

# The Value of Information in Municipalities: A South African Case Study in the Eastern Cape

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Master's Dissertation

Department of Information Systems

**February 2021**



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# Acknowledgements

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The first person I would like to acknowledge and thank is my wonderful supervisor, Ulrike Rivett. There were moments when I was ready to throw in the towel and write this period off as experience, but you continued to encourage me to persevere. I have come to understand that learning is a continuous journey, and I have also learnt to apply these qualities to my daily life; and for these lessons, I am forever grateful to you.

Secondly, I would like to acknowledge iCOMMS - you have been the best postgraduate research group anyone could ask for - encouraging growth, learning and sharing. Again, Ulrike, thank you for allowing me to join this team.

To my parents, thank you for always believing in me. Your love, support and the sacrifices you have made throughout my life to ensure I can have the life that I enjoy - there are not enough words to express my gratitude and love to you.

To my husband, Dennis – this has been the most memorable journey with you, and now it is your turn to submit that PhD. I want to let you know that I am so proud of you.

To UCT and the postgraduate office 3.14 in the Civil Engineering building - known as Girl Fun Friday; this is where the journey all began. UCT unwittingly placed us in the same office, but through proximity, chance and snacks, we became good friends and a support group to lean on when things got tough. We have laughed, cried and celebrated each other's achievements and victories—a toast to many more years of our friendship.

# Plagiarism Declaration

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# Abstract

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Within the South African context, there is clear legislation and policy advocacy on the importance of community participation in facilitating inclusive decision-making. Statutory frameworks require municipalities to inform citizens of their rights and encourage them to contribute to municipal initiatives. Public participation and access to information are critical elements of good governance. However, implementing the policies is not always executed as intended. This can be attributed to various reasons such as the lack of resources, institutional capacity, poor administration of government resources and redressing historical backlogs of service delivery. Research also suggests that citizens feel excluded from the decision-making processes as they lack access to information to participate constructively.

Governance has become a popular concept in literature, especially where the focus is on reducing inequality, reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development in developing countries, and consequently considers the relationships between government and civil society. The intention of “good governance” is to strengthen accountability and responsiveness of policies and strategies by enabling communities to engage and have an influential voice, especially on decisions that affect their livelihood. This research aims to examine how information sharing practices between municipalities and communities affect good governance.

One theme that consistently emerges in the review of the legislation and policy documents is citizenry's inclusion in the municipal decision-making process. Public participation has an influential role in good governance. However, there is a gap in the importance of information sharing and how to share this information to facilitate effective public participation. Thus, this study integrated the principles of good governance and Information Value Chain to determine how municipalities use and disseminate information to their communities and use citizen knowledge to improve good governance.

The study included reviewing various policy documents and literature, semi-structured interviews with municipal staff and focus groups with community members, follow-up meetings, workshops, and observations. By combining the Theory of the Information Value Chain with the Good governance Principles Framework, data could be analysed by categorising data into themes.

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Plagiarism Declaration</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Abbreviations &amp; Acronyms</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Context of the Study	2
1.2 Research Question	3
1.3 Research Objectives	3
1.4 Scope and Structure of Thesis	4
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Methodology</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Research Design	6
2.2 Data Collection	8
2.3 Data Analysis	9
2.3.1 Information Value Chain	10
2.3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of the IVC	13
2.3.3 Good Governance Framework	13
2.4 IVC and Good Governance Principles Framework	14
2.4.1 Step: Input	16
2.4.2 Step: Process	19
2.4.3 Step: Share	21
2.4.4 Step: Output	21
2.5 Analytical Rubric	22
2.6 Site Participation and Selection Criteria	24
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>25</b>

<b>3. Overview of Water Service Delivery</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1 Roles and Responsibility of Water Service Delivery	26
3.2 The Role of National Government	27
3.3 The Role of Provincial Government	27
3.4 The Role of Local Government	28
3.5 Summary	29
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>4. Review of the Legal Requirements of Public Participation in Municipal Processes</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Review of Community Participation Legislation and Policies	31
4.1.1 White Paper on Local Government, 1998	34
4.1.2 Municipal Structures Act	34
4.1.3 Municipal Systems Act	35
4.1.4 Batho Pele White Paper	36
4.1.5 National Framework for Public Participation	37
4.1.6 Other Legislation	38
4.2 Integrated Development Plans	38
4.2.1 IDP Process and Role Players	40
4.2.2 The IDP and Community Participation	41
4.3 Analysis of the Legal Requirements of Public Participation	41
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>5. Mechanisms and Practices for Public Participation</b>	<b>44</b>
5.1 Processes and Mechanisms for Participatory Governance	45
5.1.1 Ward Councillors	45
5.1.2 Ward Committees	45
5.1.3 Community Development Workers	47
5.1.4 Community Liaison Officials	47
5.1.5 IDP Representative Forum	47
5.1.6 Izimbizo	47
5.1.7 Other Methods of Engagement	48
5.2 Accountability and Information Sharing	48
5.2.1 Accessibility of Information	48

5.2.2	Encouraging Public Participation	49
5.2.3	Information to Facilitate Decision-Making	52
5.2.4	Information Culture	53
5.3	Challenges to Good Governance	54
5.3.1	Institutional Capacity	54
5.3.2	Limited Economic Base - Lack of Finances and Other Resources	56
5.3.3	Skills and Education	56
5.3.4	Lack of Community Engagement	57
<b>Chapter 6</b>		<b>59</b>
<b>6. Description of the Study Sites</b>		<b>59</b>
6.1	Ndlambe Local Municipality	61
6.1.1	People	61
6.1.2	Economy and Education	62
6.1.3	Access to Services	62
6.2	Kouga Local Municipality	63
6.2.1	People	64
6.2.2	Economy and Education	64
6.2.3	Access to Services	64
6.3	Kou-Kamma Local Municipality	66
6.3.1	People	66
6.3.2	Economy and Education	67
6.3.3	Access to Services	67
6.4	Summary	68
<b>Chapter 7</b>		<b>69</b>
<b>7. Current Information Sharing Practices and Analysis: Case Studies from Local Municipalities in the Eastern Cape</b>		<b>69</b>
7.1	Ndlambe Local Municipality	69
7.1.1	Step: Input	70
7.1.2	Step: Process	74
7.1.3	Step: Share	78
7.1.4	Step: Output	80
7.1.5	Analysis	82



7.2	Kouga Local Municipality	87
7.2.1	Step: Input	87
7.2.2	Step: Process	93
7.2.3	Step: Share	95
7.2.4	Step: Output	96
7.2.5	Analysis	98
7.3	Kou-Kamma Local Municipality	101
7.3.1	Step: Input	101
7.3.2	Step: Process	105
7.3.3	Step: Share	112
7.3.4	Step: Output	114
7.3.5	Analysis	117
<b>Chapter 8</b>		<b>121</b>
<b>8. Analysis and Discussion</b>		<b>121</b>
8.1	Communication Channels and Access to Information	121
8.2	Enablers and Barriers of Information Sharing	124
8.2.1	Barriers to Information Sharing	125
8.2.2	Enablers of Information Sharing	125
8.3	Actualised Participatory Governance	126
8.4	Information Currency and Culture	129
8.4.1	Information Asymmetry	130
8.4.2	Information Culture	130
8.4.3	Social Media	130
8.4.4	Good Governance Principles in Practice	131
8.4.5	Municipalities as Business Organisations	131
8.5	The Information Value Chain as an Assessment Tool	133
<b>Chapter 9</b>		<b>135</b>
<b>9. Conclusions and Recommendations</b>		<b>135</b>
9.1	Conclusions	135
9.2	Recommendations	139
<b>References</b>		<b>142</b>

# List of Figures

---

Figure 2-1 Research design outline.....	7
Figure 2-3: Information Value Chain.....	11
Figure 2-4 Good governance framework (MercyCorps, 2011).....	14
Figure 3-1: Roles and responsibilities of water service delivery in South Africa (Lindfors, 2011) .....	26
Figure 4-1 Schematic Model of Participatory Local Governance (Smith, 2007).....	32
Figure 6-1: Map of South Africa and the nine provinces (Sartorius, et al., 2011) .....	59
Figure 6-2: Map of South Africa with study sites (Source: Google Earth, n.d.) .....	60
Figure 6-3 Location of Ndlambe Local Municipality .....	61
Figure 6-4 Location of Kouga Local Municipality .....	63
Figure 6-5 Location of Kou-Kamma Local Municipality .....	66
Figure 7-1: Reporting Diagram.....	74
Figure 7-2 Ndlambe LM IVC workflow process (Rivett et al., 2018).....	75
Figure 7-3 Screen shot of Ndlambe's municipal website and documents published.....	79
Figure 7-4 Analytical Rubric for Ndlambe LM .....	86
Figure 7-5 Public participation mechanisms and frequency .....	89
Figure 7-6 Screen shot of Kouga LM's municipal website and documents published .....	96
Figure 7-7 Analytical Rubric for Kouga LM.....	100
Figure 7-8 Kou-Kamma LM workflow process (Rivett et al., 2018) .....	107
Figure 7-9 Screenshot of Kou-Kamma LM's municipal website and documents published .	113
Figure 7-10 SDBIP Quarterly reporting process.....	114
Figure 7-11 Analytical Rubric for Kou-Kamma LM.....	120
Figure 8-1 Actualised Participatory Local Government Framework.....	127
Figure 8-2 Example of Actualised Participatory Local Governance .....	128

Figure 8-3 Information Value Chain.....133

## List of Tables

---

Table 2-1 Research design approach .....	8
Table 2-2: Advantages and disadvantages of IVC approach.....	13
Table 2-3 Adapted IVC and Good Governance Principles.....	15
Table 2-4 Reporting channels and information gathering platforms .....	17
Table 2-5 Analytical rubric categories .....	22
Table 2-6 Analytical Rubric .....	23
Table 4-1: Summary of policy, legislative and institutional frameworks for community participation.....	33
Table 4-2: Principles of Batho Pele .....	37
Table 5-1: Roles and functions of ward committees outlined by policy and legislation.....	46
Table 7-1: IVC Barriers experienced by Ndlambe LM .....	81
Table 7-2: IVC Enablers experienced by Ndlambe LM.....	82
Table 7-3 Kouga LM KPA's for Good governance and Public participation .....	90
Table 7-4 IVC Barriers experienced by Kouga LM.....	97
Table 7-5 IVC Enablers experienced by Kouga LM.....	97
Table 7-6 Engagement platforms in Kou-Kamma LM.....	102
Table 7-7 IVC barriers experienced by Kou-Kamma LM .....	116
Table 7-8 IVC enablers experienced by Kou-Kamma LM.....	117
Table 8-1 Communication channels .....	122
Table 8-2 Summary Table of Common Barriers and Enablers to Information Sharing .....	124
Table 9-1 Common Enablers and Barriers .....	138

## Abbreviations & Acronyms

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CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDW	Community Development Worker
CMA	Catchment Management Agency
Community Participation	Public Participation at the municipal level where residents are called “the community”
DM	District Municipality
DoH	Department of Health
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DWA	Department of Water Affairs
DWAF	Department of Water affairs and Forestry
IDP	Integrated Development Plan – a development plan that establishes the goals and objectives of a municipality over a five-year period.
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
iCOMMS	Information for Community Orientated Municipal Services
IT	Information Technology
IVC	Information Value Chain
LM	Local municipality
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Municipal Executive Council
MM	Municipal Manager
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NMMU	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PCM	“Please-Call-Me” text that can be sent to a phone free of charge

Public Participation	The participation of all residents in a country, including citizens and non-citizens, in the decision-making process of all three spheres of government
PPO	Public Participation Officer
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
UCT	University of Cape Town
VC	Value Chain
WSA	Water Service Authority
WSP	Water Service Provider
WRC	Water Research Commission

# Chapter 1

---

## 1. Introduction

After more than two decades of democracy, South Africa still faces similar challenges of disparity, unemployment, and poverty (Gool, 2013). South Africa has made strides towards ensuring viable access to services to its citizens, by developing and implementing strategies, policies, legislation, and governance systems (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Hodgson & Manus, 2006)

“Governance” has become more prevalent in literature, especially where the focus is on reducing poverty and inequality, as well as promoting sustainable development in developing countries. This concept has created prospects for communities to contribute to the decisions that affect them (Taylor, 2007). Terms like “governance” and “good governance” are considered to be broader than “government” (Graham et al., 2003; Hellström, 2007; Sheng, 2010) to include the relationships between the three spheres of government, economy and civil society and how they arrange themselves (Hellström, 2007; Sheng, 2010). It is important to note here that “governance” is not synonymous with “government”, as “governance” is about how “government” and other social entities cooperate with citizens to make decisions (Graham et al., 2003). Taylor (2007) substantiates that government cannot function properly without the other stakeholders’ co-operation and that these stakeholders are now engaged in governing. Good governance is characterised by participation, the rule of law, transparency (built on the free flow of information), responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, consensus orientation and accountability (Hellström, 2007; Sheng, 2010).

The South African service delivery<sup>1</sup> paradigm was reorganised and local government became responsible to implement policy, manage and provide services, with the rationale that they were located closest to communities (Green & Smith, 2005). This presented municipalities (local government) with numerous challenges to perform their functions effectively with already constrained resources (Green & Smith, 2005). Legislative and regulatory frameworks have been established to manage the relationship between citizens and local government in collaborative efforts to achieve key developmental outcomes (Smith, 2007). Information sharing on its own is not sufficient as there are other actors involved in decision-making processes (Bailey & Francis, 2008).

Participation is continuously stipulated in local government policy, legislation and strategies (Perret, et al., 2005). Even **Section 152 (1)** of the Constitution obliges municipalities “to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government” (Republic of South Africa 1996 p. 83; Reynell et al. 2012). Williams (2006) adds,

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<sup>1</sup> Service Delivery refers to the basic services (e.g. water, electricity, sanitation, etc.) offered by a municipality that have a direct impact on the quality of life of the people residing within the community (Education & Training Unit, 2007c)

“Community participation has become synonymous with legitimate governance” (p. 198). However, research suggests that there is limited scope to exercise real influence, as communities perceive their exclusion from the decision-making processes (Taylor, 2007; Williams, 2005). Accessibility of information also presents a particular challenge. For example, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (an important document which outlines a municipality’s five-year strategy), is often written in English and not available in other local languages and uses highly technical terminology (Perret et al., 2005; World Bank, 2011). Reynell et al. (2012) theorises that even though local government’s intentions are genuine in their objective to “positively affect democracy and bring about social and economic change” (para. 1), many of these ideals have limitations. Inadequate service delivery is a result of lack of capacity, lack of resources within the municipalities and lack of an active civil society (Greenberg, 2001 as cited in Perret et al., 2005; Reynell et al., 2012). Smith (2007) agrees that continuous citizen participation is regarded as crucial to improve governance where inclusive governance requires participation by the most vulnerable in society. Participatory processes should ensure that all participants have a voice. Information should be presented in non-technical and accessible formats (i.e. no language barriers) and take cultural sensitivity into account.

Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act is dedicated to community participation and defines the mechanisms, processes, and procedures to be followed by the municipality to “encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality.” (Tissington, 2011 p. 21). However, the lack of *practical* guidelines, legislative gaps and lack of experienced staff hinder the principle of community participation, especially when municipalities regard the process as a means to an output (Perret et al., 2005; Thinyane, 2013; Thinyane et al., 2017). Williams (2005) puts it succinctly that “participation is largely a ceremonial exercise and not systematic engagement of communities to influence development and service delivery programs.” (Williams, 2005 p.22). Consequently, if municipalities do not effectively promote participation, citizens will most likely find alternative methods to be heard where “participation” may take on the form of protests (Hemson, 2004a; Nnadozie, 2013; Thinyane, 2013; Thinyane et al., 2015, 2017).

Uzzaman (2010) maintains that good governance can only be attained if community knowledge is combined with their social and political experiences. The fundamental philosophy of participation is to provide citizens with a voice that carries meaningful value when in local government decision-making processes (Gaventa, 2002; Lowndes & Wilson, 2001) as cited in (Uzzaman, 2010).

## **1.1 Context of the Study**

Most municipalities and government structures rely on the public to engage in active citizenry (e.g., report any local government issues). Literature has shown that some hindrances to residents’ reporting are due to their lack of understanding of the local municipalities’ roles and responsibilities. Research conducted by the University of Cape Town’s (UCT) Information



for Community Orientated Municipal Services (iCOMMS) and the Water Research Commission (WRC) surmised that community members might not know who to contact or lack access to information as to what procedures to follow. This contributes to the sentiment of being marginalised in decision-making, as residents perceive that they do not have adequate information to participate in activities that affect them (Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013). However, municipalities are required to provide information through the IDPs and other mechanisms. Through these initiatives, municipalities are required to engage with the local community to incorporate their input to devise development plans that will meet the communities' needs.

This study considers these engagement initiatives to study how municipalities gather and share information with the local communities and forms part of the broader research project conducted by iCOMMS and the WRC (Project no. K5/2214/3).

The context of this study considers how the flow of information between the municipality and communities are valued to satisfy the principles of good governance.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Access to information and communication plays an essential role in good governance. In the South African context, legislation, and policy advocate for the importance of community participation in facilitating inclusive decision-making, but this does not always translate during the implementation phase, when decisions or policy should be applied and executed. This research reflected on the following question:

**How do the information-sharing practices between municipalities and communities affect good governance?**

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study investigates how municipalities use and disseminate information to their communities and use citizen knowledge of their surroundings to improve good governance through service delivery provision.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Review and examine the legal requirements of community participation processes and information flow between municipalities and community.
2. Investigate the existing practices of municipalities and communities to share information using case studies of service delivery processes.
3. Using the Information Value Chain and Good governance Principle's method to identify and assess the barriers and enablers to information sharing in three municipalities as a case study of implementation in South Africa.

The information gaps can be identified by considering both perspectives of the municipality and that of the community and this could possibly contribute to the barriers and enablers of information sharing.

## **1.4 Scope and Structure of Thesis**

The geographical scope of this research encompasses three local municipalities located in the Eastern Cape. The inquiry is limited to municipal and community engagement about water service delivery only. Municipalities provide several services, e.g., solid waste removal, housing etc., but for this study, the focus is on water and sanitation services. The reason for this is that the study conducted for the WRC related to drinking water supply monitoring and the same data sets were used to investigate a different aspect.

The study period for the iCOMMS and WRC project covers a period from April 2013 to June 2015.

The following aspects will be discussed in the various chapters of this study:

### **Introduction and Methodology**

**Chapter 1** introduces the research concepts and objectives. It also provides some background to the research, the scope, and the limitations of the study.

**Chapter 2** describes the research methodology, the approach to data collection, how the data was analysed and discusses some of the challenges.

### **Literature Review**

**Chapter 3** describes the framework of how water service delivery functions in South Africa, with the roles and responsibilities of various entities in the three spheres of government.

**Chapter 4** reviews the policy and frameworks required for engagement and information flow between municipalities and the communities that they serve.

**Chapter 5** assesses the mechanisms and practices for public participation and information sharing. This section also discusses the challenges of good governance.

**Chapter 6** describes the municipal study sites and provides the background in terms of economic profile, education, and access to services.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

**Chapter 7** studies the current information sharing practices and analyses each municipality as a case study.

**Chapter 8** discusses the findings and seeks to answer the research question and its objectives.

**Chapter 9** concludes the research.

# Chapter 2

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## 2. Methodology

A qualitative case study was employed for this research methodology, coupled with triangulation to verify and incorporate various perspectives and these will be discussed in Section 2.1 below.

This research was conducted in three local municipalities (LMs) under the jurisdiction of Sarah Baartman District Municipality (DC10) – previously known as the Cadadu District Municipality in the Eastern Cape. These municipalities are Kouga, Ndlambe and Kou-Kamma Local Municipalities and are described in more detail in Chapter 6. The literature review for the WRC Project K5/2114 helped to provide context and collect information on legislation, policy, and documented examples for this study. The investigation period was conducted from April 2013 to August 2014 and the main project concluded in August 2015.

This chapter sets out the methodological concepts applicable to the research and further defines the sampling frame, procedure, research design, data collection and analysis.

### 2.1 Research Design

The research question for this study required an engagement with policy as well as implementation practices.

“Social realities are inherently complex to be grasped in its entirety with one method of investigation. It is so complex that it is impossible to be captured by a single way of data collection.” (Yeasmin, 2012 p. 155)

This study chose a qualitative research approach because it provides the tools for a detailed and in-depth study of complex experiences using multiple sources of evidence (Robson, 2002; Yin, 2003). A combination of triangulation and an interpretivist approach was employed to combine multiple methods and data collection techniques as the research required interpretation of information and considered managing information flow, the power of stakeholders, personal experiences of participants, etc.

The case study utilised information gathered from municipal staff and ward councillors who participated in semi-structured interviews; community members contributed to participation groups and documents like policies, legislation, reports, IDPs, etc. added to generating rich data. This helped to provide a holistic narrative and ensured that “the issue is not explored through one lens but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed or understood” (Baxter & Jack, 2008 p.544). Triangulation also offered a verification process, which validated information by integrating different

perspectives and transferring tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge. The research design process is shown in Figure 2-1 and a brief description is provided thereafter.

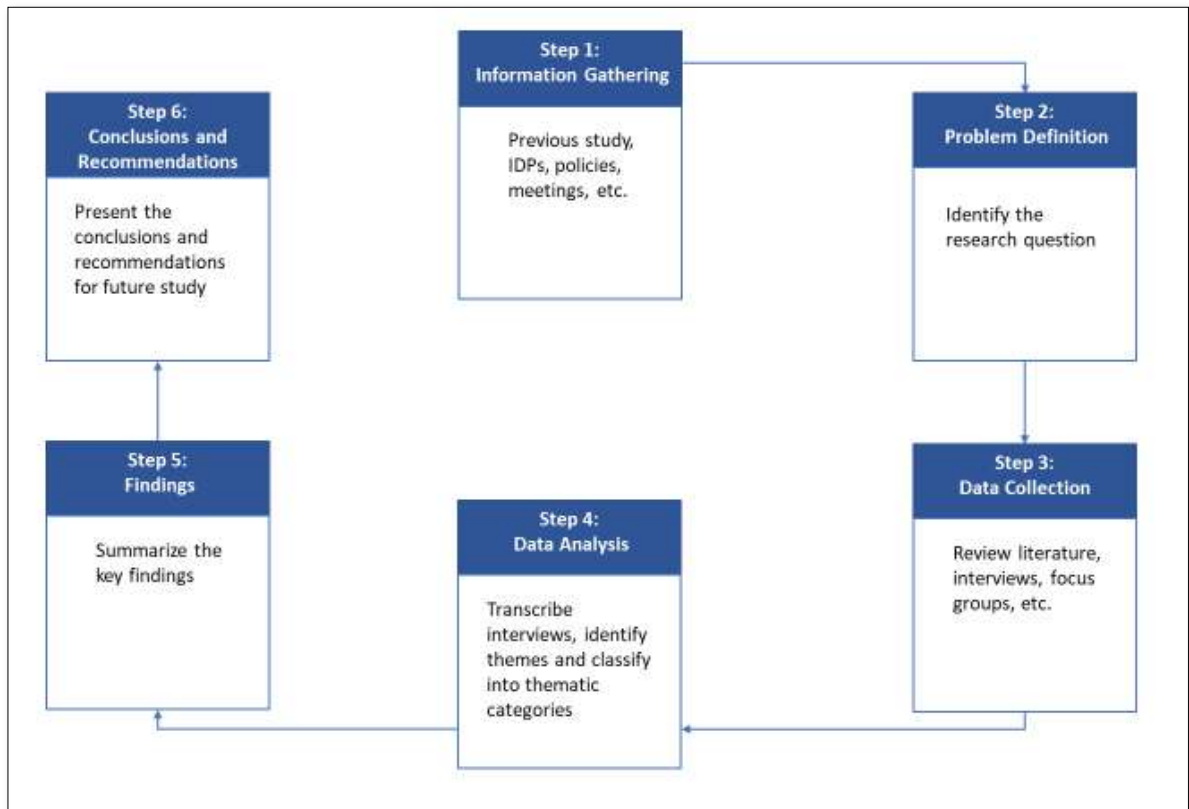


Figure 2-1 Research design outline

Table 2-1 Research design approach

Step	Process
1	Guidance from previous studies, policy and other literature helped to inform the definition of the research problem. Meetings with potential collaborators* were conducted to preview the feasibility of the study
2	The research problem was defined, a proposal submitted, and the identified collaborators agreed to engage
3	During this phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with municipal representatives to better understand how the municipality functioned and learn about some of the challenges that they faced. Participation group interviews and focus groups were also conducted to better understand citizen needs and the challenges that they faced when engaging with the municipality. Follow up visits were also included in the data collection process.
4	The interviews were transcribed and summarised. A process of thematic analysis was undertaken to determine important themes and highlight findings.
5	The key findings were summarised once the Information Value Chain was applied as the chosen analytical tool.
6	The conclusions were drawn based on the findings and recommendations made.

\*Collaborators in this case are the district and local municipalities, researchers, and community representatives.

## 2.2 Data Collection

The data used for this study was gathered using the various methods described in this section:

A review of **documentation**, which included project documents, policies, municipal frameworks and strategies, websites, IDPs. This review helped to understand the municipalities and their communities better before the interviews commenced. This also provided background knowledge of each area and helped to focus on the topic guides' design and structure.

**Semi-structured interviews** were conducted with municipal staff from 31 March to 4 April 2014. A topic guide was used to help guide conversations and was designed to glean information under themes, which also helped the analytical process. This format also allowed respondents to speak freely and encouraged them to express their thoughts and views, providing insight into understanding their personal experiences and perceptions. Municipal staff were identified based on their positions held within the municipality, i.e. technical personnel directly involved with water and sanitation services, or personnel involved in policy formulation and implementation relevant to water provision (e.g., Director of Infrastructure).

Community **participation groups** were held from 25 to 27 May 2014. These consisted of about 35 participants, from each area. Participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. The questionnaires were divided into two sections:

- Individual sessions where participants had to answer simple yes/ no questions based on their personal experiences.
- Group sessions consisted of open-ended questions, which encouraged participants to converse freely and share their personal thoughts and perspectives.

The timing of these participation groups was important and proved to be the most demanding, as the rest of the country prepared for the 2014 General Election. This was a very sensitive time, and it was decided to conduct community interviews once elections had ended to avoid confusion of the research as an election campaign.

**Follow-up meetings** were conducted with the municipalities from 14 to 16 July 2014 and again from 15 to 19 March 2015. These meetings were used as feedback sessions to update the LM with information about the study or learn about new concepts and strategies that the municipalities had decided to implement.

The WRC hosted a **workshop** on 17 July 2014 at Nelson Mandela Metro University (NMMU), in Port Elizabeth, which served as a knowledge sharing and reflection session. Attendees included representatives from each municipality, industry professionals from other universities and our research team.

**Brainstorming sessions and team meetings** also contributed to this research as concepts were continuously discussed and analysed. These sessions also acted as a data-gathering source, as team members often had new knowledge to share, e.g., communication from the municipality, new ideas, new literature, etc.

**Observations** also formed a critical data collection technique, as these were the most contextual and covered reality in “real-time” (Yin, 2003). The most important observations were the interaction between municipal staff and citizens who had come to the municipality to report water or sanitation-related issues. Researchers paid particular attention to how the person was treated, how the complaint was recorded, and the process followed to resolve the problem.

### 2.3 Data Analysis

A multi-method approach to data analysis was employed to consider various perspectives from the municipalities, municipal staff, community members and documented literature.

The municipal interviews were transcribed, summarised and compiled into documents for each municipality. These documents were sent to the municipalities for review and any additional comment or input and served as a discussion point for the follow-up meetings.

The same process was applied to the participation group interviews where the questionnaires were also transcribed and collated with any handwritten notes, which helped to emphasise important perspectives held by community members, i.e., their expectations of the municipality, their role and function, their understanding of their roles as civic actors, and the methods they used to engage with the municipality. This further contributed to identifying the gaps between the municipality's current communication strategy and the legal frameworks within which they should adhere to.

To highlight important findings, thematic analysis was applied. Themes that emerged from the data were examined using the categories used in the topic guides and the Information Value Chain (IVC themes), which helped to identify enablers and barriers for each municipality. The barriers helped facilitate a better understanding of the key challenges that the municipality faced as an organisation, as well as the challenges that they face when engaging with the communities that they served. The enablers helped to identify structures already in place that could facilitate better engagement processes between the community and municipality.

To compare data, an analytical rubric was developed that combines legal frameworks that municipalities are mandated to follow with the information collected and collated from interviews with the study site participants.

This study used data collected for the WRC project between 2013 and 2015. The formal project was submitted in 2015 but the thesis work continued. The author is cognisant that change is expected to occur over time, however, it is expected that the changes would have minimal impact and that the findings are still relevant, independent of the data collection timeline.

### **2.3.1 Information Value Chain**

The Value Chain is commonly used in the corporate world to model "value-creating" activities and analyse an organisation's competitive advantage (Coelho, 1999). The Value Chain was conceptualised by Michael Porter in 1985 and offers a process view of an organisation and considers the organisation as a system. Each system consists of a sub-system, with inputs, transformation processes and outputs (Coelho, 1999; Kaplinsky & Morris, 2001). Value Chain analysis lends itself as an analytical tool to identify core functions and map the flow of inputs (i.e. information) (Kaplinsky & Morris, 2001). Coelho (1999) refers to the "information age" and states that information plays a role in creating value within the value chain at various points. The impact of information today, is determined by savings in cost, quicker turnaround times or any elements that contribute to an organisation's competitive advantage, where every value chain has a series of attributes and an information process (Coelho, 1999).

Gigler (2011) considers an alternative evaluation framework, that considers "informational capabilities". That is, in the perspective of ICTs and information systems, instead of measuring



access and usage of technology, informational capabilities should be considered to determine how people translate information to improve their surroundings.

Gresham & Andulis (2002) define an IVC as: “an integrated framework that bridges the processes, organisations, technology necessary to manage, analyse and use information” (p.2). For this study, a new IVC was created by adapting Porter’s Value Chain, and Gresham & Andulis (2002) Information Value Chain with Gigler’s (2011) Impact Chain and the Good Governance Principles. The IVC approach was used as the assessment tool for this study, with the premise that municipalities act as business organisations, and seeks to create value from information, understand information flow within rural municipalities and enhance decision-making processes.

An IVC was developed for each municipality to explain the process of information and how value is placed to make decisions. A paper titled “*Modelling Information Flow for Organisations: A review of Approaches and Future Challenges*” by Durugbo et al, (2013) analysed diagrammatical and mathematical models of information flow to better identify issues of information flow modelling. The paper stated that mapping information flows is a challenging task as organisations are “communicating entities” that rely on people with access to information to communicate with one another. Within an organisation, communication and flow of information involves various departments, individuals, groups, processes, communication channels, etc. (Durugbo, et al., 2013)

Figure 2-2 depicts the four IVC chains. Each of these chains will be discussed in more detail, below.

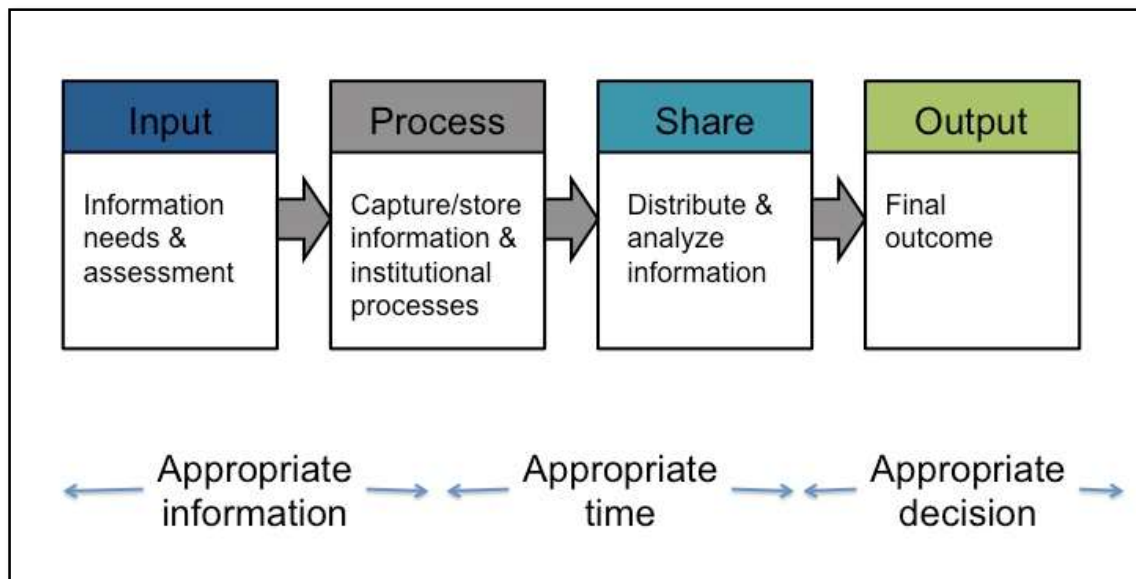


Figure 2-2: Information Value Chain

Source: Adapted (Gresham & Andulis, 2002; IfM Management Technology, n.d.)

### Input

“Input” considers the various information sources (or channels) that the municipality utilised to collect information. The municipality is mandated through policy and legislation to provide “formal” channels, which citizens use to engage, either individually or collectively. However, there are other methods of engagement which also exist- that are less formal and often overlooked. Interviews with municipal staff and community members were helpful in identifying other information inputs.

All these input methods provided the municipality with the information needed to make decisions, as well as develop and implement strategies or policies. Identifying and assessing useful and reliable information is important for decision-making.

### Process

The next phase (or chain) of the IVC is “process” which follows information flow. Various frameworks, guidelines and policy advise on community participation and most of this literature provides an outline to an idealised process of information gathering and dissemination, which is very difficult to put into practice. This section of the study considered the literature to compare to the scenarios depicted by the municipal and participation group interviews. This also helped to identify the enablers and barriers of information sharing.

### Share

The third chain of IVC is “sharing” of information and considers how information is shared across departments, but it also speaks to community participation and comments on how the municipality disseminates important information to the community. The literature on frameworks, policy and legislation also describes how municipalities should share information, but this does not always happen due to lack of capacity, departmental silos or information was not shared in the right way (e.g. highly technical language, not available in local languages, etc.).

