Building the Capability of the State for Improved Service Delivery
Each of us is a knowledge worker and a learning champion in this knowledge economy. We all have a role to play in turning the Public Service into a “Learning Public Service for Quality Service Delivery”, let us pursue this ideal by using the Service Delivery Review as a facility for sharing our experiences, successes, mistakes and methodologies and for growing our own intellectual capital.

We belong, we care, we serve.

Opinions expressed in this journal are not those of government but reflect the views of individual writers.

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Africa Public Service Day

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In his seminal book, *Out of America: A Black Man Confronts Africa*, journalist and author Keith B Richburg comes to grips with the many ailments that are ravaging the continent of Africa. There are many of them, indeed, but by and large he decides to pay specific attention to what he considers to be the most debilitating one.

In scrutinising this ailment he tells the story of two gentlemen, an African and an Indonesian, who, as young men, develop a great friendship while attending university in London. The story continues to say that with the march of time the two become senior in their respective governments where they work as bureaucrats and finally become finance ministers in their respective countries.

During a state visit to Indonesia, the African gets to spend time at his old friend’s house and is startled by the opulence around him, the five Mercs, the gleaming swimming pool and a troop of servants. Naturally, he exclaims: “How did you amass so much money so soon? Not so long ago the two of us were just poor students!”

The Asian walks his friend outside the house, and points into the distance where a huge freeway is gleaming prominently. “You see that toll road?” the Asian beams, and then taps himself on the chest. “Ten percent.”

The African nods understandingly. A few years later, it is the Indonesian’s turn to visit his friend in Africa. As expected, the African is living on a massive estate set upon undulating hills. There is a fleet of Mercedes-Benzes in the yard and at least one Rolls-Royce, a tennis court and an Olympic-size swimming pool. “Dear God!” the Asian exclaims, “How do you afford all of this?” Time it is the African’s turn to visit his friend in Africa. As expected, the African is living on a massive estate set upon undulating hills. There is a fleet of Mercedes-Benzes in the yard and at least one Rolls-Royce, a tennis court and an Olympic-size swimming pool.

“Dear God!” the Asian exclaims, “How do you afford all of this?” This time it is the African’s turn to visit his friend in Africa. As expected, the African is living on a massive estate set upon undulating hills. There is a fleet of Mercedes-Benzes in the yard and at least one Rolls-Royce, a tennis court and an Olympic-size swimming pool.

“You see that highway?” he says. The Asian sees nothing but an open field.

“But I don’t see any highway,” says the puzzled Asian.

“Exactly,” says the African, smiling. Then he taps himself on the chest and boasts: “One hundred percent!”

You’ve probably heard variations of this joke. It’s a simple morality tale that highlights the cancerous effects of corruption on Africa versus Indonesia, where corruption is also rampant but somewhat “benign”, for lack of a better word.

As we celebrated Africa Public Service Day recently it was perhaps proper that we reflected deeply on the scourge of corruption that is ravaging the continent. It seeps from the highest levels of many of our governments, and filters down to the proverbial man in the street. It touches governors as much as it affects those in the private sector.

Many international agencies issue out regular indices measuring the extent and impact of corruption on our countries. One of these was recently issued by Transparency International. While there were concerns about the methodology used in conducting the study, the point that is not in dispute is the fact that the government of this country acknowledges the existence of the scourge among our ranks, and is committed to uprooting it.

Professor Stan Sangweni, chairman of the Public Service Commission and a member of the Anti-Corruption Forum, said as much in a recent interview with a Sunday newspaper on the issue of corruption as reported by Transparency International.

“We certainly support the concept. This is an important tool in addressing problems of corruption. But one has to look at the methodology of how the survey is conducted. That is where the problems arise. In 2001 we ranked 38 and the score was 4.8. This year we ranked 46, with a score of 4.5. This is based on a perception that nothing is being done. And yet there has been a steady but very vigorous increase in the measures put in place to deal with corruption. We have put in place no less than five pieces of legislation aimed at countering corruption,” he said.

Some countries are more corrupt than others, but there is not one that can claim to be free of the scourge. This you will learn from the various corruption indices that are published regularly by various institutes.

Past experience has shown that Africa tends to be prone to the malignant variety of corruption. There is a perception on this continent that once you are in power, you can help yourself to public property. It is this perception that we as public servants must be fighting against, or ensuring that anti-corruption structures that are already in place are working.

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Dudley@dpsa.gov.za
The idea of the centrality of citizens, or Batho Pele/People First, in all aspects of governance is perfectly in line with some of the key insights progressive governments are currently trying to implement in the aftermath of the period in which many responsibilities in terms of public service delivery have been signed over to the market.

It is a period that has seen the emaciation of the capacity of the state on the African continent as a result of conditionalities set by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank that advocated the minimisation of the role of the state in order to encourage economic growth and to show greater efficiencies associated with business management.

Eliminating social injustice

As we set out to engage with the theme of this edition of the Service Delivery Review journal — “Building the capability of the state for improved service delivery” — we are obliged to keep the perspective of building a particular kind of state capability that specifically relates to the principle of people-centeredness in the context of the developmental state.

The kind of capability of the state that we strive towards is not demonstrative of a state that is power-hungry for its own sake, but a state that requires capability for the specific purpose of improving the lives of all South Africans by improving on the delivery of public services. These public services are key towards creating social justice and closing the gaps between the rich and poor, urban and rural, men and women, black and white, the able-bodied and those living with disabilities.

It is through the best possible provision of education, healthcare, police services and other services that we will build a country in which each individual will have the opportunity to develop his or her full potential.

As political leadership, and paying heed to the advice that our senior managers are imparting to us, we are currently concentrating on improving co-ordination and integration across the very complex landscape that is responsible for service delivery.

The challenge of horizontal integration is not new and should not be merely linked to the fact that we are government. As Guy Peters, a well-known North American public administration author states in his monograph, "Managing Horizontal Government: the Politics of Coordination":

“The administrative Holy Grail of coordination and ‘horizontal-ty’ is one of the perennial quests for the practitioners of government. From the time of the separation of governing structures into departments, ministries and analogous organizations there have been complaints that one organization does not know what another is doing, and that their programs are contradictory, redundant or both. The fundamental problems of coordination have been exacerbated by the growth of structural elaboration of modern government, but the coordination problem appears endemic to all large organizations, or collections of organizations, whether public or private.”

As Peters alludes, there are factors at play in the modern public service delivery landscape that make integration and coordination that much harder, and demonstrate to us that we will
have to adjust our practices. These include decentralisation; agentisation; outsourcing and even the very idea of governance itself, just to mention a few familiar ones.

Governments do not work and operate in isolation any more. We are constantly in relationships that need coordination if we are to work in an optimal manner. In other words, silos and hierarchies simply fall short in resolving the very real problems that operational officials experience when they try to work these complex arrangements.

The centre must hold

It is the absence of a centre that, in my opinion, poses the biggest limitation. When it comes to coordination and integration, our government is convinced that it is essential to have a strong centre to hold things together. Note for example the many initiatives that we have undertaken in the past few years to build that strength: a more capacitated and differently structured Presidency; integrated approaches to planning and budgeting; integrated programmes for rural and urban development; and an integrated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system.

To prove the logic of our position, I would like us to think about two images from the natural world that we are all familiar with. The first is the constellation of planets where each orbits the sun at its own pace.

Although seemingly independent, the planets forming part of a constellation are held together by a central force that prevents them from each going in their own direction.

The second image is that of a spider web that, at a glance, has many concentric circles. But if one looks closely, it is the lines that cross over the circles and come together in the centre that provide the strength to the web and actually hold it all together. It is the centre of the web that in effect is the strongest but would have had no function if it were not for the other threads.

It is useful to bear these images in mind when we engage in discussions on the capability of the state and the challenges of coordination and integration.

Engines of service delivery

With the above images in mind, it is also critically important to appreciate the special position that public managers occupy in the public service as this provides us with a broad and comprehensive perspective over operational processes. Managers sit at the very nexus of an information network that criss-crosses many divides and are close to the coalface and yet sufficiently distanced to grasp the bigger picture.

As public sector managers, whether in the health sector or the education sector, whether directly or indirectly involved with service delivery, what underlines our mission is the fact that we are part of a single organisation — the South African public service.

We have a single purpose to deliver the best services possible to all South Africans, regardless of the difficulties involved in doing so.

The Progressive Governance Network, which we are part of, makes it adamantly clear that governments will only succeed if they use public service delivery to structure a society in which social justice can prevail. And public service leaders and managers are the engines that should drive service delivery.

As public officials, we owe it to the people of this country, the region and the people of the world to bring about a socially just and democratic society as fast as possible.
Public Service HR Forum Takes-off

Public Service Human Resources (HR) managers, HR practitioners, senior and middle management from across the country recently met in Johannesburg to grapple with some of the vexing issues of managing people employed by the government.

The gathering of about 200 people in September also launched a public sector-wide HR forum which is modelled along the same lines as the various subject specific learning networks in the public service.

While the idea of a public sector-wide HR forum has roots in partnership discussions between the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and Government Communications and Information Service (GCIS) it was further suggested that the forum be used as a platform to discuss public sector related HR policy and implementation issues.

Delegates suggested that the forum be made up of HR practitioners and heads of HR in departments, perhaps using the Government Information Technology Officers Council model. The next session will be on performance management in January/February 2006.

Public Service Trainers Focus on Boosting State Capacity

In the middle of September 2005, the 9th National Public Service Trainers’ Conference was held in Johannesburg. It was attended by about 500 public service trainers from all over the country.

This year’s conference was hosted by the Gauteng Provincial Government in partnership with the Public Service Trainers Forum (PSTF) and the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI). The conference is hosted annually by different provinces and includes participants from local, provincial and national government.

The theme of the conference was “Positioning HRD strategies to meet the challenges of a developmental state through an integrated public service: From Vision 2014”. It brought together officials involved in human resource development (HRD) interventions such as HRD managers, training practitioners, Skills Development Facilitators and academics in the field of public management.

The conference stimulated debate, disseminated HRD information and enriched the skills of public sector HRD officials. International speakers gave global perspectives and national and international HRD best practices were shared and benchmarked. Among the issues on the agenda, was the integration of the public service across the three spheres of government. The highlight of the conference was the realization of the digital divide when the Singaporean Civil Service College connected live with the conference delegates in GPG on HR matters.

The conference took place at a time when government is focusing on improving the capacity and organisation of the state. Government spends one percent of its budget on the training of civil servants. This is because it realises that public service skills development is crucial in improving government performance and service delivery.

Trainers help equip public servants to meet the challenges in achieving the country’s vision for 2014, mainly the halving of unemployment and poverty. Public service training also boosts overall skills levels in the country, enhancing economic growth and social development. Gauteng trained 25 153 employees in 23 courses in the last financial year. This year it plans to train 35 000 civil servants. It had trained 9 000 civil servants by June this year.

The PSTF is a non-statutory, non-profit making body comprising of Public Service HRD practitioners. This body is located in the Department of Public Service & Administration within the ambit of SAMDI. The PSTF was formed in 1997 and has been active in shaping the formulation and implementation of the Public Service HRD Strategy — Gauteng Provincial Government News

Aspects of government’s myriad activities should be consciously linked to objectives of economic growth, empowerment and participation, argued Donaldson.

Ironically, while government plays a critical role in stimulating growth, for example as an employer and a consumer of services, a faster rate of growth makes it difficult for government to perform its tasks because of high staff mobility due to competition skills with other sectors of the economy.

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South Africa to Import Skills from India for Public Service

By Shaun Benton

In a move to improve the capacity of local government, a government delegation travelled to India in November to identify experts, who have the skills to build capacity in the public service.

The Minister of Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi told the media early in November that the initiative was part of a broader “human resource development intervention” to boost skills levels in the public service. She pointed out that a second phase of this strategy will see “a more comprehensive recruitment” of technical skills from India.

The emphasis for the short-term importing of skills will be on mentorship, so that skills transfers can take place while management capacity is consolidated. According to the Minister, financial and other technical skills are among the specific skills desired to boost capacity in local government.

The Department of Communication had also provided a list of specific Information and Communication Technology skills required in the hardware and software fields, an area where India is one of the world leaders. — Bua News

Work Together with CDWs

By Thapelo Salekana

President Thabo Mbeki has called on Councillors and local government officials to accept and acknowledge Community Development Workers and the roles that they play in identifying the needs of communities.

The President made the call when he addressed a municipal imbizo at Gert Sibande District Municipality in Mpumalanga. The district municipality is one of the areas where CDWs have been deployed by government. According to Flora Mabou-Bolman, Speaker for the district municipality, the district has 114 wards and 103 CDWs have been deployed. She said that “the [Mpumalanga] provincial government has trained and recruited 103 CDWs with one in each ward. We hope others will be deployed to cover the remaining [11] wards”.

She further pointed out that the challenge facing CDWs was rejection by Councillors and some community members, among others.

This was confirmed by a CDW at the Albert Luthuli Municipality, Julius NKosi who told President Mbeki that they were rejected by Councillors and asked him to clarify roles as well as responsibilities of CDWs and Councillors. According to NKosi, “there should be a formal introduction of CDWs to Councillors”. He proposed that the President should start and speed-up this process of formal introductions for them to do their work for the benefit of communities.

In response, President Mbeki said Councillors should regard CDWs as additional capacity to help identify the needs of communities. However, he pointed out that CDWs were government officials not public representatives like Councillors. He then asked Mayors and Speakers in municipalities to introduce CDWs to councils and government departments. — Bua News

DPSA Holds the Health and Wellness Indaba

The DPSA held its fifth Annual Public Service Employee Health and Wellness Indaba at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Durban in October 2005. The Indaba was held under the theme, “Caring for those who Serve”.

The Indaba was officially opened by the Minister of Public Service and Administration Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi on Sunday, 9th October 2005 and was attended by delegates from national departments, provincial governments and other key stakeholders in employee health and wellness sector.

During the opening ceremony, Minister Fraser-Moleketi pointed out that the health and wellness of public service employees is the key to the ability of government to render quality services to the people of this country.

As the largest employer, government has a duty to maintain a leadership role in the field of employee health and wellness.

The Minister said, “As the Public Service, we are charged with the responsibility of delivering services aimed at ensuring a better life for the people of South Africa. “We are the driving force behind service delivery and without consistent efforts to promote health and wellness amongst our employees, we cannot really be effective.”

The Director-General of the DPSA, Professor Richard Levin, set the scene for the Indaba on the second day. Thereafter, various speakers delivered presentations on various matters relating to employee health and wellness.

• Mr Matthew Ncube from the International Labour Organisation spoke about “Stress, Burnout and Related Problems in the Workplace”;
• Professor Ian Roothman from University of the North-West made a presentation on “Legal framework for employee health and wellness and some case studies from within the Public Sector”;
• Dr Danie Bosman from Dekra Norisko spoke about “Occupational Health and Safety in relation to employee health and wellness”;
• Mr Siyabonga NKosi from Gauteng Shared Services Centre made a presentation on “Behavioural Risk Manage-
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SITA Announces Cost Savings for Government

The State Information Technology Agency (SITA) announced major gains in its annual results for the 2004/2005 financial year. The results were announced in Rosebank, Johannesburg, where the organisation revealed considerable savings for Government.

