Progress and Challenges of Service Delivery in South Africa Since 1994

Barry Hanyane and Goonasagree Naidoo

UNSIA, University of South Africa

Abstract

The new South Africa came into existence in 1994. The incoming government faced a massive task of fiscal, political, social and economic transformation, all of which would require an effective public service capability. Yet the public service itself had been subject during the Apartheid era to the same limitations as other key South African institutions. Due to the lack of know how in 1994, South Africa needed an overwhelming transformation of public service focus, culture and procedures. Yet, 15 years after the democratic dispensation's arrival, many people still lack access to the most basic of necessities. Woolard (2002) in Burger (2005:483) argues that it is visible that poverty is South Africa's priority as it is estimated that approximately 37% of South African households , and probably more today, survive on less than R1 000 in a month.

Keywords: Social Transformation, Service Delivery Protests, Corruption, Personal Sanitation and Hygiene

1. Introduction

Hirschowitz and Orkin (1997) used data from the 1994 October Household Survey (OHS) and analysed living conditions according to race, gender, urbanisation and employment. They found stark contrasts between different groups at the national level. Africans, who constitute 76% of the population, were more likely to be affected by inequality and relative deprivation. Africans were found to be more likely than other population groups to live in shacks in urban areas and in traditional dwellings in non-urban areas, and to have less access to domestic infrastructure such as water, sanitation and electricity. Budlender (1999:205) examined access to basic services across ten types of households on the basis of income. She used the 1995 OHS and Income and Expenditure Survey (IES) and found that access to household services is closely correlated with income. For example, in the bottom strata, 18% of households relied on water sources that are situated more than a kilometer from their dwelling; in the top three strata, this was the case for less than one percent of households. Her conclusion was that a household that has poor access to basic services will enjoy lower levels of well-being and have fewer opportunities to earn income. In a similar

fashion, Møller and Devey (2003: 468) used the October Household Surveys of 1995 and 1998 to examine trends in living conditions and satisfaction among poorer, older South Africans. They found that access to services is strongly correlated with income, but that over the period 1995 to 1998, poorer and older households did record gains in access to clean water, electricity and home ownership.

Ngwane *et al.* (2003: 556) examined deprivation in terms of basic needs by comparing the progress in service delivery at the provincial level between 1995 and 1999, using the October Household Surveys. They found that nationally, the lack of formal housing seemed to be on the increase, while the proportion of households deprived of safe water was unchanged over the period. The analysis highlighted disparities between rural and urban areas in South Africa. An example is the differences in the use of electricity as an energy source for heating: in 1999, approximately 77% of households in urban areas were using electricity, compared to 16% in rural areas (Ngwane *et al.*, 2003: 560). The comparisons of provincial progress also showed the more rural provinces to be at a disadvantage, for example, a relatively high proportion of households in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo Province still did not have any latrine facilities. Le Roux Booysen (2003: 42) examined the progress that the provinces had made in delivering the RDP, through the use of reconstruction and development indices. The analysis employed data from surveys by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the Advertising Research Foundation, the Institute of Race Relations, the Health Systems Trust, the Election Task Group, the South African Policy Service and the 1996 Census. He found that provinces that are more urbanised have advantages over the more rural provinces in the delivery of infrastructure, the facilitation of demographic transition and the improvement of standards in secondary education. The Leibbrandt *et al* (2006) study examines patterns of access poverty and inequality with a comparison of 1996 and 2001 Census data. They argue that in both 1996 and 2001, almost two thirds of households occupied formal dwellings. In the period between census takings, the proportion of Africans in formal dwellings increased from 53% to 60%. The proportion of households in formal dwellings increased in all provinces, especially in Limpopo. As regards other basic services, Leibbrandt *et al.* (2006) results show improvements in access to water, electricity, sanitation and refuse removal, specially for the Black population and across all provinces. It is clear that the literature paints the familiar South African picture of disparities in access to basic services and improvements since 1994. However, in all of the above cases, the level of geographical disaggregation was limited to studies of the urban-rural divide or comparisons of provinces. The analysis did not allow for further distinctions of the performance of local governments in meeting the basic needs of their communities. The Human Sciences Research Council survey of 5700 South Africans' perceptions of service delivery in 1995 was also done to determine service delivery progress (Møller & Jackson, 1997). Within this line of work, it was also possible to distinguish between urban and rural settings. With specific focus on cities, Møller (2001: 233-234) reported on the quality of life in the

Durban metropolitan area. She found that background factors, such as access to formal housing and access to services, accounted for only 10% of the variance in life satisfaction. However, general neighborhood satisfaction along with the background factors, explained 33% of variance in life satisfaction. In a more rural setting, Sotshongaye and Møller (2000: 117) examined self-assessed development needs among rural women in Ndwedwe in KwaZulu-Natal. The women, from the better-serviced Mavela ward, cited piped water and electricity in the home as important development needs. In the more remote Cibane ward, the women indicated that more basic needs such as safe water, housing and access to roads were priorities.