### Output

The last chain of IVC is “output” but could also be considered as the final achievement as it seeks to improve information capabilities, human and social capabilities and achieve informed decision-making. At this last phase, information should be converted to knowledge and meet the goal of “right decision”. It should encourage a response to queries and at the very least, inform lessons to be learnt if the action steps do not work.

### 2.3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of the IVC

IVC is a relatively new approach, and the advantages and disadvantages are presented in Table 2-2, below.

Table 2-2: Advantages and disadvantages of IVC approach

Advantages	Disadvantage
1. Considers various aspects of information (i.e. information/ data sources)	1. Relatively new approach to analysis
2. Helps to categorise data	2. Limited literature
3. Identifies processes within municipalities workflow	3. Process needs refinement
4. Highlights information gaps	4. Workflow is very simplified and does not consider complex relationships
5. Identified enablers and barriers of information exchange and communication	5. Some data is difficult to categorise – should define categories more specifically
	6. Describes processes as a system, which can overlook other important aspects

IVC is a flexible tool to analyse an organisation and helps understand the organisation's challenges. When applied to the municipalities for this study, it helped determine the enablers and barriers, which contributed to the design and use of the intervention that was eventually implemented and studied.

### 2.3.3 Good Governance Framework

Good governance considers how government and other social organisations interacted to make decisions (Graham et al., 2003). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) details a set of 5 Good Governance Principles, namely (Graham et al., 2003):

1. "Legitimacy and voice
2. Direction
3. Performance
4. Accountability
5. Fairness"

These principles have been adopted by other literature and adapted into a framework by MercyCorps. This framework is shown in Figure 2-3 below.

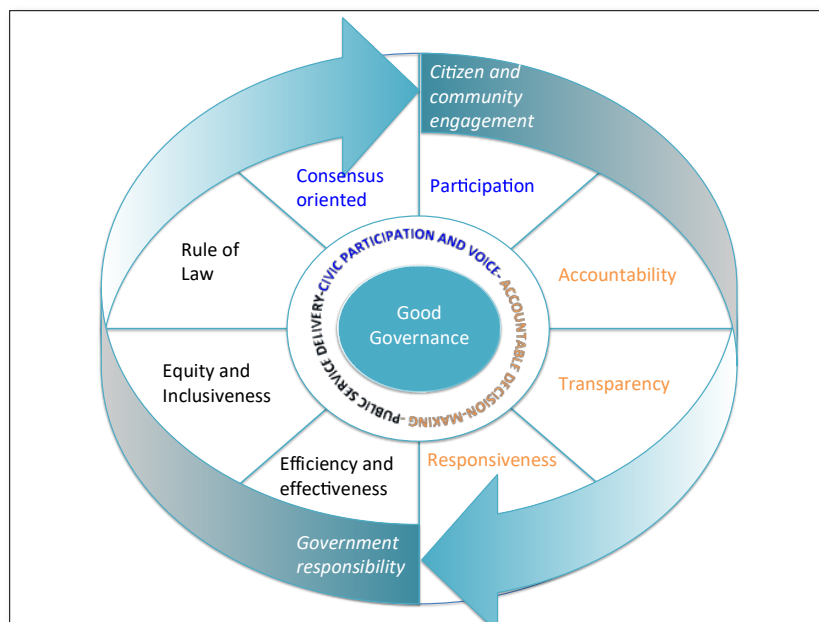


Figure 2-3 Good governance framework (MercyCorps, 2011)

## 2.4 IVC and Good Governance Principles Framework

For this research, the IVC was modified to include the Good Governance Principles to utilise the framework as an analytical tool that could assess information flow and decision-making processes within a municipality.

Municipal and community accounts were grouped and categorised per the IVC processes to determine what information was transferred and how it was used for decision-making. The data collected was categorised into the IVC chains (e.g. input, process, share and outputs) and grouped with the Good Governance principles to highlight how much of a role an actor plays in decision-making.

The MercyCorps framework was adapted to include concepts from Graham et al. (2003), Hellström (2007) and Sheng (2010) to develop Table 2-3, which was used as the research instrument for this study. This framework considers the value chain process with a combination of the Good Governance Principles and was applied to information collected throughout the study. The findings were scrutinised further, to interpret the impact that information has on management and the significance of the impact. Any discrepancies in the findings were also included and explanations determined.

Table 2-3 Adapted IVC and Good Governance Principles

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Objective (based on Good Governance Principles)
<b>Input</b>	Legitimacy and voice	Public participation	Everyone has a voice in decision-making
		Consensus orientation	Differing interests or objectives are facilitated through good governance so that consensus is met, based on the best outcome, for the collective group on policy and procedure.
	Direction	Strategic vision	Long-term strategy with set objectives aimed at developmental growth and good governance and development
<b>Process</b>	Performance	Responsiveness	Institutions and processes have a singular objective to serve all participants
		Effective and efficient	Processes and institutions deliver on their objectives to meet the requirements whilst utilising the available resources
	Fairness	Equity	All residents have access to equal opportunities to enhance their well-being
		Rule of law	Legal frameworks must be reasonable and imposed
<b>Share</b>	Transparency	Free flow of information	The public can easily access information from institutions which includes the “right to know”, where sufficient information is available to identify and monitor.
<b>Output</b>	Accountability	Access to information	Sufficient information is available for all stakeholders and citizens to make informed decisions and decision-makers are accountable to the public and public institutions.

### 2.4.1 Step: Input

“Input” considers the various communication channels and information sources used by the municipality to collect information, e.g. using ward councillors who interact with the communities, telephone calls from concerned residents, technical staff reporting back, etc. Municipalities are mandated through various policy and legislation to provide “formal” channels, which citizens can use to engage. However, there are also informal channels used between the municipality and citizens, which are often overlooked as a viable resource. This section will discuss the various inputs of information, considering both the formal and informal channels.

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Objective
Input	Legitimacy and voice	Public participation	Everyone has a voice in decision-making
		Consensus orientation	Differing interests or objectives are mediated through good governance so that a broad consensus is reached, on the best outcome, for the collective group on policy and procedure.
	Direction	Strategic vision	Long-term strategy with set objectives aimed at developmental growth and good governance and development – historical, cultural, social, etc.

#### a) Perspective: Legitimacy and voice

Legitimacy and voice are important in decision-making, as it requires input from the community to contribute and participate. Consequently, it is also important for the municipality to provide adequate information for citizens to participate constructively.

#### Dimension: Public Participation

As will be discussed in Section 4, various legislation and policies make provision for public participation. These legislation and policies outline formal mechanisms, processes, and procedures of public participation where everyone should have a voice in decision-making with the capacity to participate constructively. That is, the municipality is required to create and encourage participation within the local community, provide structures for participation which includes the acknowledgement of petitions, complaints lodged by community members, consultative sessions, etc. and how the municipality should communicate and share information to the public, which includes issuing public notices (Tissington, 2011).

There are three elements that make up the formal public participation structure within municipalities, namely:

1. Ward councillors – elected representative that facilitates engagement between the municipality and community (refer to 4.1.2)
2. Community Based Planning – community led initiatives that use local knowledge to develop an action plan.
3. Public participation Policy and Strategy – each municipality is required to develop their own public participation Policy in terms of the National Framework for Public participation (refer to Section 4.1.5)

Table 2-4 lists the reporting channels available and information gathering platforms that communities and municipalities can use.

**Table 2-4 Reporting channels and information gathering platforms**

<p><b>Community reporting channels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ward councillors</li> <li>• Community Development Workers (CDWs), Non- Government Organisations (NGOs) and interest groups</li> <li>• Telephone</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Letters</li> <li>• Phones</li> <li>• Walk-ins</li> </ul>	<p><b>Municipality information gathering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Technical staff</li> <li>• Departmental communication</li> <li>• Complaints register</li> <li>• Ward councillors</li> <li>• DCWs, NGOs and interest groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community information gathering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Ward councillors</li> <li>• CDWs, NGOs and interest groups</li> <li>• Print media/ radio</li> <li>• Loud hailing</li> <li>• Community meetings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Municipality departmental communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Telephone</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• Complaints register</li> </ul>

Ward councillors, CDWs and other field staff (NGOs, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), etc.) acted as information brokers, as they had the most contact with both the municipality and communities (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). Their role was to liaise with both parties and share information. Within the formal structure of public participation, ward councillors had an

important role as they helped the municipality to identify and assess community needs, mobilise the community for prompt action and response and ensured that community needs were accurately reflected in the IDP or municipal program.

Dimension: Consensus orientation

Consensus orientation facilitates various concerns to reach a general agreement on the best outcome for the whole group. This principle leverages on the concept that all participants have the opportunity to contribute and as many interested parties are encouraged to participate (Hartnett, 2011; Sheng, 2010). Hartnett (2011) elaborates that consensus orientation is the process of decision-making whereby once a proposal has been developed, the group must have a means to finalise a decision.

Ward councillors and ward committees played an important role in engaging with interested parties but often did not engage with the entire community and thus citizen-based initiatives and intermediary organisations (NGOs, CBOs) helped to represent the interests of sectors of society and engage with local government on behalf of citizens.

Local government's role is to ensure consensus by arranging and implementing mechanisms like community meetings, special interest group forums, etc. For this reason, the IDP and budget representative forum structure was established. Any input into the review of the IDP was meant to ensure optimal participation of various interest groups and sectors. Furthermore, the IDP Forum ensured communication occurred at grass roots level so that all community members had the opportunity to have a voice (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017 p.17).

Local government requires consensus on any project, IDP policy, policy or legislation to be passed.

**a) Perspective: Direction**

The long-term strategic vision of a municipality is set out in its IDP, over a five-year period and is revised annually. The IDP provides the framework for development, which aims to co-ordinate the work of all three spheres of government in a comprehensive strategy and takes the existing conditions, issues, and available resources into account. IDP's contain five Key performance Areas (KPAs), set out by national and provincial government (COGTA, 2009), that should be to be addressed, namely:

1. "KPA 1 – Basic Service Delivery and Infrastructure Development
2. KPA 2 – Municipal and Institutional Development and Transformation
3. KPA 3 – Local Economic Development
4. KPA 4 – Financial Viability and Management
5. KPA 5 – Good Governance and Public Participation"



These KPAs are used to measure performance targets and indicators across all municipalities, but also set out objectives that municipalities should aim to achieve. The KPAs are mentioned here to highlight the strategic vision of municipalities.

### 2.4.2 Step: Process

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Objective
Process	Performance	Responsiveness	Institutions and processes have a singular objective to serve all participants
		Effective and efficient	Processes and institutions deliver on their objectives to meet the requirements whilst utilising the available resources
	Fairness	Equity	All residents have equal access to opportunities to improve their well-being
		Rule of law	Legal frameworks must be reasonable and imposed

There are two main processes that govern a municipality's activities, i.e. the formal processes governed by policy and legislation that the municipality is mandated to observe (e.g. Municipal Systems Act, Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Finance Management Act, White Paper on Local Government, etc.) and the daily workflow of the municipality with its departments and functions, where the Constitution, and other policy designate roles and responsibilities to municipalities (DWAF, n.d.; Republic of South Africa, 1996). An ideal process of work was identified, however after examining the real process, the following was acknowledged:

- Numerous information sources and poor inter-department communication, results in duplicated data and time wasted on redundant work
- Information is often captured on one spread sheet, which results in multiple versions across departments with outdated information i.e. data is uncollated and scattered
- Poor prioritization of queries and loss of resources
- Inefficient use of time
- Ease of administration results in poor customer service

The daily workflow will be discussed later by assessing the individual municipality and their processes.

#### a) Perspective: Performance

The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) and the Municipal Performance Management Regulations, with other associated legislation mandates a regulatory framework for municipalities to develop their own performance management systems tailored to suit their needs. Each municipality formulates performance targets and indicators to measure its improvement towards achieving its objectives and to ensure that the long-term strategy of the municipality is realised (DPLG, 2000). These performance measures should have been formulated in consultation with the community and recorded in the IDP along with the national KPAs. Once approved by the municipal council, the IDP forms part of the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) and an annual performance report should be published for councillors, staff, public and other sectors of government. The community should be involved in establishing the goals and objectives as well as reviewing municipal performance (DPLG, 2000; Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Kouga Local Municipality, 2016b; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2012).

**b) Perspective: Fairness**

The dimension for *Fairness* is *Equity* and the *Rule of law*. *Equity* means providing everyone with an opportunity to improve their well-being and the *Rule of law* refers to the legal frameworks that define the boundaries within which to act and makes reference to all the policy and legislation discussed in this research (MercyCorps, 2011).

Due to the history of inequality in South Africa, there are still some areas that experience poverty, limited social and economic development and struggle for access to basic service delivery and even with many success cases, there are still areas within municipalities that battle to respond to these challenges. Some municipalities cannot leverage the funds to address service backlogs and complying to the financial management system is a challenge in itself (COGTA, 2009).

Municipalities should also act fairly and be inclusive in the way in which information is shared or obtained from citizens and need to consider their citizens' capacity to engage. Special measures should be taken to ensure that all citizens have equal access to information by providing simplified information that accommodates a variety of languages, spoken or written, providing transport to meetings to citizens that live far away from municipal centres and accommodates marginalised groups like women and people with disabilities (Smith, 2007).

### 2.4.3 Step: Share

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Objective
Share	Transparency	Free flow of information	The public can easily access information from institutions which includes the “right to know”, where sufficient information is available to identify and monitor.

Transparency is the “right to know” where information should be accessible to the public and is considered a central principle of Good Governance and at the most fundamental level, transparency “means sharing information and acting in an open manner”(Smith, 2007 p.5). Lack of transparency can lead to mistrust, disempowerment, and frustration. Participation can only truly occur when citizens have access to information to actively participate in decision-making processes (Smith, 2007).

All three municipalities publish the IDP and information on the municipal website, but this limits a large demographic of the population that do not have access to the Internet or cannot read (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). One municipality commented that only poor water results are published in local newspapers, to warn citizens to take precautionary measures before consuming the water (Municipal Interviews, 2014). However, some communities do not have access to the newspapers as they are only distributed to the towns and often do not reach the more remote areas (Community Interviews, 2015). Loud hailing seems the most effective means of advertising community meetings or special events or notices (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

### 2.4.4 Step: Output

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Objective
Output	Accountability	Access to information	Sufficient information is available for all stakeholders and citizens to make informed decisions and decision-makers are accountable to the public and public institutions

The “output” of the IVC should yield accountability and transparency where sufficient information is made available and accessible for all citizens and stakeholder to make informed decisions. Citizens should be able to participate freely in a space, that allows them to voice

their concerns and hold their representatives and local government accountable for any development or policy decisions that affect them, without fear or consequence.

## 2.5 Analytical Rubric

The analytical rubric presented in Table 2-6, below, was developed by the author of this research study by considering the legal frameworks (discussed in Chapter 4) with data collected from the municipality and participation group interviews to develop a set of criteria that could be used for analysing the data. Each criterion can score a maximum of two points if requirements are met in full. That is, there is documented evidence or municipal and participation group interviews correspond. One point is awarded if there is no documentation to back up the score or municipal and community interviews yield a contradicting response. Zero points are awarded if there is insufficient evidence. The maximum score is 40 points. The colour categorisation identifies the various criterion that is mandated by legislation (See Table 2-5). The policy or framework is identified in brackets for ease of reference (Table 2-6).

Table 2-5 Analytical rubric categories

Category type	Description	Colour category
a) Municipality	Criteria that the municipality is required by legislation/policy to implement	
b) Community	Mechanism implemented to ensure that the community has an active voice	
c) Combination - municipality and community	Mechanism implemented to ensure that the municipality engages community in information sharing and decision-making	

Table 2-6 Analytical Rubric

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Criteria	Weighted score	Score	Step	Perspective	Dimension	Criteria	Weighted score	Score				
Input	Legitimacy and voice	Public participation	Municipality has a public participation policy that meets minimum requirements set out in <i>Draft National Policy Framework for Public participation</i>	2		Process	Performance	Effective and Efficient	Municipal Contact numbers are well published, and community members know who to contact/ how to contact the relevant municipal department. (Batho Pele, Municipal Systems Act)	2					
			Ward committees are active and ward meetings are held at least quarterly. (Municipal Structures Act)	2					Fairness	Equity	Municipality has satellite offices to ensure accessibility to all communities (Batho Pele, Municipal Systems Act)	2			
			Community members have knowledge of the IDP and municipal structure	2		Rule of Law	Municipality uses the legal frameworks stipulated by policy and legislation (e.g. MSA, Bantu Pele, etc.)	2							
			The Municipality consults and includes community in policy/ decision-making for projects/ policy at various levels. (White Paper on Local Government, Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2				Share	Transparency	Information sharing	IDP, Service delivery performance reports, financial, municipal website, etc. are accessible (Municipal Systems Act, Batho Pele)	2			
	Consensus Orientation	Community members have an active voice and participate in decision-making processes e.g. IDP forum or community project, etc.	2		Municipality uses a variety of communication platforms and languages	2									
	Direction	Strategic Vision	The Municipality has a mission/ vision statement that is outlined in the IDP. (Municipal Systems Act)	2			Community members access published information from the municipality				2				
			The Municipality makes progress by monitoring and evaluating their progress towards achieving the KPAs outlined in their IDP.	2		Output					Accountability	Accountability	Municipal departments can be held accountable and responsible for outcomes	2	
	Process	Performance	Responsive-ness	The Municipality is responsive to reported issues/ complaints/ queries (Batho Pele, National Draft Policy Framework for Public participation)	2								Mechanisms implemented to encourage Public participation (e.g. report, compliment, critique, etc.)	2	
				Municipality keeps community informed/ provides feedback on issues/ complaints (Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2									Community members feel that the municipality listens to the communities and is transparent	2
			Effective and efficient	Municipality's customer service is well rated by the community	2			<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>			<b>0</b>		
Ward councillors, CDWs and community leaders used as additional resources (Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Systems Act)				2		<b>Percentage</b>		<b>0%</b>							

## 2.6 Site Participation and Selection Criteria

South Africa is a very diverse country, and each region presents its own characteristics like climate, resources, economic activity, etc. To maintain context within the study, the study sites had to be Local Municipalities (LMs) that serve as Water Service Providers (WSP) and/or Water Service Authorities (WSA) under the jurisdiction of one district municipality. It is assumed that LMs under the authority of the same district municipality would have the same structure and characteristics. This would also limit the complexity of studying and identifying multiple variables across various district municipalities of different provinces, which could further impact the study (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). The criteria for selecting the sites were:

- Rural district municipality (DM) that is experiencing current water and sanitation service delivery issues
- Interest and willingness to participate in the research
- Capacity to support the study (municipality and communities)
- Approval granted from relevant authorities within a reasonable time frame

Sarah Baartman DM was identified, as it matched the criteria, but a strong motivator for its selection and the three LM's, was their response and willingness to participate in the study. At the time of the study the DM was named Cacadu DM but was recently renamed to Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

The study sites will be described in more detail in Chapter 6 to provide a better context.

## Chapter 3

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### 3. Overview of Water Service Delivery

Public participation, in South Africa, is a Constitutional right and should not be merely followed to comply with legislation but to encourage and support Good Governance (Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013). Furthermore, the Constitution provides a definition for local government and this includes communities, which further shows support by legislation and policy papers. After Apartheid, municipalities were tasked with new responsibilities and functions and new strategies had to be developed which encouraged municipalities to partner with their respective communities (Hemson, 2004a; Nnadozie, 2013; Smith, 2007).

This chapter forms part of the literature review, which was a desktop study and briefly discusses the responsibilities of all three spheres of government in the water sector to provide a comprehensive view of the various role-players. The third sphere (local government) is considered as being the closest to communities and thus, municipalities are mandated to include public consultation and participation in their developmental objectives (Green & Smith, 2005; Hemson, 2004a; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013).

Apartheid not only segregated communities into racial and geographical boundaries, it also provided different levels of service to areas, which affected the type of services that were provided (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). South Africa's complex history reflects that there was no opportunity for community participation, as a majority of the population were denied rights (DWAF, 2002; Hunter, et al., 2003; Williams, 2006). The post 1994 government sought to rectify these issues by implementing strategies, this included producing various legislation, White Papers and policies that focused on "people centred development" across all sectors - including water supply and sanitation services (Gool, 2013; Republic of South Africa, 1996; Williams, 2006). However, since different areas experience different challenges, progress across the country has been disproportionate and this further emphasises the socio-economic conditions and competency of municipalities (COGTA, 2009).

The Constitution of South Africa also makes provision for Access to Information in Section 32 of the **Bill of Rights**, which states "everyone has the right of access to information held by the state, and any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights." (Republic of South Africa, 1996 p. 1257) The Constitution further sets out to state the objectives of local government in Section 152 (Republic of South Africa, 1996 p. 1331), which is to:

- a) "Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities
- b) Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner
- c) Promote social and economic development

- d) Promote a safe and healthy environment and
- e) Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.”

This chapter summarises relevant legislation, policy and strategy of South African to outline the roles and responsibilities of the various spheres of government. It also highlights the guidelines and frameworks that municipalities are mandated to follow, which affect decision-making, community participation and information flows.

### 3.1 Roles and Responsibility of Water Service Delivery

The roles and responsibility concerning water provision, infrastructure maintenance and water quality monitoring are shared between the three spheres of government, namely: National, Provincial and Local government. National and provincial government have a dual responsibility, to support local government, strengthen their capacity, and regulate its performance where necessary. The primary function of local government is to provide water and sanitation services (DWA, 2002; Republic of South Africa, 1996).

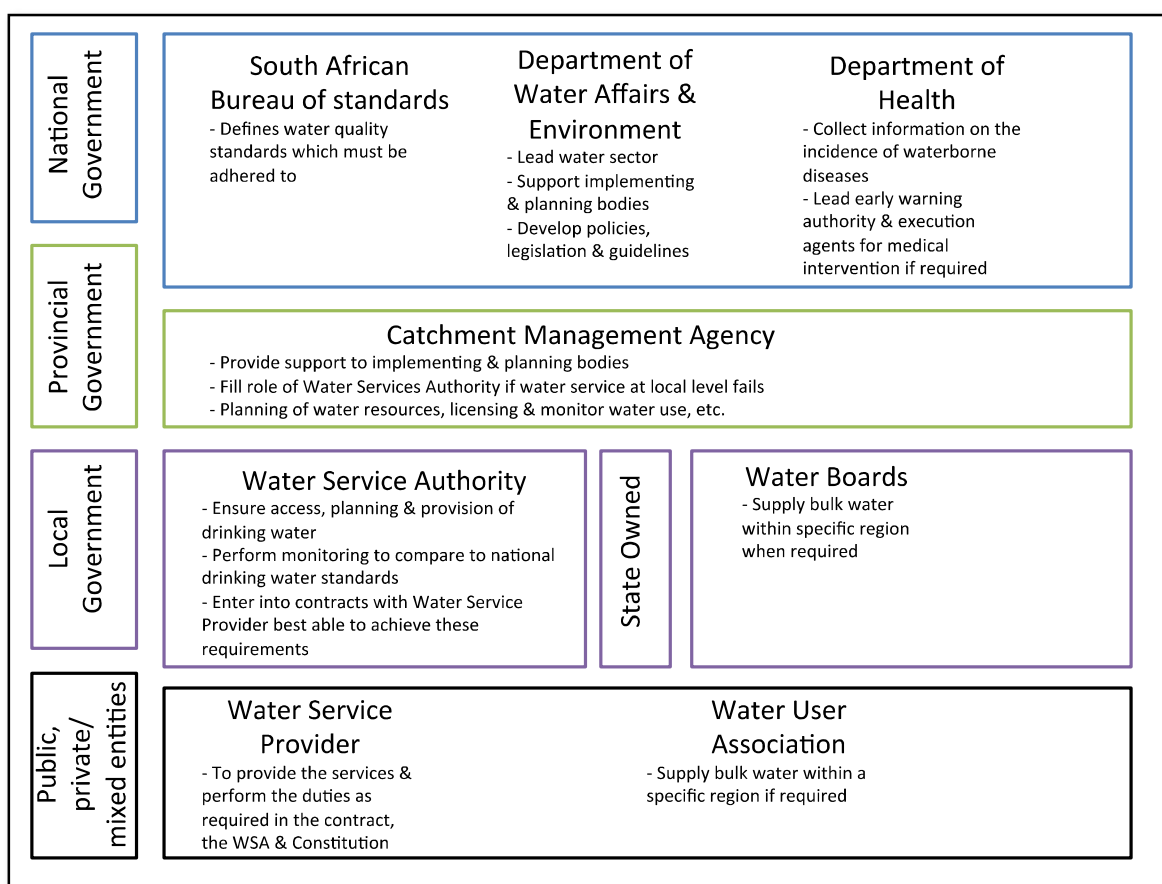


Figure 3-1: Roles and responsibilities of water service delivery in South Africa (Lindfors, 2011)



Water service delivery, previously a state function, was transferred to municipalities by the Water Services Act (Act 108 of 1997) (DWAF 2004) with the rationale that local government is the sphere of government, closest to communities (Green & Smith, 2005; Hemson, 2004b). National and provincial government are responsible for policy, strategy and providing support to municipalities that struggle to fulfil their duties (COGTA, 2009).

## **3.2 The Role of National Government**

### **Department of Water Affairs (and SABS)**

National government acts through the Department of Water Affairs (DWA), which has the overall duty of water resource management, policy regulation and water service provision (Lindfors, 2011). This ensures that water sector goals are met through sustainable resource management and protected consumer rights. DWA is the leader of the water sector and is tasked with the function to lend support and strengthen Water Service Authorities (WSA) (located within local government) (DWAF, 2002; Earle, et al., 2005). DWA has four main functions to fulfil regarding the provision and management of water resources (DWAF, 2002; Earle et al., 2005; Hodgson & Manus, 2006; Lindfors, 2011):

- Policies – development and revise national policies, monitor and provide oversight to legislation which impacts the water sector, co-ordinate with other national departments on the development of strategies to achieve water sector goals
- Support – helps to support and strengthen local government through guidelines, practical tools (i.e. manuals and courses) and technical support
- Regulation – in conjunction with the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) to establish national standards and monitor sector performance
- Information – development and maintenance to manage the water sector's information for effective monitoring, support, planning and regulation

### **Department of Health (DoH)**

The Department of Health (DoH) is responsible for the operational activities, including policy, which impact health in the water sector, i.e. supporting water quality management by collecting information on the occurrences of waterborne diseases and acting as the early warning authority (DWAF, 2002; Hodgson & Manus, 2006; Lindfors, 2011). At local government level, environmental health officers (EHO) are tasked with the function to monitor drinking water quality and are also responsible for the health and hygiene education of water and sanitation related issues (Lindfors, 2011).

## **3.3 The Role of Provincial Government**

### **Catchment Management Agency**

Catchment Management Agencies (CMA) act on a provincial level and have a dual responsibility with the DWA to support and strengthen local governments (DWAF, 1994,

2003). CMAs may function as water resource managers and are accountable for water supply planning at the catchment level, i.e. within designated catchment areas (Lindfors, 2011). Some of the CMAs functions include licensing and monitoring water use and discharges for environmental reasons that affect water provision, quality, and accessibility - specifically in areas where people rely on untreated water (DWAF, 2003; Lindfors, 2011). CMAs also assist in the development of water conservation and demand strategies and can be delegated responsibilities of WSAs to manage information and support organisations within a water management area (DWAF, 2003). South Africa currently only has two operational CMAs, it is planned to have seven more operational in the future (Khorommbi, 2019).

### **3.4 The Role of Local Government**

The primary objective of local government is the provision of water and sanitation services (DPLG, 2000; Republic of South Africa, 1996).

#### **Water Service Authority**

WSAs are “responsible for ensuring access to water services” and are responsible for “decisions regarding water service development approaches, delivery strategies and resource allocation” (DWAF, 2004 p. 9). The provincial government can authorise a LM to perform these functions. (DWAF, 2002)

The WSA are allocated an area of jurisdiction and must perform the following functions (DWAF, 2002, 2004; Hodgson & Manus, 2006; Lindfors, 2011):

1. Understand the right to access basic water services – this also includes the extension of services subject to available resources, service level choices that are sustainable (environmental and financial)
2. Planning – prepare water service development plans
3. Select of water service providers – select, procure and contract with the water service providers (including itself)
4. Regulation – regulate water service provision and monitor, evaluate and performance manage, as well as ensure compliance with drinking water quality standards
5. Communication – educate consumers in health and hygiene, water conservation and demand management as well as inform consumers and the appropriate authorities about any health risks

#### **Water Service Provider**

A Water Service Provider (WSP) is any organisation that has been contracted by the WSA and takes on the operational function of water and sanitation provision to “provide water services to consumers or to other water service institutions” (DWAF, 2004 p. 9). WSPs also become responsible for the maintenance of the systems to ensure sustainability over time. In sanitation, this means cleaning the sewers and pump stations frequently and responding to

breakages or spillages for sanitation services. DWA has a monitoring and oversight function and should intervene or recommend remedial action where required (Tissington, 2011).

The municipality may perform the functions of the WSA as well as the WSP, or external entity (e.g. non-profit organisation or community based organisation) but clear distinction of functions is required (DWAF, 2002).

### **Water Boards**

A Water Board is a regional bulk supplier that is owned and operated by government. Water boards can provide water to more than one WSA and deliver services on behalf of WSAs (DWAF, 2003; Lindfors, 2011). Water boards are responsible for providing regional water resource and bulk water supply infrastructure, supplying municipalities with water or supporting rural municipalities with water systems. However, not all municipalities are dependent on water boards as they may have the capability to function as a WSP (DWA, 2013).

In an initiative to establish local government capacity, DWAF proposed expanding the mandate of water boards to include the roll-out of sanitation and water infrastructure. Water boards could then provide direct water and sanitation services to consumers and assign state resources to infrastructure development (DWAF, 2004).

South Africa currently has nine water boards (Republic of South Africa, 2021).

## **3.5 Summary**

This section considered the roles that national, provincial and local government play in providing water and sanitation services and how the various departments within the government spheres interact to ensure water and sanitation services are provided in a way that safeguards the environment, ensures health and safety to people who utilise these services and that there is oversight functionality to ensure compliance to standards.

Considering how many departments in all three government spheres are involved in this service - further emphasises the significant role that water and sanitation play in people's daily lives.

## Chapter 4

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### 4. Review of the Legal Requirements of Public Participation in Municipal Processes

This chapter forms part of the literature review and examines the legal requirements that municipalities should adhere to according to legislation, policies, and other prescribed frameworks. Public participation has various definitions and may even be used interchangeably with concepts like “civil participation”, “community participation” and “citizen participation” (Ababio, 2007; Kanyane, 2008; Sebola & Fourie, 2014) as cited in (Sebola, 2017). The *National Framework on Public Participation* defines public participation as an “open, accountable process through which individuals and groups within selected communities can exchange views and influence decision-making.” (DPLG, 2007 p. 15). This definition embraces that public participation supports the principles of Good Governance by recognizing the basic rights of all people to contribute to governance, and that the intrinsic value of people is recognised to participate in governance processes. People can participate as individuals, interest groups or communities (Sebola, 2017).

Literature on good governance identifies core principles assimilated with the idea of Public participation, namely (Hellström & Jacobson, 2014; Smith, 2007; Thomson et al., 2012):

1. **Participation** – continuous citizen participation is considered key in Good Governance for better service delivery.
2. **Inclusiveness or social equity** – this refers to inclusive governance for improved participation and to empower the most vulnerable within society. It is essential that participatory processes support the voices of all contributors. This means that information should be presented in accessible formats and that cultural, social and gender sensitivity be considered.
3. **Accountability** – it is important that citizens can have their voices heard in official decision-making as well as hold leaders responsible for any actions or decisions taken.
4. **Responsiveness** – government must respond to the needs and interests of citizens by listening, processing inputs, and acting on these in a timeously
5. **Transparency** - sharing information is the fundamental principle of good governance. Transparency instils confidence in citizens and fosters accountability by providing the information needed to hold government departments and officials to account.

Sebola (2017) also makes the case that public participation is only achievable if the information provided to the public is meaningful and that this can only be attained through effective communication tools. Stein (2001) agrees and adds that transparency strengthens

democracy by assisting access to information that allows citizens to participate and hold officials accountable (Stein, 2001) as cited in (Tshoose, 2015).

To understand public participation in South Africa, one must consider the theory and processes adopted in the legislature and what mechanisms are used for effective communication.

#### **4.1 Review of Community Participation Legislation and Policies**

Community engagement and participation is entrenched in South African policy and plays a central role in participatory governance, as civil society is permitted to exercise its voice in government processes and decision-making (Buccus, et al., 2008; Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013; Sebola, 2017). As previously mentioned, the Constitution places provision on government to institute public participation frameworks and procedures. This is highlighted in Chapter 1 of the Constitution, which states that “the Constitution is the supreme law of the country and any obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled or any law or conduct in conflict is considered invalid” (Tsataire, 2008) as cited in (Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013 p.15). Furthermore, the Constitution requires local government to provide “democratic and accountable government for local communities” and “encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government” (Section 152 (1) (a) and (e)) (Republic of South Africa p. 1331, 1996; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013; Tshoose, 2015)

Smith (2007) provides a model of Participatory Local Governance, shown below in Figure 4-1. This model considers the space of engagement between local government and citizens, where there are three domains of engagement. The first domain is political and represents the area of democracy. The second domain deliberates the various mechanisms, processes and structures surpass the political representatives to citizen participation and includes developmental processes. The third domain relates to the methods citizens (collectively or individually) utilise to engage with local government through various channels to address developmental challenges (Smith, 2007).

