dominant at the core of the bourgeoisie; and this is because the national bourgeoisie identifies itself with the Western bourgeoisie, from whom it has learnt its lessons ... In its beginnings, the national bourgeois of the colonial country identifies itself with the decadence of the bourgeoisie of the West. We need not think that it is jumping ahead; it is in fact beginning at the end. It is already senile before it has come to know the petulance, its fearlessness or the will to succeed of youth".

Fanon's warning could not be more relevant in South Africa. South Africa prides itself with a black democratic government with political power that lacks economic content. The historical development of society suggests that the economy is the superstructure of any society. Those who own and direct the commanding heights of the economy dictates the content and character of socio-economic development patterns of any society. In the context of Cape Town the white minority are still occupying the commanding heights of the provincial economy, with black people only left to sell their labour in order to survive. It is therefore no surprise that water cut-offs are rife in white

areas as they are in the black townships. The question of water affordability, the impact of cost recovery measures and cut-offs ought to be understood within this context.

In his National Assembly address (1998) on Reconciliation and National building, President Mbeki referred to South Africa as two nations within one nation. The one being the economically disempowered black majority and the other being the economically empowered minority. Khayelitsha, in the context of the affluent areas of the city of Cape Town, is a mirror image of the above outline of South Africa's socio-economic realities. Khayelitsha as a dormitory suburb is dominated by informal settlements that have no economic base. It is isolated from economic and social opportunities with dilapidating health facilities and lengthy commuter trips to places of employment and opportunities.



# CHAPTER SIX

## 6.1 CONCLUSION

This chapter establishes the fact that, so long as the historically disadvantaged communities of Khayelitsha continue to experience persistent water cut-offs and evictions, South Africa cannot continue to pride itself about being a developmental state whose historical responsibility is to address the socio-economic legacy of apartheid capitalism, so as to allow the easy access to affordable basic social services in a sustainable manner.

In the milieu of a democratic South Africa founded on human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights, the people of Khayelitsha have been subjected to water cut-offs and evictions. This is despite the fact that the Constitution and the Water Services Act of 1997 recognise water as basic human right and a necessity for all. The understanding and advancement of these legal instruments by the City of Cape Town has proven not to be in harmony with a South Africa that recognizes the injustices of the past and concerted efforts to establish a just society. For instance water services institutions are by law required to take reasonable measures to realize the fulfillment of basic human rights. The mini- thesis has argued that some people, particularly in the informal settlements do not have access to water. Based on the perusal of the incoherent and illogical Integrated Development Plan 2002/03 and Water Service Development Plan 2001 of the council, it became self evident that the council is reluctant to address the question of water accessibility and affordability that has led to water cut-offs in Khayelitsha.

current debt arrears are beyond the financial means of the debtors, and that the economic realities of these debtors suggest that no matter how hard they try, it will be impossible for them to settle such debts. Moreover, the study has discovered that amounts have been and are still estimated and vast amount of water is wasted due to leaking pipes. Based on the understanding that quite a substantial number are not paying for water services on the grounds that they do not have the money that the council deem to be affordable, the payment of a R10 flat rate seems to be appropriate in this regard. Even though there has been argument that R10 is not sufficient, it appears to be a huge amount in the context of non payment, it will also begin to instigate a culture of ownership and responsibility and create a reciprocal relationship between the council and the community. The interviews conducted have revealed that council officials are isolating the economic realities of Khayelitsha community and the ability to pay for services, it therefore unclear as to what has informed the promulgation of the Debt Management Policy and the Integrated Development Plan of the City of Cape Town.

The affluent economic realities of the former white areas that fall within the territorial jurisdiction of Cape Town reveal that people in those areas can easily afford to pay what the council deems affordable. Among other things, the above outlined juxtaposition must inform development planning and basic service provision in the City of Cape Town if we are to talk about a caring, responsive city and in a country that recognizes the injustices of the past and envisages to establish a just society based on the achievement of human rights.

The White Paper on Local Government alludes to the new local dispensation as

developmental. In other words municipalities are no longer mere mechanical administrators of service provision, rather they are now a leading force in consultation with their communities to find sustainable ways to address the socio-economic problems of such communities. Community participation in the City of Cape Town has come to mean anything that one wants it to mean. In no way have the people of Khayelitsha participated in any developmental objectives of the council, this has led in many cases in people disowning the council. The recent burning of the council cars and confrontation between the police and the community of Khayelitsha attest to the divide that exists between the council and its community. It is therefore suggested that the council devise means and ways to allow the community to partake in the development objectives of the council. Failure to take into cognizance these recommendations will serve to forever perpetuate apartheid style of administration, with the black majority having no access to basic municipal services, and subjected to abject poverty while living adjacent to white minority areas with easy access to basic municipal services.