SITA CEO, Mr Mavuso Msimang, said several initiatives were undertaken in the reporting year that saved government considerable resources.

At the Department of Social Services, SITA assisted with the detection and elimination of some 17 000 fraudulent social grant transactions, which saved the department R1.7 billion.

Government was also saved R200 million through the reduction of tariffs on the processing of application systems in its IBM environment, and R170 million by capping amounts recoverable from government in the processing of BAS applications.

According to Mr Msimang, SITA’s results this year are the first in the organisation’s three-year strategic turnaround programme. He further stated that “the turnaround strategy is premised on the urgent necessity to radically improve the quality and levels of service delivered to government.”

He also pointed to improvements that have taken place in SITA’s Procurement Services. Deficiencies in this environment were guaranteed to gravely impair the reputation of the organisation given the centrality of procurement in government’s business activities, and the sensitivities surrounding this function.

Government Employees’ Medical Scheme on Track

By Themba Radebe

Substantial progress has been made in establishing the Government Employees’ Medical Scheme (GEMS). Addressing the Media in Johannesburg, the Minister of Public Service and Administration Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said that despite pessimism on the project, government had steadily proceeded on the desired course and achieved the key milestones.

The Minister said some of the project’s highlights in 2005 included the Cabinet approving a preferred member enrolment strategy that had seen an increase in the enrolment of employees.

The Cabinet has also approved the cost and risk implications and further noted the implications of implementing GEMS in the developmental state.

Fraser-Moleketi also reiterated some of the benefits which government realised through GEMS. These included the promotion of equitable assets to comprehensive and affordable healthcare benefits by all public service employees and greater access to employee benefits for lower income earners.

The scheme also provides for the provision of a comprehensive HIV disease management programme for the employees and their families. According to the minister, government is setting an example to other employers that innovative medical benefits can be made available to all employees.

Regarding procurement services by GEMS, the Minister said this represented a substantial part of the work that the team had done in 2005 to prepare for the enrollment of members on 1 January 2006.

According to the Minister, the potential value of the contracts to be awarded to service providers and the high profile of the scheme within the medical scheme environment suggest that the procurement process will be subjected to intense scrutiny.

She pointed out that, as the Minister, she had considered the progress report and update provided to her in respect of the procurement process that has been conducted by the scheme. She has congratulated successful bidders.

The GEMS was registered on 1 January 2005 and was informed by substantial bodies of research, sound data analysis and intense consideration by Cabinet.

Through the establishment of GEMS, government seeks to meet specific objectives that include equity, efficiency, quality, accessibility and sound corporate governance.

Speaking at the same briefing, the department’s Director-General, Professor Richard Levin, said GEMS was a medical scheme created by government as an example to other employers that innovatively and strategically medical benefits can be made available to all employees. — BuaNews
Reflections on the Learning Academy

Dudley Moloi and Bongani Matomela provide an overview of the key issues that emerged at the Fourth Annual Service Delivery Learning Academy

Public Service and Administration Minister Geralldine Fraser-Moleketi made a clarion call to public servants on the need to always put people at the centre of development and service delivery. Thus, the Minister told delegates, requires serving with passion, compassion and visionary leadership. The Minister argued that most of these critical attributes are in abundance in the history of the South African struggle and are embodied by the lives of past heroes like Chief Albert Luthuli.

Minister Fraser-Moleketi further drew the attention of the audience to the fact that 2005 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter. She reminded delegates of how the fundamental principles of the Charter continue to form the basis of governance in post-apartheid South Africa.

Among the tenets of the Charter is the issue of the centrality of the state in the delivery of services such as housing, water, health and education. This is in contrast to signing-off the key role of the public service to the private sector in the emasculation of the capacity of government or the state. The Minister did, however, acknowledge the complexity of the service delivery landscape and the obligation to build a particular kind of capacity to ensure that the state fulfills its responsibilities.

Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) Director-General Professor Richard Levin picked up on the Minister’s thoughts on the centrality of the state in delivering public goods by pointing out the fact that governance trends over the past 13 years or so are increasingly pointing towards the reaffirmation of the role of the state in reconstruction and development. It was within this context that Levin argued that re-invention of South African governance requires more state involvement.

What was also particularly useful from Levin’s input was how he unpacked the often nebulous concepts of “capacity” and “capability” in the context of the public service. He delineated the issue of lack of capacity or capability across government in terms of the following: Ideological, Political, Technical, and Administrative.

Breathing space

With specific reference to the notion and move towards a unified public service, Municipal Demarcation Board chairperson, Dr Vuyo Mlokoti, expressed concerns with regard to the flurry of changes that are affecting the performance of local government. Mlokoti argued that municipalities have not been given enough time to breathe and consolidate, especially in view of the fact that 2009 is the original targeted year for the completion of the local government transformation project. Whilst not opposing the need for change per se, Mlokoti pointed to the need to guard against creating a permanent state of instability in the public service due to the fact that change programmes that we institute enough time to take root.

High-level presentations from Stats SA and the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) presented a set of complex but necessary challenges in relation to building the organisational and structural capacity of the state. These inputs touched on how intergovernmental relations could be improved; the capacity challenges to deliver on a social security protection programme to millions of people and the complex systems and processes required to achieve that as well as the value of information an integrated information system to support the values and goals of a developmental state.

Role of the state

Building the second economy through various development programmes emerged as a key issue. The presentations included reflections on current efforts in this regard by the Industrial Development Corporation, the National Development Agency and other public entities. There was also critique on the scale and coherence of various initiatives that stimulated a lot of debate. What also emerged clearly was that the state is, and will continue to be, the driver of growth and development while recognising the overall capacity challenges in terms of systems and processes, people, culture, infrastructure, skills and competencies to meet the development choices government has made. The issue of effective and relevant leadership development was heavily emphasised.

In the commissions participants focused on operational aspects through sharing case studies on improving systems and processes in implementing development programmes. These ranged from studying the value of Monitoring and Evaluation to measure impact and effectiveness, the use of Information Technology to facilitate development programmes and the need to build optimal capacity down at the service delivery levels (in hospitals, colleges of education and so forth). The case studies also interrogated and affirmed the importance of culture change and skills development.

The discussions on development programmes were also challenging, and participants emphasised the need for community involvement in dealing with issues of integration and coordination in implementation. What emerged clearly was that the capabilities underpinning development programmes were key to development.

In terms of the approach to service delivery, partnerships and integration were highlighted as important. Participants were also reminded and updated on efforts to focus on local service delivery — notwithstanding the challenges of capacity, resources and governance at that level of government. Critical also in this regard was the issue of how to link communities with government services as illustrated through best practice projects such as the gateway portals in northern KwaZulu-Natal area of Mhlazwana and the CDW programme.
Among some of the key observations made by The Ten Year Review of South Africa’s first decade of democracy is that the state has been more successful in terms of service delivery in instances where government had more direct control.

This correlation between impact and direct control or influence is more evident in the area of increasing access to social grants.

In contrast, some of the other poverty alleviation initiatives have not had the desired impact because of less direct government intervention.

It is estimated that the country’s various poverty alleviation programmes have a billion rand budget and yet it is extremely difficult to ascertain what visible impact the money has had in terms of breaking the cycle of poverty. In fact, if you look at what has happened, you will find that people created a garden and the garden disappeared.

There are no famous enterprises coming out of this investment. So we have been less successful in those areas than we have been in the area of disbursing grants. The Minister talks of the state as a driver of growth and development, working with the private sector and society.

This requires the state to proactively take a developmental role by being more interventionist than in the past.

Constructing a developmental state

But then, what is a developmental state? Does the state become a developmental state just because we say it is a developmental state? What is it that a developmental state does differently? The idea of the developmental state is not originally South African. There have been a number of attempts in this regard, notably Japan, which declared itself as a developmental state at the end of the Second World War.

Japan undertook serious state directed ventures that eventually resulted in it being the second biggest economy in the world within a short space of time. There are other so-called developmental states, for example, Singapore, which has an economy that within one generation moved from absolute backwardness to a per capita income that exceeds that of the United Kingdom. Another example is China where the state adopted an interventionist approach. Botswana is also an example of a state that is playing an active and successful role on the African continent.

What has to be noted as South Africa hammers its own version of a developmental state is that each of the above developmental states is different ideolog-
mentally as well as in terms of the methods used to achieve economic and developmental goals. South Africa has to learn from these various countries in terms of where they are succeeding and failing as developmental states.

Requiring further recognition as well is the fact that the whole notion of a developmental state is inherently contradictory. The state, for example, is a very big bureaucracy of more than a million people, split into many national and provincial departments that work within a rigid regulatory machine that works in very predictable ways. Development, on the other hand, is dynamic, very unpredictable and differs from place to place, which is why some people are of the view that this large bureaucracy cannot be made to fit into something as complex as a development state.

Are we capable of delivering?

Amongst some of issues and questions that President Thabo Mbeki highlights in his State of the Nation Address (SNA) is whether government has the capability to undertake the tasks it sets for itself. In response to the President, one of the emerging points with regard to the capability of government to implement its programmes is the centrality of human resources.

People are central to the capability of the state because they serve as a repository and custodians of skills both in terms of soft skills and in terms of the knowledge capital and institutional memory. People are custodians of the organisational culture, that is, the good elements of culture such as service, excellence, are captured in people. Furthermore, people work in and make their teams work in the public service because individuals do not deliver results, teams do. People create new things from existing knowledge and are also the leadership core of the public service.

The current situation in local government provides a good example of service delivery challenges. As we may all be aware, the 284 local authorities are facing serious challenges that directly affect many lives. Despite increases in terms of financial transfers the demand for services continues to exceed their capacity to deliver services. Most of the budgets set aside for infrastructural development are not spent, which is something that borders on the criminal given the obvious needs. In cases where some kind of spending does occur, the quality of that spending is poor.

A lot of the challenges faced by local government (which are not unique to this sphere) largely have to do with planning, management, information and integration deficiencies that sometimes collectively lead to contradictory objectives. We do not have the same spatial view of development priorities as government.

Integrating with caution

Integration across the three spheres of government is being suggested as a way out of the service delivery challenges we face, but then it too has many downsides. Too much integration buries people in inter-departmental committees in which no one can work until everyone agrees. And if there is some kind of agreement on a programme of action, it is essentially the lowest common denominator of everyone’s interests.

In other words, people only do what no one is willing to oppose, which means integration could potentially kill innovation. So integration is useful for the good that it brings but one should not overdo integration. There is value in focused direct implementation alongside integration. Sometimes we create too many forums that eat away the time set aside for implementation. It is not unusual for senior managers and managers to spend a whole week sitting in different forums, where not much is done besides debating work plan presentations.

Outsourcing capacity

Development or a developmental state requires the kind of leadership that is willing to take the heat. The spate of protests that has hit some local authorities has its roots in the role of leaders in development because leadership is about facilitating agreements and setting priorities with communities. It is also about making trade-offs and hard choices between what is possible and what is not. Some of those hard choices have to do with what government does in the absence of capacity. Thus has very little to do with one’s views on outsourcing but a lot to do with getting things done because people do not have the luxury of having to wait for services while the state builds its capability for service delivery.

Outsourcing as a service delivery option requires government’s capacity to manage the quality of services rendered by outsiders starting with setting clear terms of reference. In many instances consultants complain about being poorly managed by government departments. The terms of reference tend to be meaningless. So in the end no one knows what problem we are trying to solve — let alone what kind of results.

Because most of departmental outputs are often not properly defined consultants literally get away with murder because we do not know what we want. As a result we do not get much value from consultants or external service providers due to poor contract management and ill-defined service delivery agreements.

What is also troubling is the fact that lack of capacity not only has local or national consequences, it has regional, continental and global consequences as well. If the state is struggling to deliver water at the village level, imagine how difficult it is to deal with issues around African renewal and the World Trade Organisation, for example. As is the case internally, it is not possible to withdraw from such processes until we have built the capacity for effective engagement.

It is clear in the context of the challenges outlined in this presentation that South Africa has a dire need for an effective bureaucracy, the kind of bureaucracy that says, “If you qualify for an ID you will get it, if you do not, you will not get it.” It must be predictable and fair in the thrust towards eradicating poverty and changing the circumstances of our citizens in the country.
I am going to be commenting on some key findings from the recent Development Report 2005 just as a way of background. This was co-published in this instance by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). But this is a biennial report put out principally by the DBSA. I happen to be from the HSRC and I am speaking on behalf of the team.

Just to put things in perspective, one way to think about the government’s approach to resolving poverty is the so-called “three pillar strategy” articulated by President Thabo Mbeki in 2003. The three pillars are these: to strengthen the first economy; to meet the challenges of the second economy; and to provide and refine social security. This is the over all development strategy.

The Nature of Dual Economy

By way of background, what do we mean by the second economy? The second economy is characterised by mainly informal, marginalised and unskilled economic activities, populated by those who are unemployed and thus unemployable in the formal sector (cited from 10 Years Review, 2003). Other characteristics are also important to note. First of all, by its nature it is unable to benefit from growth in the first economy. That is to say that those people who reside in the second economy are not
readily taken up in employment if the first economy grows. They are not able to effectively establish links to the first economy either by virtue of their personal characteristics, particularly relating to geography. Secondly, it is an economy with a group of people that is difficult to assist. In one of his speeches, President Mbeki indicated that assistance to the second economy usually leads back to the first economy. It does not stay there. It does not become an engine of growth.

Relating concepts that people might be familiar with is the idea of dualism. That is to say the persistence of two sectors, one modern and formal, the other informal and weak. This is an old idea in economics. A more worrying related concept is that of underdevelopment. This is the process through which the first economy exploits the second economy. It creates the second economy as a means of emerging itself.

This is the process that we are familiar with, spawned by the history of South Africa where laws and processes were created to produce a labour pool. That is what the second economy is and that is the second pillar. Why do we need the second pillar? Is it obvious that we need a second pillar?

Meeting the Challenges of the Second Economy

There are two points to make here, first of all, regardless of macro-economic policies. Regardless of whether we achieve
Second Economy Interventions

What do we mean by second economy in this country? Just to name a few, there is the Expanded Public Works Programme, various aspects of the Land Reform Programme but most notably the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme, Small Enterprise Support, Poverty Alleviation Project, SRDP and the URP, Rural and Urban Development Programme, the recently launched Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme and so forth.

If you go to the government’s programme of action, and you go to the Economic Cluster, you will see a section in the list of actions and activities that specifically deals with the second economy. But you will also see a section that is called Enhancing Economic Inclusiveness which largely reflects second economy type interventions.

In the Development Report we looked at three particular examples or sectors. First of all, the Expanded Public Works Programme. Secondly, the various agriculture sector interventions, and thirdly, small enterprise promotions. The EPWP is not the first public works programme South Africa has had post-1994. It encapsulates a number of previously existing public works programmes including the Working for Water Programme, the Community Public Works Programme.