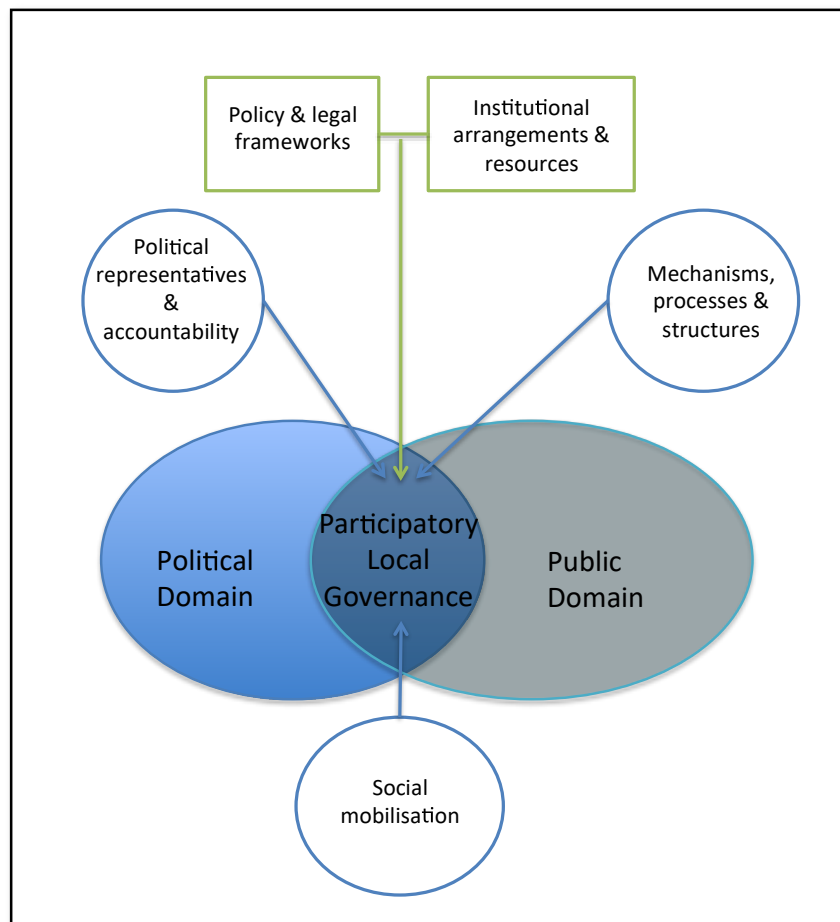


Figure 4-1 Schematic Model of Participatory Local Governance (Smith, 2007)

The intent of “participatory” governance is to strengthen accountability and responsiveness of policies and strategies by enabling civil society to have a voice in government processes. Institutional procedures may enable and facilitate engagement between local government, but it can also serve as a barrier (Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013; Taylor, 2007).

An example of municipalities aiding participation is having dedicated resources, like a Public Participation Officer (PPO), with the intent to support and encourage community participation. However, anecdotal evidence indicates that citizens are not likely to know the name of their ward councillor or how to contact them (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Managa, 2012; Smith, 2007). Municipalities should provide and receive feedback from their communities and ward councillors should facilitate communication channels between communities. Key legislation, processes and mechanisms for community participation are provided for in various documents, policy, and handbooks, and will be briefly outlined.

Table 4-1 uses Smith’s (2007 p. 15) policy, legislation and institutional frameworks summary that emphasises the value of community participation in governance and includes some additional frameworks.

Table 4-1: Summary of policy, legislative and institutional frameworks for community participation

Policy	Legislation	Regulations/ Guidelines	Programs	Institutions
White Paper on Local Government (1998)	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)	Guidelines for the establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees (2005)	Ward committee system	<b>National</b> DPLG: Public Participation and Empowerment Directorate
Batho Pele (1997)	Municipal Structures Act (1998)	Handbook for Ward Committees (2005)	Izimbizo	<b>Provincial</b> Departments of Local Government
White Paper on Water Services: Water is Life, Sanitation is Dignity (2003)	Municipal Systems Act (2000)	Handbooks of Community Development Workers in South Africa	Community based planning	<b>Local</b> Public Participation units, Speakers' offices and IDP units
Kwa-Zulu Natal Public Participation Framework (2006)	Municipal Demarcation Act (1998)	Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006)	Community Development workers	
Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation (2007)	Municipal Electoral Act (2000)	Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001)		
	Finance Management Act (2003)			
	Promotion of Access to Information Act (2000)			
	Municipal Property Rates Act (2004)			
	Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (2000)			
	Water Services Act (1997)			

(DPLG, n.d., 2005; DWAF, 1994; Republic of South Africa, 1998a, 2000, 2001; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013; Smith, 2007)

#### 4.1.1 White Paper on Local Government, 1998

In the opening address of the White Paper on Local Government, 1998, it is stated that apartheid gravely damaged the spatial, social and economic domains and local governments had to play an essential role in re-establishing local communities after 1995 (Republic of South Africa, 1998b; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013).

The White paper reviewed the state of local government (1998) and made recommendations that mandated local government to promote community participation and engagement. Section B of the White Paper, recommends that local government work with citizens and adopt a solutions-based approach to identify their needs and improve their quality of life. (Republic of South Africa, 1998b; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013; Rogerson, 2009)

In general, the White Paper deals with municipal institutional systems, providing tools for the formulation of the IDP (e.g. budgeting, performance monitoring and management, etc.) and working with citizens and other stakeholders. Councillors also need to encourage community participation in municipal planning and programming (Republic of South Africa, 1998b; Smith, 2007).

The White Paper requires municipalities to enhance community engagement at four levels (Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013):

1. **Voters** – to hold elected leaders accountable
2. **Citizens with voices** – to express their views during the various phases of policy development to ensure that the policies reflect the views of their communities
3. **Consumers and end-users** – as paying customers, to demand affordable services and effective services
4. **Organised partners** – to mobilise resources for development

It is important to note that the White Paper takes into account that municipalities are not independent of context, by stating, “Municipalities need to be aware of divisions within local communities and seek to promote the participation of marginalised and excluded groups in community processes” (Smith, 2007 p.7). The White Paper also warns that participatory processes can become impediments to development by stating that it is “important for local municipalities to find ways of structuring participation which enhance, rather than impede, the delivery process” (Smith, 2007 p.8).

Smith (2007) believes that participatory governance is under-defined in the White Paper. The ideas presented are underdeveloped and do not provide enough context for laws, such as the Municipal Structures Act or Municipal Systems Act to build on (Smith, 2007).

#### 4.1.2 Municipal Structures Act

The Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998) provides for the establishment of municipalities by prescribing requirements for categorising municipalities, establishing criteria and



definitions, providing division of functions, regulating internal systems as well as providing electoral systems (Republic of South Africa, 1998a).

Rivett, Taylor, Chair et al. (2013) argue that the Municipal Structures Act was a landmark piece of development legislation that held foresight for the country's structures and processes to engage and consult the citizenry. Only metropolitan and local municipalities of specific categories are eligible to have ward committees. This means that municipalities not within this description would be required to develop their own Public participation mechanisms (Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013).

Section 73(3) states that the object of ward committees is to enhance participatory democracy in local government and outlines important points related to ward committees (DPLG, n.d.; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013):

1. Ward committees serve as a vehicle for improving public participation and consultation regarding local government
2. A ward committee is a structure for communication between local government and its residents
3. Unless they are elected, ward committee members are volunteers from the community

Sebola (2017) notes that ward committees function as primary communication tools between the council and local communities. Still, the law makes it clear that the council has ultimate authority. Public participation around necessary council procedures or through ward committees means community consultation to benefit municipal councils. According to the Legislative Sector Support report, consultative processes describe and create consensus about the public's expectations (Sebola, 2017). This further implies that the interactive relationship between government and citizenry is that both can influence each other in a way that caters to the development of policies that satisfy the needs of the people (Republic of South Africa, 2013).

#### **4.1.3 Municipal Systems Act**

The Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) is also a crucial piece of legislation, which enacted the White Paper's participatory governance principles (Smith, 2007). Chapter 4 is dedicated to community participation and Section 16 (a)(i) states that municipalities should "encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the local community, including the preparation, implementation and review of its IDP" (Republic of South Africa, 2000 p.30).

Section 17 of Chapter 4 requires municipalities to implement systems that allows communities to contribute to decision-making processes and promote community participation. It also outlines how information should be communicated and legislates public notices, admission to public meetings and how the local community should be informed

(Republic of South Africa, 2000). Some of the key points of Section 17 are listed below (Education & Training Unit, 2007a; Republic of South Africa, 2000):

- The process to receive, process and consider petitions
- Procedures to notify the public of matters that council are being revised and the process to allow for public comment and consultation
- Hearings and public meeting procedures
- Sharing information frequently on matters regarding the status quo of the municipality through consultation with community organisation, community leaders as well as traditional leaders

Chapter 5 discusses the integrated development planning, provides the framework for the IDP and highlights the roles of the ward committees, development and community participation (Republic of South Africa, 2000; Smith, 2007).

Some key points to consider in the Act is Section 18(1-2), which specifies that a municipality must share information with its community concerning (Republic of South Africa, 2000):

- a) The mechanisms, processes, and procedures available that promote and enable community participation
- b) Community participation must be encouraged especially in matters that concern and affect the community
- c) The rights and duties of members of the local community
- d) Municipal governance, management, and development

When communicating the points mentioned above, the municipality must consider language preferences in the municipality, as well as the special needs of marginalised groups, like people who cannot read or write, women and other disadvantaged groups (Republic of South Africa, 2000; Smith, 2007). The communication mechanisms presented in this piece of legislation, are key facets of public participation since participation is not possible without information. However, the challenge of participation is reaching the more remote areas where communication strategies impose limits on residents who do not have the ability or the technology to access information. That is, not all published information is widely disseminated due to limited access to websites or print media that is not written in simple language and catered more towards a literate and educated audience (Houston, 2001; Republic of South Africa, 2013; Sebola, 2017; Tshoose, 2015).

#### **4.1.4 Batho Pele White Paper**

The Batho Pele or White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997), describes the policy framework and implementation approach for the transformation of public service delivery. The name Batho Pele means, "People first" and is an important theme throughout this piece of legislation (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). There are

eight principles of Batho Pele are described in Table 4-2 below (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997) .

Table 4-2: Principles of Batho Pele

Principle	Description
<b>1. Consultation</b>	Consultation with citizens on the level and quality of the public services to be implemented is important and where possible, citizens should also be given options to decide on their best outcome
<b>2. Service standards</b>	Citizens are entitled to know the level and quality of services that they will receive
<b>3. Access</b>	All citizens are entitled to equal access of services
<b>4. Openness and transparency</b>	Citizens are entitled to accurate information about the public services that they receive
<b>5. Courtesy</b>	Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration
<b>6. Information</b>	Information on how national and provincial departments are managed, the cost of projects or services and contact details should be provided to citizens to engage
<b>7. Redress</b>	It is appropriate to offer citizens an apology, a full explanation and an effective remedy, and to respond sympathetically and positively to their complaints when they fail to receive the service they demand
<b>8. Value for money</b>	Public services should be affordable and efficient

The Paper's section 4 discusses how to apply the principles. Section 4.5 emphasizes that information is one of the most potent tools a customer can use to exercise their right to good service (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). This Section also discusses how information should be provided in an assortment of media and languages to meet the differing needs of customers. This is essential to ensuring the inclusion of people previously disadvantaged by disability, language, geographical distance, etc. (Managa, 2012; Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., 2013; Smith, 2007).

#### 4.1.5 National Framework for Public Participation

The *National Framework for Public Participation* provides a policy framework for Public Participation in South Africa (DPLG, 2007 p. 6) and identifies the key legislation and policy. Furthermore, the document identifies resources and core municipal processes that by law,

require input from citizens and addresses the kinds of participation needed (e.g. “inform”, “consult” and “involve”) to formulate a public participation Policy that is locally contextual and complies to National legislation. The *National Framework for Public Participation* does recognise the challenges that municipalities face to develop their own Public Participation Policy and offers a basic outline to assist municipalities with fewer resources. This basic Public Participation Policy also ensures that the municipalities can comply to the minimum legislative requirements (DPLG, 2007).

#### **4.1.6 Other Legislation**

The other legislation referred to in Table 4-1, is not elaborated on further in this study, as they contribute to other municipal functions but do require information to be made public. An example of this is the Municipal Finance Management Act (46 of 2003) that stipulates that an annual report be compiled and published. The Promotion of Access to Information Act (2 of 2000) also governs community access to municipal information (Republic of South Africa, 2001, 2004).

## **4.2 Integrated Development Plans**

In terms of Section 25 and 26 of the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000), the IDP is a five-year strategic plan that focuses on the development of the municipality. This is a requirement for all municipalities (Republic of South Africa, 2000). The IDP is intended to have a bottom-up approach to planning processes where communities can provide input. The IDP aims to promote co-ordination between all three spheres of government (i.e. local, provincial and national) in a comprehensible plan to improve service delivery and use resources more effectively (Education & Training Unit, 2007b).

There are six main reasons why it is mandated that a municipality should have an IDP (DPLG, 1999, 2000; Hofisi, 2012).

1. *Effective use of resources* - The IDP determines how the municipality can use its resources to address urgent community needs.
2. *Speed up service delivery* – The least serviced areas are identified and informs the municipality where to direct its funds.
3. *It helps to attract and motivate additional funds* – Potential investors are more likely to support municipalities with well- defined development goals and strategic plans. This also encourages government departments to support these municipalities.
4. *Strengthens democracy* – All stakeholders can make informed decisions through active participation.
5. *Helps to overcome the legacy of Apartheid* – municipalities are used to deliver services to the areas that were previously marginalised and integrate urban and rural areas.
6. *Promotes coordination between all three spheres of government* – The different spheres of government are tasked to solve the development needs of the local area by joining forces and working together.

The Constitution provided a new progressive mandate for local government and consequently, the Local Government Transition Amendment Act (1996) introduced IDPs so that local government could reflect on and identify the local communities needs and prioritise this in municipal budgets (Harrison, 2006). The White Paper on Local Government (1998) credited the IDP as a key tool of “developmental local government” and connected the IDP and performance management, service delivery, participatory processes, etc. and also elaborates the objectives of the IDP (Harrison, 2006; Republic of South Africa, 2000). Municipal Structures Act (1998) establishes the roles, responsibilities, and functions of role players, (for example the role of the Municipal Executive Council (MEC)) in local and district municipalities. However, the Municipal Systems Act (2000) is the central legislation concerning the IDP as it specifies the minimum standards of an IDP and sets out the principles and processes to be followed (Republic of South Africa, 2000). Chapter 5 of the Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000) is dedicated to Integrated Development Planning and makes provisions for this framework (Section 27). Section 26 also states that the IDP must reflect the following fundamental components (Republic of South Africa, 2000 p. 38):

- “The municipal council's vision for the long-term development of the municipality with special emphasis on the municipality's most critical development and internal transformation needs.
- An assessment of the existing level of development in the municipality, which must include an identification of communities which do not have access to basic municipal services.
- The council's development priorities and objectives for its elected term, including its local economic development aims and its internal transformation needs.
- The council's development strategies which must be aligned with any national or provincial sectorial plans and planning requirements binding on the municipality in terms of legislation.
- A spatial development framework which must include the provision of basic guidelines for a land use management system for the municipality.
- The council's operational strategies.
- Applicable disaster management plans.
- A financial plan, which must include a budget projection for at least the next three years.
- The key performance indicators and performance targets determined in terms of section 41.”

Furthermore, the IDP must support the plans and strategies of national and provincial government (DPLG, 2003; Republic of South Africa, 2000). The provincial government department, responsible for local government, must support the IDP and is accountable for monitoring its implementation. Section 31(1) of the Systems Act also provides the general framework for the MEC (DPLG, 2006; Education & Training Unit, 2007b).

### **4.2.1 IDP Process and Role Players**

Before the planning process for the IDP can start, a Process Plan is drafted to ensure the process is adequately managed. The plan usually outlines the arrangements that will be implemented to oversee the planning process, when and how the public can participate as well as the structures that will be developed and implemented to ensure participation, the timeframe, the responsible people involved and how the process will be monitored (DPLG, 1999). The district council consults with all the local municipalities within its jurisdiction, to develop a framework to ensure that plans are coordinated and aligned within the spheres of government (DPLG, 2006). The rest of the IDP process takes place in five steps, namely (Education & Training Unit, 2007b; Harrison, 2006):

#### **Phase 1: Analysis**

Information on the existing conditions of the municipality and its available resources are collected during this phase and focuses on identifying needs so that the municipality can compile a complete assessment of the level of development. Ward councillors are instrumental in collecting this information by calling community meetings, to identify the needs in the local community and communicating this to the municipality.

#### **Phase 2: Strategies**

The focus of the municipality, during this phase is to find solutions to the problems identified in Phase 1. Public participation during this phase is encouraged through public debates, meeting with the communities and stakeholders and representation through the IDP representative forum at municipal level.

#### **Phase 3: Projects**

The municipality develops projects that can be implemented in answer to the strategies developed during phase 2. Participation is limited during this phase as stakeholders are only represented through representatives on project subcommittees.

#### **Phase 4: Integration**

The municipality must verify that the identified projects satisfy the objectives outlined in Phase 2 and that these projects align with all other municipal development plans and strategies. Participation takes place via the IDP representative forum. The ward councillor is responsible for obtaining input from the public to ensure that the projects reflect their needs and can also mobilise community action and response by ensuring feedback to the municipality.

## **Phase 5: Approval**

The municipality presents the IDP to the MEC to review. The MEC may adopt a draft IDP for public comment before the final version is approved. The ward councillor is responsible for ensuring public comment and input is incorporated into any amendments.

### **4.2.2 The IDP and Community Participation**

The IDP Representative Forum encourages communities and other stakeholders to participate in identifying priorities and community needs for decision-making processes of the IDP. This forum may include numerous role-players, for example, councillors, traditional leaders, municipal heads of departments, consultants, etc. (SALGA & GTZ, 2006).

- Executive council members
- Ward councillors
- Traditional leaders
- Ward committee representatives
- Department Heads and senior officials from municipal and government departments
- Representatives from organised stakeholder groups
- Resource people or advisors
- Activists representing underrepresented groups
- Community representatives (e.g. RDP Forum)

The purpose of this forum is to cultivate community participation by providing a platform for stakeholders to engage and foster communication between all parties with the municipality. This also plays a role in the planning and implementation process (Smith, 2007).

It is important to take note of the inclusion of traditional leaders in the representative forum, because in parts of the Eastern Cape, it is common practice that some wards fall under dual authorities – the traditional and local government systems.

## **4.3 Analysis of the Legal Requirements of Public Participation**

The Constitution provides a platform for implementing the fundamental function of public participation and consequently recognises its importance in South Africa. Legislation and policy also cite the Constitution as a foundation from which to build. Upon review of the legislation and policy in this Section, the same notion is echoed throughout – that citizens have a voice and can contribute to the shaping of policies, legislation, and strategies to reflect their needs.

However, gaps are also evident, as the Constitutional mandate does not clearly define public participation or any parameters from which to provide focused guidance for a Public participation Policy or Strategy (Scott, 2009). The Legislative Sector Support report (2013) reviewed policies and definitions of public participation and concluded that there is little mutual understanding in the South African Legislative sector. The report found that the definition of public participation places emphasis on the need for consultation rather than

establishing definitions that help to inform practices and mechanisms so that citizens perceive that their input can influence shape decision-making (Republic of South Africa, 2013). Smith (2007) agrees and adds the concepts have not been elaborated enough to provide context for subsequent laws to build on (Smith, 2007).

The Municipal Structures Act is the first piece of legislation that provides a framework of the structures and processes required to establish public consultation and participation through various communication channels (DPLG, 2006; Gauteng Legislature, 2012). But it also highlights that the ultimate decision-making power lies with the MEC. Public participation around important Council meetings means consultation, which reiterates the findings of the Legislative Sector Support report.

The Municipal Systems Act provides implementation mechanisms for citizens to partake in decision-making processes and elaborates how information should be communicated. The IDP document plays an integral part of the communication strategy for all municipalities. The Batho Pele White Paper also underlines the importance of information as a powerful tool in exercising citizen's rights and that information should be offered in a diverse array of media and languages to meet the needs of different people (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). The common mechanisms employed by all three spheres of government to ascertain that the public can engage in decision-making is by means of education, information dissemination; the ability to comment, criticise or make suggestions in both written (petitions) as well as verbal format (e.g. hearings, meetings, etc.) (Republic of South Africa, 2013). As previously mentioned, the communication mechanisms are essential principles of public participation since participation is not possible without information. But it is just as important that communication strategies are inclusive, catering to and accessible to all citizens (Houston, 2001; Republic of South Africa, 2013; Sebola, 2017; Tshoose, 2015).

The Framework for Public Participation report also considered a gap analysis and notes that "there are gaps between how systems are intended to work and how they operate" (Republic of South Africa, 2013 p. 37). Tshoose (2015) writes that participatory governance is only conceptual and that not all encounters between government and civil society are meaningful. Public participation is a means for the appearance of government "to be democratic", when decisions have already been settled (Bishop, 2009; Zikode, 2009) as cited in (Tshoose, 2015).

Sebola (2017) also infers the differences between the willingness to participate versus wanting to participate but being unable to, for example language barriers, geographical distance, lack of resources, etc. This idea again reflects Managa's (2012) argument that local government needs to realise that a "one-size fits all" approach is ineffective as different communities have different needs. (Davids, 2001; Managa, 2012; Perret et al., 2005; Sebola, 2017). This should be reflected in legislation and policy, where establishing the definition of public participation should conclude that government is directly accountable to its citizens (Tshoose, 2015). The consultation processes should establish consensus about what the



public should expect from government and allow for an interactive relationship between the state and citizenry where both can influence development policies in a solutions-based approach that caters to needs of the people (Republic of South Africa, 2013; Tshoose, 2015)

Furthermore, the process of communication in public participation is very important but involving people in decision-making is difficult if the communication tools provided are not effective in reaching the public. Sharing information is challenging and continues to be an issue not only in South Africa, but worldwide (Sebola, 2017). Lack of information on significant activities is frequently cited as the biggest problem in government participation mechanisms (Dukeshire & Thurlow, 2002) as cited by (Sebola, 2017), and meaningful public participation only happens when there is constant information sharing to the public in a way that promotes interaction between the state and citizens. (Sebola, 2017)

## Chapter 5

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### 5. Mechanisms and Practices for Public Participation

Public consultation takes place in the national and provincial domains of government, whilst public participation has a specific set of requirements for the local sphere and is the most keenly felt as municipalities are “closest to the people” (Buccus et al., 2008; SALGA & GTZ, 2006). Public participation is considered to be a way of holding local government more accountable and responsive (Kugonza & Mukobi, 2016).

There is a general acknowledgement from various government institutions that more consideration should be given to public participation. Numerous literature argues that even though public participation is central to South Africa’s democracy, with the existing policies, frameworks and institutional mechanisms in place, government institutions, municipalities and citizens, struggle to comply with their statutory obligations (Buccus et al., 2008; Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013; Sebola, 2017; Tshoose, 2015). In a paper, titled “*Community development and engagement with local governance in South Africa*”, Buccus et al., (2008) discuss the framework and legislation required for public participation in municipal procedures, using cases from Kwa-Zulu Natal, and examine the actual practices that occur. The paper also highlights the experiences the community had in attempting to engage in developmental planning processes with the municipalities. (Buccus et al., 2008). “Public service has committed itself to being more responsive, accountable and transparent in implementing government policy. Public participation is limited to forms of consultation, usually around needs rather than any real empowerment in decision-making or implementation” (Buccus et al., 2008, pg. 299) and is treated largely as a ceremonial exercise or a formality in a process of governance (Buccus et al., 2008; Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013; Sebola, 2017; Smith, 2009). Mass community meetings or Imbizos and “road shows” are occasionally perceived as endorsements of pre-designed programs or plans. Although these forms of engagement draw crowds and are addressed by high-level officials, it does not necessarily translate to meaningful engagement and does not address the resolution of outstanding grievances, development challenges and policy options (Buccus et al., 2008; Sebola, 2017; Smith, 2009).

In “*Barriers to Active Citizenship in Local Governance*”, Ngamlana & Poswayo (2013) commented about how governments and societal groups found it challenging to retain the participation of citizens in decision-making processes and thus the implementation of mechanisms to promote greater citizen involvement and improved information flow needs to be fostered (Kimemia, 2009) as cited in (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Considering the structural and developmental challenges that South Africa faces, one issue that is constantly highlighted in literature, is the need for civic education to prepare citizens of their roles and

obligations (Finkel & Howard, 2005; Galston, 2001) as cited in (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Ngamlana & Poswayo (2013) elaborate further and state that ward committees were ill prepared to contribute to local governance and eventually these structures were used for politicking and failed to fulfil their intended purpose.

This chapter also forms part of the literature review and seeks to identify the existing mechanisms and practices for community participation.

## **5.1 Processes and Mechanisms for Participatory Governance**

This section reviews and discusses the key processes, structures, and mechanisms of participatory governance in South Africa. As previously mentioned, the Municipal Systems Act was a central piece of legislation in comprehending the White Paper of Local Government's objectives, as it dedicated the entire Chapter 4 to community participation. The Act describes a set of mechanisms and processes that enhances community participation, but also mandates that citizens must participate in any public consultation and decision-making to prepare and review the IDP, municipal performance management and other concerns like service delivery (DPLG, 2005; Republic of South Africa, 1998a; Smith, 2007). Community participation relies on specific mechanisms and channels of engagement facilitated by local municipalities. Some of these channels and mechanisms will be briefly discussed below.

### **5.1.1 Ward Councillors**

A ward is geographically defined municipal boundary area. A ward councillor is the elected official of that specific ward or community and plays a key role within the structure of public participation, as they can mobilise the community for action and response when required and are usually the first point of contact. Ward councillors also help to identify community needs and report back to the municipality to make sure that these needs are correctly reflected in the IDP or proposed project, as well as discuss and inform the community regarding municipal services and development programmes (Education & Training Unit, 2007a; SALGA & GTZ, 2006).

The ward committee must be chaired by the elected ward councillor, as required by Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000), as this enhances democratic participation in local government (Republic of South Africa, 2000; SALGA & GTZ, 2006).

### **5.1.2 Ward Committees**

In 2001, ward committees were introduced as the primary means for community participation in local governance. Ward committees comprise of a ward councillor and approximately ten other elected people who serve voluntarily for a period of five years (Smith, 2007). Ward Councillors are responsible for arranging meetings and setting the agendas to discuss issues and concerns as well as provide feedback on municipal policies (DPLG, 2005; SALGA & GTZ, 2006). The ward councillor's role in principal is to bridge the gap between public, administrative and political structures of municipalities by being actively involved in

community events and responsible for managing queries and grievances in the ward as well as resolving disputes and referring unsettled disputes to the municipality (Tshoose, 2015). The ward committee helps the ward councillor consult people, identify needs and interests within the community and inform the community about their rights. (Local Government Action, n.d.) The ward committee cannot make any decisions on its own, as its main function is as an advisory panel that can put forward recommendations to the MEC (Smith, 2007).

Table 5-1 lists the various policy and legislation used to identify the roles and functions of ward committees (DPLG, 2003, 2007; Education & Training Unit, 2007b; Republic of South Africa, 2000; SALGA & GTZ, 2006):

**Table 5-1: Roles and functions of ward committees outlined by policy and legislation**

<b>Policy/ legislation</b>	<b>Function</b>
<b>Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 (Section 74)</b>	The local municipality delegates Ward committees' duties and powers. The ward committee is tasked in determining local needs of the community and can advise on any issue to the ward councillor.
<b>Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998 (Section 72)</b>	Ward committees are meant to improve community participation and consultation and is a structured communication channel between municipalities and communities.
<b>Guidelines for the establishment and Operation of Municipal Ward Committees (2005)</b>	Ward committees serve as a channel of communication for information sharing between the municipality and communities and assist ward councillors in identifying the needs of the community.
<b>Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation (2007)</b>	Ward committees have a more defined role in municipal processes, like review and participating in developing the IDP, municipal budget, performance management and service delivery.
<b>Handbook for Municipal Councillors (2006)</b>	This document identifies a range of conditions for a functioning ward committee, e.g. ensuring that related information is provided to communities in an understandable format (local languages, non- technical, etc.) and providing feedback on participation processes is provided.

### **5.1.3 Community Development Workers**

Community Development Workers (CDWs) are public officials who work within communities with the primary aim to ensure that residents can access government services (all spheres of government). CDWs are also tasked with addressing the lack of information, improving communication and knowledge between local government and communities, identifying and assessing community needs and facilitate Public participation (DPLG, 2005, 2007; Education & Training Unit, 2007a; SALGA & GTZ, 2006).

The CDW's role may seem similar to that of the ward councillor, except that the CDW is a public official, and the ward councillor is an elected representative for the community. The two public participation facilitators should work closely together to resolve issues and the ward committee can also gain better access to all three spheres of government through the CDW (SALGA & GTZ, 2006). The CDW plays a supportive function to ward committees by making sure that the ward committees and communities are knowledgeable about government services. CDWs also assist with identifying community needs, support Community Based Planning and help to implement projects and activities that benefit the community, as well as provide technical support to the ward committees in monitoring and evaluating projects (Buccus et al., 2008; DPLG, 2007).

### **5.1.4 Community Liaison Officials**

The Community Liaison Officer is often employed by the municipality to liaise with the community and also forms part of outreach activities and public participation programmes (Education & Training Unit, 2007a).

### **5.1.5 IDP Representative Forum**

The IDP representative forum is a structure mandated by the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) and encourages inclusive community participation in the IDP processes between all stakeholders for discussion and decision-making. The forum usually includes ward councillors, traditional leaders, municipal department heads, community representatives, specialist advisors, etc. (Smith, 2007).

The discussion IDP and its processes was previously discussed in Section 4.2 .

### **5.1.6 Izimbizo**

The Izimbizo programme was first introduced in 2000, as a means for government to communicate its strategies and plans to the public and provide a platform where citizens could raise issues and concerns. This communication method is probably the most widely criticised as being a public relations exercise. But, this method does offer the rare opportunity for citizens to gain direct access to high-level authority figures (Champanis, et al., 2013; City of Cape Town, 2009; Smith, 2007).

### **5.1.7 Other Methods of Engagement**

Several municipalities host mayoral listening or “council meets the people” campaigns or have introduced project steering committees. The most frequent and most accessible means to communicate to the public are through the media, such as use of local newspapers, leaflets, posters, community radio or websites. The metro municipalities have also implemented and integrated the use of social media like Twitter, Facebook or sending SMSes to communicate various municipal processes or solicit feedback from the public (DPLG, 2003; Harrison, 2006; Tissington, 2011).

## **5.2 Accountability and Information Sharing**

The responsibility to ensure that basic services are delivered lies with national Government and this function includes a performance-monitoring role, while local government and other organisations are responsible for implementation and operation. Performing these functions, at various levels, is not possible without adequate information (DWAF, 1994).

This section discusses concepts about information sharing and accountability and considers the provisions made in policy and legislation.

### **5.2.1 Accessibility of Information**

Various legislation, such as the Constitution, Municipal Systems Act, Municipal Finance Management Act, requires municipalities to engage with the public on a variety of topics (DPLG 2007).

Section 4.5.1 of the Batho Pele White Paper stresses that “information is one of the most powerful tools at the customer’s disposal in exercising his or her right to good service.”(Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997 p.13) This concept is also echoed in Section D of the White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation, which refers to monitoring and information (DWAF, 1994).

Government departments at all three spheres are required to provide the most recent information about the services that they provide and the way such information is presented and communicated should be determined during consultation processes (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; Republic of South Africa, 1998b). The Batho Pele White Paper, White Paper on Local Governance and National Framework for Public participation agree that information must be easily accessible, free of jargon, easy to understand and available in a variety of media and languages, not just written form. This is to accommodate the needs of different customers and ensure inclusion of people who cannot read or write, have disabilities or live far away (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; DPLG, 2007; Republic of South Africa, 1998b). The National Framework for Public participation also recommends that policy be implemented to determine which newspapers are used to ensure reach to all sectors of the community (DPLG, 2007).

However, in practice, the opposite is often experienced as Tshoose (2015) writes: “Access to information is inadequate and uneven, as are the capacities of citizens and officials to understand the technical language used to present information” (p.18). Meeting performance targets and service delivery requirements seems to be the main goal with public participation as a mere afterthought and mechanisms are inclined to seek community input into an already devised plan (Buccus et al., 2008; Tshoose, 2015). Community members perceive public participation as a presentation of predetermine programmes or decisions for partial feedback or information sharing only (Buccus & Hicks, 2006) as cited by (Tshoose, 2015).

## 5.2.2 Encouraging Public Participation

South African Governance structures are based on the premise that governance is improved when information is readily available and discussed through appropriate public participation processes. Municipalities are therefore required to develop systems that suit the local context and fulfil the requirements of public participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making processes. The effectiveness of public participation is measured by the extent to which the community can influence decisions made within the municipality (DPLG, 2007).

The *SALGA Guideline on Enhancing Public Participation* requires all municipalities to develop a *Public Participation Policy* that is adapted to each municipality’s local conditions, and accounts for the specific needs of its people (people who cannot read or write, etc.), whilst adhering to national legislation (SALGA, 2013). The *National Framework on Public Participation* considers the public participation mechanisms and processes prescribed by the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000), along with other legislation and policy (like the Municipal Finance Management Act, White Papers, etc.) and stipulates the minimum basic requirements for the municipal Public Participation Policy (DPLG, 2007; Republic of South Africa, 2000; SALGA, 2013). The four components of a Public Participation Policy are:

1. Communication Strategy
2. Ward Committee
3. IDP Representative Forums
4. Stakeholder Forums

### 5.2.2.1 Communication Strategy

According to the National Framework on Public Participation and Batho Pele Paper, communication is the most simplistic form of public participation between councillors, the municipality, and the community. Communication is essentially sharing information about municipal issues and decisions made with the community, amongst these three role-players. Communication should be two-directional, the municipality and councillors should inform the community and the community in turn should inform the municipality of its concerns, to render decision-making more responsive and informed (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; DPLG, 2007).

Although the Municipality Systems Act (32 of 2000) outlines the mechanisms and procedures for community participation, as well as the rights and responsibilities of the various role-players, it does not always specify who is responsible to assume responsibility for engagement and coordination and this is often left to the municipality's discretion (Republic of South Africa, 2000). Participation processes and functions should be institutionalised so that citizens have access to the information about municipal matters and are able to participate in them (DPLG, 2007). Three communication "tools" emerge upon further reflection of the Batho Pele Paper and the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) that obliges a municipality to *inform*, *consult* or *involve* the community, which is also dependent on the nature of the engagement activity (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; Republic of South Africa, 2000). The National Framework on Public Participation provides clarifications for these communication tools:

- To ***inform*** is considered as the circulating of information between councillors, officials, and the community. It is a one-way communication channel and considered the most passive form of engagement, as no input is anticipated from the community. Examples of informing the community is public notices at municipal offices, announcements via radio, newspapers, loud-hailing, municipal website, etc. (DPLG, 2007).
- To ***consult*** is a two-way communication form that seeks to obtain feedback from the community once information has been shared. Examples of consultation is public meetings or ward committee meetings regarding budgets and IDP processes and can also include toll free numbers or websites that allows the community to respond. The Batho Pele Paper articulates that all spheres of government should consult regularly about the service provision as this provides citizens with an opportunity to influence decisions about service delivery (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; DPLG, 2007).
- To ***involve*** is considered a higher tier of two-way communication between the community and the municipality, which requires an active relationship. This type of participation process is more issue focused and structured that requires continuous feedback from both role-players. An example of this is the development and review of the IDP (DPLG, 2007).

