THE ROLE OF RURAL-BASED MUNICIPALITIES TO PROMOTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF MOLEMOLE AND BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITIES IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Masters in Public Administration

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2013

THE ROLE OF RURAL-BASED MUNICIPALITIES TO PROMOTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF MOLEMOLE AND BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITIES IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

By

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(MINI-) DISSERTATION / THESIS Submitted in (partial) fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

in the

FACULTY OF   MANAGEMENT & LAW

(School of Leadership)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

Supervisor: PROF. O Mtapuri

2013

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research mini-dissertation, *"The Role of Rural-Based Municipalities to Promote Socio-Economic Development: The Case of Molemole and Blouberg Municipalities in Limpopo Province"* hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Masters in Public Administration has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Mr. N.J Modisha

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the following people without whose support I would not have completed this research study:

- All the respondents who participated in the study. Without them, the study would not be possible;
- My colleagues, managers and subordinates, for giving me time to conduct my field study;
- Dr. O. Mtapuri who, as my Supervisor, provided professional support and advice throughout the research project;
- The Administration staff at Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership for their administrative support; and
- My wife, Mano, kids, as well as parents, for being so understanding to allow me to conduct the study and compile this report at the time when I was supposed to be with them.

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
CDWs	Community Development Workers
COGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CPMD	Certificate Programme in Municipal Development
CPS	Centre for Policy Studies
CRC	Citizen Report Card
DFA	Development Framework Act
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
KPAs	Key Performance Areas
LDOs	Land Development Objectives
LIBSA	Limpopo Business Support Agency
LIMDEV	Limpopo Economic Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SDBIP	Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan
SDF	Spatial Development Framework

Abstract

This article measures the expectations of citizens against local government's legislative mandate to deliver services to citizens within the context of the Molemole and Blouberg Municipalities in Limpopo. In doing so, it aims to contribute the discourse on governance from the perspective of the governed. The qualitative study utilized purposive sampling and collected data using unstructured questionnaires; individual and focus group interviews, observation and participatory tools. The key findings are that citizens in the study area are in dire need of the following services: water, electricity, sanitation and sewerage, road maintenance services, housing, refuse removal and health services in that order; and that citizens were unclear about the functions of national, provincial and local government in relation to housing, health and other services. They felt that a local municipality has the responsibility to tar and maintain roads within its jurisdiction, including district roads and even to provide housing and health services. They also felt that, while local government is touted as the sphere that brings government closer to the people, it has not been accorded the necessary powers and functions to provide basic services to communities at a satisfactory level. As a result, since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, communities have lost faith in the ability of local municipalities to improve their welfare.

Key words: service delivery, governance, municipalities, essential services

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The local government system of municipalities in South Africa is an establishment to give effect to Chapter 7 (ss 151–164) of *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* (Act no.108 of 1996). The constitution (1996) obligates local government to:

a) provide democratic and accountable government;

b) ensure a sustainable provision of services to communities;

c) promote social and economic development;

d) promote a safe and healthy environment; and

e) encourage the involvement of communities and sector-based community organizations in the matters of local government.

Thus, arguably, local governments are primarily responsible for implementing policies in a way that is developmental and empowering. According to Reitzes, M (2009), local governments in South Africa are also meant to be the sphere of government exhibiting the maximum levels of participatory, accountable, transparent and representative engagement with communities. Maserumule (2008) further asserts that "municipalities are no longer instruments of service delivery, but are also assigned a role as agents of economic development in their areas of jurisdictions around the country".

Section 195 of the Constitution obligates public officials to ensure that they utilize resources effectively, efficiently and economically. It also goes further to argue that public administration must be accountable, transparent and development-oriented. Local government has undergone much transformation since 2000 (Williams, 2006). This change has been necessitated by government's realization that there is a need to modernize all spheres of government.

The Municipal Systems Act,2000 (no. 32 of 2000) requires municipalities to undertake development-oriented planning so as to ensure that it strives to achieve the objects of local government set out in Sections 152 and 153 of the constitution. One of the core components of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000) is that it must reflect an assessment of the existing level of development in the municipality, which must include an identification of communities that do not have access to basic services. Chapter 4 of Municipal Systems Act enjoins municipalities to develop "a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance…."

It is believed that involving citizens in the policy formulation and implementation will ensure municipalities are accountable and can help restore trust in the incumbent government in particular and public administration in general. This implies that communities must be engaged and consulted when service delivery priorities and programmes are determined. As asserted by Mokwena and Fakir (2009), "…deliberative democracy and participation at local level can help to democratize formulation and implementation of development plans".

Prior to the adoption of the constitution (1996), structures of local government were created by decree of provincial administrators with delegated powers to provide services on behalf of these administrators (SALGA, 2004). The concept of developmental local government was introduced with the intention of changing local government from being a tier of government to a sphere of government (Cloete, 1997).

The sphere of government means executive and legislative powers are vested in the Municipal Council (Cloete, 1997). This was a paradigm shift away from a hierarchical division of government structures and powers to the one of cooperativeness, distinctiveness with constitutional recognition. As stated in Cloete (1997), the new local government system has been built on the structures

of the earlier transitional system, i.e., *the pre-interim phase (1993-1995), the interim phase (1995-1999) and the final phase (1999) to the election of December 2000*. However, as stated in Nyalunga (2006), the power of local government as vested by the constitution is fragile as section 139 of the constitution states that "when a municipality cannot fulfil an executive obligation in terms of legislation, the relevant provincial executive may intervene to fulfil that obligation".   This, in some cases, means putting the municipality under administration.

The *White Paper on Local Government* (1998) aims to establish a framework for developmental local government that requires involvement of citizens to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs so as to improve the quality of their lives. It is hoped that involving communities on policy priorities and reporting back to them on their achievement can enhance public accountability and restore trust and legitimacy in the local governance system. It has therefore become increasingly important that development initiatives that pay attention to local perceptions and ways are more likely to be relevant to people's needs, and to generate sustainable, timely and relevant interventions (Mokwena & Fakir, 2009).

The *White Paper* also provides guidance on the role of councillors in local municipalities. There are broad categories of councillors: Ward Councillors and PR councillors. A PR (proportional representative) is elected through the party lists and is primarily accountable to the party and their role is to interact with local and provincial party structures (Paradza, Mokwena & Richards, 2010). Ward Councillors on the other hand articulates the concerns of their constituent residents in council committees. Ward Councillor should hold meetings with residents in order to take their concerns and needs to municipal officials for implementation.

They (Ward Councillors) also assess whether services are fairly, effectively and in a sustainable manner so they can have the intended impact. Councillors are an important stakeholder as they serve as an interface between citizens they represent and municipal officials who implement policies (Paradza, Mokwena & Richards, 2010). In addition to this, councillors are expected to play a watchdog role on the governance of the municipality.

1.1.1   Traditional Leadership as a partner for Local Government

According to Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act no. 41 of 2003, the involvement should be extended to traditional authorities as well as other local civil society formations. Sustainable partnerships between traditional leaders and local government must be built in order to enhance local governance and excellence in service delivery. Traditional leaders are mostly based in the rural areas of our land and their involvement in policy discourses is of utmost importance.

The institution of traditional leadership is recognized and protected in Chapter 12, Section 211 of the constitution (1996). But their exact role, powers and functions have not been clarified and this might be the reason for some conflicts between local municipalities and traditional leaders. As stated in *Municipal Structures Act* of 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), municipal council "may invite" representatives of traditional leaders for council meetings. This means they are just invited like any other member of the public and they do not even have voting powers in council decisions. The government must come with clear guidelines as to the roles, powers and functions of this important institution (as opposed to minimalistic approach) to ensure they play a meaningful role in the drive for realization of the developmental objective.

This is supported by the *White Paper on Local Government* (1998) which proposed for a reconciliation of Chapters 7 and 12 of the final constitution. While Chapter 7 provides for the establishments of elected local governments, Chapter

12 only recognizes traditional leadership as an institution (Cloete, 1997). The fact that they were not voted for (compared to elected councillors) may raise important accountability questions. It is generally argued that traditional institutions are an important partner for local municipalities for the following functions:

- Convening meetings to consult with communities on priorities. In most villages, they are still respected by their subjects and hence their meetings (*kgoros*) are well attended;

- They can represent the interests of their communities at municipal council meetings, as they are much closer and share in the challenges they face. This is important considering that most residents in rural areas may not able to articulate their interests and needs to councillors. Mokwena and Fakir (2009) acknowledges the reality that social, political, economic, and even cultural relations of inequality exist and can therefore compromise the extent of participation of those sections of the community that are at the margins. Inclusion of traditional authorities can help to enhance the quality of participation and avoids the assumption of total consensus in development issues; and

- Lastly, they can assist in settling of land disputes and allocation of land for economic development projects. This is important to ensure residents benefit from the development in their areas.

1.1.2 Rural Development: A strategy to achieve Developmental local government

As the country moves to the close of the second decade of democratic dispensation there is still glaring underdevelopment in rural areas. Rural development is about taking actions and initiatives aimed at improving the standard of living in non-urban people, rural poor, in the rural villages of our land. According to Legistalk (2010), the concept of rural development has changed significantly during the last three decades. Rural development, it is argued, is not

necessarily agricultural development because agricultural development is focused on increased agricultural production (Legistalk, 2010). Furthermore, Rural Development is a strategy to improve the social lives of the rural poor, including improvement in education, health and nutrition (clean water and access to sanitation) as well as a reduction of gender and income inequalities (Legistalk, 2010).

This is true considering that most people working in farms are still facing exploitation by their bosses, be it through lower salaries or surprise and often sudden evictions after long hard years of labouring for them. It is therefore a challenge to local municipalities to create sustainable decent work through investments in social and economic infrastructure.

Specifically, Developmental local government aims to achieve the following outcomes (*White Paper on Local Government, 1998)*:

To provide and improve infrastructural services which is an important element of social and economic development in communities. The objective of developmental local should also strive to reduce the past disparities among rural and urban areas. This is a quite a challenge in rural areas as there is a need to secure access to land and services to the poor residents found in these areas. Again, infrastructure in rural areas is at such an inferior state that huge investments are required to achieve "real" development.

Job creation is another important aspect to be addressed by the objective of developmental local government. This would require efforts to stimulate local economic development to address income inequalities among the urban and rural residents. There is therefore a need to review existing policies to encourage investment in rural areas of our land. This involves using procurement systems of purchasing goods and services by municipalities from local suppliers and service providers.

This should also involve procurement from the informal sector as a way to boost this sector to graduate to the formal sector. The ultimate impact would be to increase job creation and contribute to economic growth through the multiplier effect. Municipalities can provide services like training to assist residents acquire skills that will make them sustainably employed. Also municipalities could assist small businesses to acquire the markets, locally, regionally, nationally and also internationally. This would be in line with the constitutional requirement for municipalities to promote the socio-economic development for local communities.

1.1.3 Local Government and Corruption

The *Municipal Finance Management Act* 2003 (no. 56 of 2003) stipulates that municipalities must establish sound and sustainable financial management systems and controls. The act was promulgated to cascade norms and standards of the national and provincial treasury to the local sphere of government. It seeks to provide for guidelines for municipalities to create systems and controls to monitor the usage of public resources by municipalities in order to realize the objective of public accountability.

According to Ghutto in *Parliament Oversight and Accountability Model* (undated) accountability is defined as "a social relationship where an actor (individual or an agency) feels an obligation to explain and justify his or her conduct to some significant other (the accountability forum, accountee, specific person or agency)". The South African Institute of Race Relations (Hennie & Bekker, 2009) has proposed the following moral and perhaps cynical oath for public officials and politicians:

> *We pledge that the money received by us will be held in solemn trust and will only be used in the public interest and in accordance with the law. We swear to be especially vigilant against the unethical or dishonest use of moneys in our care. We will never abuse our privileged position for our own personal financial gain, nor divert the money for party-political gain or for personal enrichment of officials.*

It must however be mentioned that accountability does not only relate to financial matters, but also relates to non-financial issues like leadership, effective interaction with the citizenry and acting professionally at all times. Municipal accountability can go a long way in effecting democratic control and assuring public confidence as local government is closest to people on the ground.

There are myriad reports on corrupt and fraudulent activities relating to irregular and improper awarding of tenders in order to benefit relatives and friends of either councillors or municipal officials. As stated by Dens Beckett in *The Star* (2011), "the ANC culture now is that if you are in office and not rich you are fool." Corruption poses a serious threat to the struggle to build a caring society and erodes the moral fabric of society (Zuma, 2010). As stated by Yunus Carrim at the Institute of Financial Municipal Officers (IMFO) Annual Conference in October 2010, it is not like these unethical deeds do not happen at provincial or national spheres, but it is because at the local government level they are in the public eye.

Rural municipalities can ill-afford corruption because they do not have enough resources to deliver the much needed basic services. Corruption will thus have dire consequences for these municipalities as they have to setup unending committees and invest time and money to deal with it. Zuma (2010) posits that there will be consequences for corruption and lack of accountability by public officials. Some of the "consequences" are already manifesting themselves through service delivery protests in most communities around the country.

There are more opportunities for corruption in those municipalities that lack proper financial skills, poor application of policy and legislation and in some cases lack of knowledge of legislative frameworks. Local Municipalities must have fully-functional accounts committees to assist in the oversight of their financial affairs. But not all municipalities have functioning public accounts

committees, which require interventions by national and provincial spheres of government (Parliament Research Unit, 2008).

According to Dike (undated), the following are the causes of corruption that can negatively impact on the ability of local municipalities to deliver basic services:

- Poor salaries to political and administrative officials may lead to acceptance of bribes to augment the low income;
- A wrong perception that political office is a means to accessing wealth. Some politicians perceive political activity as an investment and appointment to the office is seen as a return on that investment; and
- The weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanisms. This requires a vigilant and strong civil society and independent oversight over municipal administrative matters.

Like most countries in the world, South Africa is faced with a modernized and sophisticated citizenry that seeks more accountability on the part of the government. The pressures of globalization and widespread access to communication technology led to increased opportunities for citizens to demand more from their governments (Rondinelli, 2007). Rondinelli (2007) goes on to state that governments were seen by citizens as being too plodding, ineffective and inefficient.

This implies that citizens no longer want to be passive participants in decisions that determine their destiny. They demand an active role as the voters in the policy formulation. The government and municipalities must provide constant feedback to communities on their achievements and actions.

Municipalities must therefore create effective structures to enforce public accountability of the usage of resources (financial, physical, human, information & technological) they are entrusted with. According to Khan and Chowdhury (undated), public entities (municipalities included) have an obligation to answer

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for the way resources at their disposal are used and the results achieved from the usage of these resources. It can therefore be safely argued that citizens expect public money to be spent economically, efficiently and effectively, with minimum wastage, theft and in a way that the public actually benefits from these resources. This is the main objective of developmental local government as espoused in the *White Paper on Local Government* (1998).

Hence, it has become challenging for local authorities to come up with innovative ways to create adequate structures wherein communities can participate meaningfully in policy making. This is important because local municipalities are at the coalface of service delivery as they are closer to the people on the ground as compared to their counterparts in the national and provincial spheres. In the January 8[th,] 2010 statement (www.anc.org.za), President Jacob Zuma asserted that "local government is where most of our people have direct and frequent contact with government". Municipalities must put in place socio-economic strategic interventions to secure investment and deal with social exclusion and poverty (Maserumule, 2008).