Poor service delivery has led to protests and unrest. The Centre for Development Support at Free State University has published four case studies of delivery failures and protests in Phumelela, Khutsong, Phomolong and Nelson Mandela Bay municipalities (*cf.* Botes *et al.,* 2007). They found that poor service delivery has been caused by poor governance, individual political struggles within local government, a lack of communication, an inactive client interface, inefficient management and issues of affordability and unfunded mandates. The national level databases show improvements in basic service delivery in accordance with the RDP commitment made in 1994. Interesting variations between communities may be hidden by the level of aggregation, and earlier studies typically show that the rural areas lag behind. Closer inspection of service delivery at local level is required.

Russell and Bvuma (2001:243) list the changes that have taken place in the South African Public Service to include the following:

- The rationalisation and amalgamation of former national, provincial and homeland public services into a single unified public service structure, and the building of a new public service whose values and culture support the new nation. Until 1994, there had been a national public service and separate public services in each of the then four provinces and six self-governing and "independent" homelands. In 1994, nine new provinces replaced the four provinces and six self governing and independent homelands and the separate bureaucracies were amalgamated. One by-product was the creation of significant numbers of committed public personnel in some provinces.

- The creation of new central personnel agencies designed to provide strong leverage for change. The incoming government appreciated the centrality of public service change to achieving what was expected of it, and it took important early steps to provide an institutional framework that would give government a powerful tool to effect change. Soon after the new government took office, central public service powers were taken from the very powerful Public Service Commission (PSC) and divided. A new Department of Public Service and Administration was created. The Public Service Laws Amendment Act, 1997 assigned to the Minister for Public

Service and Administration the most powerful and contentious public service management roles, including responsibilities for creating and abolishing departments and agencies, for employment, personnel practices, classification and pay, and those for transformation and reform. The Public Service Commission's role was defined by Section 196 of the 1996 Constitution as to: promote values and principles, set out in the Constitution at section 195, throughout the public service; to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration and personnel practices of the public service; to propose measures and to ensure effective and efficient performance of the public service. This tasking shaped the PSC's role to emphasise advisory and consent roles such as the promotion of equal employment opportunity, ethical behavior and management approaches. Apart from these central personnel agencies, key influences on public service evolution were placed with the Departments of Treasury and State Expenditure, which were able to exercise financial controls. A Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs is also a significant player through its influence on provincial and local government, since South Africa has a unitary constitution and hence both national and provincial public services form part of a single public service some 980,000 strong. Reform initiatives in the South African public service thus are typically directed at departments and provinces.

- New public service legislation and regulations were enacted. As well as these central agency reforms, further legislation passed in 1996, and regulations adopted in 1999 provided for the devolution of most personnel powers to Ministers and Heads of Departments.

- English became the language of administration. The traditional South African public service had generally conducted business in the indigenous South African language of Afrikaans, a Dutch-sounding language founded by white European settlers, representing a barrier for those communities that spoke other languages. The scope of the public service reforms was further extended by the extensive adoption of English and the associated need to translate much administrative documentation into English and to produce the new Public Service Regulations in English.

These were followed by other changes in the public service such as the introduction of a public service delivery approach and philosophy of *Batho Pele* (meaning people first in the native Sotho language). Russell and Bvuma, (2001:243) further note, that an increase in partnerships between public sector agencies and private sector entities was observed. In return, there was a realization of alternative service delivery avenues and opportunities for the public sector and private sector customers. Public service

delivery areas such as the provision of proper sanitation and water service delivery became one of many critical service delivery areas that suffered from poor planning, lack of adequate administration and robust strategic public sector thinking.

2. Sanitation and water service delivery

After the end of Apartheid South Africa's newly elected government inherited huge services backlogs with respect to access to water supply and sanitation. About 15 million people were without safe water supply and over 20 million without adequate sanitation services. The government thus made a strong commitment to high service standards and to high levels of investment subsidies to achieve those standards. Since then, the country has made satisfactory progress with regard to improving access to water supply: It reached universal access to an improved water source in urban areas, and in rural areas the share of those with access increased from 62% to 82% from 1990 to 2006. However, much less progress has been achieved on sanitation: Access increased only from 55% to 59% during the same period. Significant problems remain concerning the financial sustainability of service providers, leading to a lack of attention to maintenance. The uncertainty about the government's ability to sustain current funding levels in the sector is also a concern. 55% of wastewater treatment plants, especially smaller ones, do not meet effluent standards and some do not even measure effluent quality. South Africa has a fairly strong research and training infrastructure in the water sector. The Water Research Commission (WRC) supports water research and development as well as the building of a sustainable water research capacity in South Africa. It continues to find more solutions to the water problems faced by South Africans. This can be compared with world statistics.

In 2004, only 59% of the world population had access to any type of improved sanitation facility. 4 out of 10 people around the world have no access to improved sanitation. They have to use open or unsanitary facilities, with a serious risk of exposure to sanitation-related diseases. While sanitation coverage has increased from 49% in 1990, a huge effort needs to be made quickly to expand coverage to the MDG target level of 75%. Investing in sanitation infrastructure involves a long project cycle. If the MDG sanitation target is to be achieved, innovative approaches need to be developed to reduce the time span from policymaking to services delivery. The global statistics on sanitation hide the dire situation in some developing regions. With an average coverage in developing regions of 50%, only one out of two people has access to some sort of improved sanitation facility. The regions presenting the lowest coverage are sub-Saharan Africa (37%), Southern Asia (38%) and Eastern Asia (45%). Western Asia (84%) has the highest coverage among developing regions. Out of every three persons unserved, two live in Southern Asia or Eastern Asia. Human excreta have been implicated in the transmission of many infectious diseases including cholera, typhoid, infectious hepatitis, polio, cryptosporidiosis, and ascariasis. WHO (2004) estimates that about 1.8 million people die annually from diarrhoeal diseases where

90% are children under five, mostly in developing countries. Poor sanitation gives many infections the ideal opportunity to spread: plenty of waste and excreta for the flies to breed on, and unsafe water to drink, wash with or swim in.