The Communication Strategy consists of the following:

### **1. Public Participation Principles**

Developing a culture of participatory governance requires a shift in attitude toward local governance. This means that for local government, public participation is not merely information sharing, but forming a partnership with local communities and communities also realise the constraints that municipalities face. To facilitate this



mutual understanding, municipalities are required to educate citizens in the principles of Public Participation (DPLG, 2007).

## **2. Citizen's Participation Charter**

The main purpose of a Citizen's Participation Charter is to outline the rights and duties that citizens have regarding participating in their local governance and should be updated annually. The Charter includes aspects like information about the municipality, what community participation is, how community participation works, information on how to make queries and complaints as well as providing contact details for the ward councillor, ward committees, etc. The Charter should be distributed through ward committees and be readily available at municipal offices (DPLG, 2007).

## **3. Community Complaints Management System**

The Batho Pele Paper (1997) prescribes a Community Complaints Management System under its Principles of Redress. The Batho Pele Paper recognises that public servants see complaints as a tedious exercise with no value added when issues cannot be resolved. Many departments do not collect the data to identify problem areas and complaints are only counted when lodged through formal channels. However, many residents hesitate to use these as the process can be daunting and time consuming (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). It is therefore important for municipalities to be cognisant of how complaints are managed and responded to, especially criticisms over poor service delivery, as this does affect perceptions of good governance (DPLG, 2007).

Both the Batho Pele Paper and National Framework on Public Participation stipulate requirements for the Complaints Management System, namely (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; DPLG, 2007):

- The Complaints Management System should be accessible, easy to use and publish information for the public to lodge complaints, like a telephone number or department contact details. This information can be published on the municipal website, in all municipal offices and major documents such as the Citizens' Participation Charter. Provision should also be made for face-to-face interaction where someone can report a complaint in person, in their preferred language.
- Clear protocols should be developed to define the responsible person or departments to respond to the type of complaint, a time frame within which to respond, tracking mechanisms for the public to keep track of their complaint and a basic level of information must be provided in response to each complaint lodged. The municipality should be cognisant that longer response

times yield more agitated customers. When there is an unavoidable delay, the customer should be updated on any progress or be informed on when an outcome can be expected.

- Standing rules of order should be developed that details the management of complaints.
- All complaints should be fully and impartially investigated and should have review and feedback mechanisms incorporated so that mistakes can be avoided. Citizens may feel nervous to report issues and thus their confidentiality should be protected.
- Procedures to manage complaints should be published throughout the municipality and municipal staff should be trained to correctly manage complaints and recognise what actions should be taken.

#### 4. Citizen's Satisfaction Surveys

Satisfaction Surveys are used to evaluate municipal performance in key areas like service delivery and the responsiveness of municipal staff and officials to the public (DPLG, 2007). There are many communication options that municipalities can adopt, and these aspects form part of their communication strategy. Some municipalities may use social media platforms, e.g. Twitter and Facebook, to engage with their residents (Rivett et al., 2018).

### 5.2.3 Information to Facilitate Decision-Making

The White Paper on Local Government states that municipalities can build favourable social conditions to development. In particular, “ensuring that knowledge and information are acquired and managed in a way that promotes continuous learning, and which anyone can access easily and quickly.” (Republic of South Africa, 1998b p. 26) Section C of the Paper, entitled *Cooperative Government*, provides a framework of intergovernmental relations. Intergovernmental relations serve strategic purposes, namely (Republic of South Africa, 1998b p. 37):

- “To promote and facilitate decision-making
- To coordinate and align priorities, budgets, policies and activities across interrelated functions and sectors
- To ensure a smooth flow of information within government, and between government and communities with the objective to enhance implementing policy and programmes
- The prevention and resolution of conflicts and disputes”

The White Paper also stresses the importance that oversight and monitoring plays in local government for informed decision-making. This can only be achieved if institutions utilise accurate and relevant information (Republic of South Africa, 1998b). For example, national and provincial government both have monitoring roles, which should also support that of

local government and help to determine where municipal capacity is needed. This can only be done effectively if the information is reliable and will enable national and provincial government to provide the necessary support or intervene in municipal functions when necessary. “Good monitoring and information systems are required to indicate potential problems before they become crises, so that municipalities are able to make their own corrective measures where problems arise”(Republic of South Africa, 1998b p. 42) Citizens are more inclined to influence decisions and exercise their rights at the local level of government, since they have greater incentives to do so (Republic of South Africa, 1998b).

Additionally, the White Paper considers the issue of external reporting and how municipalities cannot meet the information needs of their constituents. The Paper also outlines the challenges of dispersed information across various government departments, water boards, consultants and non-government organisations (NGOs), which is not readily accessible and there is also concern over duplicated data sets (Republic of South Africa, 1998b). The Paper then concludes that municipalities need to address this issue by presenting information in a credible and understandable manner that allows citizens and communities to assess information presented in the municipality’s IDP (Hamann & Tuinder, 2012; Stats SA, 2015).

#### **5.2.4 Information Culture**

There is consensus that information technology and information can be used to improve efficiency, makes information dissemination easier and more accessible. Municipalities need to be able to understand, analyse and interpret information collected to leverage the data that allows them to achieve their overarching objective of high-quality service delivery and improved performance. Through the exchange and availability of information, citizens can participate in municipal decision-making processes by exercising a degree of control. However, despite investments in information systems and the focus on technology, access to better computers or communication channels does not readily translate to better information environments (Davenport, 1997).

A paper published in 2014 by P Svärd, entitled “*Information culture in three municipalities and its impact on information management amidst E-Government development*” considered the information culture in three municipalities in Europe and studied the impact that the work environment has on information management. The municipalities studied in Svärd’s paper were grappling with a hybrid system of paper and technology, like the study sites of this research, and is described in more detail in Chapter 6. Svärd (2014) considers “information as a resource that gives the organisation a competitive edge if well leveraged” (Svard, 2014 pg. 49) which ties to the notion of the value chain and IVC discussed in Section 2.3.1. A correlation between business success and information culture is theorised and the paper also highlights the challenges like lack of information management skills, collaboration, and insufficient information management systems, etc. that are caused by municipal employees. The central argument of the paper stresses that municipal employees play a significant role in effective information management simply by the way that information is created,

managed, used and valued within the municipalities they work for and that the tools are not vital to performance but the training and acquiring the necessary skills to perform.

Svärd also highlights the follow aspects of information culture (Svard, 2014):

- 1) Information management is meant to allow the organisations to progress and compete in its sector.
- 2) Information should be managed to enable the organisation to control internal processes and operations that reinforce rules and policies.
- 3) Information management seeks to foster communication, participation and distinguish identity.
- 4) Information is managed to nurture creativity and innovation.

The paper concludes that there is a positive association between a positive information culture and successful business performance where the management of information yields accountability and transparency required for the implementation of all the organisational processes (Svard, 2014).

### **5.3 Challenges to Good Governance**

The literature presented above shows that public participation plays a pivotal role in democratic South Africa, as it is embedded in legislation policy and various mechanisms have been developed to aid the processes. However, many researchers have highlighted some of the weaknesses of public participation. Good governance should be a pillar of democracy (Tshoose, 2015) as the mere idea of public participation plays a significant part in the progress of an open, participatory, accountable and transparent governance model (Taylor, 2007). The characteristics of good governance are discussed in the beginning of Chapter 4.

The barriers to public participation hamper progress in the realm of good governance and thus, these challenges have been identified and discussed in this section.

#### **5.3.1 Institutional Capacity**

In 1994, 12 million South Africans did not have access to basic water services (Hemson, 2004b; Nnadozie, 2013) and 20 million were without adequate sanitation services (DWA, 2002). This water and sanitation backlog has been reduced since 1994, with South Africa attaining the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for “halving the proportion of the population without sustainable access to basic water and sanitation, in 2008” (DWA, 2013 p. 24). The growing backlog was attributed to the increasing number of households or a decline in services (Nnadozie, 2011). Using the backlog as an indication, there is noticeable disparity in access to basic services across different demographic and geographical segments of the country where the backlogs were “more severe in poorer black rural areas than they were in the mainly white and more affluent urban areas” (DWA 2004 p. 4). The “poor are unevenly distributed by province” (Torres 2000 p. 2) and Gool (2013) remarks that rural areas are notably impoverished and, thus service delivery would expectantly be disparate. The

Apartheid system had already placed some municipalities at a disadvantage where they needed to catch up to supply services at the standard and quality decided upon by the new Constitution.

The Municipal Services Act was passed in 2000 and defined how local government should provide services to its citizens. In the instance where municipalities could not deliver services, this Act also permitted municipalities to enter into contractual agreements with external service providers to assist in delivering services, on the municipalities' behalf. But, there are still service delivery backlogs and this substantiates the lack of capacity and lack of skills required to render services (Hemson, 2004a; Managa, 2012; Nnadozie, 2013).

The lack of institutional capacity is not only a barrier to good governance but has also been identified as a barrier to active citizenry. While legislation mandates citizens to participate in local governance, some of the mechanisms provided by the municipality do not necessarily deliver on its intentions. By focusing only on ward committees as the legitimate means of engaging with local government, it limits the establishment of citizen-led organizations. Even well-functioning ward committee systems do not reach the whole community and do not always represent the interests of all citizens. Consequently, civil society has become more proactive to engage with government (e.g. interest groups, citizen-based initiatives, etc.). Local government should recognise these initiatives as alternative means within which citizens can participate e.g. rate payer's association, social movements, etc. (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Buccus et al., (2008) agrees and adds that due to the lack of policy guidelines on how municipalities should utilise ward committees, there is no clear understanding of how ward committees can contribute to municipal development planning and decision-making.

To organise the states legislated frameworks, citizens should focus on increasing local government's capacity to effectively engage in these new spaces. That is, qualified and skilled officials placed in the relevant positions would be beneficial (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Municipalities acknowledge that there is room to improve but attribute their shortcomings to the lack of resources (equipment, skilled staff, etc.), support from national and provincial government, and training and support to implement new changes. Poorly informed and highly technical plans developed by consultants, which officials struggle to understand, are difficult to implement confidently (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Managa, 2012; Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013).

Policy documents do emphasise the importance and value of active citizenship in municipal decision-making. Municipal councillors and officials acknowledge the importance of participation and meaningful engagement, however, few mechanisms have been identified or are poorly developed and Public participation practices are left to the municipality's discretion and may not even exist in some municipalities (DPLG, 2007; Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013; Smith, 2007).

### 5.3.2 Limited Economic Base - Lack of Finances and Other Resources

Based on the Auditor-General's 2016 report, most of South Africa's local municipalities have a constrained revenue base as they run operations ineffectively, lack the ability to collect debt, have key positions vacant and struggle to attract the requisite skills needed to ensure effective management and oversight (AGSA, 2016; Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). A poor financial situation results in the inability to attract and appoint skilled professionals to key vacancies.

Considering the Auditor-General's report, it is also noted that public participation forms the smallest portion in the municipal budget, whilst the Framework for Public Participation is still to be properly implemented across all municipalities (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013).

Afesis-corplan conducted a study across seven municipalities in the Eastern Cape and determined the true cost of effective public participation. The study found that to aid public participation processes, the municipalities supported citizens by arranging transport to central venues, in wards that are made up of little rural villages, so that citizens could attend meetings and participate (Afesis-corplan, 2012) as cited by (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Officials confessed that in these municipalities, more emphasis was placed on complying to legislation than enabling effective participation and that in some meetings, the municipalities would share pre-drafted plans instead of gaining input on the communities' developmental needs. Poswayo (2012) surmises that a top-down communication approach was used which is only aimed at complying with legislation (Poswayo, 2012) as cited in (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013).

Many municipal officials dispute this idea by arguing that they lack the time, resources and budget constraints to develop proper public participation mechanisms and practices as most municipalities do not have adequate staff dedicated to champion public participation programmes. However, these resources are included in municipal organograms but there are no policy guidelines which indicates the number of personnel a municipality should employ or what their duties would demand. Most municipalities use existing staff to fulfil this requirement, which adds to someone's job portfolio (Buccus et al., 2008; Hemson, 2004a).

### 5.3.3 Skills and Education

Poor administration of government resources is indicative of skills shortage in both project and financial management. "Lack of expertise has left many municipalities inadequately staffed, resulting in deteriorating service delivery over the years and leaving many communities with inadequate access [to basic services]." (Managa 2012 p. 3)

Education is another challenge that rural municipalities face as a large demographic leaves school early to pursue employment opportunities and exacerbates the skills shortage issue within the communities (Hemson, 2004b; Nnadozie, 2013).

This view is echoed by the government's inability to make information available to all citizens, regardless of literacy levels. This leaves a portion of the population out of the political space and its processes (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013; Perret et al., 2005; Rivett et al., 2018).

### **5.3.4 Lack of Community Engagement**

People are often frustrated by the disparity between the services they receive and what they expect (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). Poor communication has been cited as the biggest catalyst of service delivery protests (Heese & Allan, 2008) as cited in (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Jain's (2010) study, *“Community Protests in South Africa: Trends, Analysis and Explanations”* traced the occurrences of protests in the country and shows the increased number of protests over a five-year period (from 2004 to 2009). In 2012, DWA also reported on the 71 water related protests that occurred (DWA, 2013). In Green & Smith's (2005) study, it was found that poor quality of service, delayed response to problems, poor channels of communication, threats of disconnection for non-payment, etc. contributed to increased household dissatisfaction with municipalities (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Green & Smith, 2005). Protesters are frustrated by lack of involvement in local decision-making and a lack of accountability from local officials and councillors who are supposed to represent them (Managa, 2012). “The right to demand an efficient local government” (ANC, 2000 p. 2) is encouraged by various government policies and the Constitution, where citizens have the right to partake in any public consultation and decision-making process in local government, e.g. ward meeting, forums, etc. Even though consultation does take place, it is minimal and co-decision and actual partnership rarely occurs (Perret et al., 2005; Reynell et al., 2012).

Local municipalities may lack the skills to organise participation, however, compared to their urban counterparts, rural areas lack an active civil society. This can be attributed to “hidden” social barriers of marginalised groups which are attributed to living in remote areas, transportation issues, lack of participation by women, the youth and the elderly (Davids, 2001) as cited by (Perret et al. 2005 p. 15). As a consequence, participation sometimes manifest in protests because of inadequate communication, poor service delivery, and ineffective participatory policies (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Nnadozie, 2013; Reynell et al., 2012; J. Smith, 2009).

Another barrier to participation is the socio-political dynamics within rural communities. Green & Smith (2005) comment that households in their study were apprehensive to demand better services from municipalities since most felt that they had no right to exercise, based on low levels of participation and non-payment of bills. Dissatisfaction in service delivery is closely linked to low-levels of community engagement. Green & Smith's (2005) surveyed 314 households, and found that citizens were willing to be more proactive if they had access to certain information, e.g. free basic water, tariff structures, how water meters worked, etc. (Green & Smith, 2005; Smith, 2009).

Ngamlana & Poswayo (2013) makes the case that active citizenry is limited by the presence of intermediary organisations, especially in communities with low literacy levels and high unemployment rates, local officials tend to prefer engaging with intermediary (community based) organisations rather than with local citizens. Officials may find it more convenient to deal with intermediary organisations and do not need to explain technical jargon of plans, the intricacies of municipal processes or budget constraints (Helliker, 2010) as cited by (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). As a consequence, communities rely on obtaining information from a middle-man, which deprives citizens of a chance to engage with local government directly by asking questions or raising their concerns and hold their elected representatives accountable. (Vellem, 2012) as cited by (Ngamlana & Poswayo, 2013). Ngamlana & Poswayo (2013) further states that although intermediary organisations do play a key function in bridging the gap between local government and communities, they should place more emphasis on empowering communities to engage with the state directly. Tshoose (2015) says that local government must rethink strategies for public participation and that existing community structures should be included to provide input into government structures, e.g. ratepayers associations, traditional leaders, religious bodies, etc. Tshoose (2015) and Ngamlana & Poswayo (2013) also make the case that citizens need to be educated to participate actively in promoting their developmental needs and that the mechanisms for Public participation needs to improve to accommodate a multiplicity of people from all areas. These mechanisms need to account for the disparities that exist amongst the marginalised and this includes providing special measures to accommodate people with disabilities, supplying simplified information to accommodate different languages, etc. (Tshoose, 2015).

Sebola (2017) makes a case for considering alternative communication tools and practices to improve engagement and hence public participation by arguing that due to low literacy levels, some citizens will continue to struggle, but the current generation would prefer to use technology to engage with government. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, etc. can be used effectively, but it seems that governments are far from embracing and implementing these technologies. (Maarek, 2014; Robert & Namusonge, 2015) as cited by (Sebola, 2017).

According to an infoDEV (2012) survey, a large portion of the lower-income bracket has never engaged with government electronically. To encourage community engagement, government needs to be more responsive in their e-government initiatives and measuring performance is necessary for providing effective service delivery.



## Chapter 6

### 6. Description of the Study Sites

This section forms part of the literature review of the study and will contextualise the municipalities that were studied by providing some background on the geography, the people, the economy and access to services.



Figure 6-1: Map of South Africa and the nine provinces (Sartorius, et al., 2011)

South Africa has nine provinces with an estimated population of 55 million people. The Eastern Cape was formed in 1994 to incorporate the Eastern Province and two former Homelands, Transkei and Ciskei. These former homelands were afforded very little economic and infrastructural development under Apartheid's policy and this legacy has resulted in spatial inequalities that are still present (Hamann & Tuinder, 2012). Migration has played an important process in shaping the human landscape of the Eastern Cape, the second largest province, covering an area of 168, 966 km<sup>2</sup> and home to approximately 6.9 million people

(Rivett, Taylor, Maphazi, et al., 2013). According to Hamann & Tuinder (2012), the province has the highest rate of permanent out-migration, in comparison to any other province, and to the three main economic hubs of South Africa. With little prospects in rural Eastern Cape, people have been moving from this province to nearby towns or cities with the perception that there are better prospects, which has resulted in peri-urban sprawl and informal settlements (Hamann & Tuinder, 2012; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015).

Sarah Baartman District (at the time of the study known as Cacadu). Is the largest of the six District Municipalities in the province and comprises of nine local municipalities. Kouga Local Municipality, Kou-Kamma Local Municipality and Ndlambe Local Municipality were selected as the study sites and are all located in the Sarah Baartman District. These sites are all classed as Category B municipalities and were selected based on assessing the municipal index, meeting the criteria of being a rural environment, interviews with municipal officials and willingness to participate in the research (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015; Stats SA, 2011a).

The locations of the study sites are indicated in Figure 6-2 below. This chapter will provide a background to each municipality and describe some of the challenges that they face.



Figure 6-2: Map of South Africa with study sites (Source: Google Earth, n.d.)

## 6.1 Ndlambe Local Municipality



Figure 6-3 Location of Ndlambe Local Municipality

Figure 6-3 is a map of Ndlambe LM, which is situated along the Eastern Coastal zone and is well known for its unspoiled coastal and river areas, as well as its diverse vegetation. Ndlambe is largely rural with agriculture and tourism, as the main economic activities. It is comprised of the following towns: Alexandria, Port Alfred, Bathurst, Boknesstrand, Cannon Rocks and Kenton On Sea (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015).

### 6.1.1 People

Ndlambe LM serves an estimated population of 63, 000 people, of which 78% of the population is black African, 14.2% are white, 7.3% are coloured and 0.5% are Indian or other ethnicities. Xhosa is the most dominant language spoken in the area with 78% of speakers, followed by English (12.2% of speakers) and 11.7% of Afrikaans speakers as their first language (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015; Stats SA, 2011a).

During peak holiday season, the area experiences an estimated 33, 000 additional residents to the area, which places tremendous pressure on available services and infrastructure. During the pineapple and chicory harvest, the area also experiences an influx of migration workers. (Stats SA, 2011a).

## 6.1.2 Economy and Education

Ndlambe experiences a relatively high unemployment rate of approximately 30% where a large portion of households are headed by females (about 43%) (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2012).

The level of education is also low with most residents having completed some primary education, only about 20% of the population having completed Grade 12 and less than 10% achieving some form of higher education (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015). The literacy rates are estimated to be 54%, which is below the provincial average of 60% (Stats SA, 2011a).

## 6.1.3 Access to Services

### 6.1.3.1 Water

Ndlambe LM is appointed as both a WSA and WSP and thus operates and maintains all water supply systems, except for the Amatola Water Board supply footprint. There are six water supply schemes, which supply drinking water to the communities within Ndlambe, however communities in Bathurst and Trappes Valley still rely on rainwater and private boreholes and tankers transport water to the informal settlements in Alexandria (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015). Only 83.3% of the population has access to piped water, either within the dwelling or from a yard tap. 8.2% rely on a rainwater tank, 3.8% use boreholes and 1.8% make use of water tanks. Other water sources are water vendors, rivers or dams, etc. (Stats SA, 2011a).

### 6.1.3.2 Sanitation

All sewerage systems are operated and maintained by Ndlambe LM. Water-borne sewerage has been set as the minimum level of service to be provided, which places strain on available water resources. There are five wastewater treatment works, which services the communities. Several communities utilise conservancy tanks or septic sewerage systems as the main sanitation service as water-borne sanitation is not readily available. The municipality provides a sewerage removal service using a fleet of sanitation tankers (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2015). Only 35.5% of the population has access to a flush toilet (connected to sewerage system), 25% have access to sanitation through a flush toilet connected to a septic tank, 20.6% use a pit latrine and the other 15.8% use other forms of sanitation like a chemical toilet or bucket toilet (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017; Stats SA, 2011a).

### 6.1.3.3 Access to Internet

Although about 80% of the population residing in Ndlambe LM own a cell phone, 70% of the population does not have access to the Internet, whilst about 11% of the population can access the Internet at home, about 13% can access the Internet from their cell phones and only about 3% can access the Internet from work (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2012, 2017; Stats SA, 2011a).

### 6.1.3.4 Challenges

In its IDP, the municipality outlined some of the challenges it experiences with water and sanitation related services (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017 pp. 48 - 49):

- “Insufficient supply quantity to meet the growing demand
- Aged infrastructure operating within extreme environmental conditions
- Poor quality of low-cost house plumbing leads to leaks and subsequent loss
- Source quality, where the main phenomenon affecting the quality of the water in the region is the salination of water in the main catchments due to the geology of the area.
- Massive peaks in demand caused by the bulk migration during harvesting and holiday making periods.”

## 6.2 Kouga Local Municipality



Figure 6-4 Location of Kouga Local Municipality

Kouga is the second smallest municipal area within Sarah Baartman District, covering a coastal landscape of 2 670km<sup>2</sup> and is the most populous region with an estimated population of 113 000 people (Kouga Local Municipality, 2013). There are 11 towns, namely: Jeffrey’s Bay, Humansdorp, St Francis Bay, Oyster Bay, Patensie, Hankey, Lorie, Sunnyside, Andrieskraal, Matjiesfontein and Thornhill (Stats SA, 2011b).

Kouga’s economy is characterised by agriculture, forestry, fishing and tourism. Secondary and tertiary activities have started to grow with industries like finance, insurance, real estate and

manufacturing providing the most employment opportunities since 2010 (Kouga Local Municipality, 2016b; Stats SA, 2011b).

### **6.2.1 People**

Kouga Local Municipality is characterised by socially and racially diverse communities. The coloured community is the largest race group and contributes to 42.6% of the population. The second largest group is black African that makes up 38.8% of the population, where 17.3% of the population comprises of white less than 0.2% being Asian or Indian. Afrikaans is spoken as a first language by 58.4% of the population, followed by Xhosa (29%) and then English (6.4%) (Kouga Local Municipality, 2016b).

### **6.2.2 Economy and Education**

The unemployment rate for Kouga is about 21.5% with about 35.4% of female headed households (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017). Only about 28% of the population residing in Kouga, has completed primary school, 20% have some secondary education and 24% having completed matric. Only 5% of the population has attained a higher form of education. The municipality estimates that 13% of the population does not have formal education (Kouga Local Municipality, 2016b; Stats SA, 2011b).

### **6.2.3 Access to Services**

Kouga is the WSA and WSP for Hankey, Humansdorp, Jeffreys Bay, Patensie and Oyster Bay. For the towns of Loerie, St Francis Bay and Thornhill, the municipality is the WSA with Nelson Mandela Bay Metro acting as WSP (Stats SA, 2011b).

#### **6.2.3.1 Water**

The majority of water (91.4% ), in Kouga, is supplied from a regional or local water scheme operated by the municipality or other WSP and 98.6% of households have access to piped water (Stats SA, 2011b).

About 90% of households have access to municipal water, however, only 60% of households that have access to piped water inside a dwelling (Kouga Local Municipality, 2016b; Stats SA, 2011b). Kouga acknowledges the backlogs that exist, and this is associated with the capacity challenges of the bulk infrastructure to supply all communities with potable water (Kouga Local Municipality, 2016a).

#### **6.2.3.2 Sanitation**

Currently, there are eight wastewater treatment works operating in Kouga, which require major upgrades to cope with the additional capacity that they experience. According to the IDP, the majority of households in Kouga LM (75%) have access to a flush toilet, flush septic tanks or chemical toilets (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2013, 2016b) but the municipality has stated that its greatest challenge is to provide infrastructure to meet future demand. The municipality acknowledged that the bucket system (11.2% of the population) has not yet been

completely eradicated in the informal areas and has been set as a target in the IDP (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017; Stats SA, 2011c).

#### **6.2.3.3 Access to Internet**

About 83% of the population residing in Kouga LM has access to a cell phone and about 23% have access to a computer. However, considering access to the Internet, only about 11% of the population can access the Internet from home, about 11% can access the Internet from their cell phone and only about 3% can access the Internet from work, whilst 72% of the population has no access to the Internet (Stats SA, 2011b).

#### **6.2.3.4 Challenges**

From the IDP, the municipality has outlined the following challenges (Kouga Local Municipality, 2013, 2016b, 2017):

- Aged infrastructure and wastewater treatment works need to be upgraded to manage the additional loads
- The eradication of the bucket system as a form of sanitation remains a priority for the municipality.
- A long-term strategy for water master planning is required to upgrade and rehabilitation of bulk infrastructure
- Kouga has a considerable backlog in supplying piped water to about 12, 500 households. This could be attributed to developments in Jeffrey's Bay, which have caused a huge influx to the area. Consequently, the bulk capacity needs to be upgraded to manage the increased water demands.

## 6.3 Kou-Kamma Local Municipality



Figure 6-5 Location of Kou-Kamma Local Municipality

Kou-Kamma is bordered by three other municipalities, namely: Kouga, Baviaans and Bitou Local Municipalities. It is a predominantly rural area serving a population about 44, 000 people over an area which spans 3, 575km<sup>2</sup> (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012). Tourism and fruit and dairy farming are the main economic activities for the area (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012; Stats SA, 2011c). Kou-Kamma is comprised of 12 formal settlements and numerous informal settlements. Kareedouw and Joubertina serves as the main town centres with smaller settlements like Louterwater, Clarkson, Woodlands, Sandrift/ Blikkiesdorp, Nompumelom, Stormsriver, Coldstream, Misgund and Krakeel that are remotely established across the municipal area, as well as Tsitsikamma (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012, 2017).

### 6.3.1 People

Kou-Kamma is a predominantly rural municipality, with a meagre population compared to the rest of the areas within the Eastern Cape. The average population density is 11 people per km<sup>2</sup> (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012).

Kou-Kamma's estimated population is 44, 000 people of which 59.8% are coloured, 30.6% are black African, 8.2% are white and 0.3% are Indian or Asian. Afrikaans is the most spoken language with 73.2% of speakers, followed by Xhosa (19.9%) and only about 2.5% of the population are native English speakers (Stats SA, 2011c).



### 6.3.2 Economy and Education

The unemployment rate for Kou-Kamma is 15%, is the lowest in the province (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012). Only 4.1% of the population residing in the area has had no formal schooling, 48.5% have had some primary school education with only 7.8% having completed primary school. Approximately 30.8% of the population has some secondary school education; with only 7.7% having completed matric and only 0.5% has pursued some form of higher education (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012, 2014; Stats SA, 2011c). The education levels are considerably lower compared to that of Ndlambe and Kouga local municipalities.

### 6.3.3 Access to Services

Kou-Kamma is both the WSA and WSP for its designated area (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2016; Stats SA, 2011c). The region has experienced serious drought in the past with water sources drying up and placing strain on the municipality to provide potable water to all the communities. Furthermore, the municipality has to service a large number of settlements in an immense geographical area (3 575 km<sup>2</sup>) which places further constraints on resources. (Stats SA, 2011c).

#### 6.3.3.1 Water

Kou-Kamma is currently serviced by nine water treatment schemes which supplies water to 68.3% of households who have access via piper water within a dwelling, 21.4% have access to piped water in their yard and 4.6% of households do not have access to piped water (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012, 2014, 2016).

#### 6.3.3.2 Sanitation

There are nine wastewater treatment works that service Kou-Kamma. Households with access to a flush toilet connected to the sewerage system only make up 68% of the demographic, while 7.4% of households rely on septic tanks, 10.8% of households rely on chemical toilets or pit latrines and 3.1% of households utilise the bucket system (Stats SA, 2011d).

#### 6.3.3.3 Access to Internet

About 73% of the population residing in Kouga LM has access to a cell phone and about 12% have access to a computer. However, considering access to the Internet, only about 5% of the population can access the Internet from home, about 9% can access the Internet from their cell phone and only about 3% can access the Internet from work, whilst 77% of the population has no access to the Internet (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012, 2017; Stats SA, 2011c).

#### 6.3.3.4 Challenges

In its IDP, Kou-Kamma LM acknowledged some of the challenges it faces (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012, 2016):

- “Communities complain that they wait up to two weeks to have sewerage problems attended to and this poses health risks.” (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012 p. 77)

- The large geographical area and settlements that need to be serviced, place strain on the existing fleet to provide services to the areas
- Purification plants and water treatment works do not function adequately due to ageing infrastructure, limited maintenance and lack of proper skills and expertise (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012) not fc
- Effective maintenance cannot be undertaken due to lack of skilled personal and necessary equipment
- Programmes to ensure better community participation

## **6.4 Summary**

This section provided some context of the three municipal study sites to better understand the setting for this study. These municipalities are mostly rural and rely on farming and tourism activities as the main economic activities.

Higher education is not prevalent amongst the communities and consequently there are limited skilled professionals and resources that the municipalities can utilise. These skills often need to be brought in. When skills are developed within the municipalities and staff leave, the loss of skilled and experienced staff further hampers any progress that can be made. This also has repercussions on the services and future plans of the municipalities to provide adequate infrastructure and stifles development and possible economic growth.

## Chapter 7

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### **7. Current Information Sharing Practices and Analysis: Case Studies from Local Municipalities in the Eastern Cape**

This section will discuss the overall information sharing practices identified in the municipal study sites, using the IVC and Good governance framework. It will then present the study sites in more detail and discuss the information sharing practices that each municipality has adopted and identify the ways in which the municipalities had to adapt to make information flow more effective.

#### **7.1 Ndlambe Local Municipality**

A brief situational analysis of the municipality is provided, and the findings discussed under the various IVC headings.

Approximately 500 people were employed by Ndlambe LM in 2017, with Port Alfred as the main administrative centre and satellite offices in Bushmans, Kenton-on-Sea, Seafield, Bathurst and Alexandria (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

It was interesting to note that upon conducting the interviews with the municipal staff and studying the municipality's organogram, it was evident that staff members often fulfilled multiple responsibilities e.g. the Director of Community Protective Services was also the Director for Parks and Recreation, which are two separate portfolios in municipalities in the larger cities.

Some of the challenges that the municipality faces are discussed below (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017):

- The municipality experienced funding and budget constraints and struggled to collect revenue as a large portion of residents qualified as indigents and their municipal bills were frequently written off. People residing within the municipal jurisdiction, struggled to attain the skills needed for better paying jobs owed to the low unemployment rate and low level of education.
- Budget constraints affected the rest of the municipality as human resources and equipment needed to work more effectively. Due to the limited budget, Ndlambe LM struggled to retain skilled personnel or attract the necessary expertise, as most people tended to seek more lucrative offers in the cities. Skills development was largely reliant on on-the-job training, but once a person gained the experience, they also sought better opportunities.

- Limited human capacity and skills shortage thus required municipal personnel to have multiple responsibilities, and this often resulted in priorities changing daily. Some staff expressed their need for proper training to better equip them with the skills needed to perform their roles more effectively as well as manage customer expectations.
- Aged equipment and lack thereof also resulted in poor service delivery. The superintendent for the Port Alfred Technical Department explained that there were only three honeysuckers (sewerage pumping machinery) for the entire Port Alfred area (approximately 45km<sup>2</sup>) and due to the age of the machines, they often broke down and could take up to 6 weeks to repair.
- Communication between departments was poor as departments tended to work in silos and information was scattered across the municipality or duplicated.

### **7.1.1 Step: Input**

The communication strategy of Ndlambe LM is highlighted throughout their IDP, as well as from the Municipal and Participation group interviews conducted in 2014. This was used to ascertain the communication channels used within the municipality with the Public Participation Strategy adopted by the municipality.