According to the Constitution (1996), local government has the power of the autonomous local institutions to raise their own revenue and spend it on their constitutionally assigned functions (Nyalunga, 2006). Rural-based municipalities depend, to a large extent, on national transfers and equitable shares to deliver on their mandates and have little capacity to raise their own revenue as most of their residents reside in traditional houses for which they do not pay assessment rates and other service fees. Most of these residents earn their livelihoods from social security grants and depend on free basic services (like water, electricity and sanitation) from municipalities.

It is therefore clear that rural-based municipalities have little, if any, revenue-generating capacity to undertake infrastructure projects and programmes that can uplift the socio-economic development of communities. Furthermore,

according to Carrim (2010), a number of local municipalities have indicated they are 100% grant dependent. Municipalities are further expected to finance the cost of providing free electricity and water to the indigents. This puts a strain on the operational budget, especially if an increase in the number of indigent beneficiaries is not accompanied by a concomitant increase in equitable transfers. Despite the above challenges, communities and residents still expect local municipalities to provide services to them.

This problem is further compounded by the limited powers and functions of municipalities to levy tax from local businesses and negative responses to the introduction of Municipal Property rates tax (Molemole Municipality, 2010). Another challenge that these municipalities face is low creditworthiness to raise funds in the financial markets because of poor debt-collection records.

As expected, municipalities must use the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) to prepare a service delivery strategic plan for a five-year period. According to the Presidential Coordinating Council (PCC) (2001), the IDP is a tool that will accelerate the implementation of a system of state-wide planning, which is consultative and developmental in its orientation.

The IDP should encourage bottom-up (as opposed to the old-fashioned top-down, technocrat-led, specialist and inflexible approach) planning by cooperating with other spheres of government, sector departments and other interest groups. Bekker and Lielde (undated) confirms this by stating that the IDP is a central developmental strategy that will enable municipalities to manage both horizontal and vertical programmes aimed at social and economic development.

Section 35 of the *Municipal Systems Act* (Act 32 of 2000) states that the IDP is the long-term principal strategic planning instrument of the municipality, which guides and informs all of management's planning and development activities. This requires capacity and leadership by both appointed officials and elected

political office-bearers that ensure the municipalities are able to craft relevant and responsive programmes that can change, if not improve ordinary lives of residents.

According to the *MFMA* of 2003 (act 56 of 2003) each municipality should further simplify the Integrated Development Plan through a system of departmental service delivery implementation plans (SDBIP) (Section 69). These SDBIPs are compiled for each financial year and serve to cascade the IDP to municipal officials at all levels. The SDBIPs are aligned to the annual budget and their progress is reported quarterly for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Strategic planning is a concept borrowed from the private sector which aims to ensure an institution is able to utilize resources in the most effective and efficient manner in the contexts of scarcity of resources. The IDP is an acknowledgement by policymakers that it can no longer be 'business as usual' but instead a holistic relook of how municipalities operate in order to arrest the service delivery challenges facing municipalities.

Furthermore, the *Batho Pele White Paper* (1998), which means "putting people first", introduced principles that municipal political office-bearers and administrative staff must promote in order to ensure the IDP objectives are realized. These principles are:

- Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of public services they receive and wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered;
- All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled;
- Making communities aware of service standards;
- Treating citizens in a courteous manner;
- Provide accurate and sufficient information about the services;
- Acting in an open and transparent manner;

- Provision of services in an economical, effective and efficient manner; in order to get value for the resource expended; and

- If the promised standard of service is delivered, citizens must be offered an apology, full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic and positive response.

It is therefore quite imperative that the development of IDP by municipalities, in line with the notion of developmental local government, must consider the following important aspects (Williams, 2006):

> Community members should be involved in the process of setting the key performance areas. This will ensure active participation, acceptance and partnership during implementation. The key performance areas should be clearly simplified into operational inputs, outputs and outcomes to enable monitoring and evaluation. There must also be room for joint review the key performance areas and indicators to cater for social, political and economic changes.

The municipalities use the KPAs as a performance contract with the residents, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders. It is through these KPAs that residents can determine if the municipality is able to effectively deliver services, that is, accountable for the use of resources that it is entrusted with.

1.2   The Research Problem

The problem that has been identified is that local residents, businesses and civil society formations are not satisfied with the slow pace of service delivery. As a result, communities have become disillusioned and have lost trust in local authorities.   This has come with costly implications as communities reacted through service delivery protests (which are often violent) that have been witnessed in the recent past.

To a certain extent, communities no longer attended meetings organized by their ward Councillors, and if and when they do attend, such meetings normally end

up in chaos with no concrete way forward. Councillors' lives are no longer safe and so is public property, which at times is vandalized and destroyed. The above key focus areas have dominated policymakers around the world in general and South Africa in particular.

1.3   Aims and Objectives of the Study

In an attempt to get solutions to the above problem this study sought to answer the following questions:

a) Is there adequate capacity for local municipalities to improve the socio-economic development in the communities?

b) What are the satisfaction levels of residents on service quality offered by local authorities?

c) Are public participation structures and mechanisms effective in engaging communities?

d) What innovative measures can be exploited by policymakers to address service delivery backlogs and built on positive achievements?

1.4   Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are, namely:

a) To determine the capacity constraints facing municipalities in their endeavours to provide sustainable services to the communities they are mandated to serve;

b) To determine the satisfaction levels of residents about the service quality they receive from municipalities;

c) To determine the effectiveness of public participation initiatives by municipalities to engage local residents and other stakeholders on policy issues; and

d) To assess the views of respondents about institutional capacity of local municipalities to promote Local Economic Development and other socio-economic aspects.

The key focus areas of the study is on local government priority areas, namely: local economic development (i.e., entrepreneurship and job opportunities); provision of basic services (viz., water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal); building and maintenance of roads infrastructure; land reform; financial viability, institutional capacity and agricultural development.   It must be noted that these issues form an important part of Millennium Development Goals, of which South Africa is a signatory.   Challenges and achievements by the municipalities are examined as well as mechanisms used by municipalities to improve service delivery in their municipal wards.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several authors who have attempted over time to study municipal service delivery in South Africa. Inasmuch as one can acknowledge their contributions to solutions for municipal service delivery in local communities, one felt tempted to study this problem in order to improve on the knowledge already available. This is done because, despite the available research reports and knowledge, most municipalities continue to experience service delivery protests. As stated by Nyalunga (2006), it is widely acknowledged that local government is also marked by some dramatic deficiencies in terms of its capacity and structure to meet the demands of service delivery.

According to *Local Government Bulletin* (March 2010), "it has become worrying that violent protests, widespread corruption, unaccountable leadership and political infighting seem to define the reality of local government". The Local Government bulletin (2010) further states that the government should also start to moderate its more unrealistic policy expectations as continuing to follow a "one size fits all" approach, irrespective of the capacity of some municipalities, is a recipe for unrealistic and unmet promises that will further undermine public confidence (instead of enhancing it).

Subsequent to the notion of a developmental state, and in accordance with its goals as set in the ANC policy conference of 2007, South Africa committed itself to the Millennium Development Goals (Reitzes, 2009). These goals include the following:

- Halving extreme poverty;
- Providing universal primary education;
- Promoting gender equality;
- Reducing child mortality;
- Improving maternal health;

- Halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Ensuring environmental sustainability; and
- Developing a global partnership for development.

To show commitment to the realization of the above, then South African President, Thabo Mbeki set targets in 2006 as stated below:
- To eradicate the bucket system in formal areas by 2007;
- Provide potable water to some 2.07 million households by 2008;
- A total of 3.7 million households would be provided with sanitation by 2010;
- 3.4 million households would be electrified by 2012; and
- 2.3 million households would have adequate shelter 2014.

It must be stated that the above targets would require capacity and adequate resources by local municipalities to ensure their effective realization.

The study investigates the capacity of the Molemole and Blouberg Municipalities to provide basic services to their communities and promote their socio-economic development. In his speech at the Institute of Financial Municipal Officers Annual Conference Yunus Carrim (2010), Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs stated that "it is certainly clear that the current model of local government is not working. We just can't afford to let local government continue the way it does".

Notably, Carrim's view centred on municipal boundaries and a relook at the legislative and executive functions of local government. He also noted capacity challenges for ward committees, municipal councillors and administrative officials. It is quite clear from the foregoing that local government needs to be overhauled in the face of challenges experienced for more than a decade of its existence.

Williams (2006) has done some research on municipal service delivery, but his focus was much on performance management in municipalities. Performance management framework is an important accountability aspect for local municipalities but its focus is more on internal (institutional) capacity than on the broader impact on communities. This is because performance management focuses more on outputs (effectiveness) and less on outcomes, i.e., the impact on the lives of ordinary citizens.

According to a report in the Citizen Report Card (CRC) (Idasa, 2010), population opinions (58 percent) showed that municipal services have stayed the same since 2000, with over 30% of residents thought that things have worsened. Water provision is the most persistent problem in Molemole, at 56% (Idasa, 2010). Additionally, 43% of Molemole residents were found to have been dissatisfied with the quality of maintenance of their water facilities.

An interesting finding on the CRC (2010) is that citizens have mixed ideas on the responsibilities of local government, with some 68% saying their local municipality is responsible for housing provision, 60% education and 36% thought that birth/death is the responsibility of local government. As a result, people may forward their complaints to municipalities even if they are not constitutionally mandated to provide the services. Municipalities need to step up efforts to better inform citizens about their responsibilities.

Effectiveness is the ability to meet set targets at allocated budget for a particular financial year. Memela, S., Mautjane, B., Nzo, T., & Hoof, P (2008) aptly pointed out that "Effectiveness is the way in which planned activities are realized and the expected results are achieved in a cost-effective way". However, if the programmes or projects undertaken (by the municipality) are not being used by the beneficiaries (citizens) for which they were intended, or their welfare does not improve, then performance management cannot be the right instrument to determine promotion of socio-economic development by the municipality.

This can be seen in cases where there are no effective public participation structures to solicit the interests of communities before finalization of the Integrated Development Plan. Community members do not want projects to be delivered to them, they want to form part of decisions that lead to those projects (E-News channel: May, 2011). Again, it could be that completion of projects might have been at the expense of efficiency and economy. According to Chapter 10 of the constitution (Section 195), public administration must be effective, efficient and economic (the triple Es). It is therefore important for municipalities to balance the three aspects to advance the principle of good governance.

In their study, Fine and Norushe (2009) note that lack of an effective system of Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) is a challenge for the municipalities. Given the fact that President Jacob Zuma's administration has just established the same ministry after April 2009 elections, it can be argued that most municipalities are still grappling with its semantics because the focus of M & E is more on outputs and outcomes than inputs. The establishment of M & E will be an unprecedented accountability tool since 1994. Speaking at the ANC's January the 8th's statement (2010:6), President Jacob Zuma mentioned that the aim of M & E is to build strategic coherence within government and ensure that the State provides effective and strategic leadership in society.

2.1   Challenges Facing Local Spheres of Government

In its 2009 Election Manifesto (shortly before the 2009 General Elections), the African National Congress (ANC) identified rural development, food security and land reform as key priorities to be addressed in the next five years. All these three priorities are more relevant in the rural areas than in the urban areas. This is an acknowledgement that the service delivery machinery has not impacted meaningfully on the rural communities, a whopping 16 years into our democracy.

It can therefore be safely argued that government is turning its focus to promoting the socio-economic conditions of local communities. This might be seen as an acknowledgement of the capacity constraints facing local municipalities to deliver services to communities. Cloete (1997) correctly stated that the advantages of a third or local sphere/branch of government can be severely limited if such a sphere of government is supported through specialized expertise, financial backing and administrative infrastructure.

Most of the municipalities that were created after the new democratic dispensation experience the above challenges at a higher degree because of the following factors:

a) Newly demarcated municipalities now have bigger populations which put a strain on the already strained infrastructure and resource backlogs, which new municipalities must eliminate.

b) Most of the political office-bearers and administrative officials do not have the requisite skills and knowledge to run local municipalities according to the new democratic requirements. This is in light of the myriad of the local government legislative framework that must be complied with. More rules are in the offing, once parliament adopts the Systems Amendment Bill which could further complicate the situation (Local Government Bulletin: 2011). Administrations are still traditional, rule-driven bureaucracies which are not structured in a manner that let them undertake multi-dimensional activities like Integrated Development Planning (IDP) and Local Economic Development (LEDP (Nyalunga, 2006). This has the unwanted consequence of departments in a municipality being unable to coordinate activities.

c) Municipal administrations are focused within themselves and, as a result, cannot respond to the unpredictable changes in their political, technological, social, economic and policy environments.

d) Disparities between urban and rural areas. In most cases, you would find that the infrastructure in urban/suburban areas is advanced compared to

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township and rural settlements. The attendant consequence of this is that rural residents will migrate to urban settlements in search of economic opportunities which are virtually absent in their areas, thus putting a strain on urban infrastructure and perpetuating the disparities and inequalities further.

e) Local government must address skewed settlement patterns (*White Paper on Local Government: 1998)*. Most settlements in rural areas are far away from each other because of traditional ownership. This makes the rolling out of basic services infrastructure costly and unviable for rural municipalities. It is not uncommon to find these areas having no sanitation facilities, roads are mostly untarred and it is not easy to drive around because these settlements are not systematically structured (Cloete, 1997).

Hence residents in rural areas do not have adequate and affordable access to transportation because some roads only have pathways with no drivable roads for efficient transport system, except for donkey carts (Blouberg Municipality, 2008). It is no wonder that the needs of rural residents are always different from those of urban based residents. For instance, rural residents would require job opportunities, water and housing while the urban residents would mention repairs to potholes, crime and affordable municipal rates.

The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Minister Sicelo Shiceka commissioned an assessment of local municipalities in late 2009. The assessment was commissioned after COGTA had realized that confidence in government at the local level was at an all time low (Local Government Bulletin, 2010). The subsequent report titled: *State of Local Government in South Africa* (2009), painted a relatively bleak picture of the state of municipalities in South Africa.

The report identified a mismatch between policy intent and practice on the ground and most importantly the weak support and oversight over municipal activities by councillors and the upper spheres of government. The "one-size fits all" approach for all municipalities (metros vis-à-vis rural municipalities) is another concern that was noted. Additionally, the report noted that intergovernmental framework was not functioning as well as it could. Hence, you would find a practice whereby the sector departments would force projects into the IDPs of municipalities which were not even discussed with communities at a local level (SA Local Government Chronicle, 2010:20)

It is clear that the above report acknowledged that appropriate policy interventions and mechanisms are needed in order to turnaround the performance of municipalities and increase their responsiveness to service delivery needs of communities. According to President Jacob Zuma (January 8th statement, 2010), many municipalities are characterized by critical problems and challenges which include:

- Dysfunctional councils;
- Ineffective professional administration;
- Weak and/or absent mechanisms for local democracy; and
- Weak municipal performance management.

The report further stated that some of the municipalities were found to be vulnerable that immediate capacity-enhancing interventions and financial injection are necessary. Failure by municipalities to perform their constitutional functions will lead to a social distance between citizens and the state, mistrust and a loss of confidence in democratic government (Local Government Bulletin: 2010). This is a serious concern considering that local government, as a local sphere of government, is an important link between government and ordinary citizens in communities. Mokwena and Fakir (2009) summed it up when they wrote that "local institutions, in whatever form, are critical to mediating the relationship between the state and its citizens".