The health impact of inadequate sanitation leads to a number of financial and economic costs including direct medical costs associated with treating sanitation-related illnesses and lost income through reduced or lost productivity and the government costs of providing health services. Additionally, sanitation also leads to time and effort losses due to distant or inadequate sanitation facilities, lower product quality resulting from poor water quality, reduced income from tourism, due to high risk of contamination and disease, and clean up costs. Increases in female literacy due to increased school attendance where proper sanitation facilities exist contribute to economic growth. Every dollar spent on improving sanitation generates economic benefits that far exceed the required sanitation investments. The cost of inaction is enormous. Achieving the MDG for sanitation would result in $66 billion gained through time, productivity, averted illness and death. It is estimated that a 10 year increase in average life expectancy at birth translates into a rise of 0.3-0.4% in economic growth per year.

In regions where a large proportion of the population is not served with adequate water supply and sanitation, sewage flows directly into streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands, affecting coastal and marine ecosystems, fouling the environment and exposing millions of children to disease. Particularly in the context of urbanisation, domestic wastewater, sewage and solid waste improperly discharged presents a variety of concerns from providing breeding grounds for communicable disease vectors to contributing to air, water and soil pollution. The results of poor waste management also contribute to a loss of valuable biodiversity which is detrimental to future generations.

Le Roux Booysen (2003:669) concluded that fewer people residing in rural areas and smaller urban settlements have access to medical aid, compared with people residing in larger urban centers. This is because the main criterion for access to medical aid is formal employment, and unemployment levels in rural areas and small towns are generally high compared with larger urban centers. Only 5.5% of people in rural areas have medical aid, whereas 22.6% of people in urban areas have coverage. Just more than a quarter (26.9%) of people residing in metropolitan areas have access to medical aid, compared with 18.7 and 14.7% of people residing in smaller cities and towns respectively. As a result, people in rural areas and smaller urban settlements, as shown elsewhere in this article, are generally more dependent on public service delivery for health care. He added that the evidence also shows that the public– private divide in health care delivery means that people in rural areas are generally more dependent on public and other health care services than on private services (Le Roux Booysen, 2003: 672) . At present, a bill has been proposed and sent out for public scrutiny and contributions about providing a National Health insurance (NHI).

The Water Research Commission (WRC) study presented 18 case studies of different types of sanitation systems in different provinces, in which between 4 and 12 years of operational history have been evaluated based on 1,000 interviews. The key recommendation was that planners must choose the easily-maintained sanitation options such as movable VIP – ventilated improved pit latrine latrines – (with lightweight top structures), twin pit VIPs (with relatively shallow and therefore more empty able pits) or single or double pit urine diversion latrines. It was found that there was no single type of sanitation that fared uniformly well. "For example, at Ntuthukoville in Pietermaritzburg the waterborne sanitation which was provided in 1996 as part of the services upgrade to an informal settlement has worked very well, but the municipality is left carrying bad debts to the total of tens of thousands of rands per home''. In another example, in Newline, Mpumalanga, the VIPs (ventilated improved pit latrine) continue to fulfill their function with no significant problems 11 years after construction, whereas at Mbazwana in northern Kwa-Zulu Natal, after a similar time period, five out of 25 VIPs inspected had collapsed; at Inadi, 15 out of the 27 inspected were full. Similarly, the urine diversion latrines at Bereaville, Kammiesberg and eThekwini are reported to be working well, whereas those at Koel Park and Ekurhuleni have been disastrous.

A common lesson learnt was that failure to properly involve the community in the sanitation choice, in the sanitation implementation, and in health and hygiene education was likely to result in poor functioning of the resulting latrines. "Urine diversion type latrines have proven successful in some cases, but not all. They have two important selling points: the first is that they can be relatively easily managed by users themselves; second is that they allow the users to capture a waste product (urine) which has great value as a liquid fertilizer."

City of Cape Town's water and service standards preliminary draft concluded that the major challenges faced by South Africa in promoting sustainable, affordable and efficient service delivery, includes:

- Promoting the Water Service Development Planning Process, within the framework of the Integrated Development Plan, as the key instrument for planning, monitoring and regulating water services, with full community involvement. Service provision should be demand-responsive rather than supply driven to ensure appropriate choices of technology, lower costs, better uses of resources and more sustainable services. The Water Service Development Plan should guide strategies related the choice of service levels and technology implemented;

- Developing an appropriate regulatory framework that ensures the effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable provision of at least basic sanitation services to all people living in South Africa, and cost-effective, reliable services to businesses and institutions;

- Finalisation of the institutional framework. Currently the local government structures must deal with a range of approaches to service provision that span both urban and rural areas. The allocation of powers and functions between district municipalities and local municipalities needs to be resolved;

- Rationalising the financial framework in order to support sustainable service provision, specifically with regard to the provision of free basic services and implementing appropriate pricing for services.

