

POLICY & PRACTICE

Service Delivery: Focus on Dipaleseng Local Municipality: Mpumalanga

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Abstract

The supply or lack of services impacts on people's quality of life, and so the Constitution of South Africa and other strategy documents emphasise the provision of services to all South African citizens irrespective of colour or creed. The services are vast and the responsibility for provision is divided between national, provincial and local authorities. This paper focuses on the delivery of services whose responsibility and accountability lies with the local municipalities, including: water; electricity; sanitation and refuse removal. The paper also explores the background to the recent unrest in the country with a focus on Dipaleseng Municipality, looking at its socio-economic situation, and challenges which include poverty, economic stability and provision of basic services. Sources of data include the South African media, journal articles, relevant documents, websites and databases.

Key words: poverty rate, GDP, unemployment, service delivery.

Background

South Africa has recently experienced protests and unrest due to dissatisfaction with service delivery. Chief amongst the triggers of the unrest is lack of services including housing, sanitation, clean water, and electricity etc.

Figure 1 shows the locations of protests from 2007-2010, and Figure 2 the concerns of protestors (Jain, H. 2010: 31). As can be seen from Figure 2, amongst concerns that triggered the protests, housing is the top followed by water and electricity, sanitation etc.

Figure 1: Location of protests in relation to housing services provision

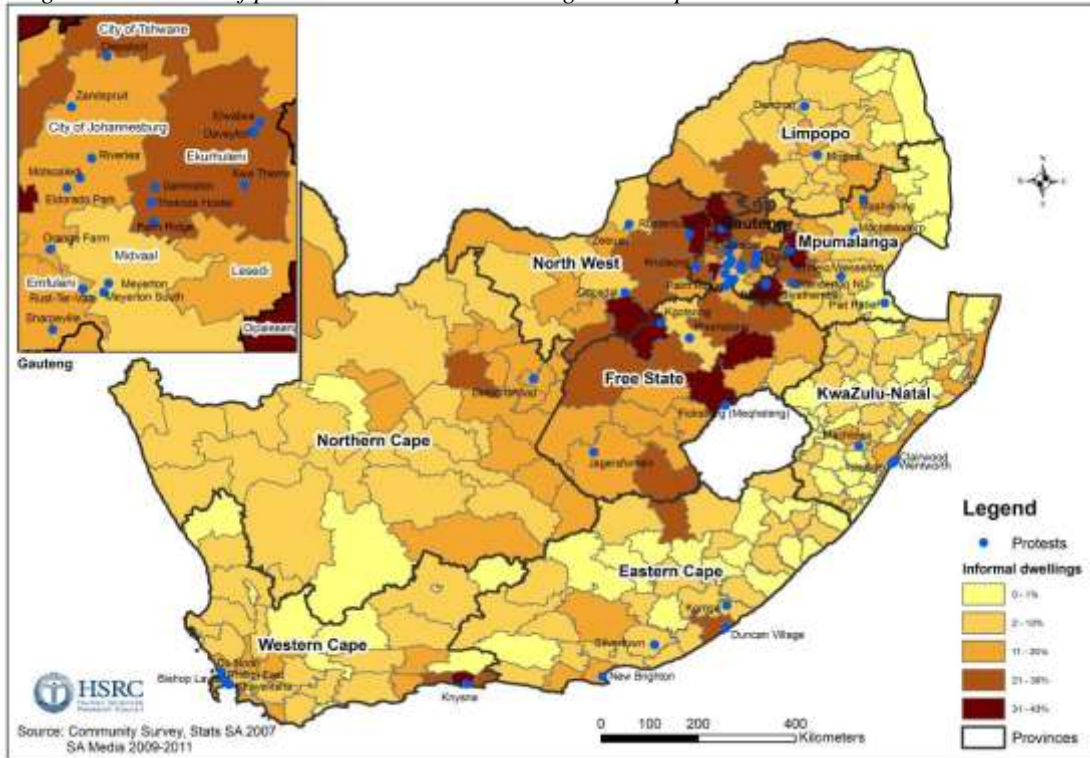
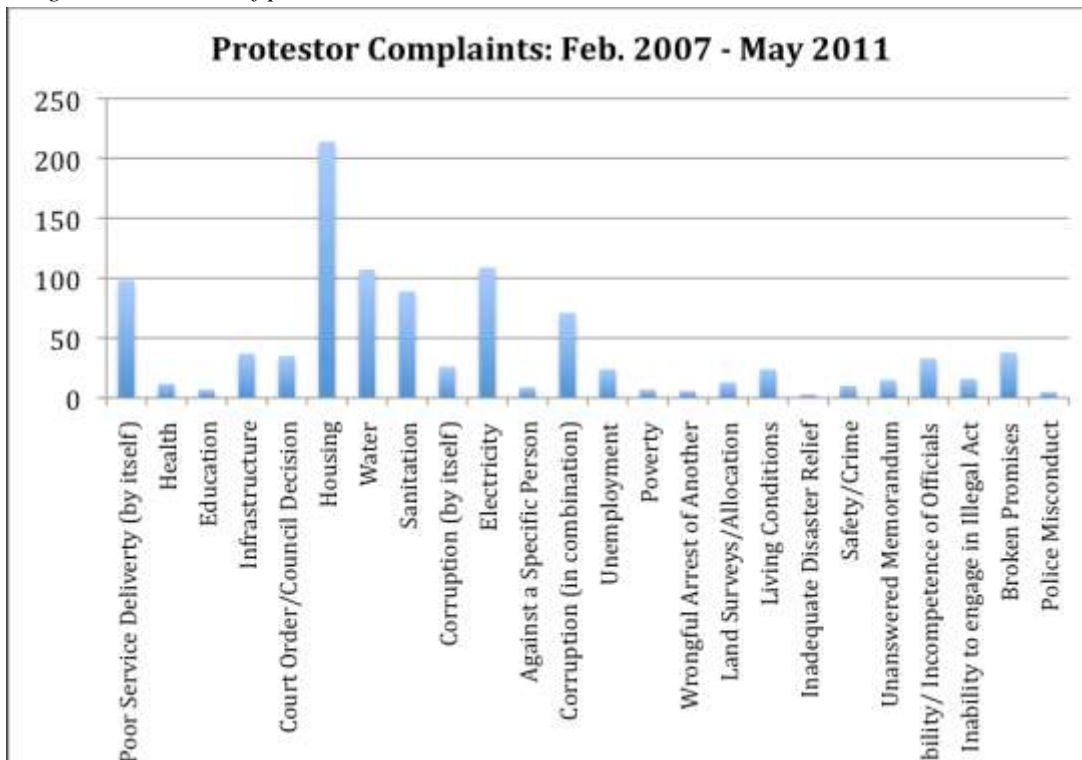