Another concern raised in the report is the appointment of senior party officials to administrative positions. As stated in Local Government Bulletin (vol. 12, 2009), where a party official holding a senior position in the party than councillors, holds an administrative position, lines of accountability will be blurred. If he/she is the municipal manager then it means council cannot tell him anything because he may "get" them in the next party meeting. This means the municipal manager will just do as he/she wishes. It becomes an even bigger problem where a senior party officer is occupying a clerical position!

Councillors will watch and look as the official misbehaves in the work environment as sometimes they knock off early to "work" for the party. His/her director does not have the power at all. One municipal director aptly put it: "*we are powerless as managers. They will tell you that 'I am a deployee not an employee' and cannot report to a Director*" (an employee). What is most worrying is that qualification or merit does not matter anymore. You must be an active member who attends meetings of the party in order to qualify for appointment to a municipal position. Where is accountability to the citizens?

How will municipalities improve their performance if those in charge of administration are not adequately qualified and skilled to perform their duties? Will an objective of a developmental local government ever be realized? Perhaps this explains the reason why municipalities, rural municipalities in particular, are unable to attract and retain qualified and experienced people who are mostly graduating, from young (22-45 year olds) to middle adulthood (45-60 year olds).

According to Ziel *et al.,* (1999) the main development tasks of middle aged people are to maintain career standards where an employee is busy with holding a job or position and mentoring juniors to be competent in their new jobs. They

would not want to move from one job to another hence they are discouraged to take a job in a municipality because of a lack of job security.

The former president of the US Woodrow Wilson once coined the notion: *Politics-Administration dichotomy (*Khalo, undated)*.* According to him politicians must only focus on policy formulation and leave implementation to the administrators. Perhaps he was right given the poor state of municipalities where political interference is the order of the day. Cadre deployment seems to be bringing social injustice over and over again as qualified people are denied an opportunity to apply their skills in local municipalities. In his address in the 98th anniversary of the ANC, Jacob Zuma raised a concern around the issue of political leadership taking up administration jobs. He promised to "tighten" the ANC's cadre deployment system.

That, however, can only be proven by the practices that will follow the 2011 local government elections. The *Municipal Systems Amendment bill* (2010) has, as its primary objective to bar municipal managers and managers accountable to the municipal manager from holding any political office in political parties. It remains to be seen if the bill can help solve the problem of cadre deployment once assented into law by the president.

According to Local Government Bulletin (2011) municipalities face a consistent pressure that when the new councils come into power after the Local government elections, new "cronies" or cadres may be appointed and would require the whole term to gain the requisite experience; compromising service delivery in the process. This problem might be worse if the number of new councillors exceed the returning ones as the new ones would not appreciate the complexity of local government (Local Government Bulletin, 2011).

It is difficult to imagine how these cadres, appointed in June (after the May 2011 Local Government elections) would have gained experience by the December

2012 deadline, unless they already had experience when appointed. As the LGB correctly concluded this would not only delay the provision of basic services to communities, but it will also contribute to the distress faced by local government. The report, *State of Local Government in South Africa:* 2009, further classified the state of municipalities into four categories, with Category 1 being the most vulnerable municipalities. Incidentally, the Molemole and Blouberg Municipalities fall under Category 1 municipalities. Municipalities were asked to come with their own turnaround strategies in order to improve their service delivery performance and help restore the public's trust in local governance system. According to Pearce and Robinson (2007:215) a turnaround strategy can come in one or two forms:

- Asset reduction which may include sale of land, buildings and equipment which is not essential to the organization, and
- Cost reduction which may include reducing the workforce or leasing equipment rather than purchasing.

The above interventions may be easily implemented in the private sector while it may be quite a challenge to implement them in the public sector. For instance, it is not easy to lay off appointed officials because government is seen as having a social responsibility to the citizens. The only possible thing is either to place ineffective officials in other positions or departments or train them to have the required level of competency. Therefore a turnaround strategy as postulated in the report will be far more challenging to implement in local municipalities.

In his January 8th (2010) statement, President Zuma raised concern about challenges facing local government. Some of the critical challenges are: dysfunctional councils, ineffective administration, weak mechanisms for local democracy and weak performance management systems.

But, in municipalities where there is factionalism, patronage and corruption, asking it to come up with its own turnaround strategy might not bring the desired

results (Local Government Bulletin, 2010). Perhaps this suggests that both national and provincial spheres of government will have to step up their support and monitoring efforts if the turnaround is to be realized. The turnaround strategy will be implemented in two phases, with the first phase starting from January 2010 leading to 2011 local government (LG) elections and the second phase following the 2011 LG elections.

2.2 The Role of Education in the Promotion of Socio-Economic Development

Table 1 and Figure 1 below depict the state of literacy at the Blouberg Municipality for 1996 and 2001. Education is one important social aspect that can lift people out of social inequity.

Table 1. Blouberg Municipality state of literacy

Blouberg municipality state of literacy		
Persons	**2001**	**1996**
No Schooling	29832	26351
Some Primary	9114	7225
Complete Primary	3411	3291
Secondary	14641	12642
Grade 12	5597	4236
Higher	3165	1541
Totals	67761	57282

Source: Adapted from Blouberg IDP: 2007-2008
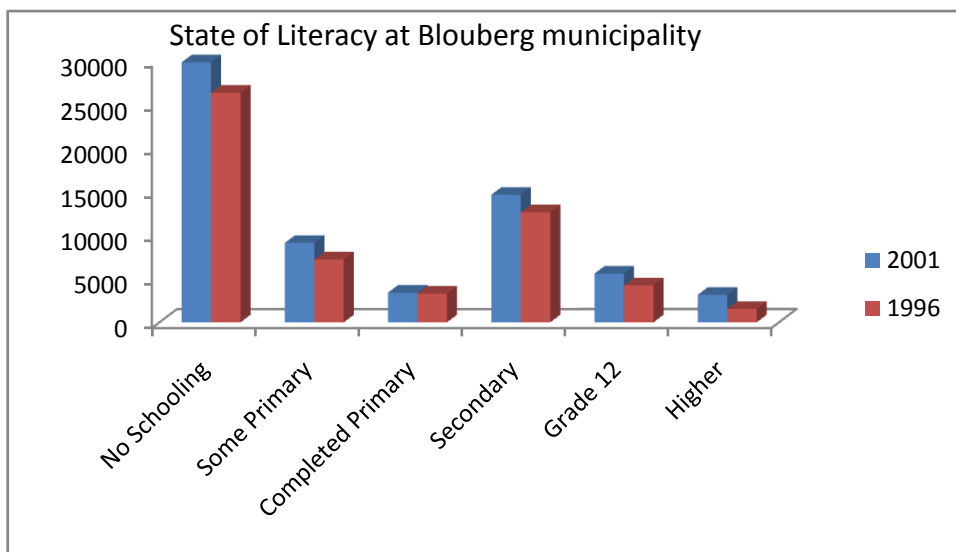
Figure 1: State of Literacy at Blouberg municipality

Education, or investment in human capital (as it is called in economic terms), can go a long way in eradicating poverty and addressing income inequalities in rural municipalities. Education can also lead to local economic development as educated people can come up with innovative ways to develop the area, create the much needed jobs and arrest the scourge of urban migration which is often a threat to family and community cohesion.

Women should also be given priority when educational financial assistance is considered. This should not necessarily be done for reasons of equity only because, as mentioned in Todaro and Smith (2006), there is empirical evidence that educational discrimination against women hinders economic development in addition to reinforcing social inequality. Also closing the educational gender gap towards women is a key plank of the MDGs (Todaro & Smith, 2006:377). Todaro and Smith (2006) advanced the following important motivations for increasing women's education:

- the rate of return on women's education is higher than that on men's in most developing countries;
- Increasing women's education not only increases their productivity, but results in greater labour force participation, later marriages, lower fertility and greatly improved child health and nutrition;

- Improved child health and nutrition and more educated mothers lead to multiplier effects on the quality of a nation's human resources for many generations to come; and

- Because women carry a disproportionate burden of poverty and landlessness than men, any significant improvements in their role and status via education can have an important impact on breaking the vicious cycle of poverty.

The above statements should seriously be looked into by municipalities because they experience massive urban migration and men make the highest proportion, thus leaving mothers to take care of children back home.

The social benefits of education will also spill over to addressing healthcare challenges. This is because an educated person can understand health warnings, read and understand medication prescriptions correctly and lead a healthy lifestyle. A healthy person will be able to go to school and finish his/her schooling up to the state of being employable. Educated people will also play an active role in policy formulation as they would understand its dynamics. The importance of education for the two municipalities cannot, therefore, be overemphasized.

Furthermore, the study conducted by the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG, 2007) has concluded that municipalities were not delivering sustainable infrastructure services. Investment in infrastructure, or capital investment (capex) as it is sometimes called, is quite an important catalyst of job creation and can go a long way in improving the socio-economic conditions of rural residents, considering the huge infrastructure backlogs inherited by most of these municipalities as perpetuated by the past apartheid system.

Looking at the budget composition of the two municipalities it was deduced that they use an 85:15 budget system. This means that a paltry 15% of their overall

budget is allocated for capital and infrastructure projects, with the remaining 85% reserved for operational budget. It would therefore take a long time for these municipalities to fully achieve the required level of development in their areas. Due to capacity constraints of officials, we may not be surprised if the 15% is not fully spent in one financial year.

2.3   Globalization and Decentralization

Globalization and technological developments has led to a more globally linked and politically sophisticated citizenry (Rondinelli, 2007). The post 21st century has seen increasing demands on governments to decentralize their powers and functions (Cheema, 2007). This, according to Rondinelli (2007), is government's experiences with the needs of socio-economic development that national government alone cannot achieve economic and social equity. In this context, decentralization could mean political devolution, de-concentration and delegation to bring decision-making closer to the people.

Decentralization to local government is believed to lead to responsiveness to local demands, where it matters the most. As stated in Bekkers and Leilde (undated) failure of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) led to the idea of decentralization. As such, this becomes the most important tenet of developmental local government as espoused in the *White Paper on Local government* (1998). Development of social and economic conditions of communities was now firmly entrenched in local municipality, more so than in the national and provincial spheres government. Local government, no longer an 'insignificant tier of government was to play an increasingly crucial role in state-led development (Bekkers & Lielde (undated). Local government was therefore no longer a function of national and provincial government.

2.4   Developmental Local Government: Democratizing governance

Developmental local government, it is believed, can strengthen local governance capacity to promote democratic governance and accountability through wide stakeholder participation from communities and civil society organizations. It can create a heightened awareness by communities about their role in developmental initiatives in their areas. As stated in Idasa Capacity development report (2009-2014), citizen's protests are not only an expression of dissatisfaction with the quality of services, but a frustration with lack of responsiveness, transparency and accountability with local government. The majority of residents in Molemole feel the municipality does not keep them informed about decisions taken and neither about services they are entitled to Idasa CRC (2010).

Moeletsi Mbeki warned of the popular "Tunisia 2020" (*Mail & Guardian*, March, 2011). Mbeki warned that the uprisings happening in Tunisia are a true reflection of people's frustration with the government they voted for in the hope it will improve its lot. "Poor people", he retorted, "would be the ones to stand up against the government because somehow they would be awake to the fact that they have been taken for a ride for too long".   This warning cannot be ignored because poor people always make the majority of voters because they believe and hope that is the only way out of poverty and underdevelopment.

The fact that about 2 million odd voters who voted for the newly founded Congress of the People (Cope) in the 2009 general elections were mostly ANC supporters is a tip of the iceberg of how things can turn ugly in South Africa. What if people who enabled the ANC to achieve an almost two-third majority in the elections were to revolt in 2020? Our country will follow the same route as other African countries post-liberation, i.e., a persistent anarchy and perpetual poverty and underdevelopment.

Developmental local government means municipalities must be creative, flexible and most importantly, innovative. This was to be a new role for municipalities,

beyond just service delivery. According to Kofi Annan, in Idasa (2009-2014), "good governance is the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development. Rural municipalities require the two aspects very badly in order to jack them up from the clutches of underdevelopment.

According to the Bekkers and Lielde (undated), municipalities require active participation by citizens at four levels, namely:

a) As Voters – to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote,

b) As citizens who express, via different stakeholder associations, their views before, during and after the policy development processes in order to ensure policies reflect community preferences as far as possible;

c) As consumers and end-users, who expect value for money, affordable service, courteous and responsive service; and

d) As organized partners involved in the mobilization of resources for development via for-profit-business, nongovernmental organizations and community-based institutions.

Municipalities have to develop the capacity of residents and civil society formations to meaningfully participate at the above levels if they are to enable government to fully realize the goal of developmental local government. This will ensure residents are able to voice their dissatisfaction with the state if their needs are not catered for, and they can also offer to assist the state to come with effective ways of addressing their concerns, instead of whining and grinning to a state to an extent they no longer participate in its political processes.

Ward committees are an important stakeholder to assist communities to air their needs and interests as they are known to communities. But, as stated in Local Government Bulletin (2011), they seem to have attracted a lot of fierce criticism from residents that these residents become disillusioned to an extent that they

tend to choose public protests or withholding of rates and taxes as mechanisms to get their needs on the municipal agenda.

It is believed that through their exercise of power and functions, local governments can ensure access and bring the decision-making processes closer to the local residents (Cloete, 1997). But, as stated by Nyalunga (2006), it is a challenge to devolve powers and functions to a municipality without an accompanying increase in its fiscal base. Decentralization might be a challenge for smaller municipalities, especially the rural ones, because the powers and functions that are devolved might be complex that they do not or might not have the capability to manage them (Nyalunga, 2006). This argument might hold if we consider the fact that assignment, delegation and agentification do not provide local municipalities with the necessary powers for policy making and financial authority to delivery on critical impact areas (Community Law Centre, 2007).

However, Cloete (1997) further argues that decentralization will allow for a better participation and involvement by local residents in the local governance processes and decisions that affect their lives on a daily basis. The system of local government is hoped that it would provide an important training ground for political leaders who can then be absorbed into the higher levels of government after gaining experiences.

One of the problems experienced of late is the tendency of provincial and national department to insist on their plans to be included in the IDPs of municipalities and instruct municipalities to explain to the communities. As stated in the Local Government Bulletin (2009), this makes a mockery of participation and turns the IDP into a "pressure cooker", where all government plans converge and councillors are tasked with mediating conflict with the communities. This leads to communities not participating enthusiastically in local affairs as they feel their suggestions are not considered in the IDPs.

According to Katorobo (2007), the Tiebout model shows considerable benefits and efficiencies to be gained through democratic decentralization. The residents, better than the central and provincial government levels, are able to determine their issues, priorities, policies and programmes in a manner that will reflect their common and collective interests. This supports the assertion, as stated elsewhere in the report, that citizens can no longer be passive participants in the development of their own areas.

But Katorobo (2007) further noted that decentralization should go hand in hand with increased powers and functions, capacity building of both municipal councils and officials to better manage the affairs of the municipality. Rural municipalities will, therefore, have to work hard if the advantages of decentralization are to trickle down to communities they were constitutionally established to serve.

