# Integrated development planning: An opportunity for planners to enable transformation?

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## Abstract

Integrated development planning has become synonymous with post-Apartheid development planning. As a style of strategic planning that departs from the master planning models of the past, the preparation of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) represents a more flexible model for responding to the many challenges that face local authorities. Furthermore, integrated development planning represents an opportunity to forge a stronger relationship between planning and implementation, something, some would argue, that planners have generally been seen to be weak at achieving in the past. Thus, a number of expectations are identifiable with the preparation of IDPs, not least the need to transform local government. This article interrogates the extent to which integrated development planning has enabled transformation in the post-1994 planning and development arena. It specifically looks at the role of the planner in this regard: has integrated development planning as a methodology, as a product (the IDP) and as an approach to planning, enabled the planning profession to contribute to transformation? This question is considered using research that focussed mainly on KwaZulu-Natal, and seeks to clarify some of the dimensions of the relationship between planning, transformation and integrated development planning.

### GEÏNTEGREERDE ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: 'N GELEENTHEID VIR BEPLANNERS OM TRANSFORMASIE MOONTLIK TE MAAK?

Geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsbeplanning het sinoniem geraak met na-Apartheid ontwikkelingsbeplanning. Nie net is dit 'n strategiese beplanningstyl wat wegbreek van die ou meesterbeplanningtradisies van die verlede nie, maar die voorbereiding van geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsplanne verteenwoordig 'n meer buigsame model vir munisipaliteite om te reageer op die baie uitdagings in die ontwikkelingsveld. Geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsbeplanning bied ook 'n geleentheid vir 'n sterker verhouding tussen beplanning en die uitvoer daarvan. Dit is miskien iets wat tot dusver nie so sterk was nie. Daar is inderdaad baie verwagtinge wat die voorbereiding van geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsbeplanning aanbetref, insluitend die transformasie van munisipaliteite. Hierdie artikel bevraagteken die mate waartoe geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsbeplanning transformasie in staat stel in die na-1994 ontwikkelings- en beplanningarena. Meer spesifiek kyk dit na die rol van die beplanner in hierdie verband; hoe het geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsbeplanning, as 'n metode, as 'n produk (geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsplan) en ook as 'n benadering van beplanning, die beplanningsprofessie in staat gestel om 'n bydrae te lewer in hierdie verband? Hierdie vraag word oorweeg met die gebruik van navorsing wat meestal fokus op KwaZulu-Natal en probeer sommige van die dimensies van die verhouding tussen beplanning, transformasie en geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsbeplanning beter te verstaan.

### MORALO WA NTSHETSOPELE E KOPANETSWENG: MONYETLA WA BA RALANG METSE HO DUMELLA DIPHETOHO?

Moralo wa ntshetsopele e kopenetsweng le tshwana le moralo wa ntshetsopele wa nakong ya kgethollo. Jwalo ka mokgwa wa ho rala leano ka tsela e fapaneng le e neng e sebediswa nakong e fetileng, ditlhophiso tsa Moralo wa Ntshetsopele e Kopanetsweng o emela mokgwa o bobebe wa ho arabela ho diphepetso tse ngata tse tobileng mebuso ya metse. Ho feta mona, moralo wa ntshetsopele e kopanetsweng o etsa monyetla wa tlisa dikamano tse matla dipakeng tsa maano le ho kenyatshebetsong, e leng se ileng sa etsa hore batho ba ngangisane ka hore nakong e fetileng bahlanka ba ralang dibaka ba