Figure 2: Concerns of protestors



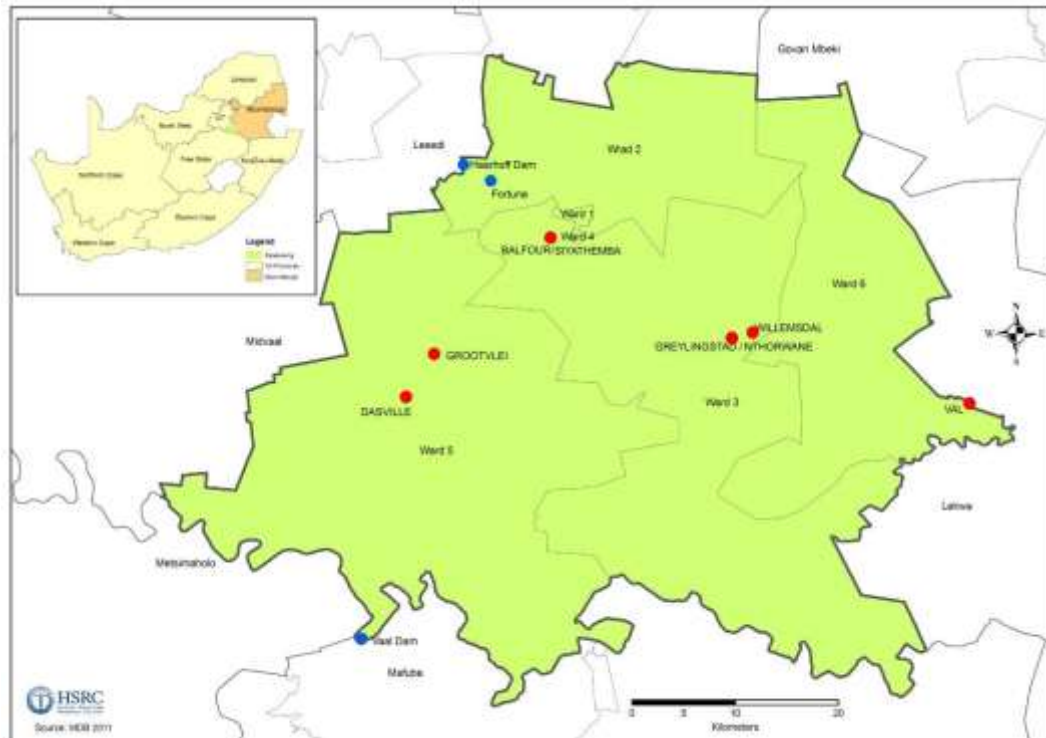
Source: Jain (2010) p30

Housing is primarily the responsibility of the provincial department, but since people have direct contact with local authorities they tend to direct grievances about the backlog in housing at municipalities. For this reason housing and conditions in the informal settlements will also be briefly examined.

Dipaleseng Municipality

Dipaleseng Municipality is located in Mpumalanga Province and falls under Gert Sibande District Municipality. It covers an area of about 2619.4 km² and has a population of 37,880 (Stats SA, 2007). The head office is situated in Balfour, one of the larger towns in the area. Other small towns include Dasville, Greylingstad, Grootvlei, Val and Willemsdal (Figure 3). Close to these towns are settlements, both urban and rural, but the municipality itself is largely rural. The townships and rural settlements include Siyathemba in Balfour, Nthorwane, Ekanini etc.

Figure 3: Dipaleseng Municipality



Socio- economic characteristics

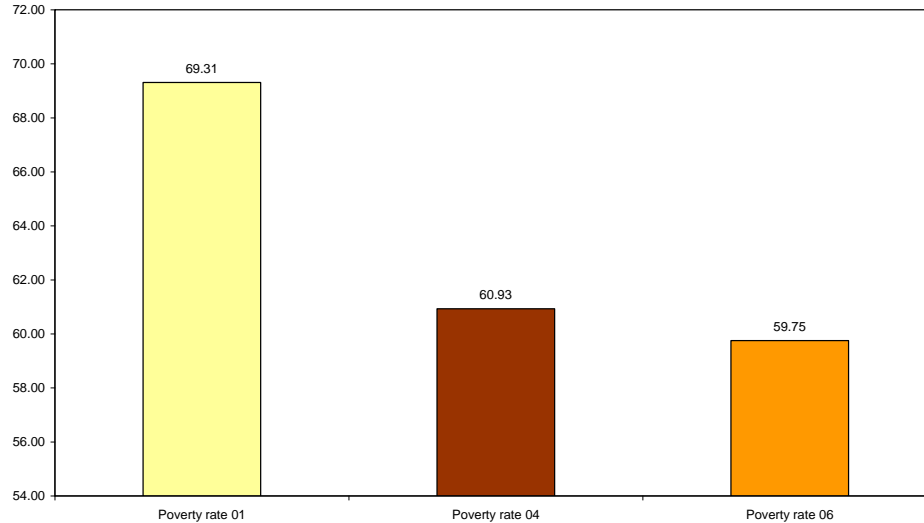
The socio-economic conditions of each municipality can be measured, by poverty rate, unemployment, and gross geographic product (GGP⁵⁹). Figure 4 below shows the decline in the poverty rate from 69.31% in 2001 to 60.93% in 2004⁶⁰, which could be attributed to government

⁵⁹ The *Gross Geographic Product* (GGP) is a measure used in South Africa to assess the total and sectorial economic activity on an annual basis within municipalities

⁶⁰ "Poverty income is defined as the minimum income needed to sustain a household and varies according to the size of the household. For example, the monthly poverty income in 2009 for a household of four.... was R2, 440 and R3,396 for a

spending on expanded public works programmes (EPWP), and other nationally and provincially driven programmes aimed at poverty reduction. Monitoring poverty levels shows the slow decline in poverty rate from 60.93% in 2004 to 59.75% in 2006 (Poverty Database, HSRC, 2006).