#### *7.1.1.1 Perspective: Legitimacy and Voice*

##### **Dimension: Public participation**

Ndlambe LM has a plenary executive system with a ward participatory system. Council adopts the rules and procedures that serve to guide ward committees, which should meet every 6 weeks, according to provisions made in the IDP, with feedback of the meetings submitted to Council as recommendations (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). From the Municipal Interviews, it was apparent that getting feedback reports was an issue and it seemed that there was no interaction between some representatives and the communities they represented. Similarly, ward meetings served as communication platforms between the municipality and the community to share information about new projects or policies. However, according to municipal officials, councillors did not always provide the outcomes of meetings or feedback to the municipality (Municipal Interviews, 2014). Meetings often became confrontational between the councillor, officials and the community and consequently officials are less motivated to attend meetings. (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

In 2015, Council adopted a Public Participation Strategy to provide the municipality with guidelines on when and how communities could be included in planning and decision-making processes. The Public participation Strategy was also intended to provide guidelines in identifying projects that would require input from the communities. A Public participation sub-committee was established, which acted as an advisory committee to the municipality. The role of the sub-committee was intended to act as an appeal body to handle any

complaints related to Public participation as well as to regulate public gatherings. (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017)

A crucial role of the IDP Representative Forum was to provide a mechanism for discussion, negotiation and decision-making between all stakeholders by ensuring that each activity and decision taken at meetings were adequately communicated to the members' constituencies and to represent community inputs and interests. (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

Numerous tools and methods for information sharing exist, but it is important that the appropriate tools are selected as each activity or project has the potential to be an enabler or barrier for the next participation activity. Ndlambe LM utilises the following communication channels (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017):

- Meetings, workshops, forums, seminars and awareness talks
- Public opinion surveys
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Public interest surveys to assess interest in a project
- Retrieving information at public points e.g. libraries, schools, etc.
- Use of existing networks, organisations and institutions
- Print media e.g. pamphlets, local newspapers and posters
- Audio media e.g. radio and loud hailing

Some of the challenges experienced by the municipality with public participation such as the effective utilisation of CDWs (who are appointed by provincial government) but have no defined roles within local government. Within the context of Ndlambe LM's Public participation Strategy, CDWs were an underutilised resource - in the sense that they were valuable resources that bridged the gap between provincial and local government, working towards a common goal. According to the IDP, 17 ward meetings were scheduled in January 2017 to February 2017 across all 10 wards of Ndlambe LM. The reporting format for the 2019/20 IDP changed and the number of ward meetings scheduled could not be gleaned from the IDP report, however, public notices for a Mayoral Imbizo was planned for April 2019 (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2020). Communication problems between the municipality and the community were the most commonly cited complaint at these meetings, and lack of feedback on updates in particular wards or lack of information provided. (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). According to the municipal interviews, e communication officers were responsible for communicating with the public (e.g. ward councillor, PPO) but if and when this happened was unclear (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Reporting issues or lodging complaints with the municipality is a form of participation and active citizenry, however, this presented a challenge when citizens struggled to interact with the municipality directly. Ndlambe LM acknowledged that it was not customer centric for numerous reasons, namely:

- Operating hours - some communities have to go without services during critical periods as a result of sharing staff amongst the satellite offices.
- Only one facility offers online access to information via the Port Alfred library

These two points are important as most residents within this municipality have limited access to the municipality, electronically or physically as a result of the operating hours of the municipality, limited access to technology and proximity to municipal offices. It was also important to consider the education and economic profile of residents within the municipality. Some residents may have been fully reliant on face-to-face interaction with municipal staff and officials and may also have had limited use or access to technology. One of the superintendents' interviewed, mentioned that when technical staff are in the field, members of the community would report incidents directly to staff (e.g. overflowing septic tanks) as it was convenient, and they did not have to follow formal processes at the municipal office.

To address these challenges, the IDP outlines some remedial actions, namely:

- Information is to be available in an understandable manner that fosters transparency and provides the public with accurate and accessible information
- Investment into a sustained Imbizo process
- Develop an environment where openness and availability are encouraged (foster a reputation of credibility and commitment)
- Development a code of conduct that evaluates how municipal officials engage with communities and manage their expectations

#### **Dimension: Consensus Orientation**

Generally, consensus orientation is achieved through general community meetings with municipal officials and ward councillors or using the IDP consultation period to identify issues and determine resolutions. Referencing Hartnett (2011) again for context, consensus orientation is a decision-making process to develop and finalise a proposal. The Deputy Director of Ndlambe LM provided an anecdote of public participation processes, during the Municipal Interviews for sanitation projects. Ndlambe LM would appoint a person within the municipality to conduct the public participation process during the planning phase of a sanitation project and contact all councillors in each area of interest, to engage and introduce the project. The councillors would then arrange community meetings to provide details to the residents and enable interested parties the opportunity to select their desired sanitation infrastructure by showing preselected samples. The sample that received the most votes, was usually what was implemented (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Predetermined options were selected for the community to accelerate the decision-making processes and some community members felt that their input was almost minimal (Community Interviews, 2015), however, in this particular example, sanitation infrastructure

was already identified in the IDP and prioritised when grant funding was made available. Predetermined options help to accelerate the process but it is also worth noting that the availability of grant funding is limited and only allocated for a specific period. If the funds are not used within the timeframe, it would be uncertain when the same kind of funding would be available again in the future (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

#### **7.1.1.2 Perspective: Direction**

As stated in their final IDP, the mission of Ndlambe LM is to “achieve our vision by enabling optimal performance within each of the five Key Performance Areas of Local Government within the context of available resources” (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). The vision is described as “Ndlambe municipality strives to be an integrated growing and investment friendly region that provides strategic sustainable and efficient services to all citizens in a healthy and safe environment by 2025” (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017 p.88).

Throughout the development of the IDP, Ndlambe LM considered the development challenges and current realities captured in Census SA (Statistics SA), departmental reports, and the municipality's Spatial Development Framework and other relevant sector plans.

The strategic objectives and overall vision for Ndlambe LM is outlined in its IDP in the National KPAs, which are used as guidelines to identify developmental needs and challenges for communities along with IDP engagement processes. Strategic planning sessions are then held to prioritise needs and establish targets to overcome the challenges identified. Ndlambe LM acknowledged that the municipality struggled to filter information and communicate targets to ground staff. The IDP stated the reporting frequencies as part of progress evaluation and monitoring. For example, SDBIP progress reports were quarterly and performance reports were to be submitted bi-annually (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). Furthermore, in evaluating KPAs, the IDP set out to identify challenges within the municipality that impeded progress in achieving the KPA and formulated strategies to overcome this. Updates of each KPA's strategic objective was also reported on with each IDP review. Projects or programmes that aligned to KPA objectives were recorded with financial projections (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). These objectives formed criterion that are referred to in Table 2-3 and Table 2-6 as part of the analytical rubric. Evaluating these criteria and reporting progress helps to understand how Ndlambe LM progressed towards achieving its strategic vision as well as help in assessing any challenges that hindered growth.

Provincial and national government departments set up municipal sector-driven planning requirements to inform their strategic planning, budgets, and implementation processes. For example, the DWA requires municipalities that are WSAs to formulate Water Service Development Plans (WSDP) which set targets and aligned with the municipality's IDP processes. For a municipality to achieve its strategic objectives, numerous plans, reports, and documents are required to develop its services and infrastructure. Specific departments

within a directorate support each sector plan which forms part of the directorate’s contribution towards achieving the strategic objectives of the Council. Aligning sector plans between all spheres of government is essential to ensure that programmes are well integrated and that available resources are utilised effectively (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

### 7.1.2 Step: Process

Information sharing formed an important action item in Ndlambe LM’s IDP process and making information accessible to the public was an important aspect of KPA 2 (Municipal and institutional development and transformation), as this fostered transparency within the municipality.

#### 7.1.2.1 Ndlambe LM Workflow

The workflow was established by interviewing municipal staff that dealt with complaints or issues lodged by residents to understand the protocols.

Generally, people called the municipality or visited the municipal offices to lodge complaints. Some complaints were received via email; however, the municipality acknowledged that walk-ins or telephonic complaints were the most common since not everyone had access to the Internet to send complaints electronically. Once a complaint was lodged, it was recorded in a Complaints Register (logbook), which in Ndlambe LM was an Excel Spreadsheet. Ndlambe LM had dedicated personnel to manage this “logbook”, who would then create a job card and notify the necessary technical team for response. However, this process could become complicated when other municipal departments sent queries on behalf of customers. Other departments did not have access to the Excel spreadsheet (complaints register), which meant that they would then liaise with the person in charge of the complaints register, and this could result in duplicate queries. This process ensured that the appropriate information reached the technical staff for action.

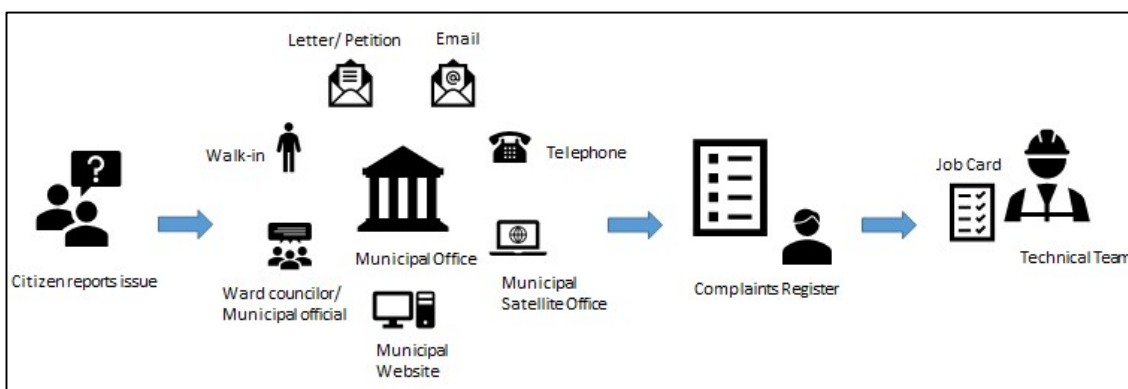


Figure 7-1: Reporting Diagram

Complaints were resolved on a first come-first-serve basis; however, this was dependent on the seriousness of the issue as well as the availability of resources on hand. For example, a



burst water main was considered priority. Feedback was only provided to the customer when an issue had been resolved. There were no set time frames within which a matter should have been resolved and no tracking mechanisms (e.g. reference number) were used to track the progress of resolving a complaint.

Figure 7-1, shows the importance of information culture and the processes required to collect, capture and share information with relevant departments. However, for Ndlambe LM there are some vulnerabilities in the process, e.g. lack of tracking mechanisms and traceability of queries.

Figure 7-2 mapped the workflow process for the Water and Sanitation Service delivery department and is linked to the IVC.

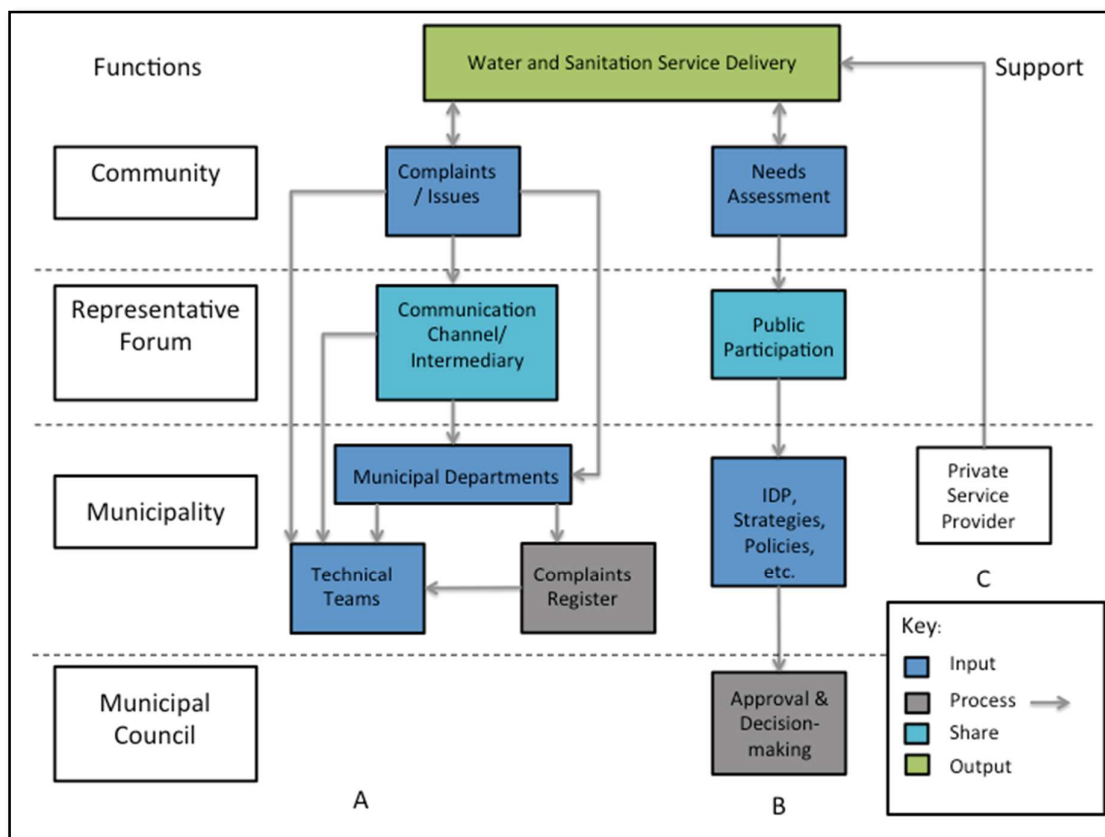


Figure 7-2 Ndlambe LM IVC workflow process (Rivett et al., 2018)

As the figure highlights, there were 3 chains, A, B and C which describe different forms of engagement and workflow. Chain A describes the general or daily workflow, described above, to lodge a complaint with the municipality. Chain B describes the formal processes that occur within a municipality, and this includes the municipality's obligations in terms of strategic planning and legislation. Chain C considers the external resources that the municipality may

rely on to properly function, for example, Ndlambe LM relied on outsourcing certain services and skills (e.g. Environmental Officers and bulk water service providers like Amatole Water.)

A designated staff member from Ndlambe LM was responsible for managing the complaints register, capturing queries, and assigning tasks to the appropriate technical departments. However, not all departments had access to the spreadsheet (complaints register). Thus, not all information was captured as technical staff performed work as required or requested some work directly from other departments, e.g. some issues would be reported to the finance department as customers had personal experience dealing with that specific department or customers would report an issue directly to a technical staff member already working in the field (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). Reporting to the technical team could have been out of convenience for the customer or familiarity. However, the lack of tracking mechanisms impacted the workflow, since not all departments or technical teams had access to the spreadsheet (complaints register). Consequently, multiple versions of the spreadsheet existed, and information was scattered across various departments or work reported in the field or completed was not properly recorded. Accessibility to the outlying communities located far from the technical departments presented another constraint. Community members complained that they felt that the wards closer to the municipality got preferential treatment (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Chain B considered the more formal processes that the municipality was legally required to follow. Ward meetings formed part of the municipal Public Participation Strategy and acted as another communication platform between the municipality and the community. Although Chain B is presented more formally, the sharing component became important for appropriate decision making. These decisions impacted both the municipality as well as the residents that Ndlambe LM serves. When information is not properly shared, this can result in frustration and dissatisfaction where community members feel side lined during decision-making processes.

Chain C highlights the capacity problem that most municipalities face (rural and urban) and external service providers are contracted to carry out services on behalf of local government. The relationship between external service providers and citizens are virtually non-existent. Citizens, as consumers, have no choice in the external service providers that are hired by the municipality and therefore have little power to hold them accountable. The conventional relationship between the customer and service provider is different in the case of local authorities and this can lead to information asymmetry (Thomson et al., 2012).

#### **7.1.2.2 Perspective: Performance**

Service delivery targets and performance indicators were used to monitor performance and progress of the municipality. The Municipal Systems Act stipulates the reporting requirements. The IDP incorporated community participation to set the performance indicators and targets and further documented the priorities, objectives, goals and initiatives

identified. This formed the foundation for the municipality's performance management system (PMS). The PMS should integrate the goals and strategies of the municipality to enable action to provide quality service. As mentioned previously, the IDP is a key strategic tool for any municipality over a 5-year period and this document informs budgets, performance management measures, IDP implementation as well as budget performance (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017, 2020).

Performance is measured in a cycle consisting of 4 phases, namely (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017):

1. Planning – development of a strategic plan that translates indicators to functions
2. Monitoring and review – mechanisms and systems that should be implemented to monitor the success of plans. This includes tracking and feedback mechanisms, reporting frameworks with a systematic approach to reviewing current goals against stated plans and understanding the reasons for variation.
3. Evaluation and assessment - evaluation involves measuring objectives that have been set and includes mechanisms like benchmarking, self-assessment and customer satisfaction surveys.
4. Reporting - involves regular, structured feedback and being accountable for the activities of the municipality to its stakeholders on how public resources are used to reach set objectives and the extent to which objectives have been attained. This process is meant to ensure accountability, transparency and good governance. Examples of reporting are monthly financial and operational reports from various departments, quarterly reporting for the SDBIP, annual performance reporting, etc.

The IDP falls under planning, as the targets and KPAs are developed or reconfirmed within this document and budgets for the year are planned. Utilising the IDP, various municipal departments are required to formulate business plans with Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as gages for implementation.

Other performance areas that need to be considered is geography, employee retention and maintenance, as these also impact the municipality's performance. Due to its geographical surroundings, Ndlambe LM covers a relatively vast area which resulted in supervisory challenges between satellite offices and the main administrative office. Budget constraints aggravated the situation further, as some units either used aged equipment or had to do without the appropriate resources. The cost of repairs and maintenance also resulted in work time lost or human resources not being utilised effectively (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

Employee retention was another challenge that Ndlambe LM faced as it experienced high staff turnover and was unable to retain skills within the municipality which placed further demands on the existing staff members. Ndlambe LM already struggled to attract skilled professionals to the area due to low salaries and its location from bigger towns or cities. Staff

members, that were interviewed, cited lack of training and lack of career pathing as a reason for seeking other opportunities (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017, 2020).

Ndlambe LM was a low-capacity municipality and needed to improve its inter-departmental coordination and communication and integrate new knowledge into the organisation. This could be achieved by implementing plans to develop new skills and improving the competency of staff.

### **7.1.2.3 Perspective: Fairness**

Various legislation and policy, like the Municipal Systems Act and Municipal Financial Management Act, refers to stakeholder participation and stipulates that municipalities conduct public participation in major policy decisions, project planning, strategic programs, etc., to act fairly and in the best interests of its constituents. Providing information that is accessible and easy to understand is important to aid citizen engagement and to make informed decisions. In its IDP, Ndlambe LM stated that “transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information” (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017 p. 79) and that this information should be “available in an understandable manner” (p. 100).

### **7.1.3 Step: Share**

As mentioned in Section 7.1.2.3, Ndlambe LM stated in their 2017 IDP that they aimed to foster transparency in the municipality by making information more accessible. Some of these information dissemination platforms included loud hailing, satellite offices, public notice boards, community radio and posters, as well as official structures such as newspapers, the municipal website, and public meetings, among others.

In its 2012-2017 IDP, Ndlambe LM acknowledged that it needed to improve its communication within the municipality as well as sharing information with its communities. The municipality reviewed its communication strategy, developed a municipal newsletter to be published monthly, opened a radio slot, started an intranet-based newsletter and planned to update its website to include all departments (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2012).

From the municipal interviews, it was found that inter-departmental communication was poor even though there were some platforms to encourage information sharing (e.g. email, website, etc.). Ndlambe LM was trying to make information more accessible by publishing to their website, however, the municipality’s IT manager observed that these platforms were not properly utilised, and this also affected information sharing with communities. Departments struggled to publish information on a regular basis, even when the municipality tried to implement a program. For example, if there was a water quality issue, the municipality would first investigate and establish the cause or extent of the issue before issuing a statement or warning to the public. Understandably this was to avoid any

unnecessary commotion, but sometimes investigations took longer than anticipated and this impacted residents (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

The municipality had limited use in accessing social and digital media and this was a constraint to the municipality's ability to share information (e.g. municipal website) to those who could access these platforms. The Communications Officer was the only staff member permitted to use the municipality's Facebook account, to communicate with the public via this platform and was tasked with facilitating and implementing the communication strategy of the municipality, as well as publishing a monthly municipal newsletter (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Furthermore, the Municipal Systems Act and Municipal Finance Act requires municipalities to report on the following over specific periods (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017 p.148):

- “Monthly financial and operating reports of departments and directorates to relevant committees
- Quarterly reporting of service delivery through the SDBIP reports
- Bi-annual and annual performance and evaluation reports
- Ad hoc reports on projects and incidents at the request of intergovernmental stakeholders. “

These documents are published to Ndlambe LM's website, along with other documents such as committee and council meeting agendas, customer satisfaction surveys, municipal by-laws, newsletters, the IDP, etc.

The screenshot displays the Ndlambe Municipality website. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, About Us, Executive Mayor and Council, Municipal Manager, Directorate, Events, and Contact Us. The main content area features a 'Welcome to Ndlambe Municipality' message, a 'Consumer Portal' announcement, and a 'Documents' list. The 'Documents' list includes items such as Bid Opening Results, Annual Reports, Appointment Letters, Audit and Performance Committee Members, Human Resources, Assets disposed of, Demarcation, Expenditure, Forms, Informational Guides, Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Loan Agreements and Long Term Borrowing Contracts, Legislation, Monthly / Quarterly Reports, Local Economic Development, Municipal Budget, Notice Board, Performance Contracts, Policies Procedures Bylaws and Charters, Revenue, Service Delivery Agreements, Spatial Development Framework, Supply Chain Unit, Tariffs, and Town Planning. A 'Welcome' message on the right side of the page reads: 'The Ndlambe Municipality would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our website. This site was created as part of our continued strive towards implementing the principles of "Isitho Phele", a government initiative aimed at enhancing the quality and accessibility of government services by improving efficiency and accountability to the recipients of public goods and services. Our team is committed to improve related matters and therefore invite you to contact us with any suggestions that would improve this service to you.'

Figure 7-3 Screen shot of Ndlambe's municipal website and documents published

Ndlambe LM reported a satisfactory relationship with its community, in the interview sessions, which was represented by engagement processes with community members. However, the municipality did acknowledge that feedback did not always occur, and this further discouraged community members (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). During the participation group interviews, some community members declared that they felt there was no point in reporting to the municipality because they felt that nothing would be done (Community Interviews, 2015; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

In comparing the IDPs for Ndlambe LM for the 2012-2017 period and the next generation IDP of 2017-2022 and 2019/20 IDP Review, it was noted that they did implement the communication strategy outlined in the 2012-2017 IDP. However, at the Mayoral Imbizo, held from January to March 2017, the community raised issues of poor communication on 3 occasions. The municipality acknowledged this and consequently made plans to improve upon this and the latest IDP (2017-2022) outlined points to improve upon (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2012, 2017):

- To promote and enhance ICT services to ward councillors to support and ensure communication between ward councillors and their constituency
- Provide administrative support services to improve public participation
- Make information more accessible for the public-council agendas

#### **7.1.4 Step: Output**

The main purpose of governance structures is to ensure accountability, transparency, and good governance. Thus, reporting structures, both formal and informal feedback, plays an important role to account for municipal activities and further aims to foster transparency by providing accurate and timely information (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

The IDP, is the municipality's 5-year strategic plan and is intended to identify the needs and goals of the community and municipality. The IDP is also linked to the municipality's budget with procedures implemented to monitor and manage financial practices. Reporting financial matters is part of the practice to ensure that municipalities are open, transparent, and accountable. In Ndlambe LM, all departments and directorates were required to report on any financial and operating activities to the relevant committee (Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). Aligning the IDP, budget, SDBIMP and performance scorecards was a means of documenting accountability that equated to good governance. However, the IDP is often regarded as a wish list but does not consider the financial constraints of the municipality (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017).

The Ndlambe IDP says that to achieve transparency and accountability, resources must be used efficiently and effectively, service provision must be fair and satisfy people's needs, so that the public will be encouraged to support and participate in policy-making initiatives. Added to this, municipal resources should be well managed with career pathing initiatives

and investment in staff to maintain the skills needed to provide these services within the municipality (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). Municipalities should inform citizens on how public resources are used and allocated to achieve the goals set out in the IDP and provide feedback on the progression of these goals. A well-functioning council also contributes to good governance in terms of accountability and transparency (Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017). The Batho Pele principles also echoes these ideas.

From using the IVC framework, the following barriers and enablers were identified. As a result of removing the barriers, the services rendered to the community will improve. The enablers enhance information flow, and participation will be more effective (Forlee & Rivett, 2015; Rivett et al., 2018). These are presented in Table 7-1 and Table 7-2 (Forlee & Rivett, 2015).

**Table 7-1: IVC Barriers experienced by Ndlambe LM**

<b>GENERAL BARRIERS</b>	
<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Description</b>
Skills and staff retention	Current municipal staff expressed the need for training to help perform their functions more effectively. Ndlambe LM acknowledged the challenge of retaining experienced and skilled staff at the municipality.
Customer service	Due to a lack of technical knowledge, both customers and the municipality acknowledged that municipal staff could not fully assist and could occasionally be unapproachable.
Multiple sources of information	Information was reported telephonically, by e-mail, letters, conversation held with CDWs or ward councillors, and walk-ins, among others. It became essential to integrate all these sources into a central register.
Tracking mechanisms	No tracking mechanisms to keep track of reports/ complaints and their progress or performance
Municipal capacity	Ndlambe LM was concerned about its capability to handle complaints, have sufficient funds and resources to upgrade infrastructure and meet the goals it has set in its IDP

Table 7-2: IVC Enablers experienced by Ndlambe LM

<b>GENERAL ENABLERS</b>	
<b>Enabler</b>	<b>Description</b>
Dedicated staff members to manage complaints register	This meant that there was someone to manage, capture all information, collate data and create job cards for the technical response team, etc.
Satellite offices	The satellite offices offered a more accessible point of communication to community members, including elderly residents who favoured personal interaction. The municipality must ensure effective communication with the satellite offices as this is advantageous for information transfer and flow.
Willingness to cooperate	Ndlambe LM included the research as part of its communication strategy which showed their commitment to progress.
Information sources	Citizens could select their preferred communication method as the municipality provided multiple information platforms. The information workflow is made easier once all the sources are collated.
Communication strategy and platforms	Ndlambe LM had a communication strategy to improve its public participation and communication channels to share information. It has an active website to publish official documents and advertise notices, etc. Ndlambe LM also utilises newsletters, radio, loud hailing, etc.
Financial and performance reporting	Ndlambe LM complied with legislation and policy frameworks and published financial and performance reports to promote accountability and transparency.

### 7.1.5 Analysis

The analysis for Ndlambe LM was supported by the communities of Alexandria and Bathurst. Ndlambe LM scored 28 points out of the total 40 points (refer to Figure 7-4), which translates to 70%. This is a relatively high score considering all the challenges that the municipality faced, including the various policy and legislative requirements that are to be complied with. The



breakdown of the score is discussed below. Refer to Section 2.5 for the explanation of the analytical rubric and scoring.

### **Step: Input**

Ndlambe LM scored 11 out of the maximum 14 points for the “Input” section. This section covers the *Legitimacy and Voice* and *Direction* of the municipality.

- a) Public participation - Ndlambe LM has a Public Participation Policy that meets the minimum requirements set out in the *Draft Policy Framework for Public participation*. In Alexandria, both municipal and community respondents acknowledged that ward meetings occurred regularly, with community participants’ responding that meetings were held at convenient times for community members to attend in their preferred language. Many of the community members interviewed said that they were familiar with the municipal structure and knew about the municipality’s IDP and that they were consulted, at some levels, of new projects or strategies. However, compared to Alexandria, the community of Bathurst were found to be less proactive, even though the ward is situated closer to Port Alfred.
- b) Consensus orientation – In the Alexandria community, many members were familiar with the municipal structure and IDP, only half of the respondents had read the IDP or participated in the development of the IDPs. In Bathurst, few of the community members interviewed had knowledge of the municipal structure or the IDP or that they could have contributed to the development of the IDP. The community interviewees had also indicated that even though ward meetings occurred regularly (every 3 months or when the community wants to raise issues), they did not attend for the following reasons:
  - meetings were held at inconvenient times, especially for those who work
  - location of meetings was far away
  - transport and travel to the meetings was an issue
- c) Strategic Vision - From the IDP for Ndlambe LM, the mission statement and vision for the municipality is presented in its introduction. The national KPAs and other goals set for the municipality are recorded in the IDP and monitored and evaluated to track the progress made in achieving its objectives.

### **Step: Process**

Ndlambe LM scored 9 out of 14 points for the “Process” section. This section covers the municipality’s *Performance* and *Fairness*.

- a) Responsiveness – Only a few community members said that they had reported a fault with Ndlambe LM, with mixed replies to the responsiveness of the municipality. Some said that their issues had been resolved or indicated that they had to buy the missing

parts before their reported fault could be seen to. The proximity of Alexandria to Port Alfred made it easier for residents from this ward to physically visit the municipality and benefit from face-to-face interaction and reported that their complaints were resolved within a reasonable timeframe.

- b) Effective and efficient – When evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of Ndlambe LM, the community members interviewed gave varied responses. Most community interviewees agreed that sanitation service delivery was particularly poor (usually backlogs for this service) and acknowledged that the municipality was short staffed and under resourced to perform their functions adequately. The community members also felt that customer service could be improved especially with respect to getting feedback from municipal staff. Those community members that did not report faults, admitted to not knowing who to contact or how to go about lodging a complaint. This was an important point for future strategies for the municipality, because this was an indication that a larger portion of the community was also unsure how to formally lodge queries or complaints with the municipality. It could also mean that information about how to follow due process was also not well published.
- c) Equity – Ndlambe LM does have satellite offices, to ensure accessibility to wards further away from its main municipal offices. However, community members interviewed said that they felt that the quality-of-service delivery was unequal. That is, better services are provided where the main administrative municipal offices are located.
- d) Rule of law – The processes and legislation to be complied with are outlined in the municipal IDP. There were also various steering committees that were tasked with ensuring compliance to legislation and policy. If compliance was not attained, a strategy was outlined with a timeline to get to compliance level. Comparing the two communities, Bathurst appeared to be the less proactive ward.

### **Step: Share**

5 out of 6 points were awarded to Ndlambe LM ward for the “Share “section of the rubric.

- a) Information Sharing – From Ndlambe’s website, IDP and interviews, documents are published on the website and can be downloaded, and reports summarised in the IDP. From both community and municipal interviews, it was acknowledged that a variety of communication platforms were used in multiple languages. However, even though Ndlambe made the documents accessible, very few community members accessed the information. As previously mentioned, very few interviewees knew about the IDP or knew that they could contribute to any decision-making processes.

**Step: Output**

Ndlambe LM scored 3 out of 6 for “Output”.

- a) Accountability – Ndlambe LM had various tools in place for accountability, however, community members did not know how to leverage these tools to enforce their “active” voice. The interview sample of the Bathurst community indicated that most of the community members were unaware of the tools or mechanisms implemented by Ndlambe LM to encourage them to be more proactive in participating in municipal affairs. There was no communication between the municipality and its community within this ward, as shown by this example. That proximity to administrative offices was not a good indication of better communication or service delivery. The difference in efficiency and communication could have been attributed to the ward councillors working for the two wards.

Ndlambe Local Municipality

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Criteria	Weighted score	Score
Input	Legitimacy and voice	Public Participation	Municipality has a Public Participation Policy that meets minimum requirements set out in Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation	2	2
			Ward committees are active and ward meetings are held at least quarterly. (Municipal Structures Act)	2	2
			Community members have knowledge of the IDP and municipal structure	2	1
Process	Performance	Direction	The Municipality consults and includes community in policy/ decision-making for projects/ policy at various levels. (White Paper on Local Government, Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	1
			Community members have an active voice and participate in decision-making processes e.g. IDP forum or community project, etc.	2	1
			The Municipality has a mission/ vision statement that is outlined in the IDP. (Municipal Systems Act)	2	2
			The Municipality makes progress by monitoring and evaluating their progress towards achieving the KPAs outlined in their IDP.	2	2
Output	Accountability	Responsiveness	The Municipality is responsive to reported issues/ complaints/ queries (Batho Pele, National Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation)	2	1
			Municipality keeps community informed/ provides feedback on issues/ complaints (Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	1
			Municipality's customer service is well rated by the community	2	1
			Ward councillors, CDWs and community leaders used as additional resources (Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Systems Act)	2	2
Process	Performance	Effective and Efficient	Municipality has a Public Participation Policy that meets minimum requirements set out in Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation	2	2
			Municipality has satellite offices to ensure accessibility to all communities (Batho Pele, Municipal Systems Act)	2	1
			Municipality uses the legal frameworks stipulated by policy and legislation (e.g. MSA, Batho Pele, etc.)	2	2
			IDP, Service delivery performance reports, financial, municipal website, etc. are accessible (Municipal Systems Act, Batho Pele)	2	2
			Municipality uses a variety of communication platforms and languages	2	2
			Community members access published information from the municipality	2	1
			Municipal departments can be held accountable and responsible for outcomes	2	1
			Mechanisms implemented to encourage public participation (e.g. report, compliment, critique, etc.)	2	1
			Community members feel that the municipality listens to the communities and is transparent	2	1
			Total		
Percentage				70%	

Figure 7-4 Analytical Rubric for Ndlambe LM

## 7.2 Kouga Local Municipality

The economic drivers for Kouga LM are tourism and agriculture. The challenges that Kouga LM faced are briefly discussed below (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014):

- Kouga struggled to ensure that there was sufficient water to meet the demands of the area under its jurisdiction and support economic activities within the area.
- Maintaining and ensuring water quality was also a challenge due to aged infrastructure and lack of skilled process controllers. Kouga set a goal to obtain Blue Drop Certification and had thus implemented strategies like water conservation and demand management to help achieve this.
- The municipality lacked skilled or accredited staff to properly maintain and ensure the quality of water supply. Most staff members had good working experience, but not all of them were accredited or eligible to obtain qualifications required due to education levels.
- Kouga had ageing infrastructure and experienced several problems that could be remedied with regular maintenance. However, limited funds were allocated for maintenance and thus there was no operational maintenance plan in place.
- In the sanitation sector, the municipality still had several households that utilised the bucket system, and the goal was to eradicate this completely. In the long term, the municipality aims to provide full flush sanitation solutions to all customers (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012).

### 7.2.1 Step: Input

Throughout its IDP, Kouga mentioned its public participation processes. This section will discuss the municipality's public participation processes by using the information provided by its IDP and the first round of Municipal Interviews. During the community participation phase, Kouga LM struggled to organise participation groups and halted engagement with the research team. One of the criteria for this study was that study site municipalities be willing to participate (see Section 2.6). Consequently, there are no participation group interviews to draw reference from for this study site.

#### *7.2.1.1 Perspective: Legitimacy and Voice*

##### **Dimension: Public participation**

The Public participation strategies used in the Kouga Municipality were an adaptation of the provincial and national public participation guidelines. Kouga also utilised ward-based planning to inform its IDP, to identify and prioritise community needs, as well as analyse its current state service delivery. The purpose of ward-based plans is to ensure that the IDP objectives become a collective responsibility of community members and ward council members, ward committees, the business community, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

There are 15 wards in Kouga LM, and the committees encompass of geographic and sector representatives from the communities. The ward-based planning is conducted in the project stage of the IDP and relies on the co-operation of all 15 ward committees and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the primary objectives of ward-based planning, are to provide communities with feedback and report on progress of previously raised matters, present the IDP and budget, and encourage communities and stakeholders to review and comment on the draft IDP (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017). According to the first round of interviews with municipal staff, ward councillors should chair meetings with their ward committees either monthly or bi-monthly, however, only about 6 of the 15 ward committees met regularly (Municipal Interviews, 2014). It was previously recorded, in the Municipal Interviews, that the municipality did not receive the formal minutes from these meetings and could not indicate how regularly ward meetings occurred (Municipal Interviews, 2014). Figure 7-5 shows the various Public participation mechanisms used in Kouga and their frequency (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017).