3. Local Government

The Bill of Rights as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 provides the communities with fundamental rights to access social services. In the same token the MDGs are emphatic that local government sphere should work towards the realization of basic socio-economic rights that contribute to human development. The argument advanced is that the contemporary focus on attainment of the MDGs constitutes a major shift in development thinking because it places improvement of the human conditions at the centre of world progress. In this regards local government sphere has an obligation to work towards the realization of these goals. These goals are:

- Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger;
- Achieving universal primary education;
- Promoting gender equality and empower women;
- Reducing child mortality;
- Improving maternal health;
- Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Ensuring environmental sustainability; and
- Developing a global partnership for development.

For the construction of a basic service delivery index per local municipality, access to basic services can be measured as:

- the percentage of households with piped water inside the dwelling;
- the percentage of households that use electricity for cooking, heating and lighting;
- the percentage of households with a flush latrine;
- the percentage of households whose refuse is removed by the local authority; and
- the percentage of households that live in a brick dwelling.

The delivery of social and economic development requires intensive effort and a more coordinated approach from local government. Since 2004 an unprecedented wave of popular and violent protests has flowed across the country. With the recent service delivery protests between 2009 and 2012 the protesters explained that they took to the streets because there was no way for them to get to speak to government, let alone to get government to listen to them. Local government sphere is the least trusted of all public institutions in the country and that has been the case since the first elections in 2000. This is evidenced by the study undertaken by the Human Sciences Research Council's Social Attitude Survey for 2003 which shows that only 43% of South Africans actually trust local government. This shows that while the new system of local government has been established with genuine intentions to positively affect democracy and to bring about social and economic delivery to the people, the system has not lived up to expectations. The general feeling in the hotspots is that political leadership lack responsiveness to issues raised by communities, incompetent, prone to corruption and with high degree of disregard for the communities.

The other contributing factor is that local political structures such as ward committees are not fully operational, resulting in poor communication with communities. Ward committees have been the focus of considerable attention by government as well civil society, with substantial investment already made in an attempt to ensure that these structures have the necessary capacity and resources required for them to fulfil their envisaged roles as the voices of communities. At the same time, questions that are often asked is how effective are these institutions; whether they are useful conduits for community involvement in local governance; whether, as created space for public participation, they are inherently capable of playing the critical role expected of them; and whether they create opportunities for real power-sharing between municipalities and citizen. Smith (2008: 11) lists the following as limitations faced by ward committees:

- the politics of representation;
- structural limits to power;
- the vagaries of councilor and party politics;
- skills of the ward councilors;
- access to information;
- influence on decision-making; and
- the councilors relationship with other structures.

The mention of ward committees typically solicits quite negative views. Communities appear to be critical of ward committees, arguing that ward committees are not functioning as intended. Moreover, ward committees are usually viewed as highly partisan structures aligned to party political agendas. These protests reflect the crisis of local democracy. It is the nature of local democracy that needs to change. The

present developmental local government model is premised on recognition of the primacy of linkages between development, service delivery and local citizen participation, defined as the organized effort to increase control over resources and regulative institutions by groups and movements excluded from such control. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 urges: "building local democracy is a central role of local government, and municipalities should develop strategies and mechanisms to continuously engage with citizens." Participation is mandated in four major senses:

- as voters to ensure democratic accountability;
- as citizens who through a variety of stakeholder organisations can contribute to policy processes;
- as consumer and end users who expect value for money and affordable services; and
- as organised partners engaged in resource mobilisation for development objectives.

Brynard (1996:44) in Kakumba and Nsingo (2008) outlines the following as the objectives of local government sphere in promoting citizen participation:

- provide information to citizens;
- get information from the citizens;
- improve public decisions, programmes, projects, and services; and
- protect individual and minority group rights and interests.

It should be noted that while the causes of the protests differ from one province to the other and from one municipality to the other, in all instances people want to be heard and to be taken seriously. The protesters are aware that they are citizens with rights and that they should be treated accordingly. The protests took a turn for the worse in May 2008 when foreign immigrants were attacked and displaced from various townships around the country. Blamed for reducing job, and other economic, opportunities for South African citizens, their stores were burnt, their shops looted, and their belongings stolen. Some analysts argue that this is to be expected given the poor levels of service delivery which are at the heart of the government's effort to 'create a better life for all'.

   Many reasons for these protests are offered. The primary reason is dissatisfaction with the delivery of basic municipal services such as running water, electricity and latrines, especially in informal settlements. Unemployment (officially at around 25.7%), high levels of poverty, poor infrastructure, and the lack of houses add to the growing dissatisfaction in these and other poor communities. This comes in the wake of political promises during the election period of May 2011 that all or most of these issues will be addressed once the new local government is in place. According to

some protesters this has been a recurring theme with every elections since 1994. The 2004 elections were followed by similar demonstrations in 21 local communities in different parts of the country and for the same reasons. In this regard it is perhaps also worth considering the fact that the South African elections normally takes place in the April/May period, immediately before winter when its harsh realities exacerbate the absence of life's immediate necessities.