Figure 4: Dipaleseng - Poverty rate 2001-2006



To explore the reasons attributed to the rise/decline of poverty it is important to understand the economy of the municipality, and key economic sectors. Mpumalanga as a whole is known for production of maize, sunflower, groundnuts, citrus fruits etc. Dipaleseng contributes 3.48 % to Mpumalanga's agricultural income. In 2001 agriculture, community services and trade were the top three sectors, with agriculture contributing 21% to the municipality's total GDP (Figure 5).

In addition crop production, livestock, dairy farming and commercial logging are also prevalent in the whole of Mpumalanga; Dipaleseng also plays a role in this sub-sector hence the existence of the biggest abattoir (Karan Beef) that employs largely Dipaleseng residents.

Dipaleseng experienced a severe decline in agricultural income between 2001-2004. Even today it has failed to recover fully. From 2004-06 some improvement was seen which can be attributed to LED programme, although the economy did not reach the 2001 mark (Figure 6). Dipaleseng has a number of small-scale agricultural projects (Dipaleseng IDP2008/09) which include: Mphatlalatsane Cooking Oil; Siyafuya Piggeries; Rainbow Nation Piggery; Harambee (farming) and Sinqobile (wood).

household of six. The poverty rate then is the percentage of people living in households with an income less than the poverty income" Source, Mpumalanga Province (2011)