There were also various public works components under the Poverty Alleviation Fund that was managed by the National Treasury. The EPWP took these under its umbrella largely coordinated by the Department of Public Works and it added some new things such as Social Sector Public Works. But we want to raise some concerns.

The second reason why we need this second pillar is because the social safety net has its limitations. It is already straining the government budget and it only provides partial assistance to certain categories of people. So by design, there are large holes in it.

A Political Rhetoric

First of all, there is this notion that says the EPWP is “putting the nation to work”. The actual fact is that it is creating roughly 200,000 short-term job opportunities per year. We have to bear in mind that this is in relation to an unemployment level of about eight million people. Nothing precedes that, but can we really say that we are “putting the nation to work”? One would not suppose that we are trying to create full employment by means of tax-funded public works programme. But are we engaged in symbolic activities or are we really solving the problems that we have? Are we kidding ourselves by having phrases such as “putting our people to work”?

Perhaps more worrying is the nature of the employment opportunities that are available in the short-term, in less than six months period. The concern is that this is unsuitable given the kind of unemployment that South Africa has. South Africa has endemic chronic unemployment not transitory or transient unemployment. It is not that people fall out of employment and they need assistance to get by for a few months before they get their next job.

We have a large proportion of people who are unemployed for over three years. They are estimated at about 6%. A large percentage of unemployed people have never had full employment. So the suggestion in the report is that, rather than a public works programme that addresses unemployment as though it was a transient phenomenon, we need something that addresses it as a chronic problem.

That means that we would have to be creating employment opportunities that are longer-term and that are more related to the economic sectors in which people would find a place later on. Presently chances of finding employment in the formal sector, after a short-term job through the EPWP, are quite limited.

I have hardly mentioned the gap between the reality of the EPWP and the political rhetoric. But I want to point out that this rhetoric is not advanced by the people that manage the EPWP. The people that manage the EPWP are quite aware of the programme’s limitations. The issue is, if we really need something that raises hope at the level that the rhetoric has us believe, why do we not create a programme that matches that in scale? What are the limits to scaling it up? There are budgetary issues, but I will get to those in a moment.

A Disunited Agricultural Sector

Moving on to the next factor, I want to make a few comments on the agricultural sector interventions.

The overall objectives as set out in the agricultural sector strategic framework are by and large fine. But what one observes is that priority is given to the agricultural sector which is perceived as unted and prosperous.

This is not a bad thing, but what we think it reflects is the failure to understand that agriculture provides a variety of functions. Prospects of a lot of people becoming prosperous in agriculture are quite small. This is the case even though agriculture is vital to a number of people.

There are numerous very good initiatives in the agricultural sector. There has also been a huge restructuring in the agricultural sector, particularly in trying to join former white farmers with black provincial initiatives. But there is a worry that there is no acknowledgement of the
size and diversity of the sector.

There are roughly four million people involved in agriculture at some scale. And that overwhelmingly, the majority of these are not engaged in agriculture as a main source of income or even a main source of food, rather an extra source of food. Furthermore, this has been increasing over time for reasons that are not too clear, but probably relates to increased levels of poverty and lack of formal sector income.

Our concern is that the idea of a united and prosperous agricultural sector appears to relate to the interests of a very small minority who are already involved in agriculture as a main source of income which, as you can see, is small and declining. No doubt we would like to see that group grow and thrive, but the fact is that agriculture has to serve a food security function. That function is not assisted by the types of agricultural policies, programmes and projects that we presently have.

Now there are some initiatives that appear to have their hearts in the right place. The concern is that maybe they are trying to address the wrong constraints. One initiative that is about to be introduced is MAFISA which is a small loan programme oriented towards rural areas, and largely towards agriculture. The concern is that this will imply giving loans to lots of people that practice agriculture not for purposes of earning income, but for purposes of feeding themselves. This calls into question the ability to repay such loans.

Furthermore, only a small minority of
rural people engaged in agriculture presently, have any contact with financial agents and alternative support for their agriculture. Our concern is that it could actually aggravate the conditions of rural people.

No doubt, those that are entrepreneurial already will do well under these conditions, but that leaves quite a number of people. So the question is, are the objectives appropriate?

An attempt to address the question of the appropriateness of resource allocation saw the emergence of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme. As the name suggests, this aims to assist people who practice agriculture in a whole variety of ways, in attempts to improve agricultural infrastructure, marketing and so forth.

Our concern is that it appears that about 75% of the budget is directed towards land reform beneficiaries who represent less that 2% of the people that participate in agriculture. So that is actually a very small black minority who already receive relatively large amounts of government assistance are benefiting whereas there are millions of other black households engaged in agriculture making 30%, quite an odd situation.

Misplaced Small Enterprise Activities

The last example is small enterprise promotion. Quite similar in some ways to efforts to support agriculture. The key question is what is a small enterprise sector? Is it people trying to get a head start in the first economy? Is it people hoping to do better within the second economy? Is it people who are economically active at all, but have some prospects of doing something where they presently stay, in rural areas and townships?

Our feeling is that overall there is no adequate disaggregating of who we are trying to help by way of small enterprises activities.

In addition to the points that Mokate makes about what distinguishes South Africa from other middle-income countries, is the issue of — why South Africa’s small sector or informal economy is so small? Roughly speaking, about 18% of the workforce is self-employed in the
informal or second economy sector. This is something like 50% in countries like India, and Colombia. We do not have an adequate understanding of why self-employment is a viable route out of poverty, even if it is not a route towards becoming well-off.

Does policy reflect an adequate understanding of the sector? One way to summarise this is that we appear to have a distinction between opportunity entrepreneurs and necessity entrepreneurs. Opportunity entrepreneurs are those who really do have a good chance of becoming viable in the first economy, and of securing loans from, for example, the IDC, for example.

By contrast, necessity entrepreneurs are those people who take up small enterprise because they have no other options, otherwise called survivalist enterprises. Clearly the necessity entrepreneurs outnumber the opportunity entrepreneurs. Most of the money goes on to support the opportunity entrepreneurs more than the necessity entrepreneurs.

One thing we can agree on is that it is very time consuming, difficult and intricate to assist poor people. This is part of the challenge. The question we should raise is — are we adequately competent with the size of the challenge? Are we prepared to deal with it?

A related issue is an over-emphasis on micro-credit. I have already alluded to the possible dangers of the small loans programmes targeted towards rural areas. This is also a concern that we have on small enterprise sector generally.

Let me summarise what the case studies collectively reveal. First of all, there is a greater need to disaggregate or quantify. You have to understand the sectors that we are trying to deal with. There is also a need to make sure that the efforts are not overly concentrated in those that are already better off.

That does not mean that you leave aside those that are better off, but if you focus entirely on them, you are doing a disservice to the majority.

There is a need to understand real constraints and problems. Lack of credit, for example, might be the easiest thing to fix, but it may not be what people desperately need. We do not actually understand what accounts for land utilisation in former homelands. Why do we suppose that credit will be an answer to enhancing land utilisation?

**Learning from the Past**

Have we adequately learned lessons from the past? Let me draw two examples. One, going back to the EPWP. I mentioned that there were these previous programmes. It turns out that they had rather diverse ways of operating. Some of them were more along the lines of longer term. Offering longer-term employment opportunities that were appropriate for chronic unemployment.

But they did not seem to be moving from little public works programmes to the EPWP. There was no concerted effort to study the lessons from the past different public works programmes in South Africa. The EPWP does not reflect what we actually learned. It seems to be a model that was chosen for convenience rather than impact.

Another example is that in 2000/2001 there was an overhaul of the Land Redistribution Programme. Did it adequately take into account the first ideas of land redistribution? I would argue it did not do so.

What we are witnessing now are the same problems that face land redistribution with which land redistribution is making insignificant contribution to poverty reduction.

**Thinking Beyond the Case Studies**

What can we say beyond the case studies? We would argue that we possibly have exaggerated expectations of what these programmes can accomplish. It is not to say they are bad, but first and foremost, they are not designed optimally. The scale of these existing initiatives does not match the size of the problems that they are trying to address.

The irony is that government is not stingy when it comes to spending on poverty. But one has to acknowledge that spending money on grants is a lot easier than spending it on second economy interventions.

This relates to another irony. Government is accused of poor service delivery, but we regard service delivery as going well in many respects. That is in terms of increased connections to electricity, access to safe water, housing and so forth.

These are successful programmes, but it is much easier to spend money on those than to let people out of poverty by training them to be entrepreneurs.

Just to give you a vivid illustration of what we mean. The statistical budget for 2004/2005 shows that spending on the 'big three' - that is public health, education, social security increased. Housing comes below these. On the second economy interventions public works is close to social security in terms of this budget. Small enterprise support is quite trivial compared to that of social security, health and education.

**Conclusion**

The country has made a very good start. First of all, the multitude of different initiatives is overwhelming. It is a testimony to the fact that there is a lot of creativity and a lot of commitment. However, we want to assert that transforming the second economy is a long-term project. What we are dealing with is massive poverty and inequality. We need to assist people where they presently are, where they leave.

We cannot be led astray by the fantasies of wanting people in the first economy for two, three, five or ten years. We need to try to make these second economies more vibrant even if they remain extensively poor relative to the first economy communities.

This persistent inequality has to be regretted, but otherwise we will delude ourselves in thinking that we can do something that we can not.

Despite all of these initiatives, we do not have a comprehensive, coherent and scale-appropriate strategy to dealing with poverty. Someday if we do have a comprehensive strategy, it should try to take into account the size of the problem that we are trying to address.
In Northam in Australia, the Australian government had to pass special laws to allow people working with natural resources to function as a single group. In South Africa, with our modern constitution, we have already written all those laws and we are also actually bound by the integrated development planning process to work together as a unit.

A key concern among role players in the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process is how to achieve alignment between the different development sectors to support municipal development (and certain dimensions which are also line departments such as Agriculture). This is exactly what the Bredasdorp integrated centre is about, but from a natural resource perspective. It is integrating all service providers that work with natural resources and using the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) or the local municipality as the vehicle to drive and mandate decisions taken by the participants of this integrated centre. The Bredasdorp integrated centre is work in progress.

A Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed with South African National Parks and we hope to have this same memorandum signed by Cape Nature and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning.

These partnerships are not based on pieces of paper but on commitment, people with commitment to make a success of the integration, people who are passionate about their resources and improving service delivery.

LandCare Area Wide Planning (LC AWP) methodology

LandCare Area Wide Planning (LC AWP) is an integrated community-based natural resource management programme with the same methodology as the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) in that it is a locally-led programme. The local people define their priorities within their geographical area and we as integrated service providers translate those priorities into projects that meet the challenges.

The LandCare programme has provided more than 20 000 person days of work.
to people in their area and at the same time addressing natural resource issues. To provide these jobs, the LandCare division has not spent one cent of the allocated budget on administrative fees. This has therefore helped in some cases 100% of the money allocated for poverty alleviation to end up in the pockets of the people it was intended for.

This methodology calls for strong partnerships between public and private sector. But above all, it calls for trust in one another. To illustrate the LandCare methodology, it is easiest explained through the following six indivisible LandCare principles:

- Integrated Sustainable Resource Management embedded within a holistic policy and strategic framework where the primary causes of natural resource decline are recognised and addressed.
- Fostering group or community based and led sustainable natural resource management within a participatory framework, including all land users both rural and urban, so that they take ownership of the process and the outcomes.
- The development of sustainable livelihoods for individuals, groups and communities utilising empowerment strategies.
- Government, community and individual capacity building through training, education, and support mechanisms.
- The development of active and true partnerships between governments, LandCare groups and communities, non-government organisations and industry.
- The blending together of appropriate upper level policy processes with bottom up feedback mechanisms. Feedback mechanisms should utilise effective LandCare institutional frameworks to give voice to the LandCare programme beneficiaries and supporting participants.

The best way to explain why an integrated centre is necessary to improve service delivery and why we need a different methodology in implementing projects from government is explained in the following explanation of LC AWP.

**What is LandCare Area Wide Planning?**

LandCare Area Wide Planning is a comprehensive problem-solving process that integrates social, economic and ecological concerns over defined geographical areas. This process strives to sustain and improve environmental health through a natural resource management approach that integrates locally driven initiatives.

LandCare Area Wide Planning looks at the big picture and considers all of the factors that affect the resource issues. Individuals and communities are encouraged to look beyond the fence row and identify where the real sources of and solutions to their problems and opportunities lie. LandCare Area Wide Planning addresses the conditions and functions of the resources at a scale larger than an individual conservation plan.

LandCare Area Wide Planning provides local people with the process to assess their natural resource concerns and determine what conditions they desire and formulate alternatives to achieve their goals. The process is led by people in the community who have an interest in the health of their environment and the process integrates the concept of locally led conservation.

Locally led conservation is a concept whereby local people lead the planning process based on locally identified needs. Local people determine the resource issues, define the geographic area that affects these issues, and implement a planning process that will help achieve the desired conditions. Agencies, programs, and others provide technical and financial resources to help solve those needs and implement solutions.

Through a locally led effort, participants become knowledgeable about the logic used to identify problems and opportunities, the science behind the planning and the rationale for proposed solutions.

**Why is LandCare Area Wide Planning used?**

People are becoming increasingly interested in how natural resources are managed and protected. Issues that were once confined to the agricultural community are now concerns to a much broader segment of society. Examples are resource issues such as soil erosion, water logging, basic water quality, water supplies and endangered species.

Competition for many resources is increasingly increasing. LandCare Area Wide Planning helps communities to identify the various demands for the resources. Coordinated solutions can then be developed to achieve the needs of individuals and the public. LandCare Area Wide Planning strives to find common ground within a community. It builds upon the common threads to manage resources for multiple objectives.

The advantages of LandCare Area Wide Planning include:

- **Improving awareness** — educating people about the issues affecting their quality of life or the health of their land encourages them to participate.
- **Coordinating community actions** — through development of a common vision, communities can coordinate their activities and work toward common goals.
- **Fostering locally led conservation** — putting the planning process in the hands of the local people ensures that local concerns are fully integrated.
• Involving broad representation — incorporating a diversity of interest, agencies, and individuals builds participation and acceptance. This results in actions that everyone can support.
• Targeting resources — focusing manpower and funding to address the important issues identified by the community.
• Forming partnerships — establishing working relationships, improving communications, and sharing information minimises conflict and promotes cooperation.
• Leveraging resources — combining the talents, expertise, funding and time of many individuals, organizations and agencies provides a workforce to achieve large-scale goals.
• Increasing efficiency — working together reduces duplication of efforts and provides information for others to utilize and build upon.

Who is involved in LandCare Area Wide Planning?

LandCare Area Wide Planning involves many people and organisations, private and public, but most importantly members of the local community, those who best know the concerns, problems, and opportunities. It includes everyone with an interest in the health of the land and those who are familiar with the resource needs and conditions. These are the stakeholders. Stakeholders may not agree on every issue, but they are bound by a common vision in the project.

Involving stakeholders

Representation by a broad base of stakeholders is essential for the success of any Area Wide Planning effort. Broad representation strengthens community support; visibility, funding opportunities and helps to implement a comprehensive plan that achieves the communities’ goals. Stakeholders should represent all ecological, economic and social concerns, interests and associated resources. These resources may include leadership, media exposure, desired viewpoints, access to funding, technical expertise, local knowledge, or other business and management skills.