2.5   The Impact of Land Reform on the South African Economy

The Reconstruction and Development Policy (RDP) Framework document of 1993 stated that "A national land reform programme is the central and driving force of a programme of rural development…." It further stated that "in implementing the national land reform programme… the democratic government will build the economy by generating large-scale employment, increasing rural incomes and eliminating overcrowding" (RDP policy framework, 1994, in HSRC, 2006). Reitzes (2009) further asserts that the Reconstruction and Development Programme decisively relates growth to development.

The HSRC (2006) further asserts that the need for land reform appears as great as ever and agricultural decline undermines one of the main traditional sources of rural livelihoods. Furthermore, President Zuma stated in the January 8th statement (2010) that government officials and representatives who have the responsibility of rural development and agrarian reform must speed up the provision of services to rural communities.

There is therefore a need to put in place a more effective approach to land redistribution that addresses the needs of the rural communities. It is, therefore, important that rural municipalities must come with innovative strategies to tap the potential spinoffs emanating from this sector, the most notable one being food security.

Studies have shown that in low-income countries a rise in food prices lead to a significant deterioration of democratic institutions and a significant increase in the incidence of anti-government demonstrations, riots and civil conflict (Business Report, 2011). Although it is always acknowledged that rural municipalities depend to a large extent on agricultural economy for socio-economic development, water shortage in these areas makes it highly likely that such would be unsustainable. As reported in the Business Report (2011), the high bread prices in the 1789s led to the popular uprising that was to be called the French Revolution. Interventions for the building of sustainable water infrastructure and maintenance of current facilities by municipalities cannot be overemphasized as agriculture is the biggest user of water.

The Molemole and Blouberg municipalities depend to a large extent on agriculture as a source of income for the livelihoods of most of the residents (Capricorn District Municipality, 2010). The Molemole Municipality has a high potential in economic development, especially agricultural development in Mogwadi (tomatoes and potatoes), game farming, forestry (Morebeng), mineral development, tourism (along N1 corridor and Tropic of Capricorn needle) (Molemole Municipality, 2010). Some of the sites in the area are not legally registered in the occupants' names; something which has a negative impact on the environment through the establishment of informal settlements (Molemole IDP, 2009-2010):10). These sprawling settlements will further put a strain on scarce resources of the municipality.

According to the Molemole Municipality (2010), there are 37 settlements covering 3,347 km2 (24%). This places an enormous challenge on these municipalities to formulate a strategy that can expedite land restitution to communities and help them farm on it so that they can earn income and address the inherited gross inequalities of the past, socially, economically and spatially.   This is key to addressing the scourge of poverty within rural communities.

Agriculture is normally known for its large scale employment, especially among the illiterate sections of our society. It is a source of livelihood to the majority of the rural population and is central to not only the rural economy, but to also safeguard food security for the rest of the country, if not Africa (Legistalk, 2010). It is imperative for municipalities to come with strategies that will broaden the farming business to the Blacks section to not only reduce the inequities in the sector, but also to increase agricultural produce in these areas in order to ensure food security by reducing high food prices. The focus should be more on youth so that the benefits can spill over to the next generations and have a long-term impact.

A high land price is one of the reasons why there are so few willing-buyer/willing-seller projects. The government must reconsider a model for reconciling high prices with its grant system and with economic potential of beneficiaries (HSRC, 2006). "Although land reform has significant potential to promote economic development…" it is argued with certainty that at the present rate it will not (HSRC, 2006).

The Development Facilitation Act (DFA) of 1995 provides principles that municipalities should follow in order to determine their developmental agenda (Pycroft, 1998). The principles are aimed at ensuring a safe utilization of land by considering geological formations and hazardous undermined areas (Pycroft, 1998). According to Nyalunga (2006), the DFA coined the term 'developmental local government' to indicate the required break with the past by making it

obligatory for municipalities to become developmental through compilations of Land Development Objectives (LDOs) and Integrated Development Plans.

This poses a challenge to municipalities to have structures and mechanisms in place to ensure efficient integrated land development. This must include the integration of social, economic, institutional and physical aspects of land development and the integration of rural and urban areas (Pycroft, 1998). Socio-economic development would be realized if local residents are able to benefit from the land they live in.

Rural municipalities must also promote the use of allocated land for diverse purposes such as productive farming or the establishment of vibrant and sustainable businesses. This can be a partial panacea to reducing inequalities between the urban and the rural, and help curb urban migration that normally puts a strain on infrastructure of urban areas while rural areas are perpetually underdeveloped. It can also help local municipalities to contribute to Local Economic Development, which is a constitutional imperative.

The DFA (1995) also encourages public participation in land use planning and development and empowerment of disadvantaged sectors of the community. In the context of rural municipalities, traditional authorities are an important stakeholder as they own most of the traditional land in their respective villages. But, as acknowledged by President Zuma (January 8th statement, 2010), the role of the institution of traditional leadership in local governance, service delivery and development is uneven.

The principles of Development Facilitation Act (1995) have since been part of Integrated Development Plan (White Paper on Local Government: 1998). This meant that the Land Development Objectives are now an integral component of IDP (Pycroft, 1998). Ward committees and Community Development Workers at

local government level also facilitate public participation with communities on issues of service delivery and Local Economic Development.

2.6 Age and Gender Distribution in Molemole and Blouberg Municipalities

About 72% (or 72 408) of the population in Molemole is under the age of 34 years (Molemole Municipality, 2010), while around 53% is under the age of 21 years, depending on the income of significant others (mostly Social Grants from the elderly) for their livelihood. This means a high proportion of the population is still young and economically active. This positive trend is negated by the high illiteracy levels in the municipality and low opportunities for employment. This puts pressure on the municipality to create job opportunities that will absorb them. Another important analysis is that women make the highest percentage of the youth population, contributing 53% or 38 541 of this population shown in Table 2 below and diagrammatically presented in Figure 2. Statistics on youth population in the Blouberg Municipality could not be verified.

Table 2: Age and gender distribution of the youth in Molemole

Age group	Female	Male	Total
0-4	6 779	5 880	12 659
5-9	7 177	6 001	13 178
10-14	6 604	7 134	13 738
15-19	7 099	5 812	12 911
20-24	4 364	3 338	7 702
25-29	3 215	2 774	5 989
30-34	3 303	2 928	6 231
Totals	*38 541*	*33 867*	*72 408*

Source: Adapted from Molemole IDP: 2010-2011
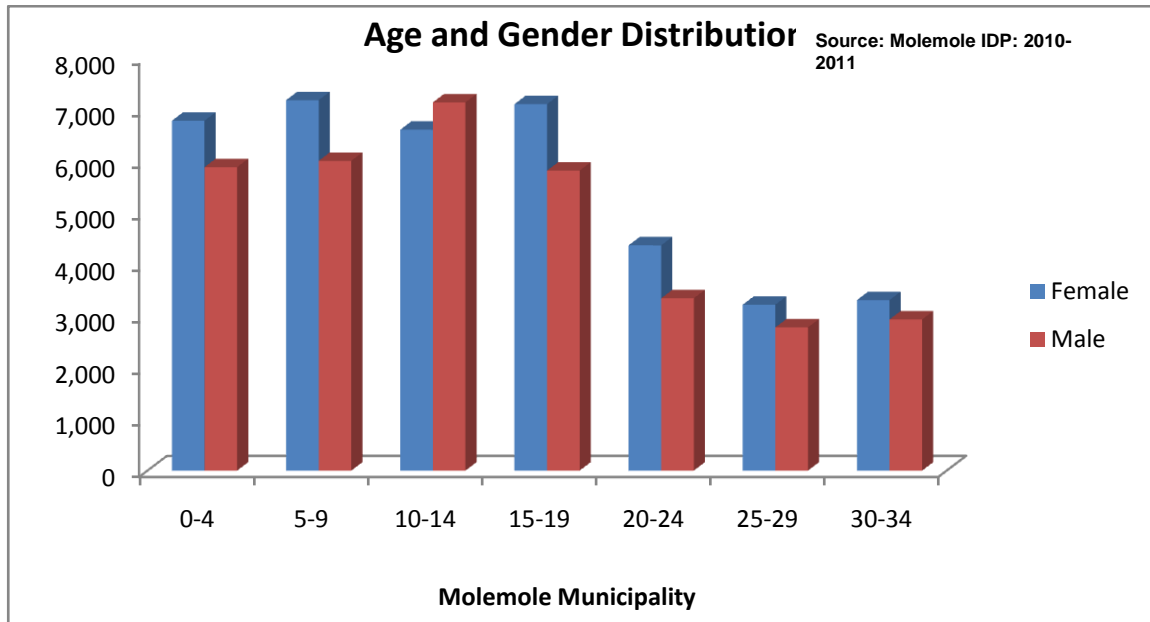
Figure 2: Age and Gender Distribution

Various models (complementing and often contrasting) have therefore been developed over the years in an attempt to find the perfect formulae to a more responsive local government. The Department of Public Service and Administration has muted a radical bill (Public Administration Management Bill) that will create a single public service that would absorb the employees of 283 municipalities countrywide. Its proponents wanted the bill to replace the Public Service Act.

The draft bill does, however, recognize the powers and functions of municipalities as conferred by the constitution. Critics of the proposed bill argued that with more than 40 000 vacancies within the national government and a further 30 000 at local levels, creating a single public service could exacerbate the situation as disgruntled employees resign in favour of the private sector.

While critics acknowledge service delivery challenges at municipal level, some felt the plan would further impact on service delivery negatively and further decrease the morale of municipal staff who had to deal with years of structural changes and institutional reconfigurations since the transitional period. It can

therefore be argued that the journey of the study of local governments (rural municipalities in particular) is set to continue in as much as Public Administration hitherto does.

It is not difficult to understand why local sustainable development is a burning issue in South Africa as poverty, inequities and inequality seem to be deepening even though the country has been a democracy for over a decade. Nyalunga (2006) summed it aptly by stating that the multi-faceted responsibility of local government to deliver services and promote Local Economic Development has a long way to go. Hence the main purpose of this study which is to find out 'whether rural municipalities do have the capacity to promote socio-economic development in their communities'.

2.7 Definition of Concepts

a. **Local Government**

It is the local sphere of municipality that was formed to give effect to Section 151 of the constitution, whose object is to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities. Nyalunga (2006) defines local governments as political units or instrumentalities constituted by law which have substantial control over local affairs and have the unique characteristics of being subordinate to the central government. Local governments are under the national government in a unitary system and under the central and State levels in a federal systems (Aldefer,1964 cited in Nyalunga, 2006).

b. **Developmental Local Government**

This is a system that is committed to working with its citizens, groups and communities to create sustainable human settlements that provide a decent quality of life and meet the social, economic and material needs of communities in a holistic way (*White Paper on Local Government,* 1998).

c. Municipality

A municipality is an administrative entity composed of a clearly defined territory and its population, and commonly denotes a city, town, or village, or a small grouping of them. It is the smallest administrative subdivision to have its own democratically elected representative leadership (Mokganya, 2010).

d. Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

This is the Strategic Plan of the municipality, that normally spans for five years, which seeks to align resources of a municipality with the implementation plan (*Municipal Systems Act*: *19*). Annual plans must be formulated in order to operationalise the IDP.

e. Public Participation

Public Participation in the municipal context enjoins municipalities to encourage and create conditions for local communities to participate in the affairs of the municipality (Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000). This implies that municipalities must organize structures to enable communities and civil society formations to determine goods and services that will satisfy their needs and aspirations.

f. Imbizos

Public meetings between politicians and/or state officials and citizens as a way to interact with communities on issues of service delivery and development. They are normally used to give progress reports on agreed outcomes.

g. Rural Areas

Rural areas are defined as the sparsely populated areas in which people farm or depend on natural resources, including villages and small towns

that are dispersed through these areas. In addition, they include large settlements in the former homelands, created by the apartheid removals, which depend, for their survival, on migratory labour and remittances.

h. Development

According to the *Municipal Systems Act* (Act 32 of 2000), development refers to integrated, social, economic, environmental, spatial, infrastructural, institutional organization and human resource upliftment of a community; with specific reference to poor sections of a society. Mokwena and Fakir (2009) further assert that development is the extension by the State, of social services like health, education, social welfare, poverty alleviation and reducing inequalities and provision of service-related infrastructure.

According to Todaro and Smith (2006), development is both a physical and a state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic and institutional processes, secured the means for obtaining a better life. They conceptualized development in three objectives, namely:

- To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods such as goods, shelter, health and protection;
- To raise the levels of living, including higher incomes, more jobs, better education, and greater attention to cultural and human values to generate greater individual and national self–esteem;
- To expand the range of economic and social choices available to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence in relation to the forces of ignorance and human misery.

Development should be understood in the context of social development rather than only in the context of economic growth (although economic growth can assist us in achieving the above social services through, for instance, local economic development, skills development and job creation).

i. Community Development Workers (CDWs)

Multi-skilled public servants deployed in communities to help people access government services and poverty alleviation programmes. They work as community facilitators, focusing on finding solutions to identified needs and blockages by interacting with national, provincial and local government structures (www.SouthAfrica.net: 2005).

j. Sustainable Development

It is the kind of development that seeks to ensure municipalities are able to, not only improve the quality of life of communities, but also maintain and improve that development. Sustainable development (Maserumule, 2008) is based on three pillars, namely, economic growth, ecological balance and social balance.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Research Design

According to Tustin *et al.,* (2005), research design is a plan to be followed to realize the research objectives or hypothesis. It represents a master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the required information (Tustin *et al.,* 2005:82). The research design applied in this study is a qualitative and contextual research that sought to get a deeper understanding of the impact of service delivery in the Molemole and Blouberg Local Municipalities on the quality of lives of communities. The aim was therefore not to engage in technical and quantitative assessment of municipal service delivery.

The study was restricted to the Molemole and Blouberg Local Municipalities. The two local municipalities fall under the Capricorn District Municipality of the Limpopo Province. Both municipalities are Category B Municipalities, according to *Municipal Structures Act*, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998). A Category B Municipality shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a Category C Municipality (i.e., District Municipality) within whose area it falls. The main responsibility of the district municipality is to provide services such as bulk water and electricity, maintenance of district roads, fire fighting, environmental management, health services, municipal airports, etc (www.localelections.org.za \municipality).

Table 3: Municipal categories

Municipal Categories	Description of category
Category A: Metropolitan Council	A municipality that has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in its area
Category B: Local Councils	A municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a Category C municipality
Category C: District Councils	A municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality

Of the three local government structures – metropolitan, local and district municipality – only district municipalities' value in promoting developmental local government is questioned (Local Government Bulletin, 2011). Many critics strongly contend that district municipalities should be disestablished (Local government Bulletin, 2011). District councils were perceived as a vehicle for integrated planning, economies of scale and mutual support (Local Government Bulletin, 2011).

But, as stated in the Bulletin, the experience of the past ten years suggests that a two-tier system has developed which at times is characterized by hierarchical relations, a lack of coordination and pure competition with the district and local municipalities operating in isolation from each other. Molemole covers about 3347.25 km^2, with a population of 100 408 or 9% of the district; whereas Blouberg covers 4540.84 km^2, with a population of 161 322 or 14% of the district (CDM IDP/BUDGET, 2010/2011:26). The two municipalities are vastly rural and depend, to a large extent, on agricultural economy. The two municipalities experience a low population growth rate (Capricorn District Municipality, 2011).