Figure 5: Dipaleseng GGP by sector 2001

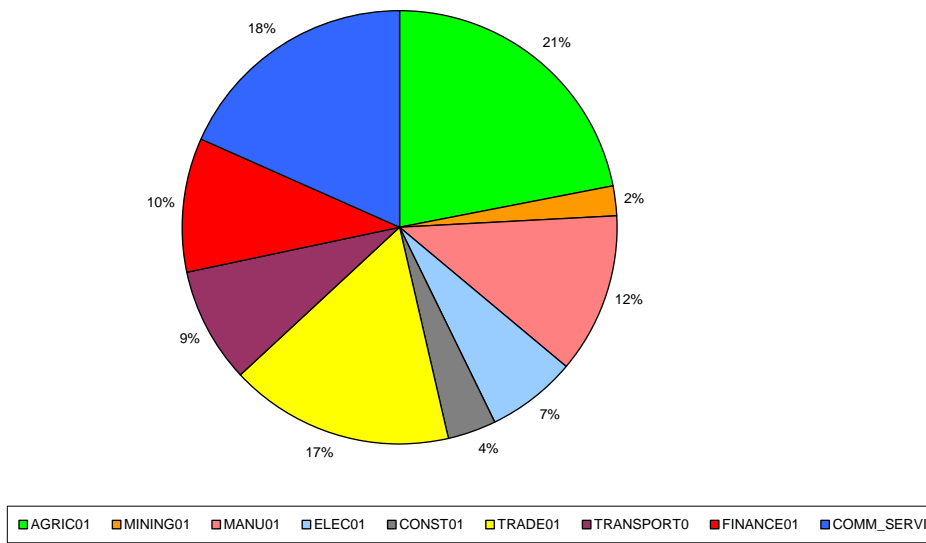
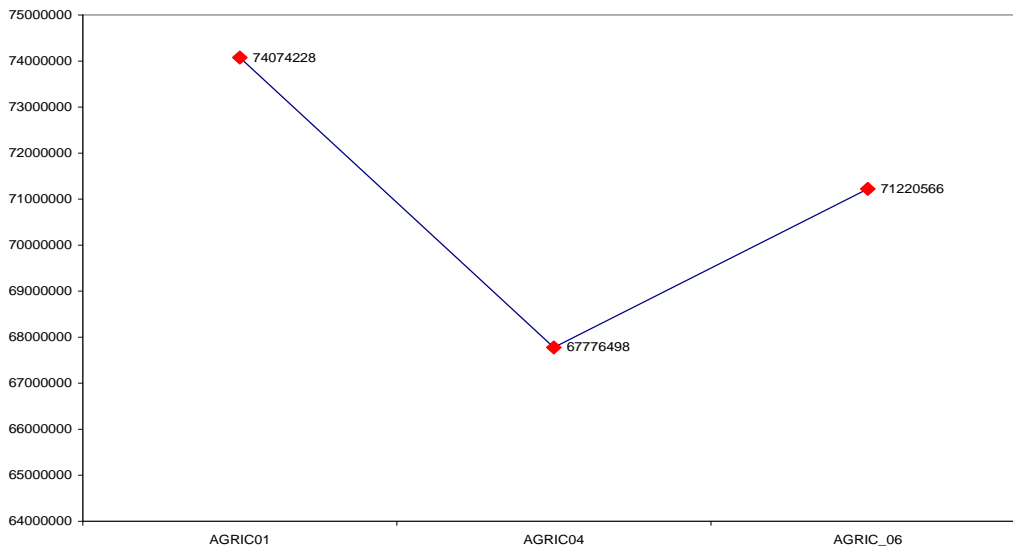
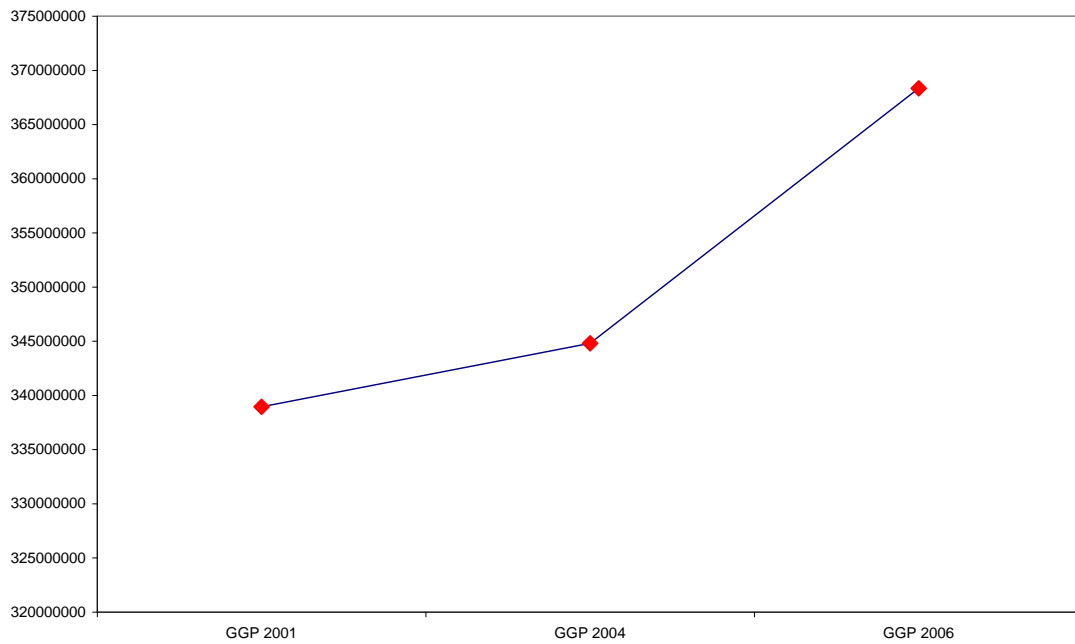


Figure 6: GGP- Agricultural Sector 2001-2006



The total GGP (all sectors combined) however shows a positive change within the same period (Figure 7). This positive change may be attributed to the growth in the secondary sectors e.g. manufacturing, trade, finance and community services. With the exception of manufacturing the other three sectors were stable from 2001-2004 despite the decline in agriculture (-R 6,297,730) and mining (- R404, 332) in this municipality (Economic database, HSRC, 2006).

Figure 7: Dipaleseng Total GGP 2001-2006



Provision of basic services

Key to the adequate provision of services is the understanding of the demographic characteristics of the population within the municipality. The total population for Dipaleseng was estimated at 38,726 in 2009 (SA mid-year estimates 2009 cited in GSDM 2010/11 IDP). Planning for services needs to be forecast, and estimating the population growth rate is crucial for medium to long-term planning. This will assist the municipality in developing plans and budgets based on the forecast demand for their services. According to the GSDM, the growth rates from 2005 to 2010 are as follows:

Ward 1 = 3%	Ward 4 = 3%
Ward 2 = 2.5%	Ward 5 = 1.5%
Ward 3 = 1.5%	Ward 6 = 2%

Failure to meet the demand for basic services results in unhealthy, unsafe and hazardous habitats which leads to diseases, disasters etc. The services may either be lacking, inadequate or of a lower standard. That is why it is crucial to understand the level/standard at which the services are provided (Figure 8)

Figure 8: Service levels

Service type	Level 1 Basic	Level 2 Intermediate	Level 3 Full service
Water	Communal standpipes	Yard taps, yard tanks	In house water
Sanitation	Sewage collection/disposal	VIP latrine/septic tanks	Full water borne
Electricity	5-8 Amp/non-grid electricity	20 Amps	60 Amps
Roads	Graded	Gravel	Paved/tarred & kerbs
Storm water drainage	Earth lined open channel	Open channel lined	Piped system
Solid waste disposal	Communal (residents)	Communal (contractor)	Kerbside

Source: ETU (n.d.)

Housing

Housing is not the responsibility of the municipality but that of the provincial Department of Human Settlements, but is also considered in this paper as it was also part of local grievances. Some 43% of the households in Dipaleseng are informal (backyard and free standing shacks). This shows an increase of 9% from the 2001 census data which recorded 34% households living in shacks. 43% is a huge percentage. Figure 9 shows the varying backlog between rural and urban areas.

Figure 9: Status Quo for housing

PROGRAMME	PLANNED TARGETS	REMARKS /COMMENTS ON ACHIEVEMENT
In Situ Development Ext 5	Provision and complete the project for 236 units	Progress not satisfactory and quality is compromised
100 Housing units for Ward2&4	Eradication of all in-situ shacks	More allocation required from Dept of Human Settlement
100 Housing units distributed amongst W:3=30, W:1=20, W:5=20, and W:30 [in situ dev.]	To eradicate 2034 units backlogs in all in situ settlements.	Backlogs escalating whereas allocation diminishes
Grootvlei informal settlements 1000 units [in situ dev.]	To reduce this by 75% before the end of 2011/12 F/Y.	Solicit allocation from Dept of Human settlements
Siyathemba Ext 7, 750 units including Ext 2 South portion [in situ dev]	750 units to be built before the end of 2011/12 financial year	Dept of Human settlements to fast track allocation for this in situ development

Source: Gert Sibande DM IDP 2010/11 Situation 3

Water and sanitation

According to the Community Household Survey findings of 2007, 48.6% of households in Dipaleseng have water inside the dwelling, 32.9% within the yard and 14% use communal taps outside the yards (Community Survey, Stats SA 2007). The municipality has made some strides in terms of water provision compared to 2001. In 2001 only 20% of households had a water supply in the dwelling, 56.4% in the yard, 17% were relying on communal taps and 6.3% used other sources. In rural areas households mainly rely on other sources of water – boreholes, springs, or dams – due to the lack of water supply networks in these settlements. Dipaleseng relies on one pressure tower, which distributes water from the Vaal and Haarhoff dams to five reservoirs.

Among the complaints that the people vented was the lack of water and its poor quality. According to the municipality there is only one purification plant that is situated in Fortuna. Dipaleseng relies on it but the engineers had long warned that it was fast nearing its capacity (Dipaleseng IDP, 2008/09).

In 2001 only 38.7% had access to a flush toilet connected to sewer. The 2007 data from the Community Survey shows that 68.1% have flush toilet. This is a remarkable improvement from 29.4%. In an attempt to even do better the municipality has provided new townships with long-drop toilets, meeting an intermediate standard in an effort to eradicate the bucket system of sewage disposal (a basic or level 1 standard). About 4.3% households were still using the bucket system in 2007 compared to 19.1% in 2001. In rural areas each household is responsible for sanitation so many

use pit latrines or having no facility. According to the IDP 2008/09 four major sanitation projects were prioritized. These were:

- Sewer reticulation and maintenance in Siyathemba to benefit Wards 2 & 4
- Completion of sewer pump station in Nthorwane to benefit Ward 6
- Completion of sewer reticulation in Balfour to benefit Ward 3

According to Statistics SA Community Survey, 16.5% households had no toilets in 2007 but recently only 3.6% households are reported to have no access to any form of sanitation. Figure 10 shows current access to toilets by type between key areas.