Forming partnerships

Partnerships help local people and organisations co-operate in a more effective and efficient manner by eliminating duplication of activities, products and services. Partnerships are important to coordinate activities with agencies and other organizations to capitalize on the combined resources within the planning area. Involvement of a broad partnership also lends support and credibility to the planning effort especially the strong link with the IDP of local governance.

The eight steps for successful partnerships are the following:
• Begin with leadership;
• Recruit active participation from a wide variety of partners;
• Identify and secure funding;
• Be clear and consistent with all communication;
• Allow for adaptability and flexibility;
• Establish common goals;
• Build trust; and
• Use consensus decision-making.

Interdisciplinary involvement

Interdisciplinary input is essential to understanding how the ecological, economic and social processes interact. Evaluation of the structure and function of complex natural systems cannot be adequately addressed by a single discipline.

Interdisciplinary technical teams must be formed to assist in the planning process. These teams are essential to identify and evaluate conditions, and to develop alternatives to maintain or restore ecological processes and functions.

The Department of Agriculture employees may be asked to serve as agency represented, technical advisors, managers, planning team members, facilitators, recorders, or even temporarily as a community leaders.

However, the primary role of the Department of Agriculture is to facilitate the process and provide technical and planning information.

Bioregional planning

“Bioregional planning is a management strategy that strives towards sustainable development by recognising the relationship between the conservation of biodiversity, human well-being and economic efficiency within a given geographical area.

This approach recognises that conservation should not be viewed in isolation because human beings form an integral part of the environment. In decision-making, human settlement patterns and the use of resources are therefore integrated.

Bioregions are not defined by political boundaries, but rather by the geographic boundaries of human communities and ecological system. A “bioregion” is a geographical space that contains ecosystems defined by the landforms, vegetative cover, cultural heritage and history as identified by local communities, scientists and governments.

Bioregional planning recognises that fundamentally any place has a distinct character or “sense of place”. The ability of people to relate and care for such places has a direct impact on their responsibility towards the sustainable development thereof.

Within these bioregions, communities, government, corporate and private inter-
ests thus share the responsibility for coordinating land use planning and implementing sustainable development options.”

**Integrated Development Planning**

Integrated development planning is an approach to local planning which focuses on local issues rather than being a sector- or development dimension-driven approach. The notion of integration, which is central to integrated development planning, suggests that both sectors and dimensions need to be approached not in and for themselves. Alternatively, the key consideration in the integrated development planning process that drives decision-making is the priority issues that are identified and defined by every municipality.

These priority issues are derived from a process of analysing the existing local situation and focusing on the problems facing the municipality and the people living in the area, as well as its development potentials.

From this range of problems and possibilities, the priority issues are extracted and become the focus point for planning.

A key concern among role-players in the IDP process is how to achieve alignment between the different development sectors to support municipal development (and certain dimensions which are also line departments, such as agriculture).

Development sectors such as water and sanitation, housing, health and education have traditionally been institutionalised and addressed through separate government line functions.

For operational purposes, each department has been allocated separate budgets and has been given responsibility for developing and implementing different legislation, policy and programmes. For municipal planning and delivery to be integrated, vertical and horizontal alignment needs to take place between and within the spheres of government.

Secondly, since the latest municipal demarcation process, establishes wall-to-wall municipalities across the country, when provincial and national sector departments implement, they will be doing so within a municipal area. This means that local priorities need to form the basis for alignment between governmental sectors and spheres.

**CAPE**

The objective of CAPE is to secure the conservation of the biodiversity of the Cape floral kingdom and through this to deliver sustainable economic benefits to the people of the region.

It is only through collective action that real progress can be made so CAPE focuses on partnerships for action.

CAPE, in co-operation with its partners, does the following:

- Provides support for the establishment of an effective protected area network.
- Facilitates conservation outside of protected areas.
- Supports bioregional planning.
- Develops methods to ensure sustainable benefits from biodiversity.
- Strengthens institutions and promotes co-operative governance and community development.
The Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative

Trust is at the heart of all successful negotiations, especially when they involve landowners and government. On the Agulhas Plain, attempts to get farmers to sell their land to SANParks resulted in some landowners feeling uneasy about the intentions of State conservation agencies. In an area where most of the land is zoned agricultural, the Department of Agriculture has become a significant partner in biodiversity conservation efforts, in particular through its LandCare: Area Wide Planning (LC AWP) programme.

Case Study

One of the functions of LC AWP is fine-scale farm planning. The Department of Agriculture works with landowners to identify zones on their properties that are suitable for different land uses. In rural areas, the distinction is made between priority agricultural land and priority conservation land.

Through the CAPE programme fine-scale (1:10 000) biodiversity maps have been prepared for the Agulhas Plain indicating the vegetation types and areas that are most critically in need of conservation. The Department of Agriculture uses these maps during LC AWP and farm planning exercises, and can therefore recommend not only which parts of the farm are most suitable for grazing, crops and infrastructural development, but also which areas should be managed for biodiversity.

Should farmers show an interest in conserving threatened habitats on their land, the Department of Agriculture will then recommend that they contact CapeNature to ask for help with biodiversity management and to investigate stewardship options. By integrating agricultural and conservation planning in this way, the Department of Agriculture is helping to implement the ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation in a practical way on the Agulhas Plain.

Where is Area Wide Planning used?

LandCare Area Wide Planning is used where natural resource concerns span large geographic areas and involve numerous landowners and stakeholders. These concerns are usually the result of landscapescale processes and require the efforts of many individuals working in unison. Hugh Hammond Bennett, in his text, “Element of Soil Conservation” stated: “Consideration of the land’s relationship to the entire farm, ranch or watershed” is a key principle of conservation planning. The watershed that Bennett speaks of is one way to delineate the area for an areawide conservation plan.

A watershed is an area of land that drains water, sediment, and dissolved materials to a common outlet. Watershed boundaries are defined primarily by their hydrologic processes but are strongly influenced by ecological processes and human activities. LandCare Area Wide Planning encompasses, but is not limited to, watersheds.

Landscape features may also serve as the basis for an area delineation. Examples are eco regions, endangered species habitats, and major land resource basins. These various definitions may overlap, so local priorities should be used to determine how the area is defined.

How is LandCare Area Wide Planning applied?

Local groups must adopt a planning process to help manage complex natural resource issues and to achieve their goals. The LandCare Area Wide Planning process provides a framework for developing conservation plans on the basis of ecological, economic and social considerations. This process may be used regardless of the expected outcome, scope, size of the planning area, complexity of the natural resource issues, or source of funding.

The planning process

An Areawide Conservation Plan is developed with clients for a watershed or other geographical area to achieve a common goal defined by the clients and the stakeholders that:

- Addresses all resource problems identified;
- Contains alternative solutions that meet the established criteria for each resource and applicable laws and regulations; and
- Is based on desired future conditions.

LandCare Area Wide Planning concepts and principles

To carry out the process of planning in an areawide fashion, it is important to understand some basic underlying concepts. The following principles provide the context in which areawide planning should be approached.

A shared vision is a clear conceptual picture of the desired future state: the ideal state towards which efforts can be directed. Creating a common vision for the planning area sets the stage for developing goals and formulating objectives. Visioning is important because it helps to define the common ground among stakeholders and provides a direction to which all stakeholders can contribute.

Developing desired future conditions

To achieve the shared vision of a community, goals are developed and expressed in terms of a desired future condition. They are the quantitative or qualitative expressions of the desired ecological, economic or social conditions and their degree of the existing condition of the land and how it evolved is needed to guide stakeholders in developing their desired future conditions.

Focus on ecosystem

To achieve many desired future conditions, the structure and functions of the natural systems must be understood. Ecological structure is the pattern or arrangement of the landscape elements. Ecological functions are the activities performed by a collection of physical, chemical and biological processes that act to create the landscape condition.

Retaining or restoring ecological functions is the foundation for designing alternatives to achieve the desired future conditions. Ecological functions and process-
es need to be evaluated at various scales. Many desired conditions (improved water quality, diverse biological communities) can only be achieved by addressing ecological functions at landscape or watershed scales.

**Education outreach**

In order to increase awareness and build community support, stakeholders must be informed of the planning effort. This can be accomplished through informational meetings, field tours, workshops etc. Hands-on participatory involvement is an effective strategy for increasing knowledge and changing attitudes.

**Program neutral approach**

Planning has traditionally focused on resources, targeted with specific programs, that are often limited to application of few specific conservation practices. Program neutral planning is the concept of planning to meet the resource needs without regard to any particular program of funding opportunity. Individual programs and funding sources can then be used as tools to implement various portions of the plan.

**Adaptive management**

Natural systems are dynamic and our knowledge of how to manage them is evolving. Once the plan is implemented, management activities must be evaluated to determine whether the desired conditions are being achieved. Adaptive management is the process of monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting resource management decisions to meet planning goals.

Monitoring implemented actions is needed to determine if desired conditions are being achieved. Adaptive management is the process of monitoring, evaluating, and adapting resource management decisions to meet planning goals.

**In summary**

The LandCare methodology is not rocket science, it is not a lengthy process and it does not have an end because you’re working with people in a specific community that have specific needs. Once the top priorities have been addressed then there are always new priorities. Therefore we must be able to adapt to the needs of the people and that is one of our biggest challenges as service providers is to find and refine a methodology that can adapt to the people.

We have so many programs which include poverty alleviation in general but that cannot be used for the one basic need and that is poverty now, not paperwork; jobs now. We have so many rules and regulations that we must abide by that by the end of the day we end up frustrated and the clients are still suffering from poverty. The idea of the integrated center is not a new one, and it is embedded in our constitution, its law, we must integrate and it makes sense.

I believe the integrated center in combination with the LandCare methodology will improve our service delivery by three fold, in partnership we can do it and listen to, invest in and trust our people.
Through political initiatives, people hope to make their countries and the world a better place. On the other hand, statistical initiatives seek to measure progress towards the domestic and global objectives of making countries and the world a better place. In addressing the subject at hand, this article takes the liberty not to focus on the issue of what progress (or otherwise) has been made by South Africa in terms of its domestic developmental goals and its international commitments through instruments such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Rather it focuses on the capacity of the state to deliver by specifically unpacking what exactly it is that has to be delivered and then explores statistical issues around service delivery goals.

Like all other participating countries, South Africa’s international developmental objectives are guided by the eight MDGs, which also set out eighteen clear targets in terms of scale and timeframes. In broad terms, MDGs commit participating countries to eradicating poverty and hunger; achieving universal and primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental stability and developing a global partnership for development.

An obvious question arises as to how South Africa is faring in terms of realizing these goals? There is a country report that was presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2005. The report, which is a first for South Africa, is easily available. However, it is useful to quickly run through some of the points raised in its content.

• Poverty — There are issues about the fact that about 3/4 or 10% of South African population live on a Dollar a day. If you use two Dollars a day the figure goes to about 34% of the populace. And of course there are so many other issues around the appropriateness of using a measure that is itself subject to debate. For example, what about the self-production of food or the social wage in terms of the free basic
issues

Production and utilisation framework of official statistics

Top Political Authority
Mass Media
Planning Authority
Specialist Groups
Resources Authority
Statistical Authority

services that are not taken into account?

• Universal primary education — South Africa has achieved this as 97% of those who are of school going age (7 to 15 years old) are actually attending school, though 100% would be ideal, but that is not easy.

• Promote gender equality — Women make up a third of the country’s population and make up about 40% of the workforce, as opposed to 50% men.

• Child mortality — the figures are a bit fuzzy, and look flat, neither going up nor down.

• Maternal health — there is a steep increase in maternal deaths

• HIV — The infection numbers are contested. We think that there are 4.5 million, the Department of Health has come up with 6.5 million and the academic world has its own figures. There is a lot of confusion around the numbers.

• Environmental stability — Providing statistics is tricky in this regard.

• Global partnership on development — South Africa is a critical engine to ensure that development aid goes to other countries. The recent write-off of debt of 14 countries on the African continent, excluding South Africa, is one of the direct results of the advocacy role played by the country along with Nigeria in this regard.

What are the statistical challenges for South Africa? To explore this question, one needs to first understand the structure and machinery of the production and utilisation framework of official statistics in South Africa or what we could refer to as a “walking robot”, which diagrammatically reflects a complex interaction between a variety of stakeholders in the production and use of statistics.

The particular challenges that Stats SA is facing largely have to do with the information systems aspect of the change trajectory, which in this country began a decade ago with the change of the political system, institutions and the legal system. As the Ten-Year Review correctly points out, the next phase of change will be information led to ensure programme alignment in the political, judicial and institutional systems. This is the time when politicians ask us to tell them how well they have performed in the past decade.

Measurement Challenges

In the same way that the state and the church have a historically tenuous relationship, the “measurer” and the politician are always in trouble with each other.

There are always differences of opinion between the one who uses the statistics as facts relating to the state and the one who runs the country. The interface of politics and statistics in an information era is here to stay. So whether there is autonomy or lack of it, statistics as an informer or auditor remains a tool under democracy for advocating positions (though we need to point out that statistics are not meant to support anyone’s position, but to measure).

The tenuous link between democratically elected representatives and the tools that hold them to account will remain, so will the tension and associated difficulties of measurement.

Politicians, for instance, are many times apt at using statistics, through the selective use of preference and other forms of knowledge and insight to create something of value, which either leads to good or bad.

A more constructive use of official statistics would be when government ministers make specific information requests and though setting up purposeful parameters so that statistics are useful. They do not, however, interfere with the method, but define the eventual utilisation of those statistics. This is what differentiates academic statistics from official statistics, which document, distribute and consider issues of utilisation last — the research question is important to academics. This is an important distinction between the two, because you don’t want the knowledge to influence what you want to do.

Another factor in the quest for the credibility of official statistics is the fact that they have to be separated from property, separate ideas from interests, sepa-
rate theory from practice and knowledge institutions. Stats-SA is a knowledge institution, its interests and those of the government, for example, are mediated through the council.

The relationships in the system are captured in the diagram above.

Intervention is a key word in the context of South Africa’s current development paradigm. It is critical in our developmental state, which is essentially an interventionist state, which requires a new breed of politicians who are not mechanical but have insight, understanding and the ability to intervene. More importantly, the new breed of politicians understands the broad convergence of issues, which is critical for implementation.

In this set up, the statistician does not become an anonymous churner of data but contributes towards finding the best use of the data for development purposes.

Need transversal systems

How do we meet MDG’s challenges through better planning? What has to be said in this regard is that we have to keep the outcomes in mind and then move towards issues of input in order to determine where we want to go or the objectives. And the question we really have to ask ourselves in this regard is whether the civil service is a self-serving group or are they serving any particular group. In other words, if Persal, which by the way a good system, fails to pay salaries we can easily go on a strike. But then if electricity is not being delivered to communities no one goes on strike. The point is that unless our systems are seamless and are outward focused we are unlikely to achieve change.