neng ba e fumana e le taba e boima ho ka e fihlella. Ka hoo, ho hlauwe ditebello tse ngata mabapi le boitokiso ba Meralo ya Ntshetsopele e Kopanetsweng, le hona ho hlophisa mebuso ya metse. Kgatiso ena e fuputsa sekgahla seo meralo ya ntshetsopele e kopanetsweng a bileng le sona ka mora 1994, mme etsepamisetse maikutlo hodima boikarabelo ba bahlanka ba ralang metse hore na: maano a ntshetsopele e kopanetsweng, e le mokgwa, sehlahiswa ebile e le katamelo ya leano, e dumelletse ditsebi tsa merolo ya metse ho kenya letsoho ho tliseng diphetoho? Potso ena e lekolwa ha re sheba diphuputso tse entswng KZN mme re leka ho hlakisa dikamano dipakeng tsa merolo, diphetoho le moralo wa ntshetsopele e kopanetsweng.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Whilst integrated development planning has become an integral part of what many planners do in post-Apartheid South Africa, it nevertheless represents a break from traditional planning approaches. In his article on the genealogy of integrated development planning Philip Harrison gives an eloquent overview of the many influences, conceptual and political, that gave rise to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as well as some of the shortcomings of the first round of IDPs (Harrison, 2001). The background of integrated development planning comprises many influences that began before 1994. Many of these are international trajectories that have emphasised the need for planning to be strategic and more responsive to change. More importantly, in the South African context, there is the need for planning to be developmental. Thus, much is expected of the IDP and its ability to enable local authorities to be developmental.

This article explores the extent to which integrated development planning has enabled planners to contribute to social and spatial transformation since 1994 by drawing on the findings of a larger research

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project that was done for the KwaZulu-Natal Development and Planning Commission in 2004/2005.[2] The study was qualitative in nature. An exploratory approach was used to enable an understanding of the role of planners in transformation. The aim of the article more specifically, is to explore the many dimensions of the relationship between integrated development planning (as process and as product — the IDP), transformation and the planning profession. Thus, the article draws on the findings of this larger research project by extracting data related to integrated development planning.

The article initiates the debate by examining the conceptual relationship between integrated development planning and transformation by drawing on some of the literature on post-Apartheid development and integrated development planning. Integrated development planning is seen as the method through which multi-sectoral, strategic plans are prepared. The most common product of integrated development planning in the South African context is the municipal IDP, but other forms exist such as that found in project based integrated development planning (for example the Cato Manor Development Project in Durban) and longer term City Development Frameworks. The article focuses on integrated development planning as a method and IDPs as products. It then seeks to understand how the preparation of IDPs may indicate a departure from traditional planning methods in general.

The main body of the article presents the research that was done — extracting the parts that pertain to this research question, explored in this article, and concludes on the extent to which IDPs have enabled transformation and can continue to enable planners to make a contribution to social change. A point of debate, of course, is that IDPs are not necessarily prepared by Town and Regional Planners. Nevertheless, this article draws on data where the experiences of planners, in particular, are recorded, as well as the views of other built environment professionals. The latter were

included in order to determine an 'outsiders' view of the role of planners in transformation. It acknowledges, however, that members of other professions have (often contentiously) been driving IDPs. This latter issue is, no doubt, the subject of another debate; one which requires engagement with a range of issues related to the professional status of planners and capacity constraints in local government, and is outside the scope of this article.

The notion of transformation was used as a point of departure in understanding the role of the planning in post-Apartheid planning. Transformation was defined broadly as an outcome and a process — social and spatial change that represents equal livelihood opportunities and results in the improvement of the quality of people's lives in general. Thus, the research did not take a narrow professional focus but one that tried to understand overall the relationship between social change and planning.

## 2. UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSFORMATION AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The Constitution includes provisions for developmental local government and cooperative forms of governance intended to provide for seamless delivery (RSA, 1996a). This has impacted on the role of planners; particularly those working in local government. Integrated development planning is, essentially, a strategic planning process, yet the IDP, as the product of that process, is considered the primary development management tool for municipalities (RSA, 2000). Within the context of the larger local government transformation process, many planners are employed in these municipalities and are, *inter alia*, expected to drive the integrated development planning process, in addition to the usual tasks such as that associated with land use management, preparation of local spatial plans and sector plans.

The IDP is not the only instrument available for enabling change, but is the method through which the strategic

direction of a municipality is charted, and therefore a key part of local government transformation in particular. The preoccupation with more strategic planning processes (that respond to change more flexibly) provides the challenge for planners to move beyond planning into implementation. Some may consider this a departure for a profession that has generally not been considered to be well versed with the language of delivery. It could be argued that IDPs represent a broadening and shift in the practice of planning. The 'shift' is represented by the move from the 'master planning' tradition of control and forecasting; to a managerial approach that favours a more strategic response to development issues. The 'broadening' refers to the need for planners to understand planning as well as implementation processes, given that the integrated development planning process requires an engagement with strategy and plan making (analysis formulation of a vision and strategies) as well as an understanding of budgeting and business planning processes (operational plans).