Figure 10: Sanitation type by nodal towns

Category	Balfour	Siyathemba	Greylingstad	Nthorwane	Grootvlei
Flush toilet [connected to sewerage system]	1800	6300	0	1400	1100
Flush toilet [with septic tank]	200	0	1000	0	0
Dry toilet facility	500	1500	300	1000	600

Source: Gert Sibande DM IDP 2010/11 Situation 3

Electricity supply

In terms of energy source for lighting most households use electricity (78.5%) and the rest rely on other sources e.g. candles, paraffin etc. In 2001, 65.5% households had electricity and the backlog was about 32%. By 2007 the backlog was about 21%. The municipality then prioritized a project on *Massive Electrification of Households*, worth R6m, to be funded by the Department of Minerals and Energy, which would benefit all the wards within Dipaleseng.

Refuse removal

Some 77.3% of households have access to refuse removal by local council once a week, an improvement of 11.8% from 2001. The municipality had a backlog of 22.6% in 2007 (Stats SA, 2007). The municipality has only three solid waste disposal sites in Balfour and Grootvlei. The communities in rural areas use own disposal methods (i.e. burning, pit dumps etc). The challenge that the municipality faces include financial resources, inadequate equipment and unregistered landfill sites.

Protests in Dipaleseng

In 2009 a wave of protest swept the country; there was concern that service delivery demonstrations would degenerate into xenophobia, but there was a history of opposition to xenophobia in Siyathemba, Balfour's township. The Sowetan reported:

The community submitted a memorandum to the Dipaleseng Municipality on 8 July 2009. Most demands concerned basic issues such as a request for a police station, a mini-hospital and high-mass lights. Topping the list were calls for a skills training centre and policies governing job recruitment in the area.

These reflect the fact that while the protest was backed by the community, leadership was provided by the township's youth. It is this generation that suffers most from unemployment and lack of housing. Moreover, many of the older leaders are now politicians and tender-seekers.

The council failed to respond to the July 8 memorandum, hence the 19 July meeting [was called and] voted for a stay away. Some activists suspect that police violence was aimed at intimidating them. It had the reverse effect. People fought back and the stay-away lasted four days (Sowetan 2009).

The police fired rubber bullets and teargas as people left the meeting, and protestors set fire to two buildings and shops were looted (Sowetan, 2009). Clearly feelings were running high on both sides.

In analysing the community demands of 8 July (Appendix 1), it is important to assess:

- how they fit into the services provided by the municipality
- are communities aware of who does what between the spheres of government?
- are they using appropriate channels to voice their dissatisfaction and, if not, how can this be remedied?
- is violent protest justified?

In the community's memorandum of 8 July 2009, half of the demands fell out of the jurisdiction of the municipality. Communities often see municipalities as their channel to reach provincial and national government, which makes the municipality the target of misdirected anger and frustrations by the citizens. This could be addressed through public participation methods (i.e. ward committee meetings, *imbizos* etc) to explain the following:

- different roles and responsibilities of the three spheres of government
- rights and responsibilities of the citizens
- channels for redress
- the municipality's achievements with regard to the IDPs and other development initiatives.

The municipality has improved in a number of areas as outlined above but has to increase the pace of service-improvement to communities that need them most. To prevent similar protests in the future the municipalities need to strengthen its communication with the residents. It has to inform them of its achievements and also delays/bottlenecks regarding the provision of services.

While the need for communities to voice their dissatisfaction with services is justified as it forms part of the democracy the South Africans voted for, the violence coupled with the protests harms interests on both sides.

Way to the future for Dipaleseng

After the protests a high profile delegation which included President Zuma visited the communities and a task team was appointed to look into the grievances outlined in the memorandum. By February 2010, more protests occurred as citizens, particularly the youth, saw government as being unresponsive to their grievances as nothing visible was happening in terms the concerns raised in July 2009.

In May 2011 the Acting Minister of CoGTA, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, received the report back from the task team. In his response to the report he stated:

In line with the local Government Turn Around Strategy (LGTAS) that the Cabinet adopted in December 2009 as well as the Municipal Turnaround Strategies (MTAS) developed per municipality, the lives of the people of Dipaleseng are fast getting turned around for the better! The reality of a better life gets closer with every coordinated effort between government and local communities. (Acting Minister, CoGTA May 2011)

Visible improvements could be seen in programmes addressing: roads and storm water drainage; water and sanitation; housing; electricity; public amenities; social and economic development; education and skills development; and public/private partnerships.