This can be attributed to urban migration of young adults, thus leaving old people and school-leavers to depend to a large extent on social grants (these are mainly child support, disability and old age) and remittances from relatives working in

urban areas. The most dominant population group in these areas is Africans, contributing more than 90% of the total population in Blouberg and Molemole, respectively (see below).

Table 4: Population Groups in Blouberg Municipality

Persons	2001	1996
African	160609	149961
Coloured	95	73
Indian	59	15
White	559	493
Total Population	161322	151223

Reproduced from Blouberg IDP:2007-2008

Table 5: Population Groups in Molemole Municipality

Persons	2007	2001
African	99 765	107 618
Coloured	-	30
Indian/Asians	-	93
White	693	1 704
Total Population	**100 458**	**109 445**

Reproduced from Molemole IDP:2009-2010

One of the encouraging signs of Local Economic Development is the plan for the construction of a new shopping complex (the second one) in the Blouberg Municipality, opposite the show grounds. Also, according to Molemole Municipality (2010), council has also approved the construction of a new shopping complex and a filling station at Mogwadi town. Construction at Blouberg is already underway while at Molemole construction it will, as reported, start in the second half of the financial year according to an official from the LED unit.

The challenge for the Molemole Municipality is that it is divided according to East (which covers Soekmekaar and Botlokwa areas) and West (which covers Mogwadi, Mohodi and surrounding villages). It is about 80 kilometres to travel to Mogwadi from the East side, which means citizens cannot directly benefit from the opportunities that come with the mall and filling station. Again, most of the villages on the west are not far away from the Senwabarwana town, from which it is economical to do their shopping than in Mogwadi. This can have negative effects on the viability of the shopping complex that may struggle to attract big retailers.

This will ensure that locals no longer have to travel long and tedious distances to Polokwane and will also ensure that money rotates around the municipality, boosting economic growth in the process. In addition, it will help to reduce the massive unemployment in these areas reduce the level of inequalities among residents. As stated in the Blouberg News (Oct-Dec 2010), 450 temporary jobs will be created during construction while 500 permanent jobs will be created during operations. The complex will take fourteen months to construct and will cost about R 120 million (Blouberg News, 9: 2010). An elated community resident stated that she "can't wait for the opening of new complex".

3.2   Population and Sampling

The population from which to draw a sample are the Molemole and Blouberg Local Municipalities. The population that will be used for this proposed study will be sampled in such a way as to make it representative. Being a qualitative research, the sampling method to be employed will be purposive, which falls under the non-probability sampling category (Tustin *et al.*, 2005:346). The strategy employed in purposive sampling is intensity sampling, which chooses information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely (Patton, 1990:171, in Oka & Shaw, 2000).

A sample was drawn from the following key actors (also see Table 5):

a) **Ward committee members -** These are community elected representatives for each ward. They serve as a link between the municipality and the citizens in the villages. Molemole has 13 wards while Blouberg has 18 wards. Each ward consists of ten committee members bringing the total members to hundred and thirty (130) and hundred and eighty (180), respectively.

b) **Councillors** - These are responsible for municipal policy formulation as well as oversight of implementation. They should be able to give a qualitative view of municipal performance. The focus was on service delivery portfolios, namely: Infrastructure and Community Services. Blouberg has thirty-six (36) councillors and Molemole has twenty-five (25)

c) **Traditional leaders** - These own land in municipalities and, therefore, are the ones to allocate land for development purposes in their respective villages. There is an estimated five (5) traditional authorities in each municipality.

d) **Municipal Directors** - The focus is on service delivery municipal departments, namely, Technical Services and Community Services. The number of directors is four (4), comprising two (2) Technical Services Directors from each municipality and two (2) Community Services Directors.

e) **Business/cooperatives owners** - These are the catalysts for development in municipalities. The study determines the support (infrastructure and other logistics) and challenges they face as they try to earn a living from their undertakings. Molemole has fifteen (15) registered emerging farmers whereas Blouberg has more than twenty (20) because

of its vastness. It must be stated that it was difficult to obtain the correct number of registered cooperatives in the two municipalities because of a lack of records.

f) **Local Citizens** - These are the grassroots beneficiaries and consumers of municipal services. The total population for Molemole and Blouberg is 100 408 and 194 119, respectively. Residents who have passed grade 12, professionals (teachers, administrators, nurses) and above will make the bulk of respondents. This is so because these are the people who can provide an insightful view of the effectiveness of municipal service delivery. Again, they are mostly opinion leaders in their communities, who are able to influence the local service delivery agendas among residents.

g) **Community Development Workers -** deployed in communities to help people access government services and poverty alleviation programmes. They work as community facilitators, focusing on finding solutions to identified needs and blockages by interacting with national, provincial and local government structures. There are about ten (10) CDWs in the Molemole and nineteen (19) in the Blouberg Municipalities, respectively.

The resource constraints of travelling to various villages due to skewness of rural settlement patterns have been a limitation to reach as many respondents as possible given that the questionnaires were personally delivered to participants' home.

Table 6: Research sample

Title	Molemole	Blouberg	Total
Municipal Directors	2	2	4
Traditional Authorities	2	2	4
Councillors	2	2	4
Business Owners /Cooperatives	2	2	4
Community Development Workers (CDWs)	3	3	6
Ward Committee members	4	4	8
Local Citizens [grassroots beneficiaries]	8	8	16
		Total	48

3.3   The Methods of Collecting Data

3.3.1   Data Collection from Primary sources

Hilla Brink (undated) advised that when planning for data collection, one has to ask the following questions: What? How? Who? Where? and When? Semi-structured questionnaires and observation were used to collect research data. The questions were structured in such a way that respondents could elaborate on their answers in order for the researcher to obtain more insight for the answers.   Discussions in the face-to-face interviews were conducted in the popular local languages to provide participants the freedom to state their views. After each formal interview, the informal off-recorded discussions were held with some of the respondents to bring matters they did not feel 'safe' to discuss while in a formal one. This led to the total time taken to finish the interviews increasing by about one (1) hour.

Observation was done on long queues by residents in villages as they wait for the daily delivery of water by municipal water tankers. This was done in order to find out the extent of water shortages in villages and the dependency on tankers for provision of water. The road projects at Mohodi village and Mogwadi suburb

were observed to have a first-hand experience on the level of development in these areas.

Transcripts were translated into English when this report was compiled. The questionnaire was piloted with six (6) respondents which respondents were not involved in the main study as these would have compromised the quality of research findings and conclusions. Paper-based questionnaires were dispatched to the respective places of respondents for filling of answers. The choice of respondents from the categories, as explained above (Section 3.2), was done in such a way that their responses would elicit interesting mix of views about the research topic.

Follow-up interviews were conducted with selected participants in order to verify consistency of responses given. According to Williams (2006), the researcher can decide to undertake the study first and after certain information is revealed a decision (based on what is revealed according to the theoretical orientation) on further categories of samples to be examined, is undertaken. Williams (2006) further states that this is type of sampling referred to as theoretical sampling. These interviews were personal, intensive and unstructured.

The questions for these interviews were mostly drawn from the responses given in the semi-structured questionnaires. A municipal official working under Local Economic Development was interviewed. Also an informal interview was conducted with about 8 local residents regarding their opinions on the capacity of their municipality to provide effective service delivery, which lasted for 30 minutes.

Retired councillors and those councillors whose term will be expiring following the 2011 local government elections also participated in the study. These councillors have been involved in the running of municipalities before and it was hoped their experience would bring a rich data that can help to answer the

research questions. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 caregivers and volunteers of the local non-profit organization which lasted for 45 minutes. This was augmented by a one-on-one interview with a coordinator of the same organization.

All the respondents participated freely during interviews in accordance with suggestions made by Rubin and Rubin (1995:47 in Williams, 2006) who state that qualitative interviewing should be characterized by being "flexible, iterative and continuous". Furthermore, Rubin and Rubin's (1995, in Williams, 2006) suggestion that the interviewing process should be conducted in such a manner that the interviewer does not pre-plan the questions, was the guiding principle.

One important stakeholder in rural municipalities is traditional authorities. However, although repeated attempts were made to get responses from them, they did not respond. However, it is important that the role of traditional authorities should be clarified and strengthened in order to enable them to play a meaningful and active role in municipal strategic planning. Their participation in this study could have shed further light on the role they could play in advancing the objective of developmental local government in rural municipalities.

3.3.2   Data collection from secondary sources

In addition to the above, data were also collected and analyzed from secondary data sources to augment the primary data. Data were therefore collected from the following sources: the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), the Annual Reports and approved Policies. Community meetings were attended in order to record concerns raised by residents and personal inspections of completed and current projects as well as sites of small-scale farmers, sewing local businesses and cooperatives were undertaken so as to augment the findings. The analysis of secondary data sources was done with due consideration of the limitations associated with them, e.g., time, errors, author prejudice and generality.

The environment and context in which data are collected were chosen with utmost care to get a true reflection of issues. Where possible, the respondents were encouraged to answer the questions away from their workplaces and given about three to five days to complete the questionnaires. People tend to overstate aspects if they are interviewed in the same place that produces stress (Oka & Shaw, 2000).

3.4   Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted according to sound ethical standards to uphold the public's trust in the research profession. According to Tustin *et al.,* (2005:45), "ethics are of particular importance in research because research is based on the principle of public cooperation". Accordingly, the present study was conducted in a way as to encourage the respondents to provide honest answers. There was a good measure of effort to ensure the findings are not misrepresented.

Letters were sent to the two municipalities with the endorsement of the university requesting permission to interview political office-bearers and administrative officials and also to use official documents for analysis. A written consent was obtained from each respondent to declare that they were not in any way coerced to participate in the study.

Generally, the following ethical principles governed the conduct of present research study:

> Honesty – any attempt to fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data has been avoided. An undertaking was made to the respondents and institutions under study to avail the research findings for scrutiny and full disclosure of the purpose of the study. With integrity, promises will be adhered to and there will be consistency at all times with every respondent. Participants were free to participate or withdraw from research without any financial promises or any incentive promised by the Researcher.
>
> (Resnik, 2009)

The researcher critically examined his work after he has compiled the research report to ensure it is a true reflection of the facts gathered in the field work and from secondary sources. Authors of work used for referencing were acknowledged at all in order to avoid plagiarism. Confidentiality of information or reports that he may access from the participating institutions is guaranteed. Effort has been made to guarantee the anonymity of the respondents. According to HSRC Code of Ethics (HSRC Code of Ethics), the researcher should at all time act correctly and in ways that respect the rights and dignity of the participants. It is on this basis that names used in this report are fictitious in order to protect the identity of participants.

Furthermore, the researcher must uphold and respect the following ethical principles:

- Respect and protection – Information obtained in the course of research that may reveal the identity of a participant or an institution is treated in the strictest confidence unless the respondent or institution so agrees to its release.
- Accountability and Transparency – The participants were clearly briefed on the aims and implications of the research and outcomes and benefits of the research. Any additional factors that might have reasonably be expected to influence participants' willingness to participate were also clarified to participants. The researcher provided the participant with a copy of the letter issued by the Programme Director (MPA).
- The researcher has striven for the highest possible level of scientific quality and academic professionalism.

(Source: HSRC)

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1   Data Analysis

It is important to analyze researched data because this provides an opportunity for other researchers to verify data and add value to the findings (*Tustin et al.*, 2005). According to Mokganya (2010), qualitative data are analyzed through the identification of both the themes in the data and the relationship of these themes; a process called coding. In a qualitative research, emphasis is on the stated experiences of the participants and on the stated meanings they attach to themselves, to other people, and to their environment (Cumber batch, 2004).

Microsoft Excel software was used to calculate percentages, draw graphs and make illustrations to assist in determining the general views of respondents. Preliminary analysis of data was done during the follow-up interviews. Content analysis was done on secondary data to make inferences that will inform the findings. IDPs Policy documents, Annual reports and media statements (newspapers, radio, and television) are the sources from which content analysis was done.

4.2   Findings of the Study

In the first instance, all respondents were asked to state the 6 main services that must be provided by their municipality. It was discovered that the main services that the municipality is expected to provide are: water, electricity, sanitation, , roads tarring and maintenance (in terms of gravel roads), housing, refuse removal and health services. According to the findings (see Figure 3 below), water is the most important service for the residents at 88%, followed by electricity at 71%.

Sanitation and sewerage system and road maintenance services are at 60%, which are followed by housing provision with 43%, refuse removal at 36% and

health services (14%). One interesting finding is that crime came at a lower percentage of about 2%. This suggests that although acts of crime do take place, crime is not that rife in the area, hence it is the least of worries in the area.

Perhaps it is proper to expand on the above statistics as they are part of millennium development goals (MDGs), in which local municipalities must play an important role to enable the country to attain them. The focal areas will, however, be on services where residents scored them highly on the list of priorities, i.e., Water, Electricity, Housing, Roads, Sanitation and Refuse removal. Also, the lack of or poor quality of these services is a source of many community protests in the country as witnessed in the media in recent years.
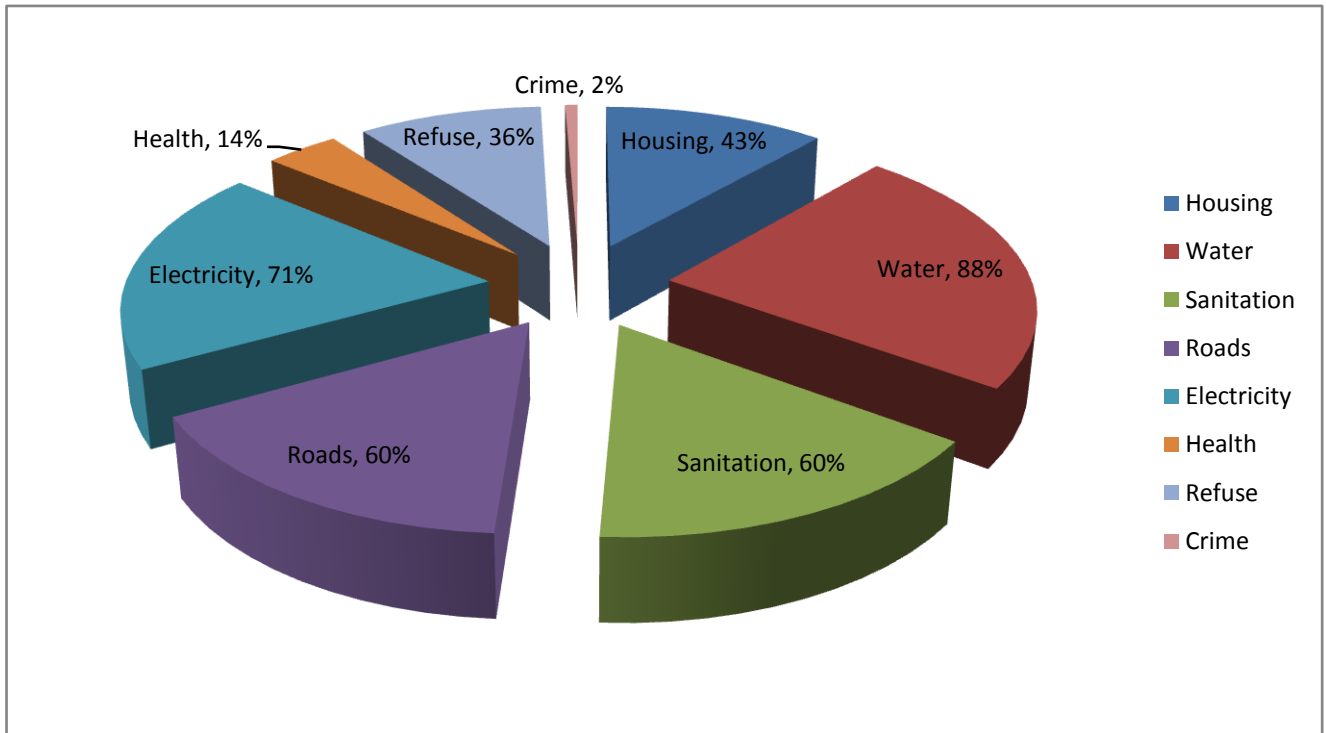
Figure 3: Services prioritized by respondents

4.2.1 Provision of Refuse Collection

Schedules 4B and 5B of the constitution list all the functions that are assigned to local government, for instance water and sanitation services (limited to potable

water supply systems), refuse removal, electricity, local tourism, local sports facilities, etc. According to this study, one of the most startling finding was that even respondents from rural villages expect the municipality to collect refuse from their areas. The Molemole Municipality is only collecting refuse in suburban areas of Mogwadi (former Dendron) and Morebeng (former Soekmekaar). Blouberg Municipality is providing the service in its suburb of Senwabarwana (former Bochum) and have also extended the service to selected villages (Dilaeneng, Witten, Machaba, Marobyane, Indermark, Ga-Makgato, De vrede, Mamadi, Modimonthuse and Grootpan), although on a weekly basis (Blouberg Municipality, 2008). The CRC (2010) found that 93% of the population do not get Refuse collection services.