A number of other reasons for are also provided. These include allegations of rampant corruption and nepotism within local government structures. Some protesters blame poor service delivery on the deployment of ANC 'comrades' to positions for which they are not qualified. The death of one protester in the Free State town of Ficksburg on 13th April 2011, allegedly at the hands of the South African Police service (SAPS), outraged many people across the country. The protests in Ficksburg occurred as a result of poor service delivery, lack of consultation and lack of good governance and, unfortunately, turned violent. It was reported that the protestor was attacked by at least six policemen simultaneously and the scene was shown to millions around the country that evening by national news channels. This further highlighted the lack of service delivery in South Africa. Other cases are the unavailability or sharing of either open or closed latrines, in Cape Town, Free State and recently Limpopo. This is a violation of the rights of South Africans as sanitation is among the services envisaged in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Other protests that occurred earlier in 2009 include the ones that took place in the Thokoza Township outside Johannesburg that followed a riot one week earlier in Diepsloot also near Johannesburg as well as others in Mpumalanga. Only in 2009, there were 24 protests compared to 27 that had occurred in the previous year.

It is widely felt that the decisions in South Africa do not respond adequately to the needs and values of the communities, especially the poor and disadvantaged sectors of the community. As a result, planning including the budgets and Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) has not sufficiently been reflective of the needs of the community. This is a contradiction to local government legislative framework underpinning local governance and popular belief that some form of stakeholder involvement in decision-making is necessary in planning on issues that affect people's lives. Protesters are adamant that for as long as government officials continue to assume that mandate at the polls gives them a mandate to act in a unilateral and top-down manner these protests will continue. This approach undermines public participation which is intrinsic to the core meaning of democracy. *The Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003* requires municipalities to "take reasonable steps to ensure that the resources of the municipality are used effectively, efficiently and economically". Good financial management is the key to local delivery. It is quite disturbing to note that most municipalities are generally associated with the worst form of financial management. Corruption, financial mismanagement and non- compliance with financial legislation are common in most municipalities. This results in poor performance; thus the delivery of social services is compromised. The

financial viability of the impoverished municipalities needs some consideration. These municipalities cannot perform their functions due to fiscal distress. These municipalities do not have extensive powers to raise their own revenues through property and business taxes and to impose fees for services. Furthermore such municipalities are overburdened to deliver. The *State of Local Government in South Africa Report, 2009* admits that "the national government may have created expectations that local government cannot fulfil, or placed a burden on municipalities that perhaps only the strongest amongst them can carry". This is the reality for local and district municipalities which largely depend on municipal grants and equitable share.

Municipalities with weak revenue base cannot survive on the current municipal infrastructure grant and equitable share funding allocations to fulfil their mandate. Such allocations are insufficient to ensure universal access to adequate services and will not enable poor and small municipalities to eradicate backlogs. Thus municipalities with financial limitations cannot translate their IDPs to workable socioeconomic programmes. The *State of Local Government in South Africa Report, 2009* further notes that the "distribution of the equitable share always favours metros over local municipalities and that the national government has failed to devised a sustainable strategy for supporting municipalities that are inherently different and confronting unique problems that are linked to their location in a distorted spatial economy".

Municipalities also face a shortage of skills. The *State of Local Government in South Africa Report 2009,* points that skills deficit within municipalities remains a major challenge. A significant number of municipalities do not have the managerial, administrative, financial and institutional capacity to meet the rising needs of local people. This situation is exacerbated by the decline of municipal professionals and poor linkages between local government and tertiary education sector. As a result these municipalities cannot meet their required performance standards hence impacting adversely on the delivery of services.

The Empowerdex report, 2009 was done to highlight the plight of the people at the bottom of the poverty ladder hence the poor of the poorest. Graaf Reinet in the Eastern Cape came out top of the heap with 96.4% of provision of formal housing, water, sanitation, electricity and waste removals in its households. Saldanha Bay scored a close second on 95.9% for actual service delivery. Berg River and Beaufort West in the Western Cape were third and fourth respectively. Witzenberg was one of the worst performing local municipalities in service delivery improvements, Nkandla Local Municipality, (the birthplace of President Zuma), only provides services to 32% of its population, although its improvement index scores higher than the national average. The worst performing local municipality was Msinga in KwaZulu-Natal, with only 18.6% of its households receiving basic services. Eight of the lowest ranking local municipalities were in the Eastern Cape and KZN. The top scorers were in the Northern Cape. At provincial level, the Western Cape also topped the log in service

delivery, with Limpopo on 46% bringing up the rear. The index was compiled from data supplied by Statistics South Africa. It measures improvements in service delivery over a period of time, comparing the results of the 2007 Community Survey with the 2001 Census.

4. Cities and Poverty Reduction

Intergovernmental transfers are therefore directed to a significant extent to areas with high rates of poverty. Indeed, there has been some concern that greater attention needs to be paid to the role that "wealthier" municipalities play in the economy. Over 80% of South Africa's economic activity is concentrated in 15 urban centers. While these cities have larger revenue bases than other municipalities, their expenditure needs are also proportionately greater. For example, cities require sophisticated transport infrastructure to provide access and mobility to large numbers of people. Poverty-targeted subsidies are meant to alleviate poverty. However, the long-term goal is poverty *reduction*, and this will only be brought about by sustained economic growth. With so much economic activity concentrated in urban centers, it is likely that this is where most economic growth and job creation will take place. One of the ways in which to ensure that major urban centers can underpin economic growth is to provide them with local taxes that are related to economic activity. While regional services levies are problematic in some ways, they are closely related to economic activity. Metropolitan municipalities retain all their levy income, but levy income in the large non-metropolitan urban centers is collected by district municipalities and spent mostly in the rural hinterland. Metropolitan municipalities therefore have access to a source of revenue related to economic activity while secondary cities do not. This inconsistency needs to be addressed. It is important to ensure that all major urban centers have access to a second major source of revenue (besides property rates) that can be used to invest in the infrastructure that is required to underpin economic activity and growth.