Private sector

The role of the private sector in supporting development is interesting. The Burnstone Gold mine which is under Great Basin Gold International Mine has employed 108 people from Siyathemba Township and other neighboring towns (Mining Weekly, 9 February 2010). Burnstone Gold already had various initiatives in place prior to the protests, although the residents still perceived the mine as employing people from outside the municipality. The Great Basin Gold company entered into a MoU with Mpumalanga Development Agency, among other things promising to:

- Develop the economy of Mpumalanga Province and Dipaleseng Municipality, and
- Unlock the economic development potential of Dipaleseng Local Municipality (DLM) by:
- Working closely with the Municipality for the revitalisation of the economy of settlements within Dipaleseng Municipality;
- Promoting business-to-business linkages, with the intention of promoting local Small Medium Enterprises' growth therefore tackling the problems of unemployment and social exclusions
- Providing financial and non-financial assistance to potential investors and local small and medium enterprises, specifically supporting Great Basin Gold's endeavour to provide business support to local existing and emerging enterprises

- Create a culture of long term sustainable vision to ensure that the growth and development programs established under the MoU uphold the principle of sustainable development. Currently the mine is supporting at least eight local enterprises: a laundry, cleaning, gardening, waste collection, construction, catering, sunflower farming and an employee shuttle service;
- Provide an avenue for coordination of economic development initiatives to enhance the activities of the Dipaleseng Development Programme, implemented in partnership with the Municipality. The program was established to integrate the mine employees' housing needs into the municipality's current housing and economic development initiatives; and
- Strengthen cooperative and government/private sector relations. Great Basin Gold has already provided capacity building to the Dipaleseng Local Municipality by seconding a Project Manager to establish a project management unit and assist the municipality to access infrastructure funding.

Questions

Various questions remain unanswered as a result of the protest. Does this mean that protesting is the language that government understands most? Do communities need to protest before service delivery is speeded up? What about the non-protesting communities elsewhere? Are they going to be denied their right to basic services? Does protesting and non-protesting mean dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the services?

One solution which has been successful in communicating people's needs is the Citizen Report Card which is a tool to strengthen public-government communication (Zama 2012). The CRC is can be used across all levels of government to provide feedback from citizens regarding:

- Availability, reliability and quality of services
- Access to and satisfaction with services
- Responsiveness of service provider
- Willingness to pay
- Hidden costs (corruption & support system), and
- Quality of life

Feedback is then disseminated through various media where after dialogues between citizens and departments for services are conducted. The end product is a social compact which is the contract between citizens (recipients of services) and government (service provider). Depending on the agreement between citizens and the municipality CRC can be repeated every 2-5 years. This will enhance the public officials' performance and improved efficient, effective and quality service delivery.

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APPENDIX 1**Submitted to Dipaleseng Municipality: 8 July 2009****MEMORANDUM**

We as the youth of Dipaleseng we demand the following:

- Training centre-to develop skills
- Policies governing recruitment-in any public or private sectors around Dipaleseng (Dipaleseng youth must have first preference)
- Visible and Active youth officers
- Police station in Siyathemba
- Mini-Hospital
- Stadium – Function fully and be fully equipped also accommodate all sporting courts maintenance and security
- To be included in this new financial year
- Youth Councillor
- Full-time cleaning campaign
- C.P.F (C.S.F) must be active or re-launch
- Public and Private sector should contribute to the development of our youth
- Youth centre
- Proper clean water and proper sanitation
- Quarterly report: on development and expenditure from councillors.
- To know tendering system.
- Houses
- Street lights and much more high mass lights.
- Paving of all roads and storm water drainage.
- Municipality must re-claim the land from private sector
- F.E.T.
- Dipaleseng incorporated into Gauteng Province
- All the computers within the library to be utilized and have access to internet
- Community hall must be available for community
- Officers of public works must operate daily and train local personnel to work on those offices.

7 days we demand our response (in Siyathemba Hall)

Youth Representative

Municipal Representative