It is only in suburban areas (Mogwadi, Soekmekaar, and Bochum, respectively) that the municipalities are charging service fees. The challenge for collecting refuse in villages is that municipalities would require more resources (including human, physical, landfill sites, etc) as people from these areas depend to a large extent on social grants due to high levels of unemployment. Cost-recovery (let alone profit) would therefore be seen to be impractical (if not immoral).

Again, according to my personal observation most of the villages do not have a proper and legal dumping site which may pose serious health hazards to human beings and animals. Providing these services would eat into the operational budget of the municipality if there is no budget allocation from the national fiscals. This can be exacerbated by the historically skewed settlement patterns of rural villages, where some roads are not passable.

Having a proper refuse collection strategy can have long-lasting social benefits for the communities in these municipalities. Firstly, as observed when moving around some of the villages were water is collected; refuse would not spill into rivers and wells. Secondly, water from these and other unrecorded sources

would be healthy to drink for both humans and livestock. This can help prevent diseases that could cost municipalities and government dearly.

4.2.2 Provision of Water Services

Provision of bulk water infrastructure is within the competency of the district municipality (this arrangement is more or less the same as prior to 1994 where central government was in charge of the function), while a local municipality is delegated the responsibility of maintenance and operations of the infrastructure. As a result, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) is entered into between a district and a local municipality relating to the provision of water services.

Based on the arrangement a district is a Water Service Authority (WSA) which performs a constitutionally assigned function while a local municipality would be a Water Service Provider (WSP) to perform a delegated function. However, one of the residents in the interview commented that, prior 1994, they used to get enough supply of water in the street taps and even from their taps that were installed in their yards and things started to get worse soon after the system of local municipalities had been introduced following the democratic dispensation.

Tebogo, a male resident in his mid 30s further argued:
> *if it is the district that is responsible for water infrastructure then it means the introduction of municipalities is but a waste of government resources since the latter is much closer to the communities and is ideally well placed to provide the service than the district.*

Residents complained that the municipality could not even satisfactorily maintain water pipes and boreholes while the pump operators do not attend to the machines all the times.   It could be observed that many boreholes around municipalities are dry; hence people are not getting adequate supply of water.

Water tankers are used to supply water to areas with dire shortages but residents still feel they should deliver water twice a day (mornings and afternoons). The

other finding is that the district municipality has seconded staff to the local municipalities to deal with operation and maintenance of water infrastructure in local villages.

However, in an interview with one of the directors it was discovered that the reporting relations for the seconded staff and the municipality were not clearly defined to an extent that they do not know who to account to end up not doing their duly appointed jobs as they are not being supervised. It is the view of the researcher that this is the cause of the friction between residents and the local municipality because residents are not privy to these kinds of arrangements. When local councillors attempt to explain the council's responsibility (with regard to water provision) residents think they are abdicating their functions. It is not unheard of where residents march to the district offices to demand better services.

This raises a question of whether a local municipality should be given full assignment for water provision and directly access funds nationally and provincially. Delegation, unlike assignment, is not controlled by legislation and does not imply the transfer of resources, which may leave the municipality at a financial and legal risk. The relation and interaction between the three spheres of government (nationally, provincially and locally) must be redefined and enforced in order to ultimately address this thorny issue. There is a need for a clear policy to channel appropriate funds to local municipalities to enable them to perform their role as water service providers. Cases where local residents march to the district municipality to demand better services are not as prevalent as protests at local municipalities (Local Government Bulletin, 2010)

One other worrying finding is the quality of water that is provided. For instance, according to the Blouberg Municipality (2008), there are areas that do not have access to clean water and, in some areas, the water such salty that it is not suitable for human consumption. Water is sometimes accessed from natural

resources like rivers and wells, whereas in some cases the sources are not known. This is a very serious challenge as residents might contract water-borne diseases, putting another unnecessary extra strain on the government to deal with outbreaks like cholera and diarrhoea.

4.2.3 Housing Provisioning

The preamble to the Housing Act (Act 107 of 1997) states that "housing is vital to socio-economic well-being of the nation". About 43% of the respondents mentioned housing as the service they must be provided by the municipalities. Housing as a function does not feature in either Schedule 4B or 5B and is therefore not a core function of local government but that of provincial and national spheres. This shows a lack of information given to residents about where to apply for housing. Schedule 4 of the constitution regards housing as a functional area of concurrent National and Provincial government.

The Housing Act (1997) specifies some activities that must be performed by the local municipality, which, among others, involve:
- ✓ Ensuring the inhabitants of its area of jurisdiction have access to adequate housing on a progressive basis;
- ✓ Ensure conditions not conducive to the health and safety of the inhabitants in its area of jurisdiction are prevented or removed;
- ✓ Ensuring services in respect of water, sanitation, electricity, roads, storm water drainage and transport are provided in a manner which is economical and efficient;
- ✓ Set housing delivery goals in respect of its area of jurisdiction;
- ✓ Identify and designate land for housing development;
- ✓ Create and maintain a public environment conducive to housing development which is financially and socially viable;
- ✓ Promote the resolution of conflicts arising in the housing development; and

- ✓ Process, initiate, plan, coordinate, facilitate. promote and enable appropriate housing development in its area of jurisdiction:

Despite the above activities being provided for in the Housing Act of 1997, no municipality has been accredited to operate housing programmes (Qomfo, 2005). According to one official working on housing related matters, housing services are delegated to the municipality (through the community services department) to perform administrative issues like registering new applicants for low-cost housing, which is a peripheral function with no accountability attached to it.

The official did not get training or up to date information on how to assist citizens on housing related queries, let alone developments, in the provincial housing department in particular, and national housing in general. It is the present researcher's view that there must be a help desk in the municipality to assist residents on issues related to housing, especially in relation to RDP houses meant for the poor. Most of the residents interviewed believe a local municipality is the appropriate sphere of government that can address housing in their communities.

The question that needs to be answered is "Should the housing services function be assigned to local municipalities because they are best placed to perform the above activities within their area of jurisdiction?" This means that the housing function will be shifted from Schedule 4A to Schedule 5B, which would support the objective of developmental local government. Perhaps as an alternative a reconciliation of the constitutional schedules and the Housing Act of would also assist in resolving the provision of low-cost housing issue.

4.2.4 Provision of Electricity

The majority of respondents (over 70%) still believe the provision of electricity is within the competency of their local municipality. This is despite the fact that most rural villages draw their electricity from Eskom. However, those who are drawing their electricity from the municipality (the suburbia areas of Mogwadi, Morebeng and Senwabarwana) mentioned the quality of service as it relates to accessibility and cost. Electricity can only be bought during office hours (08H00-16H00) from Monday to Friday and cannot be bought over weekends.

This means if a resident can miss those hours he/she must wait for the next working day to buy a token. Another concern was that if there is a problem with the system for issuing tokens, the municipality should at least extend working hours or even open on weekends as the majority of residents buy an average of twenty rand a token at a time. Alternatively the municipalities must consider using other distribution methods like local 24-hour garages, ATMS and even local shops. However, the concern raised by one municipal official working under income section is that using other distribution channels will reduce their profits and ultimately revenue from own source.

This concern should be taken into cognizance considering that some residents are even calling for Eskom to take over the electricity function from the municipalities. Eskom electricity is costing less in villages because it is being regulated by National Energy Regulator (Nersa) and prices are determined based on income levels in these villages while municipalities have to earn a profit per unit sold. Electricity sales are one of the main revenue sources for local municipalities.

4.2.5 Provision of Roads

Rural municipalities have inherited a serious backlog of roads infrastructure because in the past only suburban towns were given priority. As a result, most of the roads in rural villages are in a very bad state that it is a challenge to drive

through the gravel roads during the rainy season. This explains why most of the respondents mentioned roads maintenance as their primary concern. Local municipalities are responsible for regravelling and tarring of local roads while the district and provincial department of transport is responsible for district and provincial roads. One of the councillors working in the Infrastructure section mentioned that a municipality has to wait for a long time for funds to be advanced from the district or provincial department to implement road projects which have been included in their IDP.

However, residents who were interviewed feel it is the responsibility of a local municipality to tar and maintain any road within its area of jurisdiction, including district roads. This further attests to the problem of lack of information about competencies of district, provincial and local municipalities. The Molemole Municipality is currently tarring two district roads at a cost of more than 30 million rand (Molemole Municipality, 2010). This goes to show that, in some instances, a municipality's performance is evaluated on functions on which it does not have legislative powers and functions.

4.2.6 Provision of sanitation

Sewage disposal service is a core responsibility of a local municipality as per Schedule 4B of the constitution. However, it has not been made clear as to what are the responsibilities and functions of a district vis-à-vis a local municipality, especially as it relates to rolling out sanitation infrastructure. In reality the district is the implementing agency for sanitation projects in the Blouberg Municipality (Blouberg Municipality, 2008). As mentioned in this text above 60% of respondents mentioned sanitation as an important service to should be provided by their municipality. This proportion also includes people residing in rural villages where proper sanitation systems are absent.

A large number of villages are still using pit latrines (including RDP houses in suburb areas) and only a small section of the bond houses is using flush toilets.

The municipality is currently using sewerage trucks to perform this function. Residents in Mogwadi complain that they have been waiting for too long for the proper flush system to be installed and are tired of waiting. One ward committee member put it bluntly that:

> *Water and Sanitation is a luxury to the people, e.g., I have been staying in Mogwadi (the former Dendron) for twelve years, with a septic tank connected to the house (RDP) without water. This is a disaster.*

While residents are waiting for the local municipality to install flush toilets, municipal officials claim they are waiting for the district to roll out the infrastructure. Another challenge that exacerbates the sanitation problem for the municipalities is that there is a shortage of water in the area to have a well-functioning flush toilet system. Although this is a function of the district municipality, the local residents still believe their local municipality must do something to ensure the service is provided. This is understandable given that they interact (and perhaps trust local councillors) with the local municipality more than they do with the distant district municipality.

4.2.7 Public Participation

The majority of respondents from the two municipalities state that although public participation initiatives are organized, they feel that they are informed late (in most cases two days before it takes place). Again, public participation meetings are arranged during the week while many people would have already gone to work and then cannot be able to attend them. Another finding is that the venues for these meetings are too small and cannot accommodate many people. Municipalities normally use traditional halls or school halls to hold public participation meetings with residents.

As a result, respondents feel that their views are not considered when the IDP is finalized as a small number of people participate in these meetings, undermining

the notion of constitutional democracy. This is confirmed by a finding in Idasa CRC Report (2010) which found that the majority of residents (66%) think that there is no positive change after these meetings; hence they are not encouraged to participate anymore.

Important documents like IDP and Annual reports, which provide information about municipal plans and operations, are also distributed as handouts while the meeting is on. Reading through one annual report, the present researcher could see that it is difficult to quickly analyze these documents and make comments or inputs because they are long and, in most cases, not written in home languages.

The *Municipal Systems Act* (Act 32 of 2000, section 18) stipulates that "A municipality must communicate to its community information concerning municipal governance, management and development. When communicating the information a municipality must take into account the language preferences and usage in the community". Citizens should be fully informed about the plans and operations in order to make educated inputs to improve the functioning of their municipalities.

In the interview with the non-profit organization based in Molemole it was discovered that as a civil society organization it is never invited to any policy-related meetings as an organization. They just attend like any other public individuals. Section 16 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) obligates municipalities to develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. This should include the involvement of civil society organizations.

According to Rondinelli (2007), strengthening the capacities of civil society to participate in economic, social and political activities will be increasingly important for all governments in an era of globalization. Civil society has an important role to play in creating efficient mechanisms for allocating social

benefits and providing a voice for poorer groups in political and governmental decision making. This can lead to active cooperation of all citizens in implementing projects of the municipality. Pasha (2007:206) put the matter so aptly that:

> *Civil society organizations are the most strategically important and effective participants in the development process and yet they are still underutilized in most developing countries.*

Pasha (2007) further asserts that civil society can further good governance, first, by policy analysis and advocacy and secondly by monitoring state performance and behaviour of public officials and lastly by identifying and articulating democratic practices. Civil society organizations can therefore be an important agent for promoting transparency, openness and accountability by the municipalities.

Another concern that featured much in the questionnaires and interviews is that municipalities do not use adequate media to inform residents about meetings and even if they do the messages and invites are not accessible. Municipalities normally use pamphlets, radio and posters to invite communities and since they are issued a few days before the meeting, people might not have seen them, hence they are unable to attend or attend in small numbers. In some cases, invitations to stakeholders (like traditional leaders, ward committee members, or civil society) are dispatched the night before while they already have plans for the following day.

Lack of adequate staff complement to deal with IDP and council support issues is another concern that was raised in the questionnaires. For instance, in one municipality it was discovered that the IDP unit is only staffed by one person (The IDP Manager) and both the Committee Researcher and IDP Coordinator positions were vacant.

4.2.8 Local Economic Development

According to the *White Paper on Local Government* (1998), local government can play an important role in promoting job creation and boosting the local economy. Section 153 of the constitution stipulates that "a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and 'economic development' of community". The study found that more than three quarters of the respondents (76%) were not aware of the existence of the Local Economic Development strategy.

This percentage is the same as for those who stated they are not even aware of any help desk in their municipalities to assist small businesses. About 64% of respondents did not think the municipality is on the right track in promoting Local Economic Development. One of the reasons cited is that the municipality does not have dedicated officials to deal with issues of LED. There are market stalls around town which were not well coordinated. As a result, some individuals have taken over and rent the stalls for their own benefit. This is wasteful expenditure as communities have not benefited from the use of government resources.