Some have argued that the introduction of IDPs reflected an international trajectory that moved from project-based planning to strategic and comprehensive approaches, with an emphasis on managing resources effectively. Harrison (2001) examines some of the international influences that impacted on the formulation of the IDP. New Public Management introduced private sector management styles and ideas into the public sector where the language of outcomes, performance and accountability are well represented in the IDP language. Yet the notion of integration is, of course, not new, as Harrison reminds us (Ibid.); Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford voiced a concern with regionalism in the early days of the profession — an approach that demands a holistic approach that contains elements of multi-sectoralism. Contemporary debates on communicative action (Healey, 1997) emphasise the need to negotiate spatial planning solutions through multi-actor networks, whilst more recent emphasis on development planning resonate in familiar ways. Integrated develop-

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2 The author, together with consultants Cathy Ferguson, Alexandra van Essche and Sibongile Mkhize, was appointed in June 2004 to conduct research on "Transformational Challenges: the Role of Planners and Planning" by the Provincial Planning and Development Commission, KwaZulu-Natal. The project took a broader focus than that represented by this article in looking at the overall contributions that have been made by planners to social change.

ment planning is not exclusive to the South African development environment, but it is one, that nevertheless is intrinsically connected to the goals of developmental local government and service delivery (RSA, 1998) — some of the underpinnings of local government transition.

Despite these international resonances, and the fact that many planners were well-versed and trained in strategic planning, those engaged in the first round of IDPs found themselves party to larger transformational processes that were severely challenging. Time constraints, undercapacitated councils and an expectant public underpinned some of the early problems and issues such as reliance on consultants and lack of ownership of plans by local authorities. Lack of integration and weak linkages between IDPs and other programmes were also cited as issues whilst limited analyses informed limited strategies. The realm of governance was, in some instances, frustrated by poorly constructed participatory processes and institutional conflicts, as well as poor linkages between local and district Municipalities and time horizon clashes. Weak relationships between IDPs, Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) and Land Use Management Systems (LUMS) also applied in some instances (Harrison, 2001: 189-190).

Notwithstanding its bumpy beginnings, the IDP process in terms of outcomes, as well as process is seen by many as adding value. It is by necessity inclusive, forces plans that are implementable, and provides the opportunity for cross-sector synergy. In his examination of the process in Rustenburg, North-West Province, Pycroft (2000: 101) identifies a number of contributions the IDP has made. Investment in municipal infrastructure has responded to basic service needs, some local economic development has occurred whilst sustainable rural livelihoods are generally taken more seriously. Visser (2001) examines a similar process in Tygerberg, Western Cape, by investigating how the IDP process accommodates social justice principles. Shared cooperation of the city's decision-making structure and the development of a shared notion of social justice, he argues, ensure that social justice principles are upheld in these processes (Visser, 2001: 1685). Indicators of social justice in IDPs relate to minimum service delivery and cross-

subsidisation through a shared rates and tax base in Councils, he argues.

As encouraging as it is to see developmental principles embedded in local government legislation, there are nevertheless, some argue, contradictions that may frustrate delivery. A fundamental issue, for example, relates to the expectation of local government to encourage investment and economic growth under the provisions of the National Government's macro economic strategy that is essentially outward looking and growth focussed through the Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (RSA, 1996b) and the need for basic service delivery (as embedded in the principles of the Reconstruction and Development Programme). For some, IDP is identifiable with a needs-based state driven approach, for others it's about sound fiscal management. Other problematic assumptions relate to the notion of cooperative governance and the alignment of budgets and timeframes for a range of government agencies, which is a complex process. Chipkin (in Harrison, 2001: 177) mentions the attempt to create an autonomous local government within the context of cooperative governance, whilst relying on local government to give effect to national policy; thus asking: how autonomous is local government in all of this?

Despite these tensions, the IDP remains a primary tool for planners to engage in some of the key provisions of transformation: spatial restructuring and service delivery. Furthermore, the IDP process within the context of local government restructuring, is still young, as Harrison reminds us:

> … the tensions between the neo-liberalism of New Public Management and the progressive goals of participatory governance and social equity will create further contradictions in post-Apartheid planning, as will the different requirements of technocratic and participatory processes, and the need for both short-term delivery and long-term sustainability. However if we understand the IDP as a form of planning with multiple and diffuse origins that is in a constant process of evolution in response to the exigencies of context, we would be less likely to succumb to disillusionment or disappointment than if we believed that the IDP arrived in 1996 as the answer to post-Apartheid planning (Harrison, 2001: 191).