5. Public Participation

Nzimakwe (2010: 502) states that public participation is a complex and ongoing process through which people are enabled to exercise varying degrees of influence over development and governance issues and activities that affect their lives. Participation is therefore an active process whereby participants take the initiative and action stimulated by their own thinking and deliberation and over which they can exert effective control. Public participation and engagement is the involvement of citizens in a wide range of administrative policy-making activities, including the determination of levels of service, budget priorities, and the acceptability of physical construction projects, in order to direct government programmes towards community

needs, building public support, and encouraging a sense of cohesiveness within society (Fox & Meyer 1996:20) in Nzimakwe (2010:502).

Public participation in South Africa is facilitated by the following legislation; it is enshrined in the *Constitution of South Africa, 1996* through the Bill of Rights which mandates service delivery institutions especially municipalities to encourage the process of communication, consultation and co-production. The *White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery, 1997* considers the citizens/public as customers who must be given priority in terms of the *Batho Pele* (People First) principles. This means the public must be involved and heard in the decision making process to ensure efficient, effective and economic service delivery. On the other hand, the *White Paper on Local Government, 1998*, provides a new vision of a developmental local governance system. It suggests ways in which municipalities across the country can engage the public and community institutions in the affairs of the municipality in their capacities as voters, citizens affected by municipal policies, consumers and end-users of municipal services, and partners in mobilising resources for the development of a municipal area. Chapter 4, Part 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998, deals with the establishment, functions and powers of ward committees in the South African local governance system while the *Local Government Municipal Systems Act, 2000* requires municipalities in South Africa to develop a culture of municipal government that complements formal representative government. In terms of Section 16 South African local communities must be encouraged to participate in the affairs of the municipality. Public participation takes place through political structures, public meetings, consultative sessions, report back sessions with the local community and through mechanisms such as *izimbizo*. The *Promotion of Access to Information Act*, 2000 was passed to give effect to Section 32 of the South African constitution, i.e. the right of citizens to access any information held by the state. It seeks to foster a culture of transparency and accountability in public institutions. Another purpose of the Act is to promote a society in which the public have access to information, in order to empower them to exercise and protect their rights. Lastly, the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act,* 41 of 2003 stipulates that traditional leaders should be part of democratic leadership and governance structures at the local government sphere. In this co-operative relationship with municipalities, traditional leaders should facilitate public participation, especially in policy and service delivery decisions that affect rural communities.

Improving and encouraging the culture of public participation that will promote inclusive participation and actively incorporate public inputs on vital governance issues remains vital in this democratic era. It should be stressed that public participation is a key tenet of democratic governance. Municipalities should engage and consult civil society more frequently in policy formulation and implementation and incorporate them in governance structures.

In fact, the process to ensure community participation is a core principle of legislation. There is a wide consensus that local democracy entails participatory and

inclusive decision-making processes in which the beneficiaries have a substantial say in determining local government developmental agendas. To achieve this, it is essential that community awareness of rights and obligations should be enhanced so that citizens can play an instrumental role in municipal affairs and in implementation of MDG-related activities in their localities. For local government to live up to its potential, it depends not only on availability of skilled personnel and financial resources but also on the role played by communities in the structures. President Zuma indicated in his 2010 State of the Nation Address that he would work hard to build a strong developmental state, which responds to the needs and aspirations of the people, and which works "faster, harder and smarter."

6. Curbing Corruption and Promoting Financial Compliance

Section 215 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996 prescribes that the budgets prepared by the national, provincial and municipal governments must promote transparency, accountability and effective financial management. The Constitution is the foundation for good governance in the financial management of the State. The *Public Finance Management Act*, 1999 as amended by Act 26 of 1999 (PFMA), was created to modernise the system of financial management in the public sector and to move away from the rule driven and highly centralised system of expenditure control to the management of public financial resources by the head of the department. The PFMA allows the mangers to manage public funds in a responsible and transparent manner. They are further responsible and accountable for the use of resources to deliver services. The Act focuses on:

- financial reporting;
- independent auditing and supervision of internal control systems;
- improved accounting standards;
- output and performance; and
- increased accountability at all levels.

Fourie (2005: 683) suggests that the more the public engages in the budgetary process which is aimed at educating citizens, the distrust of government amongst the citizens will decrease as public opinion has a great impact on decision making.

    The effectiveness of municipalities to deliver on their mandate is largely dependent on their ability to plan and allocate public resources in a developmental and sustainable manner. Therefore, it is significant that municipalities carefully integrate community needs in their development plans and when allocating budget. It is essential to note that the IDP is informed by the resources which can be afforded and allocated through the budget process. Therefore, the budget must, in turn be aligned with the IDP and its objectives and strategies. The processes are, therefore, not separate and distinct; they are integrally linked and are symbiotic. Furthermore,

municipalities must ensure that the budget supports the achievement of the objectives set in the IDP and the attainment of the overall vision of the council. This again requires high levelled community participating in the formulation of IDP's and budget allocations. After all, the content of the IDP must represent consensus reached with the community through various community participation processes. The significance of this is clear in that it enables the community to hold the council accountable for the attainment of the goals and targets set in the IDP.