STRUCTURE/ PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY	STAKEHOLDERS	OBJECTIVE/FUNCTIONS
<b>Ward Committee Meetings</b>	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ward Councillors (Chairpersons)</li> <li>Ward Committee Members (elected by the community)</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Senior management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform the community of decisions of the council, municipal affairs etc.;</li> <li>To enable the community to inform the ward councillor/municipality of their concerns;</li> </ul>
<b>Public meetings on IDP and Budget</b>	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Senior managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform the community of council decisions, community rights and duties, municipal affairs, etc.;</li> <li>To enable the community to inform the councillors and officials of their issues, inputs received during these engagements have been dealt with as described above.</li> </ul>
<b>Council Meetings (open to the public)</b>	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>Senior Managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform the community of council decisions, community rights and duties, municipal affairs etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Special IDP meetings and budget engagements</b>	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Senior Managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform the community of IDP and Budget related matters;</li> <li>To obtain community input on content of IDP and proposals.</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal newsletter</b>	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Personnel of the municipality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform the community of council decisions, events, municipal affairs etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal website</b>	Continually updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Personnel of municipality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide comprehensive information on municipal affairs.</li> </ul>
<b>Sarah District Municipality IDP Coordinating Committee</b>	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District personnel</li> <li>IDP Managers of local municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serves as the co-ordinating platform of the processes of district- and local IDP formulation, coordination and alignment;</li> <li>Coordinate strategy development and alignment within the district;</li> <li>Serves as a liaison forum for engagements between government departments and municipal structures in the district; and</li> <li>Serves as a discussion and coordination forum for broad and cross-cutting LED topics and initiatives.</li> </ul>

Figure 7-5 Public participation mechanisms and frequency

Good Governance and Public Participation are further outlined in Kouga's National KPAs (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017):

Table 7-3 Kouga LM KPA's for Good governance and Public participation

Strategic Objective	Definition	Objective
<b>Good governance</b>	Kouga LM wants to create an administrative environment that values accountability and transparency and supports active participation by the public.	<p><b>Committee systems</b> - Establish oversight committees and ensure committees are functional by guiding implementation and monitor decisions.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Media and communication:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a communication strategy</li> <li>• Utilise Kouga News</li> <li>• Ensure municipal website is accessible</li> <li>• Use Kouga’s Facebook page to encourage communication</li> <li>• Foster a better working relationship with national and provincial government</li> <li>• Plan more frequent mayoral outreach initiatives</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Contract management</b> – establish community needs and provide access to information, keep contracts updated and manage documentation.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Administration</b> – council should support and provide ancillary services</p> <hr/> <p><b>Legal services</b> –:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure policy development and implementation</li> <li>• Submit compliance reports for monitoring and evaluation procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Public participation</b>	Seek better partnerships with citizens by establishing a common vision with set objectives	<p><b>Ward committees</b> –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ward committees function and perform their duties and encourage community participation in various initiatives</li> <li>• Support councillors administratively as well as at quarterly meetings</li> <li>• Optimise Public Participation mechanisms by implementing proper controls</li> <li>• Submit minutes of ward committee meetings to all directorates within the municipality to implement the identified solutions</li> <li>• Develop an action plan and monitor its progress</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Complaint’s desk</b> – should be a system that ensures acceptable service delivery and performance</p>



Kouga has some remote areas within its jurisdiction that need to be provided with essential services, however, communication between these areas and the municipality was shown to be difficult. A communication and Public Participation strategy was adopted by Kouga LM, that established a stakeholder register, which is updated when required, to ensure relevant stakeholders are interacted with (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017). There were no registered traditional leaders within Kouga, however, there were representatives for the Khoi and San groups. Representatives from these communities were invited to meetings that could have affected their communities (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017, 2019).

Kouga utilised loud hailing, newsletters, posters, emails, radio, meetings as communication mechanisms. However, the IDP states that the municipality communicated with communities and stakeholders via more formal writing or telephonically. As per legislative provisions, notices were posted at municipal offices and community halls and in places frequented by communities, with audio advertising taking the form of loud hailing (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017, 2019). Although loud hailing has proven to be effective, especially after working hours. Loud hailing after working hours meant overtime for municipal staff and considering the vast geographical area that Kouga LM covers, added to the high costs. Kouga was investigating alternative strategies that would be more cost effective than loud hailing. The municipality did not have zero-rated telephone lines. This could have been an important platform for the lower-income households to communicate with the municipality as call charges and costs incurred, discourage the reporting of issues early on. The municipality does have a Facebook page but is currently not monitored and utilised effectively. The Communication and Media Liaison Officer for Kouga LM suggested that this could be used as another platform of engagement but required a dedicated person to monitor and respond to queries (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014). Complaints reach the municipality in the following ways:

- Phone calls through one of the three call centres located in Jeffrey's Bay, Humansdorp and Hankey.
- Walk-ins, i.e. citizens walk directly to the municipal offices
- Emails and formal letters (mainly in urban areas)

According to the IDP, Public participation meetings were generally well attended especially for housing delivery programmes (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017, 2019). Numerous councils have been established to improve public participation in various programmes like sport, arts and culture, tourism, heritage, and museums. The petitions committee was also established to address any petitions or complaints submitted by communities and stakeholders to ensure that these issues were adequately managed and that the appropriate actions were taken or that the necessary oversight was provided (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017).

The Kouga Municipal website is also an important communication tool that the municipality can leverage. Publications and other materials are posted frequently on the website. The

online information also includes reports and documents which the municipality is legally required to make public e.g. IDP, Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) and monthly financial reports in terms of MFMA and revenue act. Advertising tenders, notices, vacancies, media releases, municipal contact details and events, etc. are also published on the website (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017).

Lastly, Kouga conducts annual customer surveys in December. Questionnaires are available in three of the most frequently spoken languages in the municipality (i.e. Xhosa, English and Afrikaans) and made available at municipal offices or emailed to key stakeholders and made available online. The survey usually runs for four to six weeks, and the score usually received is approximately 50%. Whilst no indication was given on the number of people that participate in the survey, it was highlighted that there was usually better response from St Francis Bay and Jeffery's Bay, and that most of the forms from these areas were returned. However, there was very little response from the outlying areas and rural areas (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

#### **Dimension: Consensus orientation**

Among the platforms used for making decisions and establishing census orientation in Kouga LM were the meetings of the Ward Committee, IDP meetings, council meetings, etc.

The IDP is key in decision-making as it is used to consult with various role-players and stakeholders to identify and prioritise needs within the community. Committees review and consider these decisions, but they only have limited scope in decision-making authority. The ultimate decision-making capabilities are with the Council (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017).

#### ***7.2.1.2 Perspective: Direction***

The vision statement of Kouga Municipality was “to create a better life for its people by providing effective and efficient service delivery, enabling the sustainable harnessing of its environmental assets, supported by inclusive governance and stakeholder participation, derived from the shared values of its people and its legislated mandate” (Kouga Local Municipality, 2013 p. 14).

The municipality has since updated its vision to “Good governance though Service Excellence”, highlighting values such as service excellence, accountability and transparency, freedom and fairness, integrity, professionalism, etc. (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017, 2019).

The strategic direction of the municipality is emphasised in its IDP and provides a situational analysis of the municipality's status quo, highlighting demographics, service delivery and socio-economic trends etc. From this, Kouga LM can identify its development priorities and set its objectives and targets for the next 5-years, which includes the 5 National KPAs (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017, 2019).

In the IDP, Kouga LM highlighted the following, as its top development priorities (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017 p. 60):

- “Broaden the tax base of the municipality
- Minimise budget leakages
- Provision of quality infrastructure and basic services
- Good governance
- Capacity building
- Improve staff morale
- Improve corporate image”

## **7.2.2 Step: Process**

### **7.2.2.1 Kouga LM Workflow**

To establish the workflow processes within Kouga LM, interviews with municipal staff, the IDP and documents provided by the municipality were used. However, Kouga LM discontinued its participation in this study after the first round of Municipal Interviews. For this reason, a workflow map is not provided, and this section will outline information gleaned from the municipal interviews conducted with Kouga LM.

Complaints reached the municipality in the following ways:

- Phone calls through one of the three call centres located in Jeffrey’s Bay, Humansdorp and Hankey.
- Walk-ins, i.e. citizens walk directly to the municipal offices
- Emails and formal letters (mainly in urban areas)

Complaints were logged into a Complaints Register – it was unclear if there was a formalised system, i.e. computer aided program like Excel or some other software or a paper-based system. Once the complaint was logged, it was designated to the relevant municipal department to be resolved. According to municipal staff interviewed, there were no tracking mechanisms in place or a designated person to keep track of the progress of complaints registered to the municipality. This made providing feedback difficult and it was further highlighted during the interview, that the major challenge experienced by the municipality, was that the reporting system was inefficient at capturing and monitoring complaints. This impacted on reporting back to Provincial Government (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

At the time of conducting the interviews, Kouga LM had appointed a consulting company, Setplan, to the development and implementation of property management system using a software application called OVIO. This software would form part of the municipality’s overall operations system to streamline workflow and capture information rich data with geo-tags, i.e. complaints will be categorised into the type of faults with a GPS location and the time taken to respond to the issue. Furthermore, the OVIO system was based on a property

management system, which could link Kouga’s billing system with deeds information as well as cadastral mapping and infrastructure. A Geographical Information Systems (GIS) component was built into the application where ratepayers can access their accounts, make payments or queries online. However, at the time of conducting municipal interviews, the system design and implementation was mostly focused on the finance and invoice management of the municipality (Municipal Interviews, 2014). Details regarding the use of the software application for complaints registers were only in planning phase and it is uncertain if OVIO has been fully integrated in Kouga’s workflow processes.

The development and implementation of the OVIO software, indicates the importance of information management to Kouga LM and its information culture.

#### **7.2.2.2 Perspective: Performance**

The history of service delivery protests is an important indicator to measure and understand performance. Kouga LM has experienced a few serious service delivery protests with one protest being reported to the president’s line and another one being referred to the premier’s office. The reason for the protest was not elaborated on in the interview (Basson, 2012; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Performance management plays an important role in municipal processes as it provides oversight and indications as to how well a municipality is performing its functions or attaining its goals, as well as its progress towards improvement.

The IDP documents the municipality's priorities and actions and informs on the municipal structure, its service delivery standards, financial planning and management, and reports on its performance. Section 41 of the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) also stipulates and informs local municipalities' KPIs and performance targets. According to the legislative frameworks, Kouga must produce quarterly performance reports and an annual performance evaluation (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017, 2019).

The municipality’s PMS compromises of the KPAs set for the municipality, ensuring performance oversight through regular audits, managerial staff are held to account via performance agreements (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017, 2019).

#### **7.2.2.3 Perspective: Fairness**

*Fairness* forms apart of Kouga’s Value Statement. Various policy and legislation stipulate how municipalities are expected to conduct public participation in policy decisions, strategic programs, project planning, etc. to act in the best interests of all stakeholders. Furthermore, Kouga LM’s Management Team is responsible for developing service plans that integrate all sector strategy of the municipality. Performance is measured according to agreed indicators, analysis and regular reporting (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017). The IDP further states that “Council believes that that the strategy must be understood by the municipal leadership and officials at all levels and presented in a format accessible to all stakeholders” and that “the

political leadership, administrative leadership as well as the public must own the vision of the municipality” (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017 p. 59).

Kouga also sought transparency in its KPA's financial planning and reporting while remaining financially sustainable and having an administration committed to responsible management of public funds and enabling an environment for active Public participation transparently and efficiently (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017).

### **7.2.3 Step: Share**

Accountability and transparency are important principles for good governance. Kouga LM utilises Committee Structures to provide guidance on implementation strategies and external oversight on projects and programmes approved by Council. In its IDP, Kouga LM outlined its commitment to public participation and a Communication Strategy to promote the continued interaction between the municipality and various stakeholders. By employing this communication strategy, the municipality makes its website accessible, uses the Facebook page to enhance communication, and promotes its general outreach program (Imbizos) at least twice a year (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017).

Kouga's “Levels of Involvement” (see Figure 75 above) explain how it consolidated development efforts using IDP processes to combine municipal and other stakeholders' efforts (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017). Broader community participation was promoted by utilising various communication channels and mechanisms.

According to the 2017 IDP, the municipality regards the website as an essential communication tool, often updated to publish various information. Kouga LM posts material legally required to share, like official reports and documents, the IDP, monthly finance reports and budgets, tender notices, vacancies, municipal by-laws, etc. (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017).

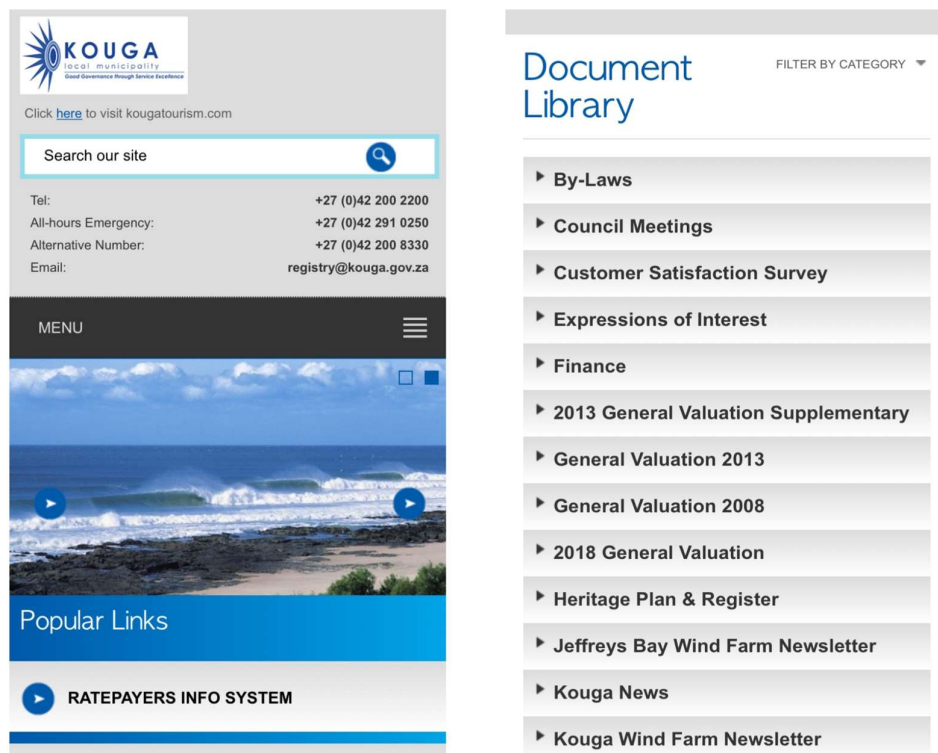


Figure 7-6 Screen shot of Kouga LM's municipal website and documents published

## 7.2.4 Step: Output

Good governance was a top development priority for Kouga LM. The municipality outlined how it envisioned to achieve good governance by seeking close partnerships with its communities and stakeholders and be a more responsive, accountable, effective, and efficient municipality. Kouga LM's strategy was to ensure that there are functional committee systems to provide both external and internal oversight, provide guidance on implementation and monitor decisions made by Council. Media and communication also played a role to ensure that information was accessible and shared with the broader community (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2017).

Kouga also set KPAs designed to enhance service delivery and improve institutional performance, monitoring and evaluation, access to information, and service quality and ensure that the municipality was financially sustainable and accountable to all stakeholders. (Kouga Local Municipality, 2012, 2013, 2017).

Comparing the IDPs over the five years (IDP published in 2012 to 2017) showed that Kouga LM has made improvements to achieve the goals and targets it set out for itself. However, it was difficult to confirm how satisfied customers were with Kouga LM's performance or perceived how the municipality was performing.

Table 7-4 and Table 7-5 consider the IVC barriers and enablers for Kouga LM (Forlee & Rivett, 2015).

Table 7-4 IVC Barriers experienced by Kouga LM

<b>GENERAL BARRIERS</b>	
<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Description</b>
Skills	The municipality lacked skilled or accredited staff to properly maintain and ensure the quality service delivery
Customer service	No interviews with the community were conducted thus no input on community perceptions and satisfaction could be made.
Multiple sources of information	Information was primarily reported telephonically, by e-mail, or formal letters. Integrating all these information sources into a central register became a necessity.
Tracking mechanisms	No tracking mechanisms were implemented to keep track of reports/ complaints and their progress or performance
Municipal capacity	Kouga LM has a large area that it needs to provide services to with relatively remote areas that are difficult to reach. There were few skilled staff, funding, and resources to provide quality services.

Table 7-5 IVC Enablers experienced by Kouga LM

<b>GENERAL ENABLERS</b>	
<b>Enabler</b>	<b>Description</b>
Satellite offices	Kouga LM also had satellite offices to offer community members a convenient form of engaging with the municipality.
Information sources	Citizens had access to various communication tools and could select their preferred method to contact the municipality. This did result in multiple information sources, but collating this data made information and workflow easier.
Communication strategy and platforms	Kouga LM had a communication strategy to improve its public participation. The municipality has an active website

	and a Facebook page, which has not been used to maximum benefit.
Financial and performance reporting	Kouga LM publishes official documents to its website and does publish financial and performance reports as required by legislation.

Kouga LM had initiated the development of software, OVIO, to streamline its workflow process and collate information to a central database. This was assumed to be a potential enabler but could not be studied further as the progress and implementation of the software was unknown. It should also be noted that the software was mainly for finance and billing with plans to roll out a complaint register later (Kouga Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

### 7.2.5 Analysis

Kouga LM could not arrange focus groups for the participation group interviews portion of the study and no longer participated in the study, after the first round of municipal interviews. Consequently, the score from the Analytical Rubric for the municipality is 14 out of the maximum 40 points (35%), which is very low (refer to Figure 7-7) but does not reflect the full perspective of the municipality. This score merely reflects the information that was available to be used in the evaluation and analysis of the municipality from the first round of Municipal interviews and other documents (e.g. IDP, IDP reviews, reports, and municipal website.). Refer to Section 2.5 for the discussion on the analytical rubric and scoring method.

#### **Step: Input**

Kouga LM scored 8 out of 14 for the “Input” section of the Rubric.

- a) Public participation – Kouga LM does have a Public Participation Policy that meets the minimum requirements set out in the *Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation*. However, little information on ward meetings and community feedback could be used to verify the processes of the municipality.
- b) Consensus orientation – No information on consensus orientation could be verified via documents or with community members, therefore, a zero score was allocated.
- c) Strategic Vision - From the IDP for Kouga LM, the mission statement and vision for the municipality was presented in its introduction. The national KPAs and other indicators were also recorded in the IDP with monitoring and evaluation tools to track progress made.



**Step: Process**

Kouga LM scored 4 out of 14 points for the “Process” section.

- a) Responsiveness – Kouga LM could not be evaluated on its responsiveness as no participation group interviews or documents could be used to corroborate the information gathered from the first-round municipal interviews.
- b) Effective and efficient – According to Kouga LM, ward councillors and traditional leaders were used as additional resources. No evaluation could be made on the effectiveness and efficiency of the municipality.
- c) Equity – Kouga LM had satellite offices in the following areas – Loerie, Hankey, Patensie and St Francis Bay to ensure accessibility.
- d) Rule of law – The processes and legislation to be complied with are outlined in the municipal IDP.

**Step: Share**

2 out of 6 points were awarded to Kouga LM for the “Share” section of the rubric.

- a) Information Sharing – The Kouga LM website is a good information source to access information from the municipality. Most documents are published on the website as well as departmental information and contact numbers. However, it is unknown how often community members accessed the website or if they had access to the Internet to access the website.

**Step: Output**

Kouga LM score zero for the “Output” section.

- a) Accountability – Although Kouga LM had various tools in place for accountability, the municipality could not be evaluated on accountability without feedback from participation group interviews. Kouga LM did mention their plans to roll out a complaints management system which would improve their response times. This system could not be considered as part of the study as Kouga LM no longer participated.

Kouga Municipality

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Criteria	Weighted score	Score	
Input	Legitimacy and voice	Public Participation	Municipality has a Public Participation Policy that meets minimum requirements set out in <i>Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation</i>	2	2	
			Ward committees are active and ward meetings are held at least quarterly. (Municipal Structures Act)	2	1	
			Community members have knowledge of the IDP and municipal structure	2	0	
	Consensus Orientation			The Municipality consults and includes community in policy/ decision-making for projects/ policy at various levels. (White Paper on Local Government, Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	1
				Community members have an active voice and participate in decision-making processes e.g. IDP forum or community project, etc.	2	0
				The Municipality has a mission/ vision statement that is outlined in the IDP. (Municipal Systems Act)	2	2
				The Municipality makes progress by monitoring and evaluating their progress towards achieving the KPAs outlined in their IDP.	2	2
	Direction			The Municipality is responsive to reported issues/ complaints/ queries (Batho Pele, National Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation)	2	0
				Municipality keeps community informed/ provides feedback on issues/ complaints (Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	0
				Municipality's customer service is well rated by the community	2	0
Performance	Effective and efficient		Municipal Contact numbers are well published and community members know who to contact/ how to make contact with the relevant municipal department. (Batho Pele, Municipal Systems Act)	2	0	

Step	Perspective	Dimension	Criteria	Weighted score	Score
Process	Fairness	Equity	Ward councillors, CDWs and community leaders used as additional resources (Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Systems Act)	2	1
			Municipality has satellite offices to ensure accessibility to all communities (Batho Pele, Municipal Systems Act)	2	1
Share	Transparency	Information sharing	Municipality uses the legal frameworks stipulated by policy and legislation (e.g. MSA, Batho Pele, etc.)	2	2
			IDP, Service delivery performance reports, financial, municipal website, etc. are accessible (Municipal Systems Act, Batho Pele)	2	2
Output	Accountability	Accountability	Municipality uses a variety of communication platforms and languages	2	0
			Community members access published information from the municipality	2	0
Output	Accountability	Accountability	Municipal departments can be held accountable and responsible for outcomes	2	0
			Mechanisms implemented to encourage public participation (e.g. report, compliment, critique, etc.)	2	0
Total	Percentage		Community members feel that the municipality listens to the communities and is transparent	2	0
			<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>14</b>
				<b>35%</b>	

Figure 7-7 Analytical Rubric for Kouga LM

### 7.3 Kou-Kamma Local Municipality

A brief situational analysis of the municipality will be provided and then the findings discussed under the various IVC headings.

Some of the challenges that the municipality faced are discussed below (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014):

- The municipality experienced financial constraints as the area is relatively poor with a high unemployment rate and indigent population. Kou-Kamma LM had to reprioritise projects and expenditures as the revenue collection was low, and affordable capital/borrowing availability had decreased significantly.
- Settlements are scattered, and this posed another challenge for the municipality to provide infrastructure and basic service like water, water, sanitation, and electricity, etc.
- The municipality has to ensure an adequate supply of water to a growing population due to migrant labour.
- Aged and poorly maintained infrastructure requires constant repair.
- Critical vacancies in departments had intensified the need for more staff and skilled professionals needed within the municipality to run efficiently and effectively.

#### 7.3.1 Step: Input

The Municipal and participation group interviews were used with Kou-Kamma's IDP to establish the municipality's communication strategy. At the time of the interviews, the municipality was writing up its communication strategy and this section highlights some of the tools used as communication channels within the municipality, as well as the public participation processes.

##### *7.3.1.1 Perspective: Legitimacy and Voice*

##### **Dimension: Public participation**

Kou-Kamma LM has six wards with each ward committee comprising of ten ward councillors and CDWs. The ward committee policy was approved and adopted by the council on 14 July 2011. From the interviews conducted with the municipality, ward committees meet with their ward councillors monthly, and community meetings were held quarterly. The community meetings were open to anyone and provided a platform for service delivery discussion where people could voice their issues and concerns and the municipality could also report on their budgets, targets for the year, implementation strategies, etc. (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017). Community meetings are important to the municipality as feedback and is often used as a measure of service delivery and can become objectives for the municipality in its IDP.

A PPO was appointed within the municipality with the purpose of restoring the function of ward committees and ward councillors and to enhance Public Participation within the municipality (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017).

Kou-Kamma LM utilised the public participation guidelines prescribed in national and provincial legislation e.g. the Constitution, Batho Pele, Municipal Systems Act, etc. The municipality also adopted a methodology of public participation that suited their specific needs, to work more effectively with communities. Council approved these adaptations, and the new strategies would be reviewed annually with the IDP. Furthermore, Kou-Kamma LM utilised various platforms to engage, namely (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017):

**Table 7-6 Engagement platforms in Kou-Kamma LM**

<b>Engagement platform</b>	<b>Description</b>
IDP Representative Forum	The mayor chairs the stakeholder engagement forum, which represents the broader community. This forum aims to assist the development of the IDP by identifying the needs and priorities of the community.
Mayoral Imbizo	This is community engagement led by the mayor, intended to assist communities raise concerns with the municipality and to assist developing the IDP.
Ward Committee or Community Meetings	Ward committees are necessary engagement tools that help to expedite service delivery. Ward committees play a role throughout the IDP development process. Ward committee meetings are held monthly.
Local Stakeholders	Stakeholders consist of various groups from the community and raise issues concerning the sectors that they represent, e.g. rate payers' associations, religious groups, etc.
Intergovernmental Forum	The Intergovernmental Relations Forum is a quarterly gathering where the municipality can interact with the mayor and other government departments to exchange ideas on projects. These inputs form part of the Departments. The inputs become relevant in the formulation of the IDP.
Media Institutions and Platforms	Municipalities utilise media and social media platforms to enhance communication and increase access to engagement opportunities. This includes radio, newspapers, pamphlets, etc. and social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

Other mechanisms to ensure Good governance and Public participation within the municipality have been implemented such as (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2019 p.52):

- “Audit Committee Functions and Performance in terms of Section 166 of the MFMA
- Internal audits and review function
- Risk Management (Risk-Based Management Strategy, Risk-Based Profile and Register)
- Performance Management System (Contracts, Plans, Assessments and Reviews)”

During interviews conducted with the municipality, the Communications Officer cited that the municipality was in the process of developing and implementing a Communication Policy. In this policy, public engagement would focus on incorporating the outcomes of citizen participation, including workshops, public exhibitions, public debates and discourses in the media, and any other means to promote direct involvement through different mechanisms. This includes all procedures of public participation that allow stakeholders to contribute to the development of spatial plans, policies, land use schemes and measures for development applications, and all courses for updating existing plans (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Table 7-6 shows the various platforms of engagement or communication channels employed by the municipality, but the most popular communication platform was dependent on the Community members, the areas they resided in and the resources at their disposal. Residents that had ease of access to the municipality and preferred person-to-person interaction would go to the municipal offices to engage, while farmers or more affluent residents would use their most convenient platform - technology (e.g. phone call, email, etc.). Kou-Kamma LM had satellite offices to improve access to the municipality and community members could report issues to the designated staff, who would then contact the relevant departments.

The dynamic in this municipality was interesting as Kou-Kamma LM had previously been placed under administration (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2009). Considering Section 139 of the South African Constitution, when a municipality cannot fulfil its role or obligations to the people it serves, the provincial authority may intervene and take appropriate steps to fulfil the obligations of the local municipality (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The result of this was that the municipality implemented strong community liaisons and ensured public participation mechanisms were in place. The Public Participations Officer was well respected in the communities, and people chose to contact him directly if they wished to raise issues. Some residents felt comfortable enough to communicate directly with the Municipal Manager and in some cases, the mayor, whilst most communities interacted with their ward councillors. The Public Communications Coordinator was also a well-respected member of the community (local pastor), who frequently acted as an interpreter during meetings. The main languages in Kou-Kamma LM are Afrikaans and Xhosa (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2016, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

According to municipal staff, councillors and CDWs, from the municipal interviews, some wards were better organised with stakeholder forums and capable of handling their own community issues as there were prominent community leaders that could communicate and articulate community issues with ward councillors or the municipality (Municipal Interviews, 2014). Other communities needed more encouragement and organisation. Information was not necessarily about complaining or reporting issues, but how the municipality could facilitate the conditions that could improve livelihoods within communities.

### **Dimension: Consensus Orientation**

Similarly, to Ndlambe LM, Kou-Kamma LM achieved consensus orientation through community meetings with municipal staff and ward councillors or by utilising the IDP consultation processes to identify priorities and find solutions.

The PPO was responsible for conducting the public participation process for any project that requires input from the community. The PPO would communicate with the Public Communications Coordinator, ward councillors and CDWs to inform them of the project and information was shared with the local stakeholders at meetings or information sessions. The local stakeholders could also provide inputs to help inform the municipality of their needs and concerns before any decision was taken (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

#### ***7.3.1.2 Perspective: Direction***

Kou-Kamma LM's vision cites the following: "To strive to be a dynamic and responsibly governed area which has an integrated, competitive and sustainable economy to better the urban and rural livelihoods of its communities" (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017 p. 12). Similarly, its mission is to "be a local municipality in which delivery and access to quality services creates an environment in which all citizens can prosper through socio-economic upliftment and accountable governance. It further depicts the purpose of existence of the Kou-Kamma LM and how it seeks to create its relationship with the customers, local community and other related stakeholders in delivering its mandate of a developmental Local Government." (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017 p. 12)

Chapter 4 of the IDP, outlined the strategic objectives and overall direction for the municipality, which included the 5 national KPAs. Chapter 4 referred to this as "Development priorities and projects", which summarised the municipality's extended view for the next 15 years, the tactical objectives and priorities to be aligned with the national objectives (KPAs) and the following frameworks (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017, 2019 p. 45):

- "Sustainable Development Goals
- National Development Plan
- Spatial Land Use and Management Act
- Provincial Growth and Development Plan

- IDP Framework of Sarah Baartman District Municipality and
- Local Government Strategic Agenda in line with the Back-to-Basics philosophy”

### 7.3.2 Step: Process

This section will discuss the workflow process of Kou-Kamma LM and how it relates to its KPAs. Municipal and institutional development and transformation (KPA 2) is one of the five national KPAs set by national government and an important indicator to determine how Kou-Kamma LM shared information, how responsive the municipality was to the challenges it faced and how efficiently and effectively it utilised its resources (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017, 2019).

#### 7.3.2.1 Kou-Kamma LM Workflow

The best platform of engagement within Kou-Kamma LM was at the monthly ward committee meetings as there was a good relationship amongst the ward councillors, the municipality, and the community. Most complaints were communicated directly to the PPO, ward councillor, the municipal manager or the mayor as community members felt comfortable to do so. Most municipal staff members, ward councillors and CDWs agreed that the ward committee system was effective and worked well for Kou-Kamma LM. Refer to Figure 7-8 below, which depicts the workflow process for Kou-Kamma LM (Community Interviews, 2015; Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Issues or complaints not raised in ward meetings, were usually reported at the municipal offices via telephone, email, etc. Walk-ins were also the most common means of reporting a complaint. Once a complaint was made, a job card was created and sent to the relevant department. A scenario of water and sanitation service delivery, the Water Resources Manager, along with his team is responsible for handling complaints. Issues are usually prioritised on the extent and impact that they have in communities, otherwise incidents are handled on a first come-first serve basis. Kou-Kamma LM also had satellite offices in each ward, where community members could also lodge complaints with a designated staff member, who would then create a job card and contact the relevant department. There was also an existing 24-hour “service call centre”, to deal with customers complains after hours (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). This “call centre” was merely a dedicated phone number that was used in case of emergencies, however the number was not toll free and consequently inaccessible to community members who could not afford to call the line (Community Interviews, 2015; Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

One challenge with the workflow process within Kou-Kamma was that staff did not feel that the system was as effective as it could have been. Satellite staff had to report complaints to the main municipal offices and could not update or record complaints directly. Feedback was only provided upon enquiry, and this also discouraged community members from reporting again, as they eventually lost interest when they felt that there was no progress. Municipal staff acknowledged that providing feedback to customers was one area that needed

improvement. Communication and feedback should also have accommodated the vastness and rural conditions of the area, as customers could not always access municipal officers or satellite offices directly (Community Interviews, 2015; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

At the time of the interviews, it was difficult to determine how job cards (the complaints lodged) were recorded as there was no formal complaints register and no tracking mechanisms were used.

Even though the communication within the municipality seemed effective, the communication officer still expressed wishes to provide more platforms that would make communication more convenient, like incorporating SMS, email, and social media platforms such as Facebook.

Figure 7-8 (below) highlights the three chains, A, B and C, which describes different forms of engagement and workflow.

1. Chain A represents the interaction between the municipality and the community for immediate response.
2. Chain B represents municipal process with community engagement for strategic planning.
3. Chain C represents the relationship with the municipality and service providers when the municipality is unable to provide a specific service. There is usually very little community engagement in this chain.