The expectations surrounding local government restructuring are tied to the performance of IDPs. Given the complexity of the process, the capacity issues surrounding local government and the complexities on the ground, it is perhaps too early to expect seamless implementation. Yet, after 12 years of democracy, many are legitimately concerned about the lack of progress in some sectors. The processes that have set the transformation of the planning profession in motion are clearly subject to contextual challenges and influences. Globalisation, the impact of HIV/AIDS and dissatisfaction with slow delivery with regards to land reform for example, yield a landscape that is unable to be manipulated by the planner or his/her IDPs. Yet, despite the limited delivery on the rather grandiose expectations of post-Apartheid planning, there are, as Williams (2000) argues, nascent forms of transformation identifiable in holistic approaches to planning that demand a more rounded approach to development that have yielded capacity-building and greater public accountability. Participatory democracy reinforced through IDP processes has ensured some form of accountability; a point supported by Visser (2001).

Transformation is essentially ongoing, where the process is as valuable as the outcome, given the need for participation, democratisation and empowerment. It is not a short process, yet it is worthwhile considering the views of planners and built environment professionals as to whether integrated development planning represents a means to enable social and spatial change. Reflections on the research represented in the following section seek to uncover these views.

## 3.  REFLECTING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PLANNING PROFESSION, INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND TRANSFORMATION

### 3.1 Research Methodology

The research was exploratory in nature given the breadth of the topic. The research methods and instruments that were used are outlined in the following sections.

#### 3.1.1 Structured Interviews

Seventeen structured interviews were held with a number of planners and

other built environment professionals in Durban, Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria. Respondents were chosen from local government, universities, the private sector and the South African Planning Institute. The purpose was to explore the general research questions posed by the project. The reason for inclusion of six practitioners from other built environment professionals was to probe views of the planning and transformation from 'outside' the planning profession.

### 3.1.2   Case Studies

Five case studies were selected based on the following criteria:

* Good representation from a range of stakeholders; community, private sector and public bodies;

* A range of projects that reflect differing approaches to integrated development planning; and

* Different scales of integrated development planning.

These projects were monitored and interrogated in order to ascertain the role of planners and related professionals and some of the challenges that impact on the planning process. Two levels of projects were selected. Primary case studies represented then current planning projects where participant observation, structured interviews and focus groups were methods used to gather data. (See below.) Secondary cases were either current or completed projects, the examination of which was based mainly on interviews. A total of five cases were examined that included a local development plan for a peri-urban area (Salem), an urban renewal project (Inanda-Ntuzuma-KwaMashu — INK), a land reform project (Groutville), an IDP for a district municipality (Ugu) and an urban design master plan (KwaDukuza). Thus, one of the projects was explicitly an IDP (Ugu) whilst two others entailed an integrated development planning methodology (INK, Salem).

The cases reflected local issues surrounding transformation and planning in integrated development planning processes. Three instruments were used in examining the cases:

* Eight structured interviews were held with planners and other built environment professionals engaged in these projects;

* Three focus groups were held with community members from these projects; one focus group interview was held with a professional team from one of the projects; and

* One current project was chosen which provided an opportunity to examine a planning process in-situ through observations at project and community meetings. This was the Salem (an area on the outskirts of eThekwini municipal area) Local Development Plan. Observations were used to understand the role of the planner in the process, the interaction between planner and community members as well as other team members. Minutes of meetings provided additional information.

### 3.1.3   Transformation Profile

An effort was made, through the purposive selection of respondents, to involve key role players and professionals from Previously Disadvantaged Backgrounds (PDBs) and to ensure a gender mix. Table 1 shows this profile.

Table 1:      Profile of Interview Respondents

|  | From PDBs | Other | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 7 | 17 | 23 |
| Female | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| TOTAL | 10 | 24 | 34 |

In addition to the above, focus groups showed a very favourable representative profile; where the 3 community groups were entirely comprised from PDBs.