Municipalities are currently assisting local co-operatives with logistics such as tractors and fuel for farming projects, buying seedlings and inviting officials from LIBSA to do workshops for the members on sound business practices. But the problem is that these co-operatives are not generating a self-sustaining profit to be able to stand on their own without assistance from the municipality. Another recommendation - This means a budget must be allocated on a yearly basis for these cooperatives even though the municipality is not getting anything from the proceeds.

According to MFMA (Section 56), the mayor of the municipal entity which has sole or shared control over a municipal entity, must guide the municipality in exercising its rights and powers over the municipal entity in a way that would

reasonably ensure that the municipal entity complies with this Act and at all times remains accountable to the municipality.

4.2.9 Governance

According to the *White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service* (1998) all public institutions must promote "Batho Pele" principles when providing services to the citizens. This means public institutions should restructure themselves in a *citizen-centric* manner, responding expeditiously to needs and interests of society. This was an important development for local municipalities because of their close proximities to communities. Training workshops should be organized to sensitize municipal officials (both political office-bearers and appointed) about this noble initiative.

Respondents were asked if they believe municipal officials do understand and practice the principles of "B*atho Pele".* The majority of respondents, or 53%, do not believe municipal officials do understand and practice "B*atho Pele"* principles. Although officials have been workshopped on these principles, the attitude of officials was cited as the main reason for not practicing them. So training on attitudes and perceptions is a necessity.

But when respondents were asked what mechanisms should be explored to encourage residents to report complaints and suggestions it was discovered that the majority of the respondents are aware that there is a suggestion book at the reception areas. Some respondents even mentioned the izimbizos as platforms that are being used to request comments and complaints. Suggestion books are meant to record complaints or suggestions as citizens visit municipal offices, meaning that they interact with frontline staff and other officials. Izimbizos are however, vehicles used by politicians when they interact with their constituencies.

However, although respondents know that they can record their complaints and suggestions, most of the respondents felt that nothing is being done to address

them. Hence, residents see no motivation to continue recording them. They take a suggestion book as another way to comply with applicable regulations. This disillusionment can be confirmed from a quote by "Lebo" who stays in an RDP house commented that:

> *People don't complain anymore. Think of a person who stayed in this household for twelve years with a septic tank connected to the house that most of the time is flowing. We have lost interest and dignity – so complaining does not help,* a female respondent (40) retorted.

4.2.10 Skills and Capacity

Respondents could not provide a clear picture on whether they believed municipal officials possess adequate skills to provide quality service to residents, with half of them agreeing that officials do have the requisite skills and half saying no they do not believe they have what it takes. One respondent from the group which felt officials do have the right skills blamed the policy of deployment which led to some officials being misplaced or underemployed.

For instance, on one hand, an official with a post-matric bachelor's degree is currently employed as a general worker in one municipality. He claimed that although he tries to apply for better jobs up the ladder, he just could not get shortlisted to try his luck in an interview. This means as a general worker his skills are being underutilized. But, on the other hand, you would find other officials at upper levels (enjoying benefits like cellphones, car allowances or laptops) with no post-matric qualification. That is the peculiarity of deployment strategy.

The problem with deployment system is that party political allegiance rather than educational qualifications or experience is the main requirement to get a higher position. One other important issue raised was a lack of good leadership to ensure officials are providing quality service. This requires proper monitoring and evaluation mechanism which can assist in identifying realistic training needs.

A need for a change of attitude by officials was also mentioned. The law requires all municipal officials to have qualifications, competencies and relevant experience by 31 December 2012. Hence, municipalities are taking officials on the CPMD (Certificate Programme for Municipal Development) course at graduate schools of business around the country (Local Government Bulletin, 2011).

4.2.11 Investing in Community Education

Education is one social aspect that relates to local economic development. A critical analysis of educational profile of the two municipalities have revealed that about 44% of the population in Blouberg were illiterate and do not have any form of schooling in 2001 (see Table 1 and Figure 1 above) compared to 46% in 1996 (Blouberg Municipality, 2008). This shows an unimpressive improvement of just two percentage points. Molemole had 24% of the population with no formal schooling in 2001 and has since improved the proportion to 16% or 8 percentage points (Molemole Municipality, 2010).

A limitation of the above data is that it is not clear how much of the above percentages relate to the youth who needs education and skills to contribute to developmental objectives of the two municipalities. This means that the two municipalities are not doing enough to increase access to education through building of more schools, introduction of ABET training, offering bursaries as well as coming up with policies to force the youth to attend at least 12 years of schooling.

4.2.12 Corruption

Almost all the residents felt the municipalities are not doing enough to fight corruption among officials and political office-bearers. In one municipality, it was discovered that there is not even a functional audit risk committee because an Internal auditor had resigned and he was the one coordinating the committee. It

was further discovered that the political oversight committee is not functioning as well as it should and hence proper control mechanisms are not put in place as officials are on their own.

4.2.13 Interventions by National and Provincial Spheres

Participants were further asked what interventions can be made by both provincial and national government to address service delivery backlogs. Respondents mentioned increase in funds, investment in infrastructure, provision of leadership and monitoring, capacity building, dispatching of experts like engineers to assist in projects. These are the challenges that rural municipalities face as they resolve to deal with backlogs. For instance, most rural municipalities are struggling to raise enough revenue because of unemployment and a culture of non-payment. If the community does not trust that the municipality will use their money wisely, they will withhold payment of services.

But the question might be: if rural municipalities do not have officials with the requisite competency and expertise how would pumping more money into the problem assist them to utilize it to address service delivery backlogs? Should the authorities deal with capacity problems first and then more funding later, knowing well that the money will be used wisely? Again, can bringing the experts to assist in skills transfer to officials be a solution to this problem? It should be remembered that constitutionally municipalities have powers and would not the "intervention" by the upper spheres of government be construed as "interference" or encroachment in their territories?

Are we ready and bold enough, 16 years into our democratic dispensations, to make fundamental changes to our worldly acclaimed constitution? If we can find genuinely correct answers to these questions perhaps the challenges facing rural municipalities to promote socio-economic development to their communities could, at least be partly resolved.

Lastly, participants were asked if they believe their municipalities are on the right track to improve their lot and if they are satisfied with the overall quality of service provided. Unsurprisingly as it has been a trend throughout the findings, a majority of respondents (about 63%) are not happy with the services they get from their municipalities. Others felt rural municipalities focus much on improving services in urban areas than in rural areas. This will lead to migration as people search economic opportunities.

Some pockets of respondents believe their municipalities can turn the corner and mention that they are able to enjoy daily delivery of water from water tankers and roads are being tarred and plead for patience because rural municipalities have inherited a very dilapidated infrastructure. The general feeling is that the maintenance of this quality is compromised by a lack funds.

One interesting hindrance to improving the socio-economic impact of residents mentioned was political interference in the administration of municipalities. One resident aptly put it that: "*As long as politicians want to take full control of the municipalities, we will never be on the right track to improve ordinary lives of citizens". Male (38)*

However, politicians believe they are the right custodians of the interests of the citizens since they were given a mandate by them through the ballot.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall trend that has emerged from the study is that residents do not have faith and trust in their municipalities, while politicians felt some headway has been made to promote socio-economic development of communities. This discrepancy from the two strands of respondents implies that either politicians are not communicating adequately to their constituencies about the work of municipalities, are being economical with the truth and obsessed with blowing their own trumpets, or perhaps residents are being unreasonable. But on inspection of the rural roads which are dangerous to drive in (see Annexure A), the glaring underdevelopment and the fact that the two municipalities rely heavily on agricultural sector, it may be concluded that rural municipalities are still a long way to go in promoting the socio-economic conditions of communities.

One thing is glaringly evident from this study, viz., that rural municipalities are still far from matching their (urban-based or semi-urban counterparts) in ensuring that rural residents enjoy the fruits of what was once called "freedom" at the dawn of democracy after 1994. The national government will have to step up their rural development programmes in order to make a meaningful impact on the welfare of rural residents.

5.1 Conclusions and Recommendations
5.1.1 Legislative Framework

The study has identified problems relating to the myriad of legislative frameworks governing local government in South Africa. The legislated five-year term for councillors is not enough for them to clearly grasp their meaning. This can lead to wrong or inadequate application of these pieces of legislation, resulting in persistent poor service delivery. Officials entering the municipal environment for the first time also come with rudimentary knowledge of local government

legislation which would also require workshops to familiarize them with applicable legislative framework. This will impact negatively on their productivity.

According to Water Services Act municipalities, as water service providers must report to the district council on the provision of free basic water to rural communities. The same municipalities are obligated to submit periodic reports to both the national and provincial treasury as per Section 71 of the MFMA (Act 56 of 2003), the provincial and national departments responsible for local government.

In addition to that, municipalities must also make time to report to their respective committees and general communities they serve as per the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. If we have to add reports to the Auditor General, it could be concluded that municipalities have to report to each and every sphere of government above it. The time and capacity to account to such a myriad of institutions will obviously be a challenge, hence the unfavourable audit opinions.

Recommendation

As the country will be voting in the third local government elections, there should be a serious audit of what local government has achieved and what needs to be done in pursuit of successful and meaningful improvement of the welfare of communities going forward. First, the legislative framework governing local government should be reconsidered. Consolidation of the various pieces of legislation governing local municipalities can remove the operational complications and inefficiencies as identified in the study.

Politicians, officials and the community at large should be thoroughly inducted and capacitated about the importance of working together to determine projects and strategies that will improve the lives of ordinary citizens to which this democracy owes a lot. Furthermore, there is a need for introduction of performance assessment of political office-bearers and officials and continuous

reporting to communities. This would assist in ensuring that municipalities focus on the key performance outputs which are relevant to the needs of society. This is called accountability.

5.1.2   The relationship between the three spheres of government

According to this study, there is discordance between the three spheres of government. There is no clear line of responsibilities between the national, provincial and local spheres of government. Although local government was touted as the ideal sphere of bringing government closer to the people it has not been accorded the necessary powers and functions to satisfactorily provide such basic services to communities.

Recommendation

The powers and functions of local government vis-à-vis provincial and national spheres of government should be clarified. The intergovernmental relations among the three spheres of government should also be fortified to avoid overlaps of functions. District municipalities should be discontinued because they are like an extra sphere of government which can derail service delivery at the local level. Communities will never march to the district offices if they want water (although district municipalities are responsible for bulk water infrastructure and free basic water); but only to their local municipality.

A dedicated official or housing helpdesk must be assigned in the municipalities to specifically deal with the issues of housing. The assigned official(s) should constantly interact with the provincial department of local government and housing to serve as a link between local housing beneficiaries and the department. This would release municipal resources to deal with issues of providing basic services to the beneficiaries once they take occupation.

5.1.3   The role of district council in the provision of services

According to this study, there is no clear understanding of the responsibilities of municipalities vis-à-vis district municipalities and other public institutions above the local sphere of government. This was evidenced by the comments by respondents on the services that should be provided by their local municipalities. Bulk water infrastructure and housing are some of the services which, although impact on local residents, are the competencies of districts and provincial departments.

Recommendation

District municipalities have to prioritize their infrastructure development programmes in all their municipalities within their jurisdictions. Local municipalities will have to spend their limited operating budgets on road regravelling and maintaining the water tankers and sewerage trucks which supply water and remove sewerage at local communities, respectively. If a local municipality is able to get direct grants for developing its own infrastructure, communities can see some positive movement in respect of service delivery which can help to restore some trust in the system of local government system.

If the aim for establishing local government was to bring government closer to the people, then municipalities should indeed be given the powers to provide housing, bulk infrastructure for water and sanitation and electricity without having to negotiate them from districts and other sector departments. It has been proven in most studies and from the concerns raised in most service delivery protests that those are the issues that people hope to get after casting that votes.

5.1.4   Appointment of competent and suitably qualified officials

This study found out that municipalities do not have qualified officials who can perform their duties in a professional manner by following generally acceptable management practices. The often cited challenge is the persistent cadre deployment, which overlooks qualified people in favour of cronies connected to

the majority party in the municipality. This has an effect of politicizing the administration of the municipality as every decision will be taken in terms of being politically correct. This problem can be worse if there are factions among members of the majority party in the municipal council.

Recommendations

Cadre deployment should be practised in the context of competency and efficiency of operations within municipalities. Although the ruling party will justify this strategy in that it helps to maintain and protect the ideology of the party, it could help if competent people are considered, especially in areas like engineering, project management and technical services. Otherwise, we will still witness the dissatisfaction that manifested with service delivery protests in recent years. Politicians should focus on their primary role of oversight on the administrative activities of appointed officials and not attempt to influence them, for instance in personnel provisioning and supply chain.

The Local Government Bulletin (2011) raised an important point when it posited that municipalities cannot deliver on their developmental mandate without suitably qualified and professional staff. The bulletin goes further to state that local government needs to "professionalize" and be "professionalized". The lack of good governance on staff matters in many municipalities results in service delivery failures (Local Government Bulletin, 2011). Political leaders and appointed officials should be trained and developed so that they can appreciate the implications of strategic planning and accountability to the residents who entrusted them with municipal resources. This will help them to be objective when taking decisions instead of taking decisions which are "politically correct".

5.1.5   Public Participation

It could be concluded that the majority of respondents from the two municipalities felt that although public participation initiatives are meant to benefit them, they felt let down because information filtered to them late and again they are not

timely informed to enable them to participate meaningfully. Respondents also acknowledged that the media like radio, posters, pamphlets and imbizos are used to inform about public participation meetings, albeit late.

Recommendation

Public participation is another important issue that municipalities should improve on. They should issue invitations at least seven (7) days before the actual meetings. Documents like IDPs and reports which are matters of discussions in these meetings should be distributed in time to give residents enough time to analyze them. Media like community radio stations and newspapers, schools and traditional authorities should be used in order to ensure capacity attendance.

Big venues like soccer grounds or school halls can be used to accommodate many residents. All in all this can go a long way in encouraging participation by residents and will ensure their inputs are taken into consideration when the IDP is finalized. It can also lead to greater acceptance and cooperation by the communities as they would own the final adopted document.

One shopkeeper who participated in the study said: "*In 2000 we expected miracles, in 2006 we expected something, and in 2011 we expect nothing.*" The shopkeeper was referring to the last two and upcoming local elections. These are the familiar words of disillusionment which has characterized feelings about local government in South Africa. It is up to the councillors and officials of these local municipalities to prove him wrong; in the upcoming years!

5.1.6   Local Economic Development

There is no Local Economic Development strategy that guides promotion of local businesses in the municipalities. Although local cooperatives are supported by municipalities on logistics like transport, water and supply of seed the produce is only enough for sustenance and cannot be sold to big supermarkets like Pick 'n Pay, Shoprite or Spar. These cooperatives cannot sustain themselves to

increase production and create the much needed jobs in these municipalities. Most members of cooperatives do not have business management skills which are necessary come up with strategies to grow their cooperatives to fully-fledged entities that can compete in both the national and international markets.

Since a municipality assigns a part of its budget towards operational costs of the cooperatives, it can be argued that they must report financially and otherwise on an annual basis about the usage of those funds. However, in the current practice, cooperatives are not obliged to report to the municipality and as mentioned above, they expect to be bankrolled for their operations. This will derail broad-based economic development as the same people are assisted every year. There must be some interventions to change this situation because this is eating out of the operational budget which is not enough to cover municipal general expenses anyway.