The systems should interface with service delivery programmes such as electricity and water provision. Ideally, if water is not delivered it should follow that salaries would not be paid. The problem is that current systems such as BAS, LOGIS and Persal are not really transversal. They are transversal in relation to the silos that they cut across.

They are not transversal in relation to the actions that have to be taken or delivery mechanisms. They are neither transversal nor integrative beyond the fact that they are used across the public service. We need more integrative systems that would tell us where things have to happen, where they have not happened and what needs to be done.

This probably means that we have to start from the outcomes and moving backwards into the organisation we are likely to achieve more transversal and integrated systems that are manageable and measurable in terms of our overall development goals.
Homes fit for People

Social housing is relatively new in South Africa. In fact there were probably one of two institutions that practiced social housing prior to 1994. But in the developed world the concept and practice of social housing has been around for almost 200 years.

In countries like Holland, Denmark and the United Kingdom, it is not uncommon to find low and moderate income people living in mostly rented housing provided by the state through subsidies.

In South Africa we define social housing as rental or cooperative housing for low to moderate income households, people earning from R1 500 to R7 500 per month. The logic behind this definition is due to the nature of the housing market.

In the past 18 months property prices have been soaring. The second issue is that if you look at government housing subsidy income bracket, it currently caters for people earning between R1 500 and R3 500, and would probably cater for people earning R7 000 from 1 April 2006.

Furthermore, social housing also makes it cheaper for people, that is, given the state’s subsidy that an institution can leverage, which is the highest in terms of income brackets because that subsidy goes to a unit, instead of an individual.

Currently that amount is between R28 000 and R41 000, depending on the densities. This also allows for institutionalised housing management, in the sense that it is an institution, which is accredited, that rents housing stock.

When social housing began in this country there was no legislative framework for it to operate. It is only during the course of this year or early next year that there will be specific legislation that would regulate social housing. This is important because social housing has been using government resources, whether local, provincial or national, so it has to be regulated.

Furthermore, the government will, through regulations, then be in a position to target the investment that it makes in housing through credited institutions. However, those entities that are outside this arrangement will continue to play a role.

Social housing and urban renewal

Social housing plays a role in urban renewal because the two have similar roles, for example the revitalisation of the innercity. The city of Johannesburg is a good example of this relationship. Social housing integrated economic develop-
ment using the established infrastructure created jobs near where people live.

Currently, the major role player in social housing is the Social Housing Foundation, which is a government funded capacity building institution. The foundation teaches people about the social housing concept and explains the requirements for the establishment of social housing projects. Then there is the Department of Housing, which provides institutional strategies, and local government, which plays a role in the provision of free or cheap land for social housing development. The National Social Housing Finance Corporation, owned by the Department of Housing, provides loan finance to social housing institutions. The funding is supplemented by donor grants. Today, there are 60 established social housing institutions nationally, with over 30 000 units delivered throughout the country, in eight provinces, except the Northern Cape. The Northern Cape is excluded purely on the basis that it is vast, does not have a big population and the fact that it is largely rural.

To date, the National Finance Corporation has financed over 32 housing institutions with loans varying from R2-million to R50-million. The average loan size is currently around R5-million. About 95% of the projects financed by the NFHC are in the inner city, and more importantly in the metropolises of the bigger towns. This is because we do not believe that social housing is sustainable in rural towns.

Jo’burg City Council’s Better Building Programme, which was previously called the Bad Building Programme, is a well-known urban renewal programme. If you have been in the inner city recently, and perhaps you also saw the inner city around 1997, you will begin to see some improvement and pockets in the greater city Jo’burg.

The changes are due to the fact that the city of Jo’burg took a conscious decision to embark on a programme to assist in the renewal of the city. Instead of allowing the buildings that have been abandoned by corporations to go to waste, the city used these to create housing stock within the inner city for rental by the previously disadvantaged people. The approach ensured that people are nearer to their work areas and social amenities such as schools and health facilities. Some years ago property prices in the Jo’burg inner city were really in the doldrums, you could easily snap up a 10-storey building for around R2-million or less. That’s not the case today — it is very difficult to find property of the same size for that kind of money. A lot of them have been snapped up by speculators, people with lots of money.

What is positive about this trend is that some of the people who picked up those properties are putting them to good use by converting them and refurbishing them into housing units. It should be borne in mind that a lot of the properties were owned by absentee landlords, which contributed to the decay of the inner city of Jo’burg.

The Newtown Precinct has seen a lot of housing developments. It is much cleaner and boast a greater diversity of communities than it used to have some years ago. There are also a number of other development programmes in the area. Of course, the sad thing is that many banks were unwilling to fund housing projects in the inner city at the beginning of the renewal programme. So most institutions or property owners who wanted to convert buildings into housing units relied on the NHFC. About three years ago we established a sister company, the Trust For Urban Housing, which focuses on the inner cities of the major metropolises of South Africa, leaving the NHFC to concentrate on the bigger issues.

It is now possible to see tangible results in terms of safe, affordable accommodation in the inner city as slumlords are becoming a thing of the past. The problems associated with building hijacking are not entirely gone, but they are beginning to disappear. Also positively, the programme legalised the rental businesses and thus created opportunities for entrepreneurs, even among previously disadvantaged people.

While much of the above might seem to be painting a good picture, it has to be admitted that there are a lot of challenges still, some of which relate to the issue of the rule of law. In places such as Yeoville or Hillbrow, it is not unusual to come across buildings that are not safe for people, where you find a building that is meant for 100 people being occupied by 400 tenants with nobody collecting rent at the end of the day.

For example, the Protection of Illegal Evictions Act, which was meant to protect tenants, has not lived up to its promise. Some of this is not as a result of disrespect for the rule of law, but due to the fact that the rule of law penalises those who have been running their businesses legally end up conducting business in an illegal way due to non-payment. Legally, evicting rent defaulters is a financial burden and an albatross around the necks of people who want to provide decent housing and accommodation.

The Act has lengthened the process of getting evictions, even in cases where they may be legitimate. Another challenge has to do with the activities of speculators. Now that the city is becoming cleaner, speculators are snapping up buildings and not using them productively, as they wait for an opportune time to sell at a profit. A major problem with the speculative
trend is that it runs the risk of reversing the gains made thus far.

**Conclusion**

What are the lessons learnt? If you are going to undertake an urban renewal programme you need a policy framework within which to operate, which must deal with issues of safety, densities and so forth, at all levels of government. The second issue is that we need to have the capacity to deal with urban renewal, which is not an easy undertaking. It took the city of New York 10 years, with all the resources the Americans have, to make New York a vibrant place after the decay of the Seventies. In the early Nineties, when the urban renewal of New York City was in full swing, it was not unusual to find huge rodents running amok in the streets, as may be the case in Hillbrow.

The other issue is that any local authority that wants to embark on a renewal programme needs to have a dedicated programme for implementation. If they do not have, local authorities are setting themselves up for failure. The Jo’burg Better Buildings Project has been running for nearly eight years but it is only in the last three years that significant progress has been made — and that progress is a result of the city council having established a dedicated programme unit to run the project. The results are now there for everyone to see.

Another important aspect is the need for consumer education in terms of their rights and obligations, as well as drawing and getting buy-ins from the broader community because the municipality cannot realise the objectives of the renewal by itself.
President Thabo Mbeki popularised the notion of the two economies that captures the contrasting realities of people living in abject poverty and social and economic marginalisation with those living in the comforts of the mainstream or so-called first economy. NDA operates within the context of the former, that is, the poor and marginalised groupings in society.

Civil society landscape

The environment and landscape that NDA and the state work within is characterised by a range of organisational civil society formations. There are independent Community Based Organisations (CBOs) as well as organised civic groups under the umbrella of the South African National Civics Organisation (SANCO) that also brings under its wings organisations that are not necessarily civic associations. There are formations that are commonly referred to as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) most of which fall under the South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO). Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), mostly churches and mosques, are also an important part of the civil society poverty alleviation landscape. Last but not least is what are referred to as social movements that mostly engage in issue-specific advocacy.

Social movements are very articulate and emphasise independence. A recent trend amongst social movements is their increasingly oppositional approach to raising issues relating to service delivery, for example, the Landless People’s Movement (LPM).

This range of civil society formations and their diverse occupations is in economic terms referred to as the Non-Profit Sector. Initially we thought that this sector was small but recent studies have shown that it is actually very large in South Africa. In 2002 there were about 99 000 organisations that operated within this field, according to one of the studies, and the assumption about their value-add is that they are:

- Facilitating access to economic opportunities.
- Facilitating access to assets such as land, housing and any other assets that empower communities.
- Facilitating in the provision of basic
In the meantime we have to deal with the fact that South Africa has about 29 million people who are classified as poor — out of a total population of about 49 million.

While undertaking a broad set of initiatives that mitigate against the impact of this widespread poverty, an essential element of the state's approach is understanding the context and roots causes of poverty through research and knowledge building.

For example, most of the 29 million people classified as poor exist and engaging in activities of what is called the secondary economy, reside in rural areas and the majority of them are women. Some of them are located on the margins of our cities and towns. Most of the poor are African due to the peculiarities of South Africa's racial economic past.

R4 million in social investment

The issues that have been raised thus far provide the context within which an agency like the NDA exists and operates. NDA was primarily established to advance the idea of a developmental state that makes the existence of agencies within civil society, the civil service and the parasitism movement imperative. This encourages constructive interaction between the state and society and advances the state's interests to strengthen civil society itself.

NDA came into existence through legislation that was passed in parliament in 1998 to promote sustainable partnerships between government and civil society organisations to eradicate poverty and its causes. It does this by facilitating partnerships at community and local levels, between state agencies, local government and civil society organisations.

The main focus of NDA is poverty alleviation and its mandate in this regard is to disburse funds to CBOs and NGOs that either provide services or help to uplift communities. In addition, the agency advises government on the best possible strategies on how to tackle poverty with the co-operation of civil society. The strength of the agency lies in project management. Below is a breakdown of the

R400 million invested by NDA in poor communities over the past five years:
• R63 million in KwaZulu-Natal;
• R42 million in the Eastern Cape;
• R20 million in the Free State;
• R61 million in Gauteng;
• over R35 million has been invested in Mpusanakia;
• more than R22 million in the Northern Cape;
• over R81 million in Limpopo;
• R22 million in the North West; and
• R43 million in the Western Cape.

NDA funding allocation decisions are based on annually supplied figures from Statistics South Africa that are then plotted geographically. The investment focuses on and supports poverty eradication projects using a criteria that includes the following:
• The project must be long-term and have sustainable impact.
•Projects should have a bias towards the poorest of the poor, especially women and children.
•Projects that encourage or train people to be entrepreneurs.

Lessons learnt

Among the many lessons learnt from interactions with civil society is the need for the agency to develop appropriate systems or technologies and the knowledge to improve the disbursement of grants. We have also learnt a great deal in terms of community empowerment, which is not always about technical skills but also about shaping the discourse in those communities, particularly through interpersonal relations.

It is always a challenge to bring diverse stakeholders together in a single project because of their different perspectives. For example, most of the NGOs and CBOs are based on personalities and are not structured as departments. Their decision-making processes are longer because they are based on democratic principles and are very complex.
The Khayelitsha Business District Project demonstrates the successes that can be achieved when government becomes involved in development and not just concentrating only on governance.

Khayelitsha is a sprawling settlement on the South of N2, near the Cape Town international airport, towards Somerset West. It has a population of about 500,000. Roughly 93,000 households have an average monthly household income of R1,499, which makes it a very poor community. The total retail sale, or what people from Khayelitsha buy, amounts to R1.2 billion annually, which is quite a lot of money.

What is interesting is that only 10% of the R1.2 billion is spent inside Khayelitsha, the rest is spent in shopping centres in town. Furthermore, only 10% of economically active people actually work inside Khayelitsha. Most of them are in the service industry, for example, government officials, teachers and informal traders, which highlights the lack of job opportunities in the township.

Another interesting statistic is the fact that, on average, people spend R19 per week on transport to get to retail centres in town. The amount spent on traveling costs for going to shopping centres takes a huge chunk from their household income. About 50% of the population lives in backyard shacks, and 120,000 people commute daily from the three stations in the area, which also indicates the huge numbers of people working outside Khayelitsha.

The Khayelitsha Business District Project covers an area of about 33 hectares of vacant land, that is centrally located in Khayelitsha. Although land invasions are a major challenge in Khayelitsha, the 33 hectares set aside for the district has not been under threat of invasion. This indicates the value that

In this Case Study George Penxa and Andre Human of the city of Cape Town’s Urban Renewal Programme share some of the achievements and challenges in harnessing the economic potential of Khayelitsha township.
people have of the need to have their own business district.

The project, which started about four years ago, is aimed at creating a vibrant, market-driven and integrated business area for the people of Khayelitsha and visitors in partnership with the community, business and government, among other stakeholders.

Land availability, the existence of a large under-served community in terms of public and commercial facilities and political commitment in community itself, were some of the positive aspects that worked in favour of the project. While on the negative side, negative private sector investment due to perceptions of crime and bad credit record with banks redlining have been highlighted. Perhaps more seriously, there were no examples of how to go about involving the community in a project of this scale.

The first step in the implementation of the project, which took about six months, was to solicit buy-ins from the private sector, mainly banks. This was followed by approaches to provincial government, the DBSA, including a bank from France, and the Rand Merchant Bank for financing.

To date we have a commitment from provincial and local government of over R50 million. Another early milestone for the project was the conclusion of the community participation process through the signing of stakeholder agreements over an eight-month period.

This process continues through institutions like the Khayelitsha Development Forum and the Khayelitsha Empowerment Initiative.

What needs to be acknowledged is the fact that there was a lot of goodwill across all the stakeholders who made up the private-public-community partnerships, with some players even making contributions without expecting a cent.

Overall, the project’s development plan, which is an outcome of the multi-stakeholder private-public and community partnership consultation, envisioned a business district for Khayelitsha that would have a retail centre, a service station, municipal offices and 1 200 residential units at an overall project cost of R415 million.

Most of the project costs will be in the form of loans from financial institutions, with the public sector contributing R90 million and R55 million from community equity. Once all the loans have been paid up, the service centre and the retail centre will fall under the ownership of the Khayelitsha community.

Community participation and management of the project is through the institution of the Khayelitsha Trust that represents the beneficiary community. The trust is responsible for the contract with the City of Cape Town, manages the Empowerment Initiative and the KBD area, in terms of refuse and safety. Business aspects of the project are run by KBD Management company, which is 100% owned by the trust. Sourcing loans, managing contracts and service providers are among the responsibilities of the company.

Furthermore, the model allows for an empowerment strategy that incorporates empowerment through equity, information sharing, local employment and entrepreneurial development.

The model allows for an empowerment strategy that incorporates empowerment through equity, information sharing, local employment and entrepreneurial development.

Success factors

As mentioned earlier, there is committed public investment of more than R50 million which will see the magistrate, Home Affairs and Welfare, setting up offices in the service centre.

Other facilities will include a sports complex (cricket oval and swimming pool) and bulk infrastructure provision such as roads and electricity. The trust and the company are now operational, and the land has been transferred from the City of Cape Town to the people of Khayelitsha through the former structure.