### 3.1.4   The Research Methodology and Extraction of Issues Related to Integrated Development Planning

Various dimensions and implications of the transformation process were explored with respondents. The most notable of these was the relationship between the 'idea' of transformation and the evolving role of the planner in a democratic South Africa. The research was divided into a number of themes used for analysis:

* The relationship between transformation and planning (and planners)and improving the value added by planning and planners;

* The impact of other trends on planning;

* Distinguishing characteristics of planners and impressions of planners; and

* Education and communication

Integrated development planning was identified as a planning approach representative of global trends in planning and governance; hence it was explored specifically under the second theme. Interview questions probed three dimensions of the IDP process:

* the broad impact of integrated development planning on planners;

* cross-sector integration and the specific role of the planner in that regard; and

* The role of spatial planning with regards to integrated development.

As the research progressed, it became apparent that IDP was considered central to the practice of many planners and issues surrounding municipal planning processes, as well as local government restructuring emerged throughout the research.

## 3.2   Synthesis of Research Findings

Shifts in the South African planning arena required over the past ten years have been directly influenced by global responses to changes in governance systems internationally. The requirements of the *Municipal Systems Act* (Act 32 of 2000) for IDPs and the constitutional requirement for local government to be developmental as reflected in planning policy and legislation, reflects a need to localise the developmental agenda. It is within this conceptual frame that integrated development planning was interrogated. Analysis of the data revealed a number of dimensions of the relationship between planners and the planning profession, integrated development planning and transformation.

### 3.2.1   A broadening [and] shift in planning thinking

Internationally there has been a trend towards cross-sector integration within government to enable greater efficiency. The IDP has become the municipal tool whereby strategic action is intended to reinforce integration and alignment. Planners and other built environment professionals that have interacted closely with IDP

processes in general expressed the view that the emphasis on integration has had a profound and positive influence on planning practice. The IDP was seen by respondents as a primary post-Apartheid planning tool and has resulted in a broadening through the incorporation of territory previously largely uncommon in planning: understanding budgeting and implementation processes, strategic planning methodologies and sector planning. On the other hand, it has led to the inclusion of new areas of focus for planners i.e. a shift in the work that planners do. The process has required planners to think more strategically, to be more accountable to politicians, to take cognisance of multi-sectoral issues and to understand budgets and implementation.

Some felt that the IDP was not an actual tool however, and represents strategic direction, informing more concrete tools such as land use schemes. Others noted that integration was more than just the preparation of IDPs and extended to multi-level government co-ordination and new forms of spatial planning. Tools of integration also include area-based planning and the spatial frameworks that "bring things together". It was noted that the Area Based Management Programme in the eThekwini Municipality and the Urban Renewal programme at a national level (both of which form the context for the INK case study) were a direct result of the impact of the concept of integrated development planning.

Generally integrated development planning as an approach was seen to be a useful departure from previous approaches, yet also fraught with difficulties. Many felt that there were several weaknesses associated with IDPs: several plans were not well prepared; they were prepared because it was a requirement, with little understanding of their real purpose and there was little ownership of the plans. Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) in some instances were weak and did not guide investment; the relationship between space and process was not always reflected in IDPs and there has been limited implementation due to institutional and budgetary alignment problems.

Whilst many felt that the shift in thinking required a strategic focus whilst remaining committed to implementa-

tion, the broadening of the planning process to incorporate other sectors presented a number of difficulties. It required a broader literacy from the planner in terms of other sectors but it also brought with it certain confusion as to what the role of the planner actually was.

Respondents were concerned about the spatial dimension of planning, the physical planning, spatial analysis and focus on 'place-making'. Many felt that this very important dimension of planning was neglected as a result of the overarching focus on development planning 'processes.' This was noted by some of the respondents from other built environment professionals in particular and tied to the perception of planning as essentially a practice that results in physical outcomes in space. The expressed need for planning to recapture its spatial origins — as a practice that has particular physical outcomes — recurred at various stages of this research project. This is explored further under the next extracted theme.