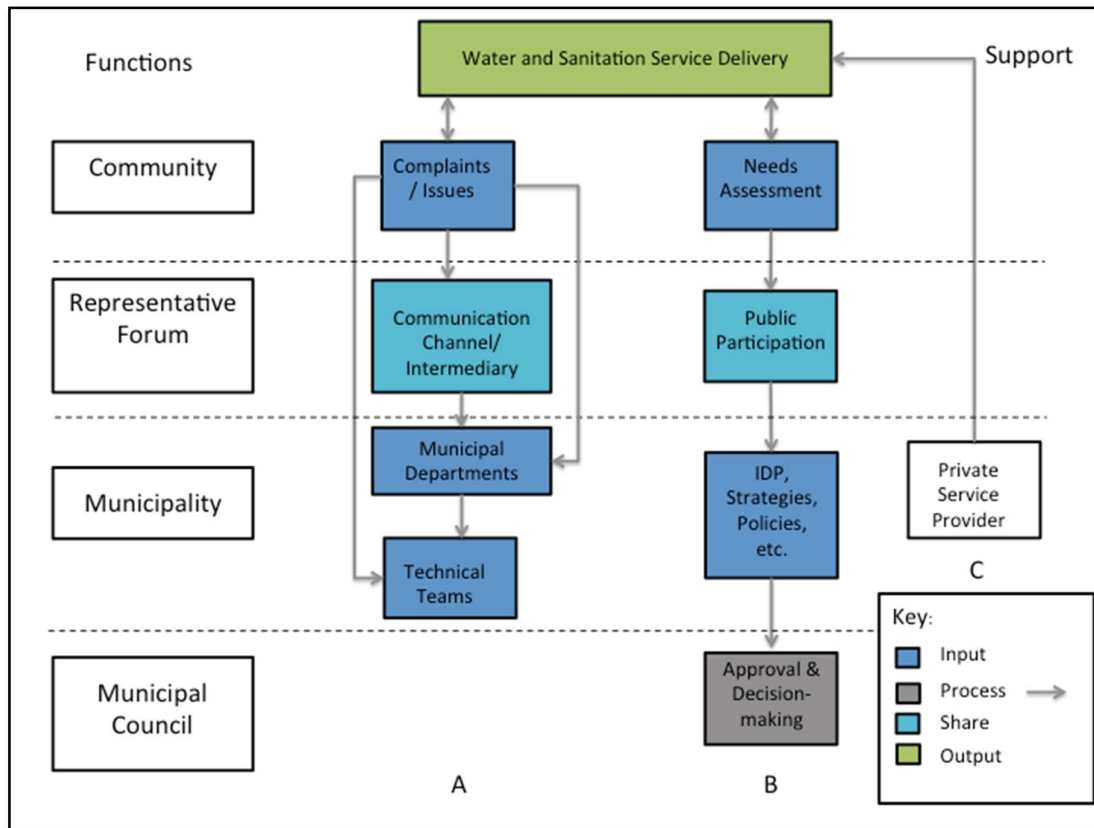


Figure 7-8 Kou-Kamma LM workflow process (Rivett et al., 2018)

Differing methods of engagement were also observed in different social classes. Ward councillors seemed to be more utilised in low-income areas, while affluent areas were more confident in their rights and communicated through resident associations or other independent bodies. Affluent residents also had more resources at their disposal and could gain access to the municipality using a variety of methods, such as the Internet, email and the telephone or pay to have the issue resolved (Forlee & Rivett, 2015). The low-income demographic relied on traditional communication channels that were considered to be the most economical and convenient such as interacting with the elected representative or a technical team working in their area or as a last resort, calling the municipality or personally visiting the municipal offices (Municipal Interviews, 2014). Other informational inputs came from different municipal departments, like the finance department, where most residents associated the finance department as a direct communication channel for the municipality e.g. a customer complained to the finance department that their water bill is too high and the finance department would ask the technical team to investigate scenarios like a faulty water meter, etc. The technical departments were also sources of information as they worked in the communities and had more contact with residents or knowledge from past experiences, for example, maintenance schedules (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012).

Chain A represents a simplistic daily process of workflow in Kou-Kamma LM, where complaints or queries are communicated through one of the many engagement channels (e.g. walking into the municipal office, ward councillor, telephone, etc.), captured in a complaint's register and the technical team is sent to resolve the issue. The holistic process was not fully addressed during the municipal interviews and regarding the actual complaints register, it is still unclear what system is used as a logbook, e.g. software, Excel spreadsheet, etc. The municipal interviews highlighted that the current system was not effective as technical staff did not always adhere to the first come-first-serve policy and selected incidents that were most convenient for them to respond to. This often resulted in a disorganised complaints register (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012).

Chain B represents the formal structure that the municipality is mandated to provide. From the IDP, "public inputs called on the municipality to strengthen the link between the IDP and Budget to achieve objectives." – Mayor/ Councillor Samuel Vuso (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017, 2019, pg. 9).

The objectives that are relevant to this study are to:

- Develop ICT skills
- Implement IT Governance – a policy framework for corporate methods and internal controls to support IT services i.e. improve business operations and prioritise project requests

These objectives speak to information culture within Kou-Kamma LM as the municipality recognised the importance of information management, and that upskilling staff was important in the processes of collecting, analysing, and understanding information.

Chain C considers all the external sources of capacity that provide services to the municipality e.g. consultants who help draft strategies, contractors, etc. These processes are harder to track since they function almost separately from the municipal workflow and feed in where necessary. It is important to note that this chain does contribute to municipal capacity and its capability to deliver services, however, for this research, its contribution was not considered.

Furthermore, the municipality stated that although unstructured and informal, the current method of lodging complaints and resolving issues worked relatively well. However, it did have its challenges:

- The response rate was dependent on the type of fault reported and the availability of technical staff (which is understaffed).
- The seasonal activities of tourism and agriculture often affected the municipality's work and resources. For example, December is peak holiday season and the municipality experiences an influx of people, which places further demand on services like water provision, sanitation, etc.

- Geographical fault reports, for example, the Langekloof area experienced issues around water availability and in Tsitsikamma, the main problem was water quality.

### 7.3.2.2 *Perspective: Performance*

Kou-Kamma LM has a complex history of experiencing numerous service delivery protests and it has only been over recent years that the area has had some stability. The reason for the stability cannot be commented on, as this is outside of the scope of this study.

Legislative requirements (e.g. Constitution) emphasise performance management as a necessity for an “accountable government”(Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2019). As mentioned previously in Section 7.1.2.2 performance is measured in four phases. Kou-Kamma LM’s phases are similar to Ndlambe LM and listed below:

1. Planning – setting KPIs
2. Setting quantifiable performance targets
3. Monitoring the performance and annually reviewing any progress
4. Taking actions to improve performance and establish a process of regular reporting

The IDP, SDBIP, performance agreements and setting targets and indicators all form part of the Kou-Kamma LM’s performance framework. The municipality has implemented a PMS with the Municipal Public Accounting Committee (MPAC) responsible for oversight functions and reporting on municipal performance (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017).

Local and district government uses Customer Satisfaction Surveys as a method to assess municipal performance. These surveys are distributed annually, and the percentage of satisfied customers has increased over the past three years, with 70-80% of people indicating that they are happy with the services provided by Kou-Kamma LM. Initially, there was a small community in Joubertina, that was unreceptive and felt that the services rendered were not satisfactory, but gradually this had changed. The surveys were available for collection from the municipal offices, but Kou-Kamma LM also conducted these surveys door-to-door to ensure better response. The surveys also accommodated various language preferences so that people were free to answer in their home language (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Kou-Kamma LM aimed to increase the percentage of satisfied customers until it reached a 95% satisfaction rate within the next five years. However, the municipality still faced numerous challenges regarding service delivery and referred to itself as a “maintenance type municipality”. The municipality highlighted some of its challenges:

#### 1. Ageing infrastructure and maintenance

One of the major challenges that Kou-Kamma LM faces regarding their water supply system, is the ageing infrastructure. Most the pipes were either clay or asbestos cement and without the proper maintenance, these pipes tend to crack or burst easily,

which also accounted for most of the water losses or disruptions. The municipality also initiated a leak detection and refurbishment plan to replace the pipes, but this was dependent on the availability of funds (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

## 2. Water quality and supply

Water quality is another challenge that the municipality faces. Although progress has been made in terms of water quality, Kou-Kamma LM struggled in complying with the Blue Drop criteria and ranked in the bottom three in the province, as far as Blue Drop status was concerned, with a mere 22% compliance rate. Though there were improvements compared to previous years, the municipality still needed to dedicate resources to ensure further improvement (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017). Furthermore, the water quality was linked to the water supply, ageing infrastructure and the number of qualified personnel which was insufficient, to ensure water quality standards met the criteria. There are 12 communities within the municipality that required dedicated personnel to attend to operational monitoring (this included water provision, testing, etc.) (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

An appointed person is responsible for collecting monthly water samples throughout the municipality. The samples are sent to the National Water Services department for analysis and the results are sent to the municipality's technical department for the necessary adjustments or improvements. Due to the shortage of senior technicians, community-based staff often worked unsupervised. The municipality had identified the need for training, to improve the skills and competency of water operators.

Agriculture and tourism are key economic activities in Kou-Kamma LM, and the municipality struggled to ensure sufficient water supply to meet the demands of these sectors. Kou-Kamma LM is the second largest producer of agriculture (citrus fruit, dairy and forestry) for South Africa's export market. Consequently, the municipality must find a solution to balance economic interests with the basic services that they are constitutionally mandated to provide. The existing infrastructure was intended to serve a smaller population and limited funds available for upgrading. Alternative strategies were implemented and this included storage facilities to store water as well as an agreement with the municipality and irrigation board, an external body, to supply the additional water demand that the municipality could not meet. (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017, 2019)

## 3. Education

As mentioned above, agriculture is a primary economic activity for Kou-Kamma LM, which provides seasonal employment with little occupational reward. There are few schools within the municipal area, and the long commute to the schools make them inaccessible. For example, there are only two schools in Kareedouw and no schools in

the Tsitsikamma area. Limited transport deterred scholars from attending and thus resulted in a high drop-out rate. This impacts the future work force as people then tend to seek employment that requires lower skills. (Municipal Interviews, 2014)

4. Limited human resources

Kou-Kamma LM is rated as Grade 1 and is thus regarded as one of the smallest municipalities in South Africa. Since there are only about 160 municipal staff members and 12 councillors for the area, staff must perform multiple functions. Understaffing was continually cited as a reason for the municipality's underperformance with respect to providing core functions and employees felt overworked. Providing higher levels of service, requires competent and qualified staff, however, the low levels of education in the area limited how the municipality could fill positions of supervisors and managers (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017).

Population migration out of Kou-Kamma LM also affected the municipality as there had been a significant drop in the size of the population - skilled and younger people left the area to seek better prospects elsewhere. This created another challenge for the municipality as it would face an ageing population, with young people leaving and little incentive to return. (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014)

5. Limited funding

Funding constraints was also cited as a limitation to performance and quality of services provided. Revenue collection posed a challenge as the municipality's recovery rate was estimated to be about 50% due to the number of registered indigent households that needed to receive basic services. The IDP stated that the municipality had implemented strategies to optimise revenue collection, but no specific information was provided to elaborate on these plans (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

6. Vandalism and theft

Vandalism and theft are social problems that the municipality often faces. For example, steel pipes for water reticulation had been stolen which affected water supply to households' sanitation; service delivery was affected when diesel tankers were stolen, or municipal property was destroyed during protests. The money that would have been spent on maintenance or upgrades was reprioritised to replace damaged or stolen property (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

## 7. Accessibility

To grow the tourism and agricultural industries in Kou-Kamma LM, access to the area is essential. However, the road networks are poor and improving access would benefit the municipality as well as the local economy.

### **7.3.3 Step: Share**

*Transparency* and *Accountability* are values that Kou-Kamma LM included in its IDP, and information sharing played a key role to ensure that these values were met. The information sharing platforms used by Kou-Kamma LM to communicate and share information with the public were: public notice boards, loud hailing, community radio and local newspapers. Municipal staff acknowledged that notices or print media seemed to be the most ineffective form of information sharing, as a large portion of the community ignored this due to the high levels of illiteracy. Consequently, information sharing relied heavily on formal structures like the public meetings or through ward councillors. Loud hailing seemed to be more popular and the most effective method to make public announcements, but community members stated that this limited interaction with the municipality and often they could not hear the full broadcasts.

The geographical dispersion of some communities within the municipality's jurisdiction presented a challenge, as the vast distances affected Kou-Kamma LM's accessibility to the communities and hampered effective engagement processes. The satellite offices were poised to be the solution to this issue, however, some residents felt that preferential treatment was given to communities closer to the municipal offices and regarded lack of feedback as evidence (Community Interviews, 2015; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

The municipality further identified and expressed the need to utilise alternative communication mechanisms that could be more accessible, efficient, and cost effective. The IT manager and Communications Officer had already identified using and integrating social media platforms, like Facebook and other electronic means (e.g. radio, SMS, etc.). The Communications Officer further expressed the need for a communication platform that was accessible to a variety of customers and/or community members, that considered age, income group, etc. For example, an elderly person preferred to receive feedback via phone call rather than Facebook (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2019; Municipal Interviews, 2014).

Kou-Kamma LM does have an active website where official documents are published such as IDPs, financial reports and municipal budgets, performance reports and evaluations, by-laws, notices, etc. Figure 7-9 shows the municipal website and some of the documents published online.

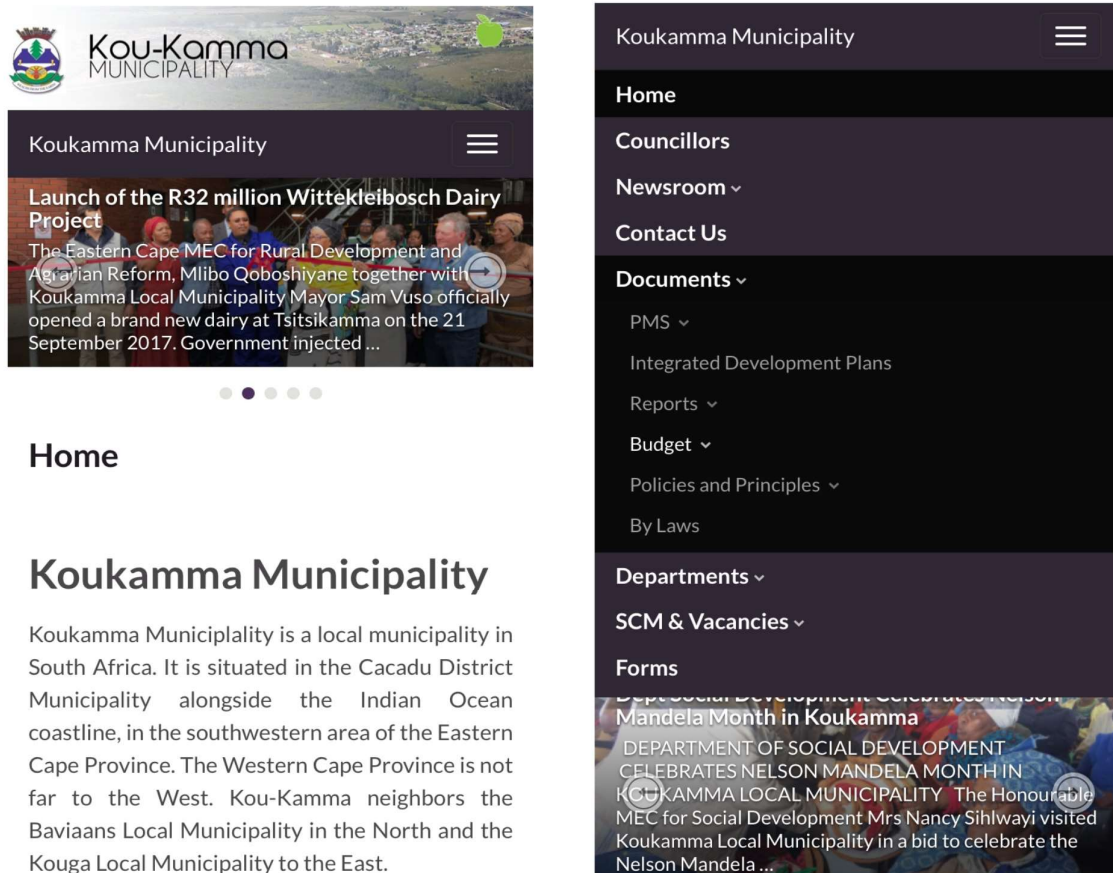


Figure 7-9 Screenshot of Kou-Kamma LM's municipal website and documents published

Budgetary constraints limited the municipality's options in updating the way it communicated with customers and/or community members. It was difficult to keep up with the latest technology and the level of IT skills was also considered to be low, as the municipality struggled to attract the necessary skills to the area (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

A barrier to information sharing was uniting all government domains to work together flawlessly. It was a challenge to report critical planning projects, programs, and data based on collated and shared information by all three spheres of government. Officials spent time and effort in managing, consolidating, interpreting and reporting information, which often occurred in departmental silos and could further be attributed to poor systems, poor reliability of reporting and lack of understanding the processes, to share information (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017).

Using water quality as an example, Kou-Kamma LM made improvements regarding its water quality, however the municipality struggled to comply with the Blue and Green Drop criteria. The Blue Drop and Green Drop scores are published on the National Department of Water's website, before Kou-Kamma LM published the results on the municipal website. The municipality had considered publishing the Blue Drop and Green Drop findings in their

community centres and on their website, to improve access to information about water quality (Municipal Interviews, 2014). However, upon visiting the municipal website on numerous occasions, no information about water quality, Blue or Green Drop has been published. Furthermore, legislation such as the Municipal Systems Act and Municipal Finance Management Act requires municipalities to report on financial and operating reports of departments, service delivery reporting through the SDBIP reports, performance evaluation and evaluation reports as well as project and incident reports, etc. Figure 7-10 shows the SDBIP reporting process as presented in Kou-Kamma's IDP (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2019 p. 207).

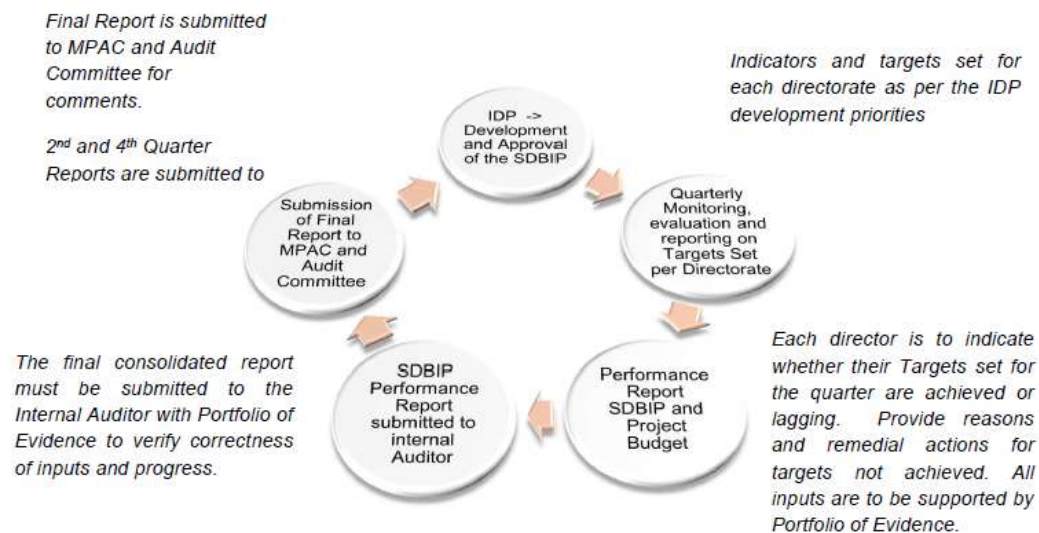


Figure 7-10 SDBIP Quarterly reporting process

As part of the new Water and Sanitation Services Department structure, Kou-Kamma LM prioritized education, communication and liaison with customers as critical strategic issues. Comprehensive plans addressed water conservation, pollution, and payment habits. For example, a water wise campaign was implemented in 2017, which targeted schools within the municipality, to educate children to save water. The premise was that children took what they learnt at school to educate parents and this would be a more effective way to implement the campaign in households (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017).

### 7.3.4 Step: Output

Legislation and various policy directives require that Kou-Kamma LM report on finances, performance, and operating activities to ensure an open, transparent, and accountable government. This also meant that documenting decision-making processes and sharing this information with all stakeholders, built confidence between communities and the municipality. Good governance was a top priority for Kou-Kamma LM to promote accountability and transparency which was also set as a KPA objective in its IDP.



The IDP sets out the municipality's 5-year strategic plan, as it identified the needs and goals of both the communities and the municipality. Kou-Kamma's long term vision was set for the next 15 years with the strategic objectives and priorities aligned to each 5-year term of Council. These objectives were anchored to the Sustainable Development Goals, National Development Plan, Provincial Growth and Development Plan, IDP Framework of the Sarah Baartman District Municipality and the Local Government Strategic Agenda, as well as municipal development priorities like ICT Governance, improving performance and oversight, human resource development, etc. (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2017).

Reporting performance information was the main outcome for municipalities and government organisations, i.e. private industry and civil society could benefit from a wide range of government-collected data. Policy documents helped the municipality determine its baseline targets and the IDP determined priorities and specified performance indicators. Once Council approved and adopted the IDP, targets were set with planned municipal budgets. The annual reports were used to report on progress made against the plans and budgets set out in the IDP (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2012, 2017; Republic of South Africa: Department of National Treasury, 2013).

Finding alternative performance indicators that can be made more accessible and used to report on accountability has been a challenge. The Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information (FMPPi) stipulates that in promoting transparency and accountability, the institution responsible for gathering and producing information should be the institution that publishes the information (Republic of South Africa: Department of National Treasury, 2013).

The following barriers and enablers were identified by utilising the IVC framework (Forlee & Rivett, 2015):

Table 7-7 IVC barriers experienced by Kou-Kamma LM

<b>GENERAL BARRIERS</b>	
<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Description</b>
Skills	Kou-Kamma LM acknowledged that staff lacked skills needed to perform tasks efficiently and effectively.
Customer service	Due to a lack of technical knowledge, both customers and the municipality acknowledged that municipal staff could not fully assist and could occasionally be unapproachable.
Roles of staff	A complaints management team needs to be able to manage complaints and queries.
Unsure of who to contact	In many cases, customers utilized the emergency number since they were unsure of who to contact directly.
Multiple sources of information	Phone calls, emails, formal letters, word-of-mouth from CDWs and ward councillors, and walk-ins were the most common reporting methods. An integrated register that incorporates all these sources was required. .
Tracking mechanisms	There were no tracking mechanisms
Municipal capacity	Municipal staff were concerned about how efficiently they could respond to complaints
Outsourcing	Some skills were outsourced, e.g. IT department and environmental officers

Table 7-8 IVC enablers experienced by Kou-Kamma LM

GENERAL ENABLERS	
Enabler	Description
Satellite offices	Kou-Kamma LM had satellite offices that provided convenient and accessible locations for community members and especially accommodated the elderly who preferred personal interaction. Communication between these offices and the municipality was crucial for the flow of information.
Willingness to cooperate	The development of a communication strategy showed a commitment to improving.
Information sources	By utilising multiple sources of information, citizens were able to choose their preferred method of communication. It was challenging to organize and gather data, but it was easier to access information and streamline workflow once compiled.
Communication strategy and platforms	Kou-Kamma LM had a communication policy to improve its public participation and the way it communicated and shared information. Social media platforms like Facebook were also suggested as a potential communication tool.
Financial and performance reporting	Kou-Kamma LM also complied with legislation and policy frameworks by publishing financial and performance reports to promote accountability and transparency.

### 7.3.5 Analysis

The analysis for Kou-Kamma LM was supported by the communities of Joubertina and Kareedouw. Kou-Kamma LM scored 34 out of the maximum 40 points (85%) on the Analytical Rubric. This is a very high score, especially considering the challenges that the municipality faced and that it had been placed under administration. Refer to Section 2.5 discusses the analytical rubric and the scoring approach used in the sections below.

#### **Step: Input**

For the “Input” section of the Analytical Rubric, Kou-Kamma LM scored 11 out of the 14 points. This section covers the *Legitimacy and Voice* and *Direction* of the municipality.

- a) Public participation – Kou-Kamma LM’s public participation Policy was modified to suit its needs but still met the minimum requirements set out in the *Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation*. Both municipal and community respondents acknowledged that ward meetings occurred regularly, with community participants’ responding that meetings were held at convenient times for community members to attend and in their preferred language. Interviewees also indicated that they attended the ward meetings to keep themselves informed, but also stated that they would prefer meetings to be held more frequently.
- b) Consensus orientation – In Joubertina, all community members interviewed said that they were familiar with the municipal structure and knew about the municipality’s IDP. All interviewees also responded that they had read the IDP and participated in its development. However, in Kareedouw (administrative centre for the municipality) only a few members reported that they were familiar with the municipal structure and fewer knew about the IDP, had read the document, or had participated in its development.
- c) Strategic Vision - The mission statement and vision for the municipality was presented in its introduction. The national KPAs and other goals set by the municipality were also recorded in the IDP with monitoring and evaluation tools to track the progress made.

### **Step: Process**

Kou-Kamma LM scored 12 out of 14 points for the “Process” section. This section covers the municipality’s *Performance and Fairness*.

- a) Responsiveness – A Large majority from both communities stated that they had reported a water or sanitation related fault, which ranged from leaks to pipe blockages. Community members residing in Joubertina reported faults via telephone or cell phone, whilst a few preferred visiting the satellite office. Community members residing in Kareedouw preferred reporting faults by visiting the municipal offices with few using the telephone or cell phone. All community interviewees reported that their faults had been resolved with varying response times, acknowledging that the response times depended largely on the scale of the issue.
- b) Effective and efficient – From the responses above, Kou-Kamma LM did have capacity to respond to reported faults, even though it was constrained by available resources. Community members were also active to report but stated that receiving feedback from the municipality was not consistent. Some interviewees reported that they received a call from the municipality and others reported receiving no feedback. Municipal contact details were published online, but some interviewees stated that they were unsure of who to contact. Influential people, like religious leaders, were used as additional community liaisons between community and municipality.
- c) Equity – The satellite offices were intended to ensure accessible municipal services and easier complaints registration throughout Kou-Kamma LM’s wards. However,

some interviewees reported that the satellite offices were still far away from where they lived and therefore not completely accessible to everyone in the area. Comparing the two wards from the municipal interviews, it appeared that Kareedouw's community was less proactive than Joubertina, considering the proximity to the municipal offices within the town.

- d) Rule of law – The processes and legislation to be complied with were outlined in the municipal IDP. There were also various steering committees that were tasked with ensuring compliance to legislation and policy. If compliance was not attained, a strategy was outlined with a timeline to get to compliance level.

### **Step: Share**

6 out of 6 points were awarded to Kou-Kamma LM for the “Share” section of the rubric.

- a) Information Sharing – From Kou-Kamma's website and IDP, documents were published on the website and could be downloaded, and reports were summarised in the IDP. From both community and municipal interviews, loud hailing, community meetings and posting information to community notice boards was the most popular communication tools.

### **Step: Output**

For the “Output” section, Kou-Kamma LM scored 5 out of 6 points.

- a) Accountability – Kou-Kamma LM had various tools in place to encourage participation and its active community did leverage these tools to hold the municipality accountable. In general, interviewees felt that the municipality needed to improve its service delivery and involve the community in more developmental projects and create jobs. Considering the two wards, the community in Kareedouw appeared to be less proactive when compared to Joubertina, as few knew who their ward councillor or public liaison officer was. However, all Interviewees did feel hopeful about their municipality and expressed that they felt that the municipality was approachable and that ward councillors were committed and willing to help.

Kou-Kamma Local Municipality					
Step	Perspective	Dimension	Criteria	Weighted score	Score
Input	Legitimacy and voice	Public Participation	Municipality has a Public Participation Policy that meets minimum requirements set out in <i>Draft National Policy Framework for Public Participation</i>	2	2
			Ward committees are active and ward meetings are held at least quarterly. (Municipal Structures Act)	2	2
	Consensus Orientation	Public Participation	Community members have knowledge of the IDP and municipal structure	2	1
			The Municipality consults and includes community in policy/ decision-making for projects/ policy at various levels. (White Paper on Local Government, Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	1
Direction	Strategic Vision	Consensus Orientation	Community members have an active voice and participate in decision-making processes e.g. IDP forum or community project, etc.	2	1
			The Municipality has a mission/ vision statement that is outlined in the IDP. (Municipal Structures Act)	2	2
			The Municipality makes progress by monitoring and evaluating their progress towards achieving the KPAs outlined in their IDP.	2	2
Process	Performance	Responsiveness	The Municipality is responsive to reported issues/ complaints/ queries (Batho Pele, National Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation)	2	1
			Municipality keeps community informed/ provides feedback on issues/ complaints (Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	1
	Effective and efficient	Performance	Municipality's customer service is well rated by the community	2	2
			Municipal Contact numbers are well published and community members know who to contact/ how to make contact with the relevant municipal department. (Batho Pele, Municipal Structures Act)	2	2
Total				40	34
Percentage				85%	

Figure 7-11 Analytical Rubric for Kou-Kamma LM

## Chapter 8

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### 8. Analysis and Discussion

Chapter 7 highlighted the information sharing practices employed by each municipality and showed that a variety of communication channels were used. To discuss and analyse the findings of this study, we reflect on the research question:

*How do the information sharing practices between municipalities and communities affect good governance?*

As previously defined in Chapter 2, Good governance is “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented).” (Sheng, 2010 para. 3) and includes the three actors of state, civil society and market (Hellström, 2007). Decision-making and implementing a decision are closely linked to public participation and inter alia information sharing practises (Sebola, 2017). It is therefore important to reflect on how information sharing practices involve both citizens and local government in problem solving or decision-making processes and how this affects good governance.

Some important findings from this study are:

- Information asymmetry amongst municipal departments and between the municipality and communities
- Information culture of the municipality
- Social media as potential engagement platform

These points will be discussed later in this section.

#### 8.1 Communication Channels and Access to Information

Access to information and communication promotes good governance as all three actors of governance need these information and communication sharing tools for decision-making (Coffey International Development, 2007). Sebola (2017) adds to this idea and says that “Public participation is reasonably possible if the information strategy to the public is effective” (p. 27).

Legislative and policy directives make provision for communication channels that local governments can utilise as part of their communication strategies. For example, Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) states that municipalities are required to implement structures for communities to participate in decision-making processes. It further outlines how information should be communicated and legislates public notice of and admission to public meetings and how the local community should be informed (Republic of South Africa, 2000).

Table 8-1 below, summarises the most used communication channels identified from Chapter 7, using the IDP reports as well as Community and Municipal Interviews.

**Table 8-1 Communication channels**

<p><b>A) Community reporting channels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phones</li> <li>• walk-ins</li> <li>• ward councillors</li> <li>• CDWs</li> <li>• Email/ Letters</li> <li>• Petitions</li> </ul>	<p><b>B) Municipality information gathering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ward Meetings</li> <li>• Technical staff</li> <li>• Departmental communication</li> <li>• Complaints register</li> <li>• Customer Satisfaction Surveys</li> <li>• Izimbizos</li> <li>• Ward councillors</li> <li>• CDWs</li> <li>• Traditional/ community leaders</li> </ul>
<p><b>C) Community information gathering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Ward councillors</li> <li>• CDWs</li> <li>• Print media/ Public Notices</li> <li>• Radio or loud hailing</li> <li>• Community meetings</li> </ul>	<p><b>D) Municipality departmental communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Phone</li> <li>• Intranet</li> <li>• Complaints register</li> </ul>

From Table 8-1, some reporting channels remain established, for example, phone calls, emails, ward councillors, complaints register, etc. There is a need for personal interaction as can be seen using walk-ins, ward councillors and meetings. The need for ward councillors and CDWs appears in three of the four quadrants (namely A, B and C) and demonstrates that they are an integral communication channel. For the municipality this means that ward councillors and CDWs are core to service delivery and must be included in departmental communications to improve link between the municipality and its communities.

This study showed that encouraging communities to participate in the process of decision-making is hindered if the information dissemination tools used are not effective or sustainable in the context. Dukeshire and Thurlow (2002) have previously noted that lack of information on important activities is often cited as the main challenge concerning government participation processes. The challenge of disseminating useful information to communities is not a uniquely South African problem, , but it does remain an important concern (Sebola, 2017).



Information dissemination was identified to have two main challenges in the context of rural municipalities, namely:

1. Communication channels for dissemination and
2. Access to information that is understandable.

Communication channels are tools used to share and gather information, but the ability to understand and interpret the information to leverage knowledge and inform decision-making can be a barrier to accessing the information. From the findings discussed in Section 7, the study site municipalities acknowledged that sustainable methods for dissemination had not been identified. Print media, as an example, was being ineffective due to the challenge of high illiteracy rates. Whilst these challenges are recognised in various policies and frameworks like the Batho Pele White Paper, White Paper on Local Governance and National Framework for Public Participation, the implementation of a variety of channels remains complex in under-resourced municipalities that face high diversity in the communities they serve (Houston, 2001; Tshoose, 2015). Another challenge of access to information is reaching the most remote areas where communities may not have access to technology and communication strategies are thus limited (Republic of South Africa, 2013; Sebola, 2017).

All municipalities included the Good Governance Principles in their mission statement which demonstrated their awareness of the Good Governance Principles and their meaning. However, the implementation of the principles remained a major challenge, partially impacted by the communication tools which have the potential to be an enabler or barrier. Social media was identified as a potential future communication channel recognising however, that limited internal resources may result in an inability to monitor and manage such sites (Forlee & Rivett, 2015).

It is not necessarily the number of communication channels that are a barrier to participation but the municipalities' ability to collate data and interpret it into meaningful information that can be used to develop strategies. Communication channels are always a means to collect data which can be utilised to monitor and evaluate performance and service delivery. The municipalities' capacity to perform such assessments was identified as one of the weakest areas.

Two-way communication was shown to be a central theme of concern for both municipalities and communities. Providing information in both directions is important as it acknowledges the communities' concerns, makes citizens feel heard and can improve customer satisfaction. Municipalities must take feedback from communities into their planning in order to move beyond the experience of communities to "rubber stamp" municipal decision making (Sebola, 2017; Smith, 2009; Smith, 2007).

The workflow mapping for municipalities showed that interdepartmental communication was poor; it hindered internal performance and external service delivery. Additionally, the lack of

process made it difficult to keep track of service complaints which consequently affected the municipality's capacity to respond to community members. The lack of responses was perceived by the community members as a complete disregard of their needs and impacted the relationship with the municipality negatively. This idea is reflected by authors such as Hemson (2004b), Managa (2012) and Nnadozie (2013) who argued that increased efforts by citizens to participate must be met by governments ability to engage and that lack of expertise and capability within municipalities has resulted in deteriorating service delivery (Green & Smith, 2005; Hemson, 2004a; Managa, 2012; Nnadozie, 2013; Reynell et al., 2012). As a consequence of dissatisfaction in service delivery, poor communication and ineffective participatory procedures, participation takes the form of protests (Forlee & Rivett, 2015) Satellite offices were intended to be a solution by offering a dispersed and extended arm of the municipal offices in remote areas. However, due to lack of human resourcing, municipal staff had to be shared between administrative offices and satellite offices. This resulted in limited operating hours of the satellites offices, supervisory challenges and information sharing between the main administrative office and the satellite offices (Municipal Interviews, 2014). Community members noted, for example, that operating hours were inconvenient. The overall experience of these offices was that they did not improve access to the municipality (Community Interviews, 2015).

## 8.2 Enablers and Barriers of Information Sharing

Enablers and barriers identification assist in developing better communication strategies for municipalities - where the enablers can be used to further enhance participation and information sharing practices. The barriers are areas that need improvement and present opportunities to improve services rendered to the community (Forlee & Rivett, 2015).