Major milestones in the near future will see the finalisation of local tenants and employees for the retail centre; putting a R2.4 million landscaping tender out; finalising arrangements for the construction of a district hospital at the cost of R100 million and completing the design phase of a R10 million multi-purpose community centre.

What are the successes of the project? Certainly the leveraging of private sector funding because without the support and partnership of the Rand Merchant Bank the project would not have kicked-off.

The other key success factors are community participation and involvement, buy-in from local and provincial government, taking an integrated approach to the management of the project and having a focused and dedicated operational team.

Red tape presented a major challenge to the project particularly around the issue of the annual budget cycle, which is likely to be changed to a three-year budget cycle in the near future.

There was also the difficulty of selling the community involvement model because people are naturally resistant to change.

The other challenges had to do with the clashing priorities of government departments and those of private sector companies, most times fuelled by the lack of mutual understanding between the two sectors.

Empowerment itself brought its own challenges as it raised high expectations.
In 1994 South Africa was weighed down by a heavy debt burden and huge underdevelopment challenges inherited from the previous regime. Some pretty tough choices had to be made around how the country tackles the apartheid legacy in order to lay the foundation for a new society. Among these choices was a decision to pursue an open economy strategy aimed at attracting international business investments so as to address underdevelopment.

Ten years down the line — as reflected in the Ten Year Review — South Africa has indeed made major strides in achieving some of its economic goals, so much so that the state currently is sitting pretty with a lot of resources, which means now more than ever we are in a position to begin to address the challenges of underdevelopment.

This reorientation of priorities and strategies is indicated by the fact that over the past two years the debate is increasingly shifting away from regarding market-led policies as determinants in the allocation of resources. Currently, more emphasis is placed on the active role of the developmental state in generating and distributing resources.

**Second economy challenges**

What is the role of state-agencies such as IDC in the current development trajectory? The role of the IDC in the current context is making sure that problems of market failure, access to finance are addressed in fulfilling the aims of the developmental state. This includes contributing towards making sure that our economy grows and that poverty and unemployment are addressed in the process.

In his inauguration speech in 2004, President Mbeki stated a number of objectives for his term of office. These include high investment, high fixed domestic investment and infrastructure development. The other objective was addressing the problems of the second economy. But then, what is this second economy? Some of us see it as part of the first economy in the sense that high levels...
of income and high levels of growth in the first economy enable the people to have the means and purchasing power to grow the second economy, which is located in areas where the poor and historically marginalised reside.

Other interventions in the second economy include improving the quality of life in those areas through enhanced safety and security, moral regeneration and social equation because South Africa is still sitting with high levels of racial and gender inequalities.

Our main focus as South Africa in the first ten years was a belief that our growth will enable us to create employment. What we have seen is that in the first ten years, although the economy has grown tremendously, we have lost quite a number of jobs — except between 2001 and the first quarter of 2003, when we created about 150 000 jobs. But overall, if you look at the net job creation in the last ten years you see we have lost a number of jobs. This has had serious consequences. When people lose jobs it means that most families are pushed below the poverty line.

**Dire need for jobs**

To address the above developmental challenges we need to have a rapidly growing economy, substantial levels of investment and an economy that creates jobs. There is currently a debate and discussion on job losses in the textile and clothing sector as well as in the mining and primary sectors.

And so the challenge to us is that we need to think creatively about how we can retain these jobs whilst making sure that these sectors remain competitive. The state is being challenged to think creatively about ways of providing employment. We know that South Africa has a high unskilled labour pool. So how then does the state respond in creating labour absorptive capacity within the economic sectors of the first economy?

One way of addressing the above question is by creating employment of about 5% per annum. We know that in the past ten years, ever since 2002, our economy has grown around 3.2%. We have created some employment, but very little to impact on unemployment levels. Our fixed investment has to grow beyond 25% from the current 16%. For South Africa to substantially deal with poverty the economy has to create 400 000 jobs annually.

**Hope for jobs in the retail sector**

And so the major issue is which of the first economy sectors have the biggest potential to really contribute to the end of unemployment? The manufacturing sector is in decline and primary sector mainly agriculture and mining have been declining since 1982, which means the first economy is undergoing huge structural changes.

However, one of the biggest interven-
In South Africa, the state has been intervening since the apartheid government came into power. They had a very focused intervention, through companies like the IDC, that were founded by the apartheid government. Although the focus was addressing the poor Afrikaner problem and self-sufficiency — the apartheid state effectively used its instruments, especially at local government level.

The Extended Public Works programme is an example of direct state intervention in the second economy. It does this through a combination of job creation, skills development and economic development at local level.

Conclusion

As already hinted earlier, the greatest need in terms of intervening in the second economy lies in rural development, particularly in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape. Just to specifically mention one project IDC is involved as a way of rounding up the presentation. In the Eastern Cape we are building a flagship project called Coega (or Nqurha), in which Transnet and Eskom are investing about R6 billion.

Plans are also afoot to build an aluminium smelter of about R2 billion in partnership with Acan.

Finally, the challenges of growing and ultimately integrating the second economy are just too huge to be the responsibility of a single sector or institution. They require concerted strategic effort specially if we are to meet the country’s Millennium Development Goals.
When most of us were at school failure was seen as something that was negative, and something that should be avoided and often worth punishment. And yet most learning theorists agree that it is only through failure that we really learn — as opposed to just memorising.

Failure is useful when it helps us to critically appraise our own performance. This is evaluation as an example of feedback. A simple way to think of feedback is experiencing the output of your own performance as a new input.

The concept of feedback was developed by Norbert Wiener, who used the analogy of someone steering a boat: “When the boat deviates from the present course, say to the right, the steersman assesses the deviation and then counter-steers by moving the rudder to the left. This decreases the boat’s deviation, perhaps even to the point of moving through the correct position and then deviating to the left. At some time during this movement the steersman makes a new assessment of the boat’s deviation, counter-steers accordingly, assesses the deviation again, and so on. Thus he relies on continual feedback to keep the boat on course, its actual trajectory oscillating around the present direction. The skill of steering a boat consists in keeping these oscillations as smooth as possible.”

Students of psychology and education are becoming increasingly aware of the vital role that feedback plays in how we learn. All complex systems (like your body, your organisation, your family, your community) change their behaviour or learn through feedback — even if this means weaving in and out of the best path (like Wiener’s boat example) rather than sticking to the best path in any strict way.

Even if you cannot predict the outcome, turning up the volume of feedback will always produce more sustainable results. As long as all the bits are talking to each other, something better will emerge. Feedback can be seen as a flow of information, in the in-between spaces, that constantly invites new responses.

Andre Croucamp and Steve Banhegyi of thoughtformz.com take us through the virtues and relevance of feedback in both personal and organisation contexts.

If you are not failing at something, you are not learning anything new.
from all the parts, improving the quality of all relationships within the system and allowing a system to learn how to do more for less effort. Sometimes something completely new and unexpected can arise out of the in-between spaces and take the whole system to another level.

Fear of failure and rejection

Feedback allows you to make those corrections to your own behaviour that are necessary to lift your performance to another level. But how, and from where, can we get effective, reliable and performance-enhancing feedback in the systems in which we live and the organisations in which we work? Many people respond quite negatively to feedback, irrespective of how well intentioned it might be. Many people resist useful feedback because they fear failure and rejection. They therefore experience critical feedback as a personal attack.

Those who resist feedback are unlikely to change their behaviour when they receive it. This has important implications for the way your organisation deals with performance appraisals and the way it helps members design career paths. Opportunities for feedback are often misappropriated to make people feel worthless and incompetent.

For feedback to be effective, organisations have to link feedback and learning and commit to both as core values in their corporate cultures. One solution is to engage feedback as an ongoing conversation in your organisation, rather than as a formal summary of someone’s performance, at a single and arbitrary point in time, with an abstract mark attached to it.

People often fear their appraisals or assessments, whereas they could be looking forward to an opportunity to learn and to grow both themselves and the organisation. This is what Weiner called “reciprocal modification” — the change in me is a change in you. This ongoing “conversation” is what is often referred to as continuous assessment as opposed to summative assessment.

Effective feedback also has implications for top performers. In the old days people who were getting 80% were “better” than everyone else and did not have to try as hard.

In the philosophy of Outcomes-Based Education, people should not be measured against each other. Individuals should be measured against their own potential and expectations. If they are getting high marks it does not mean they can rest in the knowledge of their superiority. It means it is time to find a new growing edge, a new challenge on their learning path. If you are not failing at something you are not learning anything new.

Members of your organisation need to be coached in the mechanisms and dynamics of effective feedback and how it relates to their own learning path. They need to begin to see feedback as an opportunity to improve and grow rather than as a personal attack or a defining statement of their identity.

It should also help people to experience their lives in long timeframes in which criticism doesn’t define them but is experienced as useful information on a long and fruitful learning path. It should also encourage them to experiment with behavioural changes in a way that is slightly demanding, but is relatively safe, enjoyable, creative and rewarding.

Creative ways of providing feedback to people that allows them to critically reflect upon themselves in a light-hearted fashion are vitally important in modern organisations. Some of these ways include:

**Video** — Everyone loves a movie, especially if they are the stars. Seeing yourself perform is a very powerful form of feedback. Using video cameras to record meetings and other forms of interaction can help generate this powerful feedback mechanism.

Actors and sportsmen routinely view videos of themselves in action to improve their performance. Organisations could use the same approach. Video is probably the only way that we can see ourselves in the way the world (possibly) sees us.

A short exposure to this technique leads people into dramatic and productive changes in their behaviour and the way in which they see themselves. A useful idea is to film people talking to their own future selves, expressing their expectations and commitments for the next months and years. They then view the footage months or years later and create a new message for the months to follow.

Opportunities to express feelings and thoughts through metaphor — The beauty of metaphor is that it is open to interpretation. Using metaphor as a way of expressing feedback is more dynamic than an abstract mark and gives people the feeling of being in control and being able to respond.

One way to use metaphors to express and respond to feedback is to facilitate people in a conversation that uses art. An interesting example is engaging in clay modelling or creating collages as individuals or as a team. Individuals express...
their feelings, their expectations and how they perceive their roles in these representational models. These models are then allowed to interact with each other creating arrangements that represent relationships in the work space. The group can then negotiate how these interactions change the models. These changes can then be translated back into your organisation’s dynamics and individual experience.

This exercise has the power to create fundamental shifts because the metaphorical nature of the exercise has helped people change the experience of their roles and relationships.

**Role play and acting lessons** — There are theories of organisational behaviour that suggest that the way we learn roles in an organisation are no different from the way actors learn roles for a film or a play. Some people may find the notion of pretending a little insincere, but we tend to pretend something long before we become it. Participating in role play and even in formal acting classes is an opportunity to pretend in a relatively safe environment — an opportunity to rehearse reality!

Acting in this way can provide an unusual feedback opportunity as people are made aware of how they ‘come across’ based on their body language, voice quality, inflection and other factors.

**More tips and ideas**

Feedback can only work to the advantage of an organisation when there are commonly agreed upon values and goals to focus on. Only when the values and goals are established can you focus your energies on process. Process always takes more time than authoritative orders, but it nurtures intelligent participants instead of puppets.

Remember that a focus on process helps us deal with dynamics that are far too complex for simple modelling. As long as all the bits are talking to each other, something better will emerge.

Affirming effective feedback behaviour is not always easy. It becomes almost impossible in a culture of blame. Where employees are trying to out-smart each other and blame each other, feedback mechanisms can easily generate a kind of “big brother” paranoia. This can destroy an organisation. Having said this, every true democracy should offer protection to whistle blowers who have the interests of human health and dignity at heart.

The following are some other tips for increasing the quality of feedback in your organisation:

- Stimulate an interest in learning about learning. Moving to a higher level of feedback requires a curiosity about the processes of consciousness and learning.
- Value failure when it brings new learning.
- Maintain an open system wherever possible. Avoid unnecessary hierarchies and practices of secrecy that prevent information from moving freely through the organisation.
- Encourage sharing and an active interest in what is going on throughout the organisation.
- Improve communication for its own sake. Get the conversation going and keep it going.
- Raise the energy of the whole system. Get people excited about the challenges facing them. Get people committed to changing their performance by allowing them the freedom to change the level of participation in the conversation. If this doesn’t happen the organisation can settle into a learning dead-zone of familiarity, predictability and reluctance to change.
- Create “safe” spaces in which feedback can be experienced positively. In other words, there should be “ritual” spaces in which people know that it is OK to express themselves honestly and openly.
- Coach people in how to give, receive and use effective feedback. This cannot be done unless you also nurture a culture that affirms feedback and learning.
- Encourage people to experiment and explore novel ways of providing feedback.
- Use humour and playfulness as tools. As the practice of feedback improves, people will learn how to “read” complex relationships better and even predict some of the changes that are about to emerge.

*The Art of Feedback (c) 2005 ThoughtForms.com*
Community Development Workers (CDWs) programme concretises government’s efforts in deepening the quality of services rendered to communities. It is, however, important to stress from the onset that CDWs are not replacing the role of government departments in the provision of services to communities. CDWs are a mechanism through which gaps in the service delivery chain can be identified and closed. How CDWs practically play the role of service delivery “middleman” will be covered in the overall introduction of the CDWs project with specific reference to its background, objectives, current status and future challenges.

What are CDWs all about?

As already noted, the CDWs programme is aimed at improving people’s access to government services through strengthened coordination and the integration of service provision at local and community levels. This improves networking and communication between government and local communities. It also ensures that communities have access to the kind of vital government information that contributes to the ongoing social transformation in South Africa, which is why engaging people is so central to the role of a community development worker.

The benefits resulting from the direct interaction of CDWs, the different levels of government and communities include the fact that such engagements provide an opportunity for communities to provide positive feedback on government programmes. It also affords government with an opportunity to put its side of the story so that people can appreciate the benefits of transformation.

The CDWs programme has its roots in President Thabo Mbeki’s 2003 State of the Nation Address (SNA) and was subsequently picked up by all government departments as an implementable challenge. Although the programme is an intergovernmental initiative, it is coordinated and implemented by a special unit located within the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) but also assisted by the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG), the Office of the President, and the South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) amongst other departments. The CDW Unit has provincial counterparts.
An update on the programme

The CDW Unit has thus far visited all nine provinces to assist with the establishment of a framework for guiding the functioning of provincial units, which are all established (save for Limpopo) and are located within provincial departments. The CDWs who have been recruited were taken through a year-long programme before they are employed as public servants. We have met and briefed other departments. We are now in the process of finalising an agreement with Unisobomvu Fund to ensure that the youth become part of this programme. We are establishing a learning network.

In terms of the provinces, most of them, except Limpopo have got units established in the departments of local government. The learnership is in progress. We currently have 1 367 learners in the learnership and institutional arrangements for their integration into the public service system are in place. There is a director with a staff complement of between three and five in each of the provinces and district officials who act as advisors to CDWs.

Budgets are secured in some provinces and municipalities and other stakeholders have been brought on board. The learnership is on target. In fact all the provinces are progressing well.