Koelble and LiPuma (2010:584) argue that the most worrisome occurrence that is becoming a norm in the public service is the increasing occurrence of corruption, nepotism and self-enrichment. There is an urgent need to think of innovative ways of curbing corruption and some other administrative malpractices within municipalities. Local government transformation in South Africa has exerted considerable pressure on municipalities to manage their financial resources effectively, economically and efficiently in order to meet their developmental mandate. Therefore, municipalities need to improve sound financial management requirements as envisaged in the statutory framework by appointing qualified and capable officials, including chief financial officers and internal auditors, with right and appropriate skills. Importantly, municipal officials must account for results, not only for budget spending and as more resources are transferred to local government there is a need to strengthen the institutions that enforce accountability of public resources. To fight the scourge of maladministration, mismanagement of municipal finances, fraud and corruption, municipalities need to strengthen and review their existing internal control systems that detect the above-mentioned deficiencies. These include verifying the quality and appropriateness of internal audit and audit committees. Therefore, this requires effective monitoring by the officials in managerial positions. Examples of corruption in South Africa include the Travelgate scandal, in which 40 members of parliament were found to have illegally used parliamentary travel vouchers worth R18 million for personal use. The Oilgate scandal is another example in which the petrol company Imvume Holdings was accused of paying R11 million of state money to the ruling ANC party during the 2011 local government elections. The Fidentia Asset Management scandal also serve as an example of corruption in the South African public service wherein an estimated amount of R2 billion went missing. A number of investors including the Transport Education and Training Authority (state subsidised), with a R245 million stake, lost their investments. Living Hands Umbrella Trust with a R1.47 billion investment in Fidentia Asset Management, which pays money to the Mineworkers Provident Fund to widows and orphans of mine workers killed in mine accidents, also lost their investments (www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa). These cases serve as examples amongst many cases of corruption. Thornhill (2006: 323) adds that financial management of a municipality is more complex, as when using an external entity, the municipal manager through the chief financial officer has to provide for mechanisms to monitor the financial affairs of such entity. If an external entity should

collapse as a result of financial mismanagement or corrupt activities, the municipality will be required to continue rendering the services, financing it from own resources.

On the 24th of November 2011, the Sowetan Newspaper reported that the Moqhaka municipality in Free State, which was earlier embroiled in a scandal about unenclosed latrines, had spent more than R9-million of taxpayers' money to benefit organisations other than the public including Premier Soccer League clubs.

This was after the South African Human Rights Commission found that the Municipality 'failed to adequately conceptualise, plan and implement its project which resulted in the residents being forced to use unenclosed latrines. The Commission also found that the Municipality's 'explanation that it lacked resources was not justified and therefore unacceptable'. This was a violation of the residents' human rights of dignity, privacy and a clean environment.

7. Political and Administrative Tensions

The political/administrative interface is the grey area within which politics has to be distinguished from administration and management. If there is lack of trust or lack of clarity regarding the respective responsibilities, the executive institution cannot provide the services required. It should also be stated that to be able to separate the political and administrative functions to some extent, one has to assume that sufficient educated and talented people are available to fill both offices (Cameron, 2003:58). It is crucial that current prevailing political and administrative tensions are resolved in order to enhance and deepen local democracy. The relationship between politics and administration should ensure that partisan concerns do not compromise the management of the administration which is the core element of ensuring delivery. For instance, this relationship should guarantee that councillors do not exert pressure on officials to act in the interest of particular constituencies and it must also ensure effective, efficient and economic service delivery.

8. Interventions

On the 6 November 2011, The Minister of Human Settlements, Tokyo Sexwale, unveiled a task team, headed by the chairperson of the Sanitation Committee in the Department of Human Settlements, Ms Winnie Madikizela-Mandela to advise on the issue of unclosed and or incomplete latrines in the country. This occurred after the media exposed the inhumane practice in Makhaza, Moqhaka and Moutse before and during the local government elections in May 2011. The expose made it clear to the department that the magnitude of the problem might have been unknown, since the sanitation function had recently been transferred to the Department of Human Settlements from Water Affairs. In his address, the Minister added: "These incomplete or unclosed latrines strip our people of their dignity and they are unhealthy. The team

is tasked with identifying and locating such structures in-order to have them fixed. This sordid chapter must be brought to an end."
The task team was given three months to finalise its work and establish the following:

- the scale of the problem;
- its nature;
- its geographic spread, i.e. urban or rural;
- identify irregularities and malpractices.

The Sowetan reported on the 5 November 2011 that about 100 unused latrines, worth R1,2 million and built in 1997 in Moutse, had been vandalised while government officials wrangled about who was responsible for the project. The latrines formed part of a second phase of the now-defunct state-led policy initiative of Reconstruction and Development Project in which 100 houses were to have been built. But that never happened and 14 years later people of Matlelerekeng village near Dennilton are still waiting. Until 2006 the area was under Mpumalanga but was placed under Limpopo in that same year.