This will be very close to the “two nations within one nation”, notion the one being an economically disempowered black majority, and the other a privileged white minority as earlier argued by President Mbeki. If the democratic South Africa is to live to its fullest and gain legitimacy and dignity, particularly from those who have been and are still degraded socially and exploited economically, then one could argue that water cut-offs, evictions and lack of access to basic municipal services will not redress the socio-economic problems of the historically disadvantaged communities such as that of Khayelitsha.



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- Mr. De Jager : Area Water Enginner, 08 August 2002
- Mr. M. Sotomie : Urban Planner, 13 May 2002
- Mr. Van Schalwyk : Acting Director, 08 August 2002
- Mr. Mius Gilliommi : Principal Accountant, 14 August, 2002
- Mr. Lambretch : Head of Debt and credit control, August, 2002

### **Councillors**

- Mr. H. Mdoda (ANC) : 20 May 2002
- Mr. Gabriel (ANC) : 06 September 2002

### **Samwu:**

- Mr. L. Viottii (National Water Co-ordinator), 17 August 2002

### **Anti-Eviction Campaign**

- Mr. M. Ntanyane : 11 August 2002



# APPENDIX

## Questionnaires

**N.B.** The first (A) set of questionnaire was specially designed for householdS. The second (B) set was designed for council officials and councilors, union members interviewed and the progressive social movement (AEC) in Khayelitsha.

**A**

1

<b>Table1: Access to water</b>	
<b>Q:</b> How do you get your drinking water?	
Piped- internal with meter	
Piped – internal with pre-paid meter	
Piped – yard tap with meter	
Piped – free communal tap	
Do not have access	

2

<b>Table 2: Access to sanitation and refuse collection</b>	
<b>Q:</b> What type of toilets does this household use?	
Flush	
Improved or VIP latrine	
Ordinary pit latrine	
Bucket toilet Chemical	
No toilet Other (specify)	
<b>Q:</b> Approximately how much does your household pay per month for a water bill?	
Does not pay	
R0-50	
R51-100	
R101- 150	
R151-200	
R201-300	
R300+	
Do not know	

3.

<b>Perception of water service price</b>	
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In your opinion is the price you pay each month too high, too low or matches the amount of water you use?	
Too high	
Too low	
Justifiable	
Do not know	

4.

Ability to pay for services	
Q: How easy or difficult is it for you to pay for water services that you have in terms of the total budget of your household?	
I easily afford to pay for water service	
I can afford to pay only if I cut back on other essential goods like food and clothing	
I can not afford no matter how hard I try	
Do not know	

5.

Statistics on service arrears	
Do you have any arrears for non payment of water or other services	
Q: If yes what is the approximate value of these arrears?	
R50- 100	
R101-200	
R201-300	
R301-400	
R600+	
Q: If so, how far back do these arrears go?	
6 months	
A year	
2 years	
3 years	
4 years	
5 years and more	

6.

What arrangements have you made to pay for your arrears	
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7.

Experience with service cut-offs for non payment		
Has your household ever experienced any of the following ?	Yes	No



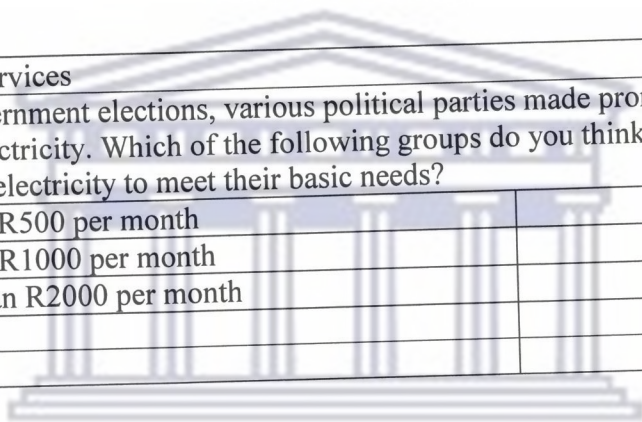
Having your water cut-offs for non payment		
Eviction for failing to pay		
Seizure of property for failure to pay		
Actual legal action taken against your household		

8.

Coping strategies for services cut-offs		
Q: When you experience water cut-offs how does your household cope with these disconnections?		
We go without services until it is reconnected by the municipality		
We get water from neighbours		
We get water from the community taps		
We reconnect water ourselves		

9.

Attitudes towards basic services		
Q: In the recent local government elections, various political parties made promises to provide free water and electricity. Which of the following groups do you think should be entitled to free water and electricity to meet their basic needs?		
Those who earn less than R500 per month		
Those who earn less than R1000 per month		
Those whose earn less than R2000 per month		
All households		
No household		



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10.