About 571 of the 1 367 learners that I have mentioned have completed the learnership and by the end of December we hope to have 2 840 or more CDWs. This figure is based on the total number of municipalities. We have 284 municipalities in the country and current thinking at the national level is that we should at least have a minimum number of 10 CDWs per municipality. That is how we got to the number 2 840.

Importing skills

Further training that we are considering for the CDWs includes linkages to the Gateway portal to enable them to access information on a regular basis wherever they are located. We are also running a pilot project in Gauteng on the Gateway Portal.

We have given 14 laptops to CDWs that are fitted with a simcard, so that they can dial in without having to look for a telephone point. They have batteries fitted into the laptops have a life span of 24 hours so that if we deploy such laptops in a remote rural area access to information on that laptop is not compromised by problems associated with power supply. They can also dial in to any government portal.

We have also given them training on e-government broadly, ICT and on the Batho Pele principles. Some of them (especially the youth), as part of our exit strategy, will be trained in extra-mural skills. We would like them to actually concentrate on income-generating projects. Once they qualify as CDWs they will be taken through another set of training to ensure that they can run programmes in their local areas on income generation projects. We will also give them training on life skills.

We use customer service centres, and mobile units that are run by other departments to ensure that we can reach the remote areas. We are currently involved in discussions with the Department of Communication to explore how we can access post offices, especially where there are no government offices or any other offices that CDWs can use.

Furthermore, we have established relationships with municipalities, ward councillors, locally-based organisations, NGOs and other departments focusing at local level. We have established relationships with ward committee members through meetings and workshops.

Our approach is that CDWs should sit in ward committees, not as committee members, but as public servants who will be there to assist with administrative functions and the running of the ward committees. SALGA has taken a resolution to facilitate the information at that level. Contact is also being established with trade unions and there are plans to stage a conference on CDWs.

It is our intention to provide the kind of skills that will ensure that CDWs add value in projects such as the Extended Public Works Project (EPWP). CDWs will receive training on how EPWP related projects are run so that they can be able to advise communities on how best to take advantage of the project.

Communication strategy is in place and we are finalising our branding. A booklet providing examples of successful case studies of community work has already been published. A web page will be developed as well so that people can access the CDWs programme through the DPSA website. A video on how CDWs are doing has been produced.

As far as policy development is concerned, we have developed deployment, implementation and evaluation strategies. We are also currently conducting some action research to measure progress, especially around the effectiveness and relevance of CDWs training on the ground.

Securing political buy-in across the board is amongst some of the key challenges we are facing. Although this has been secured at provincial level, what we find as a challenge is that political buy-in does not trickle down to ward level.

Other challenges include access to funding, inadequate inter-departmental coordination and lack of alignment of government priorities with provincial strategic – all of which are critical to the success of the CDWs programme.
With over 2,800 beds, Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, is reputed to be the biggest hospital in the southern hemisphere. It is also world-renowned as a remarkable tertiary and academic hospital in a tough, poor and crime-afflicted urban setting, which was for decades the epicentre of popular resistance to the apartheid system.

In 2000, NEHAWU — the largest-membership trade union at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital — asked Naledi, a Cosatu-linked research organisation, to investigate the crisis conditions within the hospital, and develop proposals for transforming it into a “People’s Hospital”. On this mandate, Naledi conducted preliminary research in 2001.

Results and recommendations were spelled out in broad proposals later that year. At the core of the proposals was the imperative to:

• make CHBH a better hospital for the community it serves; and
• make CHBH a better workplace for those who work there.

A period of consensus building followed, and in 2002 all trade unions at CHBH, as well as the hospital board and hospital management, committed themselves to the goal of transformation. There followed during 2003 a period of further, more intensive research, during which the CHBH staff at all levels, from CEO to cleaner, voiced their concerns at the “sick” state of the hospital, and also voiced their suggestions on how it could be transformed.

Research findings

The budget issue: Although, at the time of the research, nearly 10 years had passed since the advent of democracy, the apartheid legacy was still reflected in the CHBH budget. A comparison between Baragwanath (historically, the “black” hospital, serving the poor in Soweto) and “Joburg Gen” (historically, the “white” hospital serving the more affluent Johannesburg municipality) revealed the following picture in 2003:

• CHBH has 2.5 times more beds than Johannesburg General but CHBH has only 14% more budget than Joburg Gen.
• CHB personnel expenditure per bed is only 34% of that at Joburg Gen.
• Personnel expenditure per patient/day is 70% of that at Joburg Gen.
• Total expenditure per bed is 58% of that at Joburg Gen.

Staff shortage: Management figures for staff reflected the following shortages in 2003, though the situation of staff shortage has worsened considerably since then, particularly amongst nursing staff:
• 32% shortage of staff (overall, i.e. around 4 800 instead of 7 000);
• 36% shortage of nursing staff;
• 73% shortage of pharmacists;
• 45% shortage of allied health professionals;
• 46% shortage of managers/administrators; and
• 30% shortage of support staff.

Workload and patient-care impact of staff shortages: Staff at CHBH stressed the severe impact on patient care of the staff shortage. In their own words:
• “We sometimes only do the most critical patients. Sometimes we just ‘top and tail’ patients instead of giving them a full wash.” — Sister-in-charge
• “I have to rush time — I must stop washing and serve tea. If there are no ward attendants I must make tea myself. There’s no point in washing the patient and giving medications, but failing to feed him. Again, how can you leave a sick person in a wet bed and go for lunch?” — Nursing Assistant
• “The most important change with democracy is the shortage in staffing levels.” — Chief Professional Nurse

Workload impacts are equally severe:
• “We have to ignore the rules we were taught in our training. We were taught that you cannot wash the patient alone, but must always be two. According to the rules, there should be two nurses to turn a patient. At present we wash alone, we turn alone, we make beds alone, irrespective of how obese or how ill the patients are.” — Nursing Assistant

The cumulative result of all this is “unbearable” stress, resulting in turn in resignations, absenteeism, late-coming, irritability, anger and aggression.

Under-management at CHB: Managerial under-capacity at the hospital was found to be reflected in two ways. There is an absolute shortage of executive and senior managers, and lack of any management development programme to assist the management to deal with the situation. In addition, there is a lack of management systems which might help managers to cope better. This applies across the board — financial systems, HR systems, even patient care benchmarks.

For example, although there is an HR department in name, it is no such thing, merely a clerical/personnel function, devoid of any strategic dimension. Those systems that do exist are often dysfunctional. For example, the inefficient management “silos” structure means that basic functions like cleaning are under the control of distant supervisors, not under direct supervision at the patient care “coalface” (the wards).

The result is that cleaners do not take instructions from ward management (“You are not my boss!”) and high-skill and scarce workers such as nurses must do interim cleanups (of bodily fluids etc.), or leave the ward in an appalling mess until the next cleaning round, to the severe detriment of hygiene and general patient care.

Disempowered Management, and “management by memo”: Exacerbating the management problem at the hospital is the system of centralised control operated by the Gauteng DoH, which results in chronic disempowerment at institutional level. (More recently, the beginnings of a debate has emerged around this issue: The GDoH has contended that the hospital does have the necessary delegations to manage effectively. In response, the hospital management has asked for evidence of this in writing, since they feel that whatever the alleged empowerment level may be in theory, it does not operate in practice.)

A second kind of disempowerment of management is visible in the management culture. There is a narrow focus on Personnel, Administration and Rules rather than on Strategy, Operations and People. The culture is one of “management by memo”, i.e. the responsibility of management is seen as passing on orders from above to those down below, without inspection of their real impact on the ground. When the memo has been forwarded, the job is regarded as having been done.

The experience on-the-ground of the managerial vacuum: The absence of management arising from absolute shortage of managers, or the absence of management through managers’ avoidance of managerial responsibility, has very seri-
The role of trade unions in this situation has come to mirror the narrow and non-strategic role adopted by management. As such, this role is criticised by union members, who point to the union’s responsibility to ensure fairness:
- “The union is defending those who are wrong. There should be clear rules. What is the point of having rotten members? We are the real union members.” — NEHAWU members

Research into the pre-history of the current situation at CHBH revealed the common perception that the 1992 strike was a watershed event, which changed everything. The strike was a powerful challenge to apartheid discipline. It was characterised by violence, intimidation, mass dismissals, intense conflict between workers (between nurses and general assistants, between strikers and strikebreakers) and led to a breakdown of the previous system of discipline.

The strike left an enduring legacy of distrust and unresolved conflict, with guns still being brought into the hospital to perpetuate this situation. Most notably, there has never been any serious attempt to address this reality via the establishment of a new and legitimate disciplinary regime within the hospital, appropriate to the post-apartheid reality of a democratic political culture.

Training and advancement: Many categories of staff feel their skills and experience are not recognised, or valued. For example, Nursing Assistants and Ward Attendants perform important support functions in patient care, but feel they have no access to further training, no prospects for career advancement.

This reflects again on the absence of any meaningful HR capacity in the hospital, to develop career-pathing, skills development, and an ongoing training regime:
- “You start as a nursing assistant. You will die as a nursing assistant.” — NA of 25 years’ experience.

Labour’s initiative

The CHBH trade unions recognised (and affirmed the debilitating effect on their membership and on patients) of the crisis situation identified by the Naledi research, and (as outlined in the Introduction, above) formulated proposals for “a way forward”. They also gained the support of hospital management and Board for these proposals.

It was agreed to test the proposals concretely via a Pilot Project in the Surgical Department (which has 495 beds), before attempting rollout to the rest of the hospital.

A detailed Plan was developed for Surgical Department Pilot, which focuses on:
- a new, integrated management structure which breaks out of the “silo” system;
- new participatory ways of managing, which break out of the “management by memo” culture; and
- new ways of working, based on teamwork principles, and integrated work organisation e.g. through the appointment of ward managers, who are in charge of all staff in the wards and who are responsible for effective service delivery there.

The Plan envisages an adequate support structure to underpin the changes, e.g. an empowered HR (not “personnel”) officer located within the Department, and a training and development programme which can make career-pathing a reality. However, appropriate staff levels will have to be attained before the Plan is implementable, which means that the well-known constraint of budget limits will have to be addressed.

Innovative proposals in the Plan will provide for lower skilled staff to take off some of the burden on higher skilled staff, releasing them to do the more specialised work for which they are trained. Currently, much of the budget expenditure is inappropriately directed, e.g. CPNs and PNs (who are in scarce supply in CHBH, as in SA generally) can often be seen making beds, because there are too few Nursing Assistants and Ward Attendants to perform such functions.

After much presenting of the Proposals for a Transformed CHBH at different levels of the DoH during 2003,
formal political endorsement was received from Gauteng DoH in 2004, with the Project's adoption by the Gauteng MEC for Health as a departmental "partnership project".

Simultaneously, the MEC mandated CHBH management to develop a strategic plan for CHBH, into which the Transformation Project could be incorporated, and in terms of which the CHBH overall budget could be reviewed. During the third quarter of 2004, there ensued a period of intensive preparation at CHBH for an all-stakeholder strategic planning workshop. Consultations with all occupational categories took place, and in October a three-day strategic planning workshop was held, which was remarkable for the spirit of hope that it created. The Strategic Plan has the following key elements:

- Management autonomy from the GDoH to run the institution within agreed budget and targets.
- Develop zero-based, activity-based budget as soon as possible to replace the old historic budget system. Capacity and systems to commence this enormous task are to be set in place by the start of the next budget year.
- Develop and implement new organizational design, based on distinct business units.
- Develop HR strategy, capacity and systems.
- The Plan will require provincial agreement, and an expanded budget, at least for a limited period. What was emphasised was the need to spend money ("hump funding") in the short term, in order to save money in the medium and long term.
- Investment in financial management capacity, for example, cannot be avoided if we are to redress the current situation where the GDoH spends 15% of its annual budget currently on CHBH without really being able to track where the money goes.

**CHBH pilot highlights**

The Project at CHBH is perhaps unique as a "laboratory" for government/management/trade union partnership for transformation. It is also a pilot (with all parties being interested participants) seeking to break out of a governmental pattern of excessive centralisation, which constrains institution-level innovation, and makes transformation impossible through the dead weight of bureaucratic inertia.

Also being tested is the strong labour assertion that the quality of working life for health service staff and quality of service delivery for health service patients are inextricably connected. Under scrutiny as well are budget issues: Given the apartheid legacy, there is a necessity for investment now to break out of a vicious cycle of the neglect and very serious wastage of human resources. Perhaps the most striking finding of the CHBH research is the desire of the vast majority of the staff to work hard and to work well, and to be supported by a system which rewards and facilitates this, instead of forever frustrating them.

Judicious investment now in this area has the potential for very considerable future savings. Management capacity must be enhanced significantly to take advantage of the new space for innovation which decentralisation will allow. The current severe skills shortage suggests the need to rethink work organisation. Increased staffing numbers and up-skilling at the lower end of the skills ladder is a solution waiting to be seized upon (e.g. via learnerships for the WAs and NAs whose deep frustrations were quoted above). But it requires good management to see and to utilise such opportunities, and to deploy scarce high-level nursing skills more effectively than is the case at present. Attention to these areas could radically change the cost structure of employment.

Policy focuses of recent years, e.g. "progressive reallocation to primary care", will need re-balancing too, as it is apparent from the CHBH's daily lived experience that primary care and secondary/tertiary care are interdependent. A community without good secondary/tertiary care is a badly served community, even if primary facilities are good. Destruction of secondary and tertiary institutional capacity through neglect and underfunding is not an option.
Dudley Moloi (DM): What is your professional background and how does it relate to your current position at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital (CHBH)?

Emma Bodarenko (EB): I was actually born and educated in Ukraine where I qualified as a medical doctor in 1962. In 1976 my husband visited South Africa on a holiday and soon after that we decided we liked the idea of working here. In June 1978 my husband [who is also a medical doctor] and I came to South Africa after securing jobs at CHBH. From 1979 I worked at a number of clinics here in Soweto until 1985 when I became in charge of Lillian Ngoyi Clinic, which is located near CHBH. Between 1993 and 1998 I was superintendent of Hillbrow Hospital and later became CEO of a psychiatric hospital when Hillbrow Hospital was closed in 1998.

DM: So you have a well-rounded experience of the health system?

EB: I have been in the Health Department since my arrival in 1978 and retired in August 2003 but was asked by the Health Department to help with CHBH. The hospital at the time was experiencing management problems that led to a decision to appoint an interim management team as they called it in those days. The team was made up of a Clinical Director, HR Director, myself [CEO], and a Financial Director. After working for half a year the department realised that there was not enough time to turn around CHBH and they appointed us on a contractual basis for three years. So I have a contract that expires at the end of April 2006. That is how I became a CEO of CHBH.

DM: So the management is basically the interim management?

EB: No, we have now been appointed. The Clinical Director who has been transferred to here is now permanently employed. Because I am after retirement, they gave me a two-year offer and I will retire after that. The post has already been advertised.

DM: What specific management challenges do you see, or have experienced at CHBH specifically, and do these challenges have more to do with the health system in general?