Addressing the media in East London, Eastern Cape, as part of a five-day programme to assess the state of sanitation facilities, Madikizela-Mandela said: "There are serious shortcomings in the implementation of the sanitation programme. I have personally been shocked at how grave these shortcomings are, especially as they seem to expose our weakness 17 years after 1994." She mentioned that the problems included irregularities and malpractices during the implementation phase, non- compliance to norms and standards such as the case of open latrines in Free State and Khayelitsha as well as unlawful disposal such as the illegal sale of latrine facilities. All these needed further investigation. A number of townships in the Eastern Cape are reported to be still using the bucket system largely due to service providers who left incomplete projects. Such companies had been threatened with being blacklisted if they did not complete the work given to them. These include parts of Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Joza in Grahamstown and Chris Hani informal settlement in Uitenhage. Another issue that arose was the multi tasking of companies between project which further incapacitated them.
On the 3 November 2011, Nelson Mandela Bay was visited by Ms Madikizela-Mandela who vowed to address housing and sanitation problems and dismissed mayor Zanoxolo Wayile's concerns over lack of funding as in her opinion 'There's was no shortage of money in government to deal with the problems had been raised."

The next stop was in Mpumalanga, Doornkop Middelburg on the 9 November 2011. The Task Team has discovered that most sanitation problems in the Mpumalanga province are due to lack of water supply. Here she added that all those who had been involved in corrupt activities especially in the delivery of sanitation would be prosecuted as all cases of maladministration throughout the country would be investigated.

9. Conclusion

The delivery of sanitary services in parts of South Africa such as Moqhaka, Makhaza, Middelburg and Nelson Mandela Metro has proven to be a violation of human rights especially towards human dignity, freedom, privacy and equality. Access to adequate sanitation is therefore fundamental to personal dignity and security, social and psychological well-being, public health, poverty reduction, gender equality, economic development and environmental sustainability. Institutional and financial challenges at the local government level, coupled with a lack of political will, are causes for concern, and contribute to continued compromised access to sanitation by millions of people living in South Africa. Women, the disabled and people living with HIV/AIDS are most affected by a lack of access to adequate basic sanitation. The latter are particularly prone to diseases like diarrhea, and require ease of access to sanitation facilities, as well as a continuous supply of safe water. Lack of adequate sanitation at schools and clinics across the country is cause for concern. For households living with waterborne latrines, access to sanitation requires a continuous supply of water for flushing. Without access to sufficient water that is affordable, households can have extremely compromised access to sanitation. More still needs to be done by the Departments involved in the delivery of sanitation and water services.

References

Botes, L., Lenka, M., Marais, L., Matebesi, Z. & Sigenu, K. (2007). The cauldron of local protests: Reasons, impacts and lessons learned. Centre for Development Support, Free State University.

Brynard (1996:44) in Kakumba and Nsingo, Journal of Public Administration, 43: 2, June 2008, 107-123.

Budlender, D. (1999). Patterns of poverty in South Africa, Development Southern Africa, 16: 197-246.

Burger, Ronelle. (2005). 'What we have learnt from post-1994 innovations in pro-poor service delivery in South Africa: a case study-based analysis', Development Southern Africa, 22: 4, 483-500.

Hirschowitz, R. and Orkin, M. (1997). Inequality in South Africa: Findings from the 1994 October Household Survey. *Social Indicators Research* 41: 119–136, 1997.

Hutton, G. & Bartram, J. (2008). Global costs of attaining the Millennium Development Goal for water supply and sanitation. Bulletin of the World Health Organization. 86: 13-19.

Kiyaga-Nsubuga, Local Democracy, Good Governance and Delivering the MDGs in Africa, (2007).

Koelble, T. A. & LiPuma, E. (2010.) 'Institutional obstacles to service delivery in South Africa', Social Dynamics, 36: 3, 565-589.

Leibbrandt, M. Poswell, A. Naidoo, P. & Welch, M. (2006). Measuring recent changes in South African inequality and poverty using 1996 and 2001 census data. (In Bhorat, H. and Kanbur, R. eds. Poverty and Policy in Post-Apartheid South Africa, Cape Town: HSRC Press).

Le Roux Booysen, F. (2003). The extent of, and possible explanations for, provincial disparities in progress on reconstruction and development in South Africa. Development Southern Africa, 20: 21-48.

Le R Booysen, F. (2003).   Urban–rural inequalities in healthcare delivery in South Africa. Development Southern Africa, 20: 5, December 2003, 659-674..

Møller, V. & Jackson, A. (1997). Perceptions of service delivery and happiness. Development Southern Africa, 14: 2, 169-184.

Møller, V. & Devey, R. (2003). Trends in living conditions and satisfaction among poorer older South Africans: objective and subjective indicators of quality of life in the October Household Survey, Development Southern Africa, 20: 457-476.

Møller, V. (2001). Monitoring quality of life in cities: the Durban case, Development Southern Africa, 18: 217-238.

Ngwane, A.K., Yadavalli, V.S.S. & Ste¤ens, F.E. (2003). Poverty: Deprivations in terms of basic needs, Development Southern Africa, 19: 545-560.

Sotshongaye, A. & Møller, V. (2000). We want to live a better life like other people.: self- assessed development needs of rural women in Ndwedwe, KwaZulu-Natal, Development Southern Africa, 17; 1, 117-134.