Attitudes towards covering the cost of free		
Q: Where do you think the money to pay for these free services should come from?		
The government		
Extra taxes on the wealthy households		
Extra taxes on businesses		
Extra on the poor		

11.

Q: One of the ways that has been proposed to help pay for free services is a block tariff. This is a system where the price of a service like water or electricity increases the more you use it. For instance, if you use water to fill a swimming pool you will have too much

more per liter than someone who just uses water for washing dishes or cooking. What is your feeling on this?

12.

Q: Do you think it is socially and economically justifiable for a council to cut-off water supply for those who cannot afford to pay?	Yes	No
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13.

Q: What is the health implication of water cut-offs?

14.

Q: Do you know how much you are being charged for the amount of water that you are using a month?

15.

Q: How often does the council take readings from your meter system?	
Often	
Seldom	
They do not come at all	
No meter	

16.

Q: The water bills that you receive from the council: Are they reflective of the amount of water you are using?	Yes	No
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18.

Q: Are you aware that access to water is your Constitutional right?	Yes	No
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18.

Q: What do you propose as a solution to water cut-offs?

**B**

1.

Q: What are the conditions of water infrastructure in Khayelitsha?

2.

Q: What measures are in place to ensure that water, as basic human right as enshrined in the Constitution, is accessible to everyone in Khayelitsha?

3.

Q: Given the low economic base in Khayelitsha, do you think that the current tariffs are affordable? Please elaborate on your answer.

4.

Q: To what extent does the provision of free water facilitate affordability of water in Khayelitsha?

5.

Q: Why do you cut off people's water supply

6.

Q: By cutting-off people's water, what are you hoping achieve?

7.

Q: What is the relationship between the inability to pay for services and property attachment and evictions?

8.

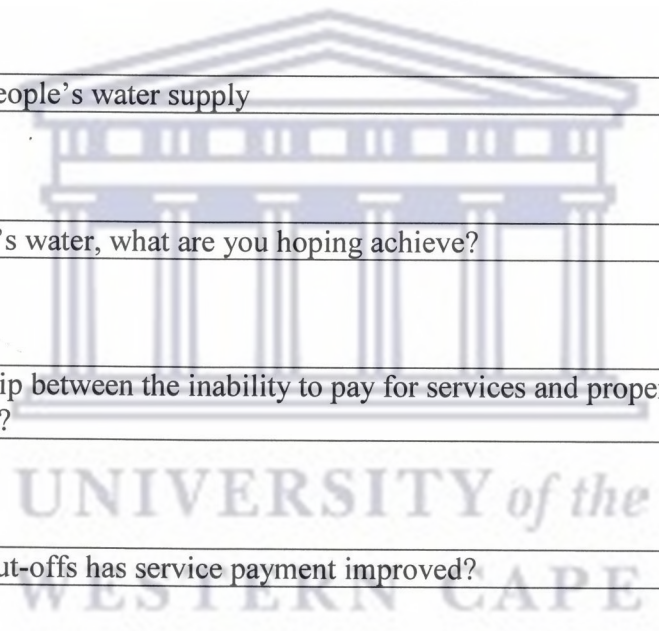
Q: Flowing from water cut-offs has service payment improved?

9.

Q: In terms of section 27 of the Constitution (RSA Act 108 of 1996) everyone has a right to have access to water as a basic human right. Do you therefore think that it is legal to cut-off people's water?

10.

Q: What is the total number of water cut-offs to date?



11.

What is the current water debt for Khayelitsha alone?

12.

Q: In certain cases households' water service debts are as high as R6000 why has the council not reacted early to save the situation?

13.

Q: It appears that those who have experienced water cut-offs are indebted beyond their financial means. Where do you think they will get the money to pay for the outstanding amounts?

14.

Q: Do you think the real problem is unwillingness to pay, or rather the ability to pay? Please elaborate on your answer.

Unwillingness to pay

Inability to pay

15.

Q: In terms of reconnection what is the arrangement?

16.

Q: What is the health implication of water cut-offs?

17.

Q: In an area that has high-level unemployment, why has the council opted for the meter system?

19.

Q: In the face of high unemployment rate and low economic base of Khayelitsha are cost recovery measures likely to succeed. Please elaborate your answer.

Yes

No

20.

Q: Do you think water should be privatized? Please elaborate your answer.

21.

Q: In terms of the council policy who should get free water service?

22.

Q: In cases where a family does not have any source of income to pay services, what is the position of the council?

23.

Q: What is your plan for the unaccounted water?

24.

Q: many people are complaining about the ineffectiveness of your billing system, what measures are in place to rectify this?



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