The most common enablers and barriers for each study site were identified and summarised in Table 8-2, with a discussion below.

**Table 8-2 Summary Table of Common Barriers and Enablers to Information Sharing**

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Enablers</b>
1. Skills and staff retention	1. Dedicated staff members to manage complaints register
2. Customer service	2. Satellite offices
3. Multiple sources of information	3. Information sources
4. Tracking mechanisms	4. Communication strategy and platforms

5. Municipal capacity	5. Strong community leaders
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### 8.2.1 Barriers to Information Sharing

**Staff retention** has been a notable challenge for municipalities with experienced staff often seeking opportunities in bigger cities. Attracting the necessary talent was identified as being difficult due to financial constraints as well as the rural geography of municipalities. Poor staff retention disrupts the information culture of the municipality and affects **municipal capacity**. Losing institutional knowledge, skills and experience comes at a very high cost and has an impact on service delivery (Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, 2019; Municipal Interviews, 2014; Ndlambe Local Municipality, 2017; Svard, 2014).

Lack of **tracking mechanisms** was found to be a common issue for all three study sites, which made it difficult for the municipalities to keep a record of customer complaints or queries and later provide feedback to the reporting customers. This further hindered the municipalities' **customer service** as well as the municipalities' own ability to track and monitor their service delivery performance. There are other checks and balances in place to track and monitor performance within the municipalities, however, monitoring and evaluating customer satisfaction would be a performance indicator that can be used to measure effectiveness, accountability, and transparency, which are important good governance objectives. Municipal staff acknowledged that customer service was an area that needed to be improved.

Multiple communication channels translate to more municipal accessibility and encourages the community to participate (enabler), but also presents two barriers – **multiple information sources** and **municipal capacity**. This means that the municipality will need to equip itself to manage the increased information in its workflow processes, increasing its capacity to collate data, respond to more queries and analyse more information, etc.

### 8.2.2 Enablers of Information Sharing

Each study municipality had an established **complaints' register with dedicated staff** to manage it and initiate the required workflow processes. Integrating tracking mechanisms with the complaints' register would aid staff to keep track of customers and their queries to provide feedback to the customer or follow up with the query internally.

The **satellite offices** did make the municipalities more accessible to the remote wards or towns, further away from municipal administrative offices. However, the satellite offices had limited operating hours due to resource sharing, and this limited its accessibility.

Ndlambe LM, Kou-Kamma LM and Kouga LM did provide various communication platforms which were rich **information gathering resources** that could be used to better inform the municipalities. The municipalities needed to ensure that they had sufficient capability and capacity to collate and analyse information to their advantage.

From the municipal interviews and IDP documents, each study municipality had initiated plans to improve or develop a **communication strategy**. The communication strategies included utilizing **community leaders** to provide feedback to the community as well as encourage people to access the municipality (DPLG, 2006).

### 8.3 Actualised Participatory Governance

Information sharing is a crucial aspect of good governance as it ensures that all citizens have access to information to contribute to decision-making processes. This includes the voices of vulnerable and marginalised groups, by ensuring that information is available and accessible in the public domain, in both verbal and written forms.

Chapters 8.1 and 8.2 discussed the communication channels and access to information as well as the enablers and barriers of information sharing, respectively. All three municipal study sites utilised multiple communication channels to encourage communities and citizens to participate in reporting as well as to make the municipality more accessible. However, the information culture in the municipalities were not conducive to effective information management and too many communication channels became barriers to participation when the municipality could not respond to queries, complaints, provide feedback or develop policies or strategies that echoed the voices of the people that they served.

“Governance is the process of decision-making and how those decisions are implemented. Good governance is when the systems and processes are accountable, transparent, just, responsive and participatory.” (MercyCorps, 2011 p. 2)

These values are also echoed in the objectives that the study site municipalities were trying to achieve, that is, to improve participation with their communities, provide services more effectively and improve the levels of transparency and accountability (Kugonza & Mukobi, 2016). Transparency and accountability are linked to information sharing as citizens have the “right to know” how to make their voices heard in decision-making processes and hold the municipality responsible for any developments or policy decisions that affect them (DPLG, 1999). However, the information sharing aspect demonstrated to be the bottleneck of good governance, where the municipalities struggled to collect, collate, interpret, and share the information with the public.

Each municipality experienced its own set of challenges and had to adjust its strategies and Managa (2012) has argued, that local governments need to realise that a “one-size fits all” approach is ineffective because different communities have different needs (Davids, 2001; Managa, 2012; Perret et al., 2005; Sebola, 2017). Rivett, Taylor, Chair, et al., (2013) and Taylor (2007) agree and stated that the intent of “participatory” governance is to strengthen accountability and the responsiveness of policies and strategies by enabling civil society to have a voice in government processes. However, institutional processes, intended to facilitate engagement between local government, can serve as a barrier.

Considering the case studies presented in Chapter 7 above, Smith's (2007) Model of Participatory Local Governance (refer to Figure 4-1 in Chapter 4) is revisited and discussed. Based on this research and its findings, Smith's model is redrawn in Figure 8-1 below, to show an alternative view.

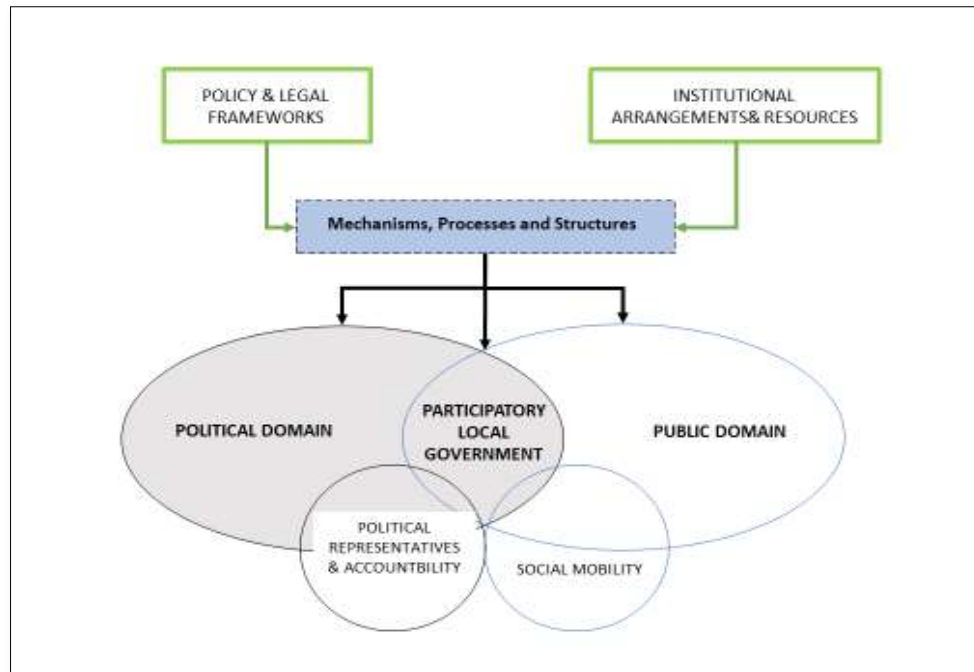


Figure 8-1 Actualised Participatory Local Government Framework

Smith's (2007) model of Participatory Local Governance draws out the interactions of local government and citizenry and asserts that there are three domains of engagement, namely:

- 1) *Political Domain*
- 2) *Public Domain* and,
- 3) *Participatory Local Government* - a domain where the political and public domains interact

In the original diagram (refer to Figure 4-1), the processes, mechanisms and structures of Participatory Local Governance occur within that domain. However, after re-evaluation and from the findings of this research – it is considered that the mechanisms, processes, and structures are informed by the policy and legal frameworks, the institutional arrangements, and resources. Consequently, these mechanisms, processes and structures describe and influence how the three domains interact with one another. This informs how the political and public domains interact and engage with one another and consequently describes the engagement space of Local Participatory Governance. Social mobilisation interacts in the spaces of both the Public Domain and Participatory Local Government and Political

representatives and accountability interact with both the Political Domain and Local Participatory Governance.

Figure 8-2, below further describes the examples where Political Representatives and Social Mobility are less proactive or engaged (as represented by smaller circles). In this instance, they are less likely to interact with two domains, let alone all three domains. This is an important aspect to consider – when civil society is engaged less, their role in Participatory Government diminishes and their ability to contribute to any decision-making processes is less likely. This could lead to further frustration as communities' voices are not heard and become despondent and less proactive in engaging with Local Government. The same can be said of political representatives and accountability. The smaller the role, the less likely Participatory Local Government exists, as there is no proper interaction between the Political and Public Domains.

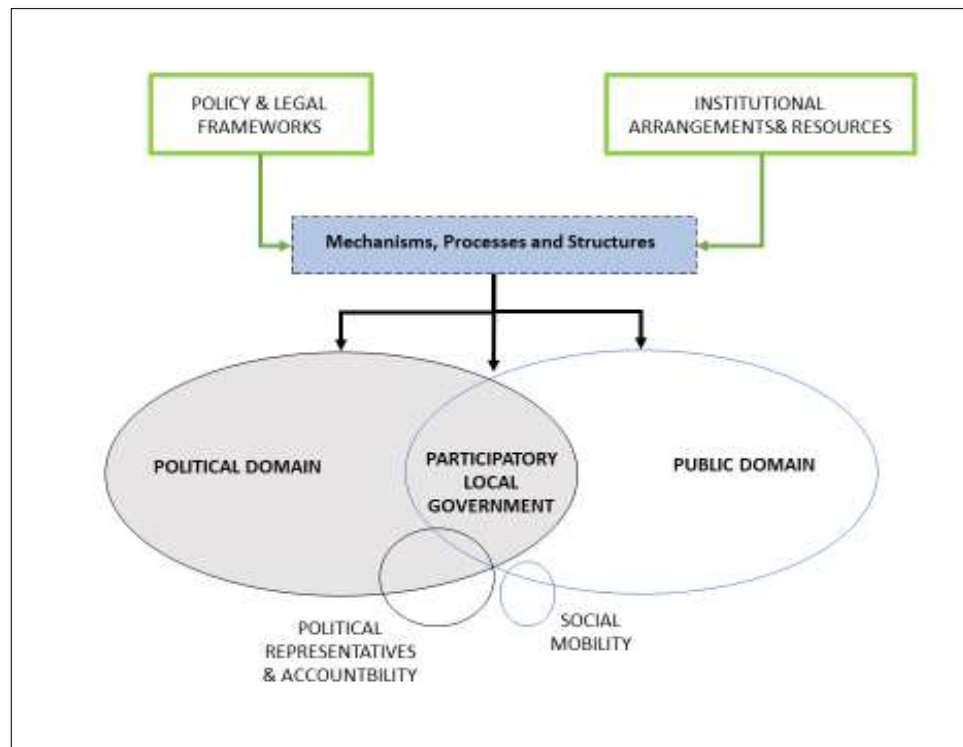


Figure 8-2 Example of Actualised Participatory Local Governance

*Participatory Governance* is meant to strengthen accountability and the responsiveness of policies by enabling civil society to have a voice in government decision-making processes (Smith, 2007). Information sharing practices should be provided in the mechanisms, processes, and structures portion of the diagram to ensure not only that information is accessible to all three domains, but also stipulates how information should be shared to ensure greater transparency and accountability between local government and the public.

## 8.4 Information Currency and Culture

Information is the currency that all citizens need to be fully equipped to partake in decision-making. Where citizens have access to information, it greatly increases Government's response to community needs. A concept strongly reflected upon in the Batho Pele Paper is that without information, "people cannot exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens to make informed choices" (Sebola, 2017 p. 28).

The legislation and policy outlined in Section 4 provided the guidelines on how public participation should take place, how communication mechanisms should be implemented and how information should be shared. These guidelines prescribed the minimum requirements of how municipalities should conduct their activities and workflows, but also offered some flexibility for customised approaches that best suited the municipality's resources and environment. However, the legislation and policy does not make provision for the flow of information or address the quantity of information to be assessed, analysed, and interpreted. This is where information culture plays an essential role within government institutions to ensure that the right skills are acquired and resources to manage information, analyse it and leverage are developed for performance targets and strategies. This includes the ability to disseminate information throughout the municipality as an organisation and community members to participate in decision-making processes.

The theorised notion of public participation is not well defined in policy or legislation – this can be seen in how the three study site municipalities interpreted and adapted the guidelines to develop their public participation approach and communication strategies. The study sites implemented the same communication channels to collect information and share information, however some communication channels worked better than others and this depended on the environment of the municipality and the resources available. For example, Ndlambe LM found that loud hailing worked better compared to print media and consequently identified that social media could have a better reach than print media, Kouga LM leveraged technology more than the other two study sites and started the implementation of the OVIO system. Kou-Kamma LM utilised its relationships with prominent community members (e.g., church leaders) to build better links with the communities and adopted a door-to-door distribution of Customer Satisfaction surveys to ensure better feedback from the communities. This additional effort not only provided the municipality with important feedback on areas that needed improvement, but in doing this, also improved the perception of the community that the municipality was trying to provide better services.

Sebola (2017) lends support to the above statement by writing that " it is not only communication tools that can ensure attainment of public participation in South African legislative environment, but only the utilisation of effective communication tools is likely to ensure the highest level of public participation in the policy formulation and decision making processes. " (p. 29)

### 8.4.1 Information Asymmetry

Information asymmetry is experienced by the municipality (across its departments) and the communities it serves. It became evident that municipal departments work in silos and that information was scattered across departments where they could benefit from sharing information and analysing data together, to formulate targets or identify areas that require improvements. In Kou-Kamma LM, the Finance Department would liaise with the Technical Team in the Water and Sanitation Department when a customer reported an issue. This provides an example where departments sharing information improved the municipalities performance. In the same sense, citizens should be able to access credible information which improves the municipality's accountability. Information sharing increases Government's efficiency by increasing their accountability and transparency and consequently strengthens the operations of the municipality.

### 8.4.2 Information Culture

In theory, increasing the number of communication channels makes the municipality more accessible and enables community members to choose their preferred method of engagement. However, in practice, providing numerous communication channels meant that more effort was required to collate and manage data. This became a constraint to the operating capacity of the municipality.

From Section 5.2.4, *information culture* is a concept that considers information as a valuable resource that can be utilised to provide an organisation with a competitive advantage. It also encourages effective information management to achieve these operational goals where information is the foundation for decision-making (Svard, 2014). Consequently, the information culture of a municipality plays an important role in effective information management because this data is a resource that can provide the municipality its advantage in meeting its performance targets and objectives.

Some of the challenges highlighted by the case studies in Section 7, are that municipal staff lack training in information management skills and collaboration (this could be due to information management systems). Staff acknowledged and reiterated that they would prefer to have more training to perform their work functions more effectively. This lack of skill correlates to Svard's (2014) paper, which concluded that there was a connection between positive information culture and effective business performance as information management yields accountability and transparency required for the implementation of all the organisational processes.

### 8.4.3 Social Media

Social media was identified by all three municipalities as a potential engagement platform and communication channel. The larger metropolitan municipalities have leveraged this platform especially as it has more appeal to younger people. Social media should be leveraged more to foster community relationships and to encourage more people to participate in



decision-making processes. This platform can also be used as a dissemination tool that the municipality can leverage to provide feedback to the communities that they serve. This also provides a sense of transparency and accountability, especially when the municipality is more responsive. Sebola (2017) again lends support to the above statement when he writes that “the current generation would like to engage the government’s transparency and accountability through modern technologies (National democratic Institute, n.d:1-5) such as twitters, Facebooks and WhatsApp’s, however the governments sound to be far from accepting and utilising such technologies” (Maarek, 2014; Robert & Nomusange, 2015) as cited by (Sebola, 2017 p. 29).

#### **8.4.4 Good Governance Principles in Practice**

From the case studies presented in Section 7, each study municipality has demonstrated that the Good Governance Principles play an essential part in their strategies and policies, as it is prominent in their mission statements. The Good Governance Principles are also well reflected in South Africa’s legislation like the Batho Pele Paper.

At the start of this research, the Good Governance Principles were considered linear, as a list of processes, as demonstrated from Table 2-3, where the Good Governance Principles were combined with the IVC.

However, upon further inspection and evaluation, the Good Governance Principles are cyclical in the sense that there is a constant flow of input, engagement, responsiveness, and feedback to achieve its objective. Good governance is not an objective as it is a constant process that ensures accountability and transparency. Ensuring that the process works well ensures that good governance is achieved.

#### **8.4.5 Municipalities as Business Organisations**

The premise of this research was that municipalities acted like business organisations and consequently the value chain approach was selected as an assessment tool with some adjustments to develop the IVC which included the Good Governance principles. Understanding the flow of information and interpreting data into useful insights is an important facet of any business to mitigate inefficiencies and ensure a competitive advantage. Today, information has an optimisation impact that can be measured by cost savings, faster turnaround times, better customer service, etc. (Coelho, 1999).

Considering the points made above (Chapter 8.4), the study site municipalities were not operating as efficiently or effectively as a business operation. Chapter 7 highlighted that the municipalities struggled to collect revenue attributed to the large proportion of indigent residents – these bills were written off and consequently affected the municipalities’ revenue base. Businesses rely on revenue and cash flow to operate, however, municipalities are government entities that are mandated to operate and provide certain services, as outlined by national and provincial legislation.

Chapter 7 also determined that improved performance is linked to a municipality's ability to respond and provide efficient services. The study site municipalities expressed that their lack of capacity and resources hampered their ability to respond to citizen demands and this consequently affected service delivery. Limited human capacity and skills shortage also required municipal personnel to hold multiple responsibilities, and this often resulted in priorities changing daily. Municipal staff also expressed their need for proper training to better equip them with skills to perform their roles more effectively as well as manage customer expectations. The staff believed that residents have the right to complain, but also acknowledged that the municipality was under-resourced (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

The municipal interviews again highlighted these issues, which affected the municipalities' ability to perform:

- Understaffed in the technical divisions
- Low level of IT skills
- Difficulty in attracting new skills with little financial incentives

The skills shortage exacerbates the capacity problem that most rural municipalities face. The municipalities struggled to attract individuals with the necessary expertise, as people eventually seek more lucrative offers in the cities. The three municipalities also struggled to maintain the few skills that they did have, and skills development was largely reliant on on-the-job training. Once a person gained the experience, they also sought better opportunities. The distance covered under the municipalities' jurisdiction also has to be taken into account, as some towns and villages are far away from municipal departments and thus, response times take longer compared to wards close to the municipal offices (Municipal Interviews, 2014).

A relationship is formed between the municipality and the community, when residents can hold the municipality accountable, and the municipality responds appropriately and timeously to resolve any issues. Participation group interviews also echoed Thomson's et al. (2012) paper, that residents were less motivated to report any issues because they felt that the municipalities would not resolve their complaints. The municipal staff is also aware of this, which adds to their feelings of incapability (Community Interviews, 2015).

Furthermore, the value chain is used in businesses to identify "value-creating" activities, highlight any shortcomings that can be improved upon and analyse the organisation to ensure a competitive advantage. Businesses would improve and invest in its information culture by implementing technology, software, training, and upskilling staff, etc. to ensure efficiency and optimal operations.

The IVC highlighted that information culture plays a less crucial role in municipalities and consequently, inefficiencies in the value chain exists within the study site municipalities. For example, staff were not properly trained to manage and interpret data, inefficiencies in

information management and collation, etc. The study site municipalities operated as pseudo-businesses where they were required to be self-sufficient, provide services and customer relations services.

## 8.5 The Information Value Chain as an Assessment Tool

The value chain is more commonly used in the business sector as it lends itself as an analytical tool to identify the core business functions and map the flow of inputs. This concept was adapted to include the inputs as “information” and the Good Governance Principles to yield the IVC. The IVC assisted with the thematic analysis of the data collected from literature, community and municipal interviews, workshops, municipal documentation and policy and legislative documents.

Chapter 2.3.2 highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of the IVC, which will further be elaborated in this section, which seeks to discuss the IVC as an assessment tool and extract the differences of theory and reality.

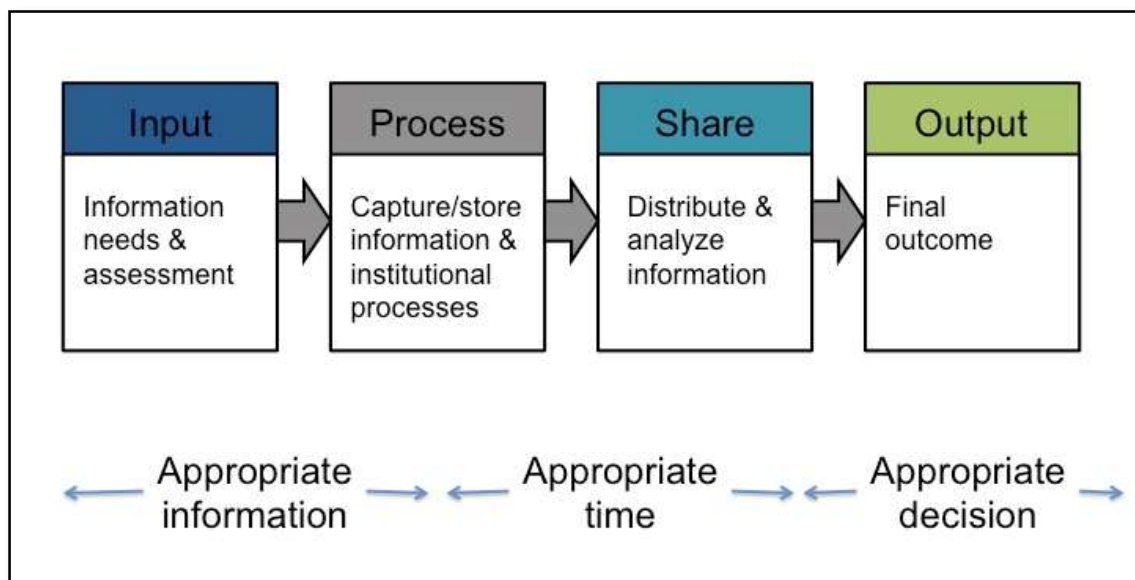


Figure 8-3 Information Value Chain

Figure 8-3 depicts the theoretical IVC with its four chains in an integrated framework and Table 2-3 included additional categories from the Good Governance Principles. The IVC approach theorises that core functions are prioritised and that the strategic planning and scope of the processes involved, provides methods to manage information and that value is created during decision making.

Categorising the data into these chains was a challenge, as the data of the information flows and the relationships between the flows and processes were complex. Not all the relationships could be mapped and using more defined categories would not have ascertained that these information flows and their relationships would be adequately

mapped. However, the simplicity of the IVC categorisation did assist in identifying information gaps and where inefficiencies in the processes were. To sufficiently map information flow, a clear understanding of the structure of the municipal departments, the processes within the departments and the municipality, is required as well as the interactions between departments and how information is utilised to make decisions. This challenge of mapping an organisation's information flow is further validated with Durugbo et al. (2013) paper that established the challenges of information mapping, as organisations are considered communication entities. Documentation was used to gain an insight of the municipal structure, and this is a possible shortcoming of this study. More time with the municipality and community would have yielded better information by observing the day-to-day processes within the municipality, rather than relying on documented processes and interviews.

The information flows were more complex than originally considered and this had an impact on the findings. The IVC was, however, useful in identifying the information gaps which yielded the enablers and barriers for each study site municipality.

From the findings discussed in Chapter 8.4, information culture is a key aspect that municipalities should pay more attention to. Information culture informs how information should be managed, analysed, and used to achieve the municipalities operational objectives and performance targets.

# Chapter 9

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## 9. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 9.1 Conclusions

This study set out to answer the following research question: *“How do the information sharing practices between municipalities and communities affect Good governance?”*

The objectives of this study were:

1. Review and examine the legal requirements of community participation processes and information flow between municipalities and community.
2. Investigate the existing practices of municipalities and communities to share information using case studies of service delivery processes.
3. Using the Information Value Chain and Good Governance Principles method to identify and assess the barriers and enablers to information sharing in three municipalities as a case study of implementation in South Africa.

An overview of Water Service Delivery outlined the functions and duties of how all three spheres of government and the various departments are linked and work together and provided context to the overall study.

**Objective 1** reviewed and discussed the legal requirements of Public Participation as well as the municipal processes and mechanisms for public participation. Smith’s (2007) Model of Participatory Local Governance (Figure 4-1), formed the basis of the research. The model was re-evaluated, reimaged, and termed Actualised Participatory Governance based on the findings of this research. It is surmised that the mechanisms, processes, and structures are informed by the policy and legal frameworks, the institutional arrangements, and resources. These mechanisms, processes and structures describe and influence how the three domains (public, political, and participatory local governance) interact with one another within the context of the engagement spaces. It was also postulated that the size of the engagement spaces and interaction with Participatory Governance, was influenced by how engaged or proactive civil society and political representatives were in their respective spheres. That is, the lesser the engagement role of civil society or political representatives, the lesser was their role in contributing to Participatory Governance.

With the analysis of the legal public participation requirements, gaps in legislation were identified such as the Constitutional mandate which does not clearly define public participation or any parameters that provide guidance for a Public Participation Policy or Strategy. Meaningful public participation and engagement can only occur when there is a

constant information flow to the public in a way that promotes interaction between government and its citizens.

The key processes, mechanisms, and structures of Participatory Governance of South Africa were also examined. It was established that formal communication channels are provided for as well as the strategies used to encourage an active civil society through municipal communication strategies, participation charters, and community complaints mechanisms. Information culture and utilising information as a resource to gain a competitive advantage over competitors was highlighted as being crucial in successful community engagement. This became a key finding of this research and highlighted that even though the municipalities' provided numerous communication channels for public engagement, more effort was required by the municipalities to collate and manage the data, which became a constraint rather than a competitive advantage. Municipal staff lacked the skills to manage and collate data into useful information sets that the municipality could use to deliver services more effectively and efficiently. There is a relationship between positive information culture and an organisations success as information management yields accountability and transparency. Poor staff retention was also deduced to contribute to the municipalities' poor information culture as the experienced staff leave and the municipalities lose resources that gained skills through experience.

**Objective 2** investigated the existing practices of municipalities and communities to share information using case studies of service delivery processes.

By describing each municipality in the context of understanding the people, the economy and education levels as well as access to services, each study site was evaluated separately. Using the IVC as an assessment tool and the analytical rubric to score each study site based on information gleaned from interviews, workshops, documentation, or information available online provided insights on the value of information.

The following is concluded from the findings using the IVC:

### **1. Input**

It was found that each of the study site municipalities established their public participation policies using the minimum standards as set out in the *Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation* and included some guidelines and measures that suited the context of their municipality, where applicable. Even though the municipalities provided common communication channels, the success of public participation relied mostly on the formal structures in place, for example proactive ward councillors, community liaison officers, etc. Proactive representatives kept the community informed and engaged on municipal matters and consequently, these communities were more proactive in ensuring that their voices were heard.

## 2. Process

The municipalities did not consistently provide feedback when faults were reported due to the municipality's information culture and indicative of the municipality's lack of capacity to manage data and formulate feedback responses. The municipality did not use tracking mechanisms to track complaints and responses. Another highlighted issue was that community members did not engage with the municipality because they were unsure of who to contact and how.

The satellite offices were intended to make the municipality more accessible to the various wards. However, this inadvertently strained resource capacity and resulted in limited office hours that were inconvenient to the community.

## 3. Share

To convey important information, the municipalities utilised public notices, ward meetings or their website to publish information like the IDP, budgetary documents, notices, etc. However, from both participatory group and municipal interviews, it was acknowledged that very few community members accessed this information. This could be attributed to two factors like the poor literacy levels and poor access to internet services. It was noted that loud hailing was perceived to be the most effective form of information dissemination.

## 4. Output

All three study site municipalities had implemented tools of engagement to encourage public participation, transparency, and accountability. In some instances, it was demonstrated that the communication between the municipalities and their communities were lacking. However, the analysis of the three municipalities did show that when a community was more proactive in engaging the municipality, they were more aware of how to engage and leverage the various platforms and processes to make their voices heard and contribute to the formulation of the municipality's IDP and proposed projects.

**Objective 3** focussed on identifying the enablers and barriers of information sharing by following the IVC.

Value chain analysis is commonly applied in corporate environments to identify the core functions of a business and map the flow of inputs. Applying the IVC in a municipal context had some challenges. Although municipalities have core business functions, like a corporate entity, where services are provided and revenue is collected, the functionality and structure differ as these are mandated through Provincial and National government. There are

concessions as to how a municipality is managed and this affects its daily operations and revenue streams.

Furthermore, the enablers and barriers of information sharing were identified and tabulated for each study site. There were some common themes and some enablers and barriers specific to a particular municipality.

The common enablers and barriers are summarised below:

**Table 9-1 Common Enablers and Barriers**

<b>Enablers</b>	<b>Barriers</b>
Satellite Offices	Skills and staff retention
Communication strategy and platform	Customer service
Financial and performance reporting	Multiple sources of information
	Tracking mechanism
	Municipal capacity

The core findings of the study are:

1. Information asymmetry amongst municipal departments and between the municipality and communities
2. Information culture of the municipality
3. Social media as potential engagement platform
4. The Good Governance Principles in Practice
5. Municipalities as Business Organisations

These points are reflected in the enablers and barriers of information sharing practices and reflects on the information culture of the study site municipalities where they struggled with collating and managing information. This was evident in the lack of tracking mechanisms to trace queries and provide feedback to customers or municipal departments.

The legal frameworks do provide guidelines on how good governance can be achieved, by stipulating basic requirements for public participation, communication mechanisms and how information should be shared. However, these guidelines cannot consider all factors that affect the daily work processes of the municipality or how its relationship with the communities could be influenced. Each municipality was assessed to understand how it strategised and adapted to suit its environment. Information sharing practices will continue to evolve and improve with technology and the main challenge that has been identified in this



study is that the municipalities have struggled to adapt to technological advances and adapt to information management and analysis that is now required of them.

Similarly to information sharing practices evolving, the legal frameworks also need to be constantly revisited and adapted to suit the changing environment. The needs of the people might not change so rapidly, but their need for information and feedback will.

Good governance is a cyclical process and not a linear achievement, as the goal posts will continuously move as the municipality improves on service delivery and performance. Good governance is not an end goal, but a constant process that ensures accountability and transparency. Ensuring that the process works well ensures that good governance is achieved.

## **9.2 Recommendations**

The recommendations made in this section, are drawn from the conclusions above and considers how municipalities can improve information sharing and enhance public participation practices.

### **Objective 1**

This study concluded that Participatory Governance is directly proportional to how proactive citizens and political representatives were in their domains. The lower the engagement activity, the lower the rate of Participatory Governance.

More effort should be directed towards education campaigns to increase Participatory Governance. Citizens should know their rights on how to hold their political leaders accountable and what mechanisms to follow. The literature review highlighted that citizens were uncertain of their rights, what course of action they could follow or who to contact. Local governments have put in the effort to provide communication channels, formulated strategies and implemented mechanisms specifically to support public participation, but this is fruitless if not properly used. In the same way that ward councillors and CDWs undergo training to be knowledgeable about the processes of the municipality and public participation mechanisms, citizens should have the same access to information. An education campaign could be held every three years before the municipal elections so that communities are aware of their responsibility to elect officials that best represent their interests and how to hold them accountable.

The study also identified legislative gaps, for example, the Constitutional mandate does not clearly define public participation or provide any guidance for a Public Participation Policy. The definition of public participation should also be reviewed. It only reflects the need for consultation rather than defining mechanisms that encompass the interactions needed to influence and affect policy changes. Flexible solutions tailored to the local context are needed to address these legislative gaps. Not all communities are the same, and in this measure, not

all municipalities will find the same workable solutions. Continuously revising legislation might help identify gaps, address points that are no longer relevant, and update policies to align with modern standards.

Municipalities should recognise that investing in the skills of their staff will also increase the organisation's capability and functionality. Equipping staff with the necessary skills to perform their role more effectively will only add value to the municipality. One of the key findings of this study was that municipal staff lacked the skills to manage and collate data into helpful information that the municipality could use to improve service delivery and performance. Staff retention also played a significant role in the poor information culture of the municipality. When experienced staff leave, this not only affects the institutional knowledge of the municipality but also negatively affects its capacity and constrains its resources.

## **Objective 2**

### **1. Input**

Objective 2 concluded findings based on the IVC and similarly determined that proactive representatives kept the public informed with municipal matters. The emphasis on educating citizens on their rights to choose the right representative also plays a crucial role in ensuring that their needs are met in local governance.

### **2. Process**

Again, similarly to Objective 1, it was concluded that the municipality lacked the resource capacity and skills to collate information and provide feedback to their constituents. Tracking mechanisms would help to assist with following up on complaints or queries. The municipalities should implement a tracking system so that they can trace any queries lodged and provide feedback. The municipalities should also ensure their visibility and make it easy to find their contact details.

The satellite offices do play an important role to make the municipality more accessible. However, the limited office hours and sharing of resources do add further strain to the municipality. To have these offices at full capacity might add financial pressure to the already strained municipality. Still, a solution to this might be to ensure the public knows the exact operating hours and communicate this frequently.

### **3. Share and Output**

Few community members accessed municipal documents, and education or lack of access to the internet was posed as reasons for this. Again, the emphasis is placed on educating citizens on the processes of the municipality. When a community was more proactive in engaging the municipality, they knew how to advocate for their rights.

### **Objective 3**

The enablers and barriers should be used to identify knowledge gaps or leverage possible strengths within the municipalities. The municipalities should address the following core elements:

- Address the information asymmetry between the municipal department as well as between the municipality and the communities
- Improve the information culture of the municipality by investing in skills training and implementing systems that improve how information is shared between the municipal departments
- Learn to leverage social media as an engagement platform
- Put more focus on implementing the Good Governance Principles and not see it as a mere guideline.
- The municipalities should prioritise the organisation's financial health to ensure it is sustainable. The municipality cannot adequately address the needs of the people if it cannot provide the services they need.

### **Future study**

Meaningful public participation can happen when constant information flow promotes the state and citizenry to interact. In this digital era, the study site municipalities identified social media as a viable communication tool. This study did not fully explore social media as it was not deemed relevant, especially within communities that already had little access to the internet and other communication devices. It would be interesting to see how local governments, especially in rural areas, transform to e-governance and leverage social media as a communication tool in future. Would social media and e-governance put pressure on local government to monitor their online engagement as a performance measure and would municipalities have the skills to collate any additional data?

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