Recommendation

The provincial department of Local Economic Development must at least assign an official, preferably from Limpopo Business Support Agency and LIMDEV to each municipality who will deal with issues of capacitating small and medium enterprises. These agencies are mandated to promote economic development in the province with Limpopo Business Support Agency dealing with support for cooperatives and LIMDEV focusing on promoting local business in the export market (LEDET, 2009). Residents and local businesses should be made aware of the existence of the help desk because in the interviews many people mentioned they have never heard of such a thing in their municipality.

Municipalities should consider their model of assisting Cooperatives. In an ideal situation one group of small businesses should be assisted at start-up level and they should be supported up to break-even point, after which other upcoming entities are identified for assistance. This is called a "hand up" because a business is only assisted to setup a business and from there it should strive to

manage the entity in a sustainable manner. Given the lack of financial resources by these municipalities, going on with this practice means other aspiring young entrepreneurs will never get assistance from the municipality.

5.1.7   Education

Municipalities are investing too little resources in educating the communities. For instance, one municipality it was discovered that only two matriculants have since been offered tertiary educational bursaries in the last three years. Limited funds make it rather difficult, if not impossible to finance a large pool of matric graduates. This would rob municipalities of the much needed human capital from which to draw for developmental purposes.

Given the fact that municipalities will always have limited funds, they can seek donations from big businesses to get them to commit to taking up two learners a year for tertiary studies or provide them with practical work to give them working experience.   It is also important that school-feeding schemes should be accelerated as one of the reasons for children to not go to school (or drop-out) is poverty. No-one can learn on an empty stomach. This high illiteracy rate (as depicted in Table 1 and Figure 1 above) will pose a serious social threat to the municipality's drive to fight crime in the area.

5.1.8   Supply Chain Processes

The two municipalities have a very impressive Supply Chain Policy that aims to promote Black Economic Empowerment for mostly local businesses. According to the policy, local businesses are given preference during procurement as a way to boost them. However, there are no records of the number of local businesses from which they procured and neither the total rand value (nor proportion) spent on local businesses (according to an official working in Procurement Section in one municipality). The absence of historical data means the municipality cannot determine if they are really promoting Local Economic Development and thus come with better strategies to address the shortcomings, if any.

Recommendation

Municipalities must provide the necessary logistical support and business management skills to Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) because this sector is known to drive the much needed job creation. They must also strive to enable these SMMEs to graduate from informal sector to formal economic stream, thus boosting their revenue bases in the process. More emphasis should be put on women-owned businesses in order to help redress past imbalances where men were believed to be the only gender that can run successful businesses.

Recording of transactions done with local businesses should be a top priority for the municipalities. These would enable them to audit their contribution to promotion of local businesses with a view to coming with better strategies.

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ANNEXURE A

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An incomplete tarred road at Mohodi village - Molemole

Annexure A: An incomplete tarred road at Mohodi village - Molemole

ANNEXURE B

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Gravel road at Madikana village- Molemole

Annexure B: Gravel road at Madikana village - Molemole

ANNEXURE C

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Research questionnaire

Research Questionnaire

THE ROLE OF RURAL-BASED MUNICIPALITIES TO PROMOTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: MOLEMOLE AND BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITIES IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership: University of Limpopo

The Researcher   :   Mr. N.J Modisha [082 813 5744]

Year   :   2010

Ward number   :   _____

5

please provide brief explanation for each answer

A. Public Participation

1. Is the municipality having enough capacity to conduct public participation in communities?
2. Does the municipality inform communities in time about public participation schedules?
3. What media is used to inform residents about public participation?
4. Does the municipality allows residents to participate in the development of the Integrated Development Plan ?
5. Are residents interested in taking part in public participation initiatives? E.g. imbizos, public hearings, Council meeting, Other, specify
6. Does the municipality have suitable structures to conduct public participation in communities?
7. Do you think the municipality fully consider the views and concerns of residents when finalizing the IDP?

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8. What other ways can be used by the municipality to ensure residents participate in the affairs of the municipality?
9. Are you satisfied with the way public participation is conducted by the municipality?
B. Local Economic Development
10. Does the municipality have the strategy in place to promote Local Economic Development?
11. Is there a help desk within the municipality for assisting Small businesses?
12. Are local residents made aware of the help desk service?
13. Does the municipality have the capacity to promote local economic development for residents?
C. Community services and provision of basic services

14. What support is given by the municipality to promote sports and recreation in the communities?
15. Are you satisfied with the way a municipality provide water and sanitation to communities?
D. Governance and Financial Viability
16. Do you think municipal officials understand the principles of Batho Pele?
17. What initiatives are there to encourage residents to report complains?
18. Do you think residents complains and suggestions are taken into account by the municipality?
19. Does the municipality make important documents (IDP, Annual Reports, etc) accessible to the residents?
20. Do you think the municipality is doing enough to fight corruption among officials?
21. Do you think municipal officials have the right skills to provide good quality customer service?
22. How can the municipality improve the capacity of officials and Councillors to improve service delivery?

23. Would you say the municipality is in the right track towards improving ordinary lives of communities?	
24. What measures can be taken by the National government to support rural municipalities in addressing service delivery backlogs?	
25. Are you satisfied about the quality of service provided by the municipality?	

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ANNEXURE D

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Completed research questionnaire

Form no: 09

Research Questionnaire

THE ROLE OF RURAL-BASED MUNICIPALITIES TO PROMOTE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: MOLEMOLE AND BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITIES IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership: University of Limpopo

The Researcher : Mr. NJ Modisha [082 813 5744]

Year   : 2010

Ward no   : 12

Contact Telephone

Cell : 0795463016

Work : 0155050688

E-mail address (if any) : _____

Name of Village/Suburb : MADIKAMA

Name the services that must be supplied by the municipality to the community:

a) Water Services   d) Road Maintenance

b) Sanitation   e) Housing

c) Electricity   f) _____

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Please provide brief explanation for each answer

A. Public Participation

1. Is the municipality having enough capacity to conduct public participation in communities?	Yes. They have good resources and they must implement them, rather to stay in office usless and they go to communities and plough back.
2. Does the municipality inform communities about public participation schedule?	Yes. But it seems people are looking hope. They care not now about municipality things.
3. What media is used to inform residents about public participation activities?	They used documents "Newspaper". Most of our people are unskilled. They don't know how to read and write. f thing they can change and use radio because people are good lifters
4. Does the municipality allow residents to participate in the development of the Integrated Development Plan?	No. This Nea or I.D.P it got its people. Its Useless and Cluelell. If you can ask someone who is educated about I.D.P you will be in danger.
5. Are residents interested in taking part in public participation initiatives? E.g. imbizos, public hearings, Council meetings. Other, specify	No. If there is public hearing is only friends and family. They inform them. Because they know people will not attend.
6. Does the municipality have suitable structures to conduct public participation in communities?	Yes. Our National govt provide them with Suitable Structure but they don't uft them. I don't know whether they are Selfish or what. Nobody knows
7. Do you think the municipality consider the views and concerns of residents when finalizing the IDP?	No, go to answer no 4

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8. What other ways can be used by the municipality to ensure residents participate in the affairs of the municipality? Encouraging them, Tell them how important is to participate in the affairs of the municipality.

9. Are you satisfied with the way public participation is conducted by the municipality? No. They do it for the sake of doing it. They care not.

B. Local Economic Development

10. Does the municipality have the strategy in place to promote Local Economic Development? Yes, they have a lot of document which guide them.

11. Is there a help desk within the municipality for assisting Small businesses? Yes but it seems they ignore it.

12. Are local residents made aware of the help desk service? No, because if you can cross Question one of the local resident about help desk he/she dont know about it

13. Does the municipality have the capacity to promote local economic development for local residents? Yes, if there is a task team to monitor the situation

C. Community services and provision of basic services

14. What initiatives are there to support the education of the youth? We have one goal, one education. They tried to inform our youth how important is education. we must go to our basics.

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15. What support is given by the municipality to promote sports and recreation in the communities? *Sometimes if they want they provide us with transport. And last season we have this mayor Cup to Compete.*	
16. Are you satisfied with the way a municipality provide water and sanitation to communities? *Totally NO. Water is a basic need but to our municipality there is no water we get water after three to four weeks*	

D. Governance and Financial Viability

17. Do you think municipal officials understand the principles of Batho Pele? *They understand this thing "In interest first" Meirs before of Batho pele. if they Can change this motto and Converted it to Batho pele things will be okay.*	
18. What initiatives are there to encourage residents to report complains and suggestions? *I don't think they used to open the Suggestions box and read it. We do report but nothing or steps taken.*	
19. Do you think resident's complains and suggestions are taken into account by the municipality? *NO refer to answer in 18*	

20. Does the municipality make important documents (IDP, Annual Reports, etc) accessible to the residents? Yes, the documents are there but only the educated people know about it. They dont care about it because they are educated

21. Do you think the municipality is doing enough to fight corruption among officials? Totally No. The reason is that you find the criminal investigating the criminals even the findings and recommendations will faver the party

22. Do you think municipal officials have the right skills to provide good quality customer service? Yes because they deserve and are highly skilled

23. Would you say the municipality is in the right track towards improving ordinary lives of communities? No. If this thing of monitoring can be introduced things will come to place.

24. What measures can be taken by the National government to support rural municipalities in addressing service delivery backlogs? If they dont perform dismissal. Non-performers must be fired and get active people so that service delivery can be improved

25. Are you satisfied about the quality of service provided by the municipality? No. It seems they select the community. If that particular community there is someone who is working at municipality or councillor they provide service.

ANNEXURE E

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Article Clip by Mr. Moeletsi Mbeki

South Africa: Only a matter of time before the bomb explodes

by Moeletsi Mbeki: Author, political commentator and entrepreneur.

I can predict when SA's "Tunisia Day" will arrive. Tunisia Day is when the masses rise against the powers that be, as happened recently in Tunisia. The year will be 2020, give or take a couple of years. The year 2020 is when China estimates that its current minerals-intensive industrialisation phase will be concluded.

For SA, this will mean the African National Congress (ANC) government will have to cut back on social grants, which it uses to placate the black poor and to get their votes. China's current industrialisation phase has forced up the prices of SA's minerals, which has enabled the government to finance social welfare programmes.

The ANC inherited a flawed, complex society it barely understood; its tinkerings with it are turning it into an explosive cocktail. The ANC leaders are like a group of children playing with a hand grenade. One day one of them will figure out how to pull out the pin and everyone will be killed.

A famous African liberation movement, the National Liberation Front of Algeria, after tinkering for 30 years, pulled the grenade pin by cancelling an election in 1991 that was won by the opposition Islamic Salvation Front. In the civil war that ensued, 200000 people were killed.

The former British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, once commented that whoever thought that the ANC could rule SA was living in Cloud Cuckoo Land. Why was Thatcher right? In the 16 years of ANC rule, all the symptoms of a government out of its depth have grown worse.

- Life expectancy has declined from 65 years to 53 years since the ANC came to power;
- In 2007, SA became a net food importer for the first time in its history;
- The elimination of agricultural subsidies by the government led to the loss of 600000 farm workers' jobs and the eviction from the commercial farming sector of about 2,4-million people between 1997 and 2007; and
- The ANC stopped controlling the borders, leading to a flood of poor people into SA, which has led to conflicts between SA's poor and foreign African migrants.

What should the ANC have done, or be doing?

The answer is quite straightforward. When they took control of the government in 1994, ANC leaders should have: identified what SA's strengths were; identified what SA's weaknesses were; and decided how to use the strengths to minimise and/or rectify the weaknesses.

A wise government would have persuaded the skilled white and Indian population to devote some of their time — even an hour a week — to train the black and coloured population to raise their skill levels.

What the ANC did instead when it came to power was to identify what its leaders and supporters wanted. It then used SA's strengths to satisfy the short-term consumption demands of its supporters. In essence, this is what is called black economic empowerment (BEE).

BEE promotes a number of extremely negative socioeconomic trends in our country. It promotes a class of politicians dependent on big business and therefore promotes big business's interests in the upper echelons of government. Second, BEE promotes an anti-entrepreneurial culture among the black middle class by legitimising an environment of entitlement. Third, affirmative action, a subset of BEE, promotes incompetence and corruption in the public sector by using ruling party allegiance and connections as the criteria for entry and promotion in the public service, instead of having tough public service entry examinations.

Let's see where BEE, as we know it today, actually comes from. I first came across the concept of BEE from a company, which no longer exists, called Sankor. Sankor was the industrial division of Sanlam and it invented the concept of BEE.

The first purpose of BEE was to create a buffer group among the black political class that would become an ally of big business in SA. This buffer group would use its newfound power as controllers of the government to protect the assets of big business.

The buffer group would also protect the modus operandi of big business and thereby maintain the status quo in which South African business operates. That was the design of the big conglomerates.

Sanlam was soon followed by Anglo American. Sanlam established BEE vehicle Nail; Anglo established Real Africa, Johnnic and so forth. The conglomerates took their marginal assets, and gave them to politically influential black people, with the purpose, in my view, not to transform the economy but to create a black political class that is in alliance with the conglomerates and therefore wants to maintain the status quo of our economy and the way in which it operates.

But what is wrong with protecting SA's conglomerates?

Well, there are many things wrong with how conglomerates operate and how they have structured our economy.

- The economy has a strong built-in dependence on cheap labour;
- It has a strong built-in dependence on the exploitation of primary resources;
- It is strongly unfavourable to the development of skills in our general population;
- It has a strong bias towards importing technology and economic solutions; and
- It promotes inequality between citizens by creating a large, marginalised underclass.

Conglomerates are a vehicle, not for creating development in SA but for exploiting natural resources without creating in-depth, inclusive social and economic development, which is what SA needs. That is what is wrong with protecting conglomerates.

The second problem with the formula of BEE is that it does not create entrepreneurs. You are taking political leaders and politically connected people and giving them assets which, in the first instance, they don't know how to manage. So you are not adding value. You are faced with the threat of undermining value by taking assets from people who were managing them and giving them to people who cannot manage them. BEE thus creates a class of idle rich ANC politicos.

My quarrel with BEE is that what the conglomerates are doing is developing a new culture in SA — not a culture of entrepreneurship, but an entitlement culture, whereby black people who want to go into business think that they should acquire assets free, and that somebody is there to make them rich, rather than that

they should build enterprises from the ground.

But we cannot build black companies if what black entrepreneurs look forward to is the distribution of already existing assets from the conglomerates in return for becoming lobbyists for the conglomerates.

The third worrying trend is that the ANC-controlled state has now internalised the BEE model. We are now seeing the state trying to implement the same model that the conglomerates developed.

What is the state distributing? It is distributing jobs to party faithful and social welfare to the poor. This is a recipe for incompetence and corruption, both of which are endemic in SA. This is what explains the service delivery upheavals that are becoming a normal part of our environment.

So what is the correct road SA should be travelling?

We all accept that a socialist model, along the lines of the Soviet Union, is not workable for SA today. The creation of a state-owned economy is not a formula that is an option for SA or for many parts of the world. Therefore, if we want to develop SA instead of shuffling pre-existing wealth, we have to create new entrepreneurs, and we need to support existing entrepreneurs to diversify into new economic sectors.