### 3.2.2 Process versus outcome

A number of respondents felt that the emphasis on IDPs has led planners to be too concerned with process, too fixated on detail and not enough has been achieved in terms of spatial reconstruction and integration. Spatial reconstruction was clearly one of the main goals of post-Apartheid planning as reflected in the *Development Facilitation Act* of 1995 (DFA) principles and the supporting policy framework. Yet many respondents felt that these goals have not been taken seriously since too much energy has been taken up by local government restructuring and the immense tasks necessary to amalgamate various plans into one (given the rationalisation of a myriad of local councils into one — the case of Cape Town and eThekwini).

On the other hand, many professionals from other built environment professions as well as community members engaged in the focus groups felt that planners have made a substantial contribution through the enablement of service delivery in IDP processes amongst others (land reform, housing delivery etc.) The community focus groups displayed some satisfaction with service delivery; many felt that this has been one of the successes in terms of transformation. The emphasis on basic service delivery, however,

was not enough, others said. People's lives needed to be positively reinforced with strategic interventions; some felt this is truly where planners can make a contribution.

Overall, successful outcomes therefore relate to delivery of basic services whilst inadequate outcomes were seen to be those related to spatial restructuring and physical integration. Thus the quantitative results of IDPs in enabling, for example, the delivery of water and sanitation were seen as positive but the qualitative aspects of the resulting built environment, many felt, left a lot to be desired.

Two of the case studies, INK and Groutville, were seen to be largely successful in combining service delivery with the 'softer' goals of social upliftment and transformation. Emerging out of the research is the value of interdisciplinary teams in addressing both these aspects within the context of integrated development planning. Both projects used a holistic approach that focused on process (from planning to implementation) as well as social outcomes, such as building dignity and capacity amongst communities (rather than just focussing on hard delivery). Groutville, in particular, was lauded at a national level for the effort made to empower and train participants on an ongoing basis. Respondents generally had the view that integration (as with transformation) was a process that required ongoing commitment, not just a product.

The interviews with non-planners in the case study areas revealed varying opinions related to IDPs. Some felt that the IDP process was a successful tool in reinforcing democratic decision-making and giving others a voice. Others felt that too much time was spent on writing reports and unproductive participation meetings with little implementation. The process was seen to be reactive i.e. responding to requests, rather than proactively setting out a programme of action. Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities between service providers, district and local municipalities was also identified as a major problem hindering the integrated planning approach. It was interesting to note that the tension (alluded to in the literature) between the need for local government to encourage private investment and economic growth, and at the same

time to encourage citizen participation and provide services, was not mentioned to any great degree.

On balance, the general view of planners was that integrated development planning was a positive trend, but that expectations of integrated planning have probably been too high. Local government restructuring has hampered the IDP process and all parties are still learning; the concept is good and we need to continue to pursue the IDP path but learn from problems and improve the process. Those more removed from the IDP process were understandably less positive about its potential to assist in transformation as the view was that the benefits are yet to be seen.

### 3.2.3 The planner as integrator?

Views on the role of the planner within the IDP process varied. The first general view expanded on the inter-disciplinary nature of development planning. Given their generalist training, many expressed the view that planners were best placed to understand the relationship between components of the IDP, and how best to ensure an integrated approach overall. Whilst specialists prepared sectoral plans, the planner was well placed to ensure that sector plans do not contradict each other and conform to the overall vision.

Generally, those interviewed expressed the view that planners played an important role in driving IDP processes. Yet, despite the point made above with regards to the generalist training that enables planners to engage with a range of developmental issues, several noted that not all planners have these skills and there are other professions that can drive the preparation of IDPs (e.g. MBA graduates). A further, more subtle point was made. The complexity of the integrated development planning process, the many role players involved in IDP preparation and the many dimensions that need to be considered simultaneously, make a lot of demands on the manager of the IDP process, the conditions of which are often outside his/her control. Problems with the IDP process are often blamed on the planner who may in fact have little power to effect the required changes.

It is apparent that planners can and should play several roles in the IDP

process. Many felt that there were some functions only trained town and regional planners (as opposed to more generally skilled development planners) can do. Of critical importance, according to most of the respondents, was the planner's technical input in the preparation of the SDFs. The SDF was considered an important tool in providing the overall investment framework for both private and public expenditure, whilst also functioning as a tool of integration. It required an ability to do spatial analysis, an understanding of space economies as well as the physical implications of development programmes.

The planner's role in IDP preparation was heavily influenced by the institutional context within which s/he operates. Bureaucratic and political transformations are key determinants in the relationship between planners, social change and integrated development planning. Many respondents noted the impact of local government restructuring, in particular, which has often had a destabilising impact on the work of the planner. A more subtle point was made around the increasingly close alignments between senior civil servants and executive politicians that impacted on the practice of planning. Prior to 1994 senior civil servants usually acted as neutral technical advisers. Now political acumen was considered an important asset for the planner to have, especially given the political nature of the integrated development process at ward and municipal levels. Is this shift necessarily a problem? Some respondents do in fact recommend that planners become more politically astute, that they can, in fact, be very influential, but this obviously depended upon where they sit in institutions. Interviews revealed that the role of the planner, and the influence the planner had, was to a large extent dependant on the position that a planner held within an institution. Thus, his/her power to influence change in the municipal context for example, was often related to how central and influential he/she is in the integrated development process. This indicates that the planner was no longer a neutral bureaucrat but an essential cog in the political wheel of change since integrated development planning is inherently political given the many

stakeholder interests that need to be balanced.

Most of the respondents were concerned about issues that pertain specifically to social change. Housing and infrastructure backlogs, land reform and restitution, rural development and slow spatial restructuring were seen as issues that have not been addressed adequately, yet were integral to transformation.

Interestingly not much was said about the rural areas within which planners work. Urbanisation and urban growth were noted by a few as special challenges, but little emphasis was placed on the literacy required to understand processes that underpin traditional and farming areas. Wall-to-wall municipalities include large tracts of rural land, and as discussion at steering committees and the workshop revealed, planners were considered to be ill equipped to deal with rural challenges. Sensitivity to the rural way of life, livelihoods as well as an understanding of spatial and land dynamics within these areas were required. New skills (and knowledge and "languages") were demanded of the planner reflecting both the broadening and shifts within the scope of the profession.

## 3.3 Looking towards the future: enabling the contribution of integrated development planning to transformation

Respondents were asked to note ways in which the planning profession could add value to the transformation process. Several views were expressed in accordance with each of the themes identified. Whilst very little reference was made to IDPs specifically, it is nevertheless worth considering the nature of these views and their implications for integrated development planning.

The first general opinion that emerged was the need to re-emphasise the spatial dimensions of planning. Some respondents felt that this has taken a position of lesser importance given the emphasis on process and development that has been so dominant in recent years (in particular with regards to IDP and local government restructuring processes). More focus should be placed on the built environment and the physical character of the spaces that result from our many plan-

ning processes. A number of respondents felt that the profession had neglected this area; layouts were not very good and neither were spatial frameworks. All of the professionals not trained as planners expressed frustration at this — spatial leadership is necessary from the planner but is not always forthcoming. Planners' main roles, after all, were to understand and conceptualise space. There was recognition, however, that spatial standards were often determined by non-planners (e.g. engineers — road widths or developers with a limited budget) that constrained appropriate and creative design. Two of the respondents working in the housing sector felt that the housing subsidy delivery process hindered other spatial imperatives such as densification and compaction.

Increasing the power of planners may assist with creating better places. Acting in the public interest takes some political clout and many felt that getting planners into decision-making positions may assist in this. Certainly the institutional position of planners within the context of IDPs in this regard was considered important. Yet, there was still space for the usual functions of development control, and land use planning, many argued, but it is through IDPs that planners were able to use their ability to think across sectors and levels of intervention.

The pressure to bridge the gap between planning and implementation was considered important. Many felt that the profession had fair representation on the policy side but needed better representation in the implementation field. Planners needed stronger skills in translating ideas into reality. Ideas needed to be grounded in implementation. Many planners did not necessarily have a thorough understanding of the 'impacts' of planning decisions — the practical outcomes. Again, the nature of IDP preparation is such that the relationship between delivery and planning needed to be thoroughly understood; the terrain that demanded a better understanding of implementation from planners.

Implementation is important, but delivery needs to conform to broader frameworks in order to ensure that it does not compromise sustainability. This was the view expressed by planners and others: the value added by

the planner related to the 'bigger picture', the larger, long-term framework within which implementation takes place. Fundamental to the planner's role was undertaking these frameworks, clearly communicating them and ensuring that the project vision was always considered. The need to negotiate long-term visions together with immediate delivery concerns within the realm of a suitable spatial framework was considered to be the challenge presented by integrated development planning.

Justifiably, or unjustifiably, planners were held accountable for delivery in many instances. However, the road to implementation is often rough; role players do not always agree, development decisions are not always done under the control of the planner whilst the development environment is often fraught with conflict and divergent agendas. Despite the emphasis on delivery and outcome, the view emerged that the normative concerns of planning: the public interest, containment of externalities and the more recent emphasis on sustainability were essential; as was of course, the goal of integration. Planners and plans, many felt, should not lose sight of this.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Transformation was considered an evolving concept in this research, representative of a process of social change that is ongoing, as well as an outcome resulting in improvement in overall conditions of the built environment and people's lives. Integrated development planning was considered as a method and outcome that has become firmly entrenched in the language of post-Apartheid planning. The research used in this article sought to understand how integrated development planning created opportunities for planners to contribute to broader transformation. A number of themes emerged in analysing the findings of the research.

The first was that there has been a shift in what it is planners engage in, as well as a broadening of the profession since 1994. Integrated development planning and the focus on IDPs are key aspects of that. Integrated development planning is a process involving many role players. It is multi-dimensional and ambitious in its scope. In the 12 years since the advent of democracy in South Africa, much has been

expected of the IDP. As a development tool it requires strategic thinking, yet also an implementation focus that deals with more immediate concerns. However, it was found that whilst planners can play many roles in the IDP process, intervention through spatial planning (spatial analysis, preparation of SDFs and LUMS guidelines) is critical and a central concern of planning. The limited extent to which spatial transformation concerns have been enabled through IDPs is therefore a point of concern. The research discussed here reflects a discontentment with the performance of spatial plans in IDPs and the limited restructuring of our spaces. To some extent, the emphasis on hard service delivery, combined with the rigors of inter-sectoral coordination and organisational restructuring has underplayed the spatial aspects of IDPs. Limited spatial analyses, one-dimensional SDFs and weak linkages with other forms of planning (such as LUMS) are typical. Yet, many of the legislative and policy directives of the post-Apartheid planning arena demand a concern with spatial restructuring. No doubt many of these shortcomings have been addressed through reviews and revisions of IDPs.

The democratic ideals of IDP preparation are seen as particularly important relating to the second analytical theme of process versus outcomes of integrated development planning within a larger context of transformation. Several references were made to the participatory processes whilst community members in the focus group voiced their need to feel included and consulted. As onerous a process as integrated development planning appears to be, it nevertheless provides a forum for input into the planning process. Planners are not new to participatory processes but the *Municipal Systems Act* (of 2000) calls for a rigor that stretches beyond the usual consultation procedures. As many respondents pointed out, the political implications of that are that the planner can no longer by a neutral bureaucrat, but has to have the necessary political acumen to negotiate between stakeholders. Engaging in these processes, and all the capacity building that it may entail, provides an opportunity for transformation that may not be the dramatic spatial restructuring called for, but certainly contributes to social change.

The spatial restructuring that many expected of the post-Apartheid era is an ambitious goal. The expectation of IDPs to enable spatial change is fair, but perhaps a bit premature. Twelve years is too short to expect major changes, but long enough to judge whether we are moving towards that goal. The findings suggest that we are not moving in the right direction. Two related issues that relate to IDPs emerge out of the research. At a specific level, dissatisfaction was expressed with the quality of SDFs, in particular their inability to give guidance to municipalities where necessary and link to other plans such as Land Use Schemes. At a more general and perhaps profound level, frustration was expressed at the way in which spatial planning was relegated to the margins, with the emphasis on the IDP processes. Planners and built environment professionals generally felt that this is the domain of the planner, where s/he can contribute to transformation, as integrator. Many felt that planners need to reclaim that territory and strengthen their skills in this regard.

In conclusion then, it emerges that integrated development planning in general, as well as preparation of actual IDPs, provides a platform for transformation. Planners can contribute in many ways, but the expectation from their own profession, as well as the built environment professionals, is that they hone the skill that distinguishes them: spatial analysis and planning. Yet, the generalist planner is also regarded as valuable, as indicated by the research, since s/he often has the training and skills to think holistically and in an integrated way. This, and the ability to engage with process, makes a planner a valuable contributor to integrated development planning, and ultimately, to transformation.

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