EB: CHBH is a very big hospital. It should be three hospitals. To run such a big hospital, compared to small hospitals, is difficult. First of all the budget is not enough. So to blame CHBH when the allocation of budget is not enough is unfair. Infrastructure maintenance is also very difficult at CHBH. You must also remember that CHBH is the only
hospital in the south-western area. There is no other hospital around. So managing all this population of Soweto is difficult. The hospital is catering for all patients, from flu up to critical diseases. The shortage of staff and doctors and pharmacists is also a big challenge.

DM: You mention the budget is not always enough. Do you think the department is aware of that?
EB: They are aware, and they are trying to help us, but you see, we have the small pie of budget that is allocated by treasury. It would be proper for CHBH to have a zero-based budget, which is based on the needs of the hospital. We are currently allocated budget on a historical basis.

DM: Is it possible to strike a compromise in this regard?
EB: I don’t think that it will happen in the near future. But you must remember that CHBH is now in a transformation stage. There are a lot of obstacles. You need to have a sound and qualified manager to be held accountable for the activities of the hospital. This has legal implications especially around who is answerable to whom? The head of department or the MEC? So there is a range of issues that we need to consider. Besides, you have to train managers that are really qualified and who can run a zero-base budget.

DM: Is the centralisation of HR a stumbling block in terms of the management of staff and the institution — for example the ability to hire and fire and generally deal with issues of discipline?
EB: It is a stumbling block. For example, I do not have power to hire and to fire. Sure, heads of departments sometimes argue that my position comes with delegation of powers. I do have a lot of delegation given to me. I can investigate, I can suspend, I can transfer, I can give progressive disciplinary procedures. But as far as dismissal is concerned, I do not
have the power to dismiss — that has to be approved elsewhere. Once I have approved a dismissal that person is given a letter informing him or her of the decision and advising that person of their right to appeal which takes too long because it is a centralised process. Some of the current appeal cases go back as far back as 2001.

Hiring or offering a job has to go through the Gauteng Shared Service Centre (GSSC). I cannot directly approve the filling of the post but have to go through the centralised GSSC process. Without stepping on their toes or something, there are a lot of problems with the GSSC and because they are managing a lot of departments they are not always doing speedy work.

**DM:** How is it possible for the department to under-spend when there is an obvious need for resources in hospitals such as CHBH?

**EB:** Our procurement system is very difficult. There are simple things I can buy very cheaply, but because of the procurement system it takes much longer. If I want to renovate, I cannot just say I found the paint and the painter, it is not like that, there are a range of activities that have to be considered. For example, in April last year there was a decision that the hospital has to be upgraded and built because some of the buildings are 60 years old. Because of the many processes involved, the project has not begun even though money has been allocated. A lot of projects that have to be done through the works department — it is money held up.

**DM:** In the light of much of the recent negative publicity around some hospitals — do you think that people should be less critical because transformation takes time? Should the public bear with the challenges that you are facing?

**EB:** It is a challenge for a hospital to be part of the revitalisation process while at the same time not jeopardising the quality and level of health services. We cannot make revitalising an excuse for neglecting. The hospital may become a bit uncomfortable due to the work in progress. Ensuring that patients bear with us and understand the reasons for certain inconveniences requires constant communication through the hospital board and the media. The primary aim is to have a proper hospital that the whole community, doctors and nurses will be proud of.

**DM:** Can you define capacity challenges in the context of CHBH?

**EB:** We have 5 400 posts allocated to us of which 4 600 are filled. This can give you an idea of how we are understaffed. There is a general shortage of staff across all the hospital departments especially nursing and pharmacy. Staff shortages are not unique to CHBH because most hospitals are affected. It is very difficult to attract certain types of skills because we cannot compete with the high salaries that are offered by the private sector.

The department came up with the scarce skills allowance in order to attract and retain critical staff. Doctors are allowed to do private work according to the number of overtime hours they accrue. Hillbrow Hospital had 700 beds when I was working there and CHBH currently has 2 880 beds, which means the hospital is like running three or four hospitals. So it is quite a challenge to manage such a big institution.

In the past CHBH was catering for all clinics and districts in Soweto. But now we are devoted to central hospitals, even though we still assist about 26 district clinics. There are nearly 30% of patients referred to CHBH who should not actually be referred to the hospital. This has to be managed by primary health clinics or district hospitals. This affects us because specialist doctors end up attending to people suffering from simple illnesses such as flu.

Among some of the strategies to reduce the patient load at CHBH include plans to build four or five district hospitals in and around Soweto. Work has already started with building a hospital in Zola. Once these hospitals are up and running they will go a long way towards taking the patient load off CHBH. They will only refer to CHBH those patients that they are unable to assist. This is how the referral system will work in future. It is not going to take a month or a year to get the system up and running. It will take between five and ten years and will happen in stages.

**DM:** What can other hospitals learn from CHBH?

**EB:** I think it is our transformation project, which I already touched on. What we commonly call the Naledi project came about as a result of Cosatu’s concerns about the state of the hospital. Because transformation costs money, we are pleased that the Department of Health has bought into our idea of transformation and is providing some funding to the project.

Sometimes people jump to conclusions [about what is happening at CHBH]. I am not trying to make excuses — there are cases of negligence but that happens in other hospitals as well — because CHBH is a big hospital with many departments it get a larger share of publicity.

People working in this hospital are very dedicated. Staff members like this hospital and this community and they want to help. How do you think the transformation process began? It came through our unions and workers who were concerned about the future of the hospital and started doing something.
We believe very strongly, as the province and the department, that our activities should be premised on the strong role of the state and an interventionist state. We also believe very strongly that we need very clear, focused and structured targets, which we articulate upfront and in the true spirit of the People’s Contract to ensure that we are actually clear what we are all about, for example dealing with unemployment, poverty, skills or redistribution and also make sure that we do review our performance on a regular basis.

We also feel that in order to improve service delivery there are a couple of things that we have to be clear about. One of them is that perhaps the old narratives of centralisation versus decentralisation are not useful anymore. We should rather be talking about the middle point in the continuum.

We also do not believe in the divisions between policy-making and implementation as this is not useful. We believe in the need for integration or what has been referred to as the spider-web mentality. For example, in the education setting, our policies must speak to what the teachers and learners are doing in the classroom so that we can see whether those policies are working or not.

We also believe very strongly that what the concept of an interventionist state means is that even in cases of public-private partnerships the public service must always be the leader in that relationship. We have many instances where government has handed-over to the private sector and lost the agenda of the state in the process. It is for this reason that we must build the capacity of public institutions for service delivery, instead of always relying on consultants.

As we push a greater role to be played by the state, it is also important that the process should be participative by involving the people on the ground. This should begin with the process of demystifying policy. In other words, talking in a language that the beneficiaries of govern-
ment services can understand.

**Jobless growth**

The Further Education and Training (FET) sector should be understood in the context of the South African economy. Its features include a low growth rate and an inability to create jobs that both swell the ranks of the unemployed, particularly among the unskilled. It is also important to note at this stage that the growth of the economy is constrained by the shortage of skills as a result of the mismatch between the skills characteristics of the labour market and the skills demands of the economy.

High unemployment, even when the economy is apparently growing, is illustrated by table one below, which shows that South Africa is amongst the most unequal countries in the world rivalled only by Brazil.

Social institutions play a critical role in the formation of human resources. The institutional forms critical for the SA social system include the following sub-systems whose organisation has a bearing on the distribution of educational opportunity and skills development:

- Youth Labour Market;
- World of Work; and
- National System of Science and Innovation

**Youth Labour Market**

Entry by young people into the labour market is affected by the jobless growth and low employment absorption of the economy. A low skills base, the poor quality of South African education and irrelevant subject choices and programmes are a further disincentive on the demand side, which all lead to a low through flow from school to work.

An added obstacle for school-leaving youth from previously disadvantaged groups is the prevalence of race-based recruitment and placement practices. Most N6 college graduates who secure jobs or learnerships are usually from rich and socially networked families. On the other hand, those young people that we manage to get into the job market do not last in their positions. An analysis of why this is happening indicates that the root of this problem lies in the nature of our economy and work organisation.

The contemporary world of work is characterised by high levels of capital investments, over-reliance on sophisticated technologies and the attendant specialised skills to meet production demands. What also accounts for the high levels of attrition among new labour market entrants is the lack of external and internal training and skilling mechanisms that benefit workers, which is a state of affairs that invariably leads to job shedding at the low and intermediate skill levels.

**Joined Up Strategies**

Growing the economy and supplying it with an appropriately skilled labour force is a very complex process that requires the combined efforts of a range of institutions responsible for human resources, for example, schools, FE colleges, universities, training centres, NGOs, trade unions, SETAs, and employer associations. The challenges faced by the country are not reducible to the failings of a single institution or set of government policies, which is why “joined up” strategies are necessary to address institutional incoherence and bring about coordinated service delivery.

Unless we adopt this kind of strategy, which relates to the spider web metaphor that was mentioned earlier, making sure that all government departments join up their strategies to collectively deliver a package of services. This is the approach that was adopted in the evolution of FET colleges, which went through the trajec-

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**Table One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>Percentage of the South African population</th>
<th>Total no school leaving first time entrants into the labour market</th>
<th>Employment rate of school leaving first time entrants into the labour market %</th>
<th>No of school leaving first time entrants into the labour market who acquire jobs</th>
<th>No of school leaving first time entrants into the labour market who fail to acquire jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>636 020</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>184 446</td>
<td>451 574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>74 020</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37 170</td>
<td>37 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24 780</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>17 346</td>
<td>7 434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>90 860</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>68 145</td>
<td>22 715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>826 000</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>307 107</td>
<td>518 893</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEARS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994 - 1998</td>
<td>• Policy Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 - 2002</td>
<td>• Merger of 152 Technical Colleges to 50 FET Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Developing structures and systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 - 2004</td>
<td>• Raising the profile of the sector;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The Year of FET — 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 - 2004</td>
<td>• Lobbying for additional resources:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• College Recapitalisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The role of FET colleges in meeting the human resource needs of the country is based on the following national Human Resource Development (HRD) objectives:

- improving the foundations for human development;
- improving the supply of high-quality skills responsive to the needs of the economy;
- increasing participation in LLL; and
- supporting employment growth through industrial policies, innovation, research and development.

The above objectives dovetail with government’s priorities that incorporate building staircases between the two economies; reduce unemployment and poverty; extending the fruits of democracy to the most vulnerable groups; and dealing decisively with the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

A measurement of the responsiveness of the sector over the past ten years reveals the following status quo nationally:

**Student Participation**
- 17% growth in FTEs
- 30% growth in head count
- Average student is African, male and aged 24
- Growth of about 100,000 15-19 year olds

**Student Performance**
- Average 58% throughput rate ranging between 32% and 74%.
- A high drop out rate and exam no shows.
- Poor placement — reliance on networks.

**Coastal KZN College lessons**

Like their national counterparts, the nine FET colleges in KZN, with 62 delivery sites, are expected to work within the government FET norms and objectives. The only exception was that national government wanted nine sites and 23 delivery sites, but this requirement was waived in the case of the province because of the huge demand. Working on the assumption that people are not getting work because they are wrongly skilled, KZN Coastal College, as an illustration, turned the whole debate around by asking industry what are their skills requirements and also drawing them into public-private-partnerships aimed at addressing the dearth of skills. The outcomes have been very encouraging.

The PPPs, in the case of KZN Coastal College, resulted in the establishment of the Unilever Employee Training Programme targeting chemical fitters and plant operators. The programme has an intake of 200 learners annually, costing R2 million.

A partnership with Toyota led to the initiation of the Toyota Recruitment Programme, which has an intake of 80 learners annually.

On the strength of intergovernmental relations, the KZN government, under the leadership of the Premier, has adopted a similar approach to that taken by the KZN Coastal College. Instead of garnering private sector support, the provincial government has focused on encouraging ‘joined up strategies’ between the public sector and municipalities for tackling the skills challenges of the province. Below are some examples resulting from these efforts:

- Agriculture and Environmental Affairs: Commercial Farming Programmes through Siyavuna, and the goat farming, Nguni cattle breeding and dry rice farming projects.
- Transport (EPWP): Zibambeleni Road Infrastructure Development.

**Conclusion**

Acknowledging the central role to be played by government in Human Capital development whilst recognizing that government can’t do it alone. It is only through developing “joined up” service delivery strategies across government departments and private and public sector institutions that this could be achieved.

That said, it is also critical to keep in mind the fact that building sufficient institutional capacity is primarily the responsibility of government — which is journey and not a destination.
Africa at the Crossroads: Building a Functioning Continent

In this edited version of an address given during Africa Public Service Day, Koko Mokgalong, of the Public Service Commission, highlights the achievements South Africa has scored in enhancing service delivery through the strengthening of its public service corps.
A s public servants throughout Africa you hold to commemorate the “value and virtue of service delivery improvement”, it is befitting that we pause and take time to reflect on our own achievements in South Africa. This reflection will be located within the theme: “The role of the State in the Reconstruction of Africa”. Six sub themes were selected for this purpose:  

* Strengthening African public service competency for effective service delivery to citizens.  
* African development for good governance — peer review mechanism, combating corruption, accountability and democracy, conflict resolution.  
* Fostering enhanced public service delivery through participatory governance.  
* Towards participatory and transparent governance.  
* Building human resource skills in the public service — continental solidarity and capacity building (issues of South-South co-operation, knowledge exchange and regional blocks)  
* Impact of African Public Service on the reconstruction and development of the continent.  

In trying to reflect on our own achievements, allow me to take you through the “state of the public service report”, which is an overview of the work done by the Public Service Commission in its attempt to respond to its mandate of being the custodian of good governance by promoting the nine constitutional values and principles underpinning public administration. This discussion is therefore structured around these principles.

**Promotion and Maintenance of High Standard of Professional Ethics**

Whilst a coherent basic infrastructure for ethics has been established in most departments, the report notes that more still needs to be done in order to fully entrench and internalise organisational culture of the public service. The culture that advocates the ethical conduct of public servants with the view to preventing corruption in their public and private lives.

**Promotion of Effective and Efficient Utilisation of Resources**

Improvement in spending patterns is notable, this notwithstanding, there are departments which still lag behind in achieving some of their strategic objectives, there is notably a continuing difficulty by departments in relating their annual reports to their budgets. The study further reflects a need to improve and strengthen information management systems.

A performance management system for managers from director level is in place; however, the performance indicators need to be better defined to enable them to be measured against set objectives. In this regard, the PSC calls for practical, user-friendly and accessible guidelines that are aligned to strategic tools such as governmental priorities, departmental strategic objectives, programme plans; and individual job descriptions.

**Human Resource Development Strategies**

The key finding here was that the current Human Resource Development Strategies need to be prioritised in order to focus on the ongoing development and support for officials to ensure that this principle is observed.

**Public Administration must be Development Oriented**

In its attempt to respond to the challenges of a developmental state, the public service is still grappling to put effective and efficient management of the poverty alleviation programmes in place. In most instances, the challenge is to allocate significant funds to these programmes. This results in community-owned projects that are not sustainable, especially when government still performs related functions.

**Impartial, Fair and Equitable Services**

In order to address the past inequities in terms of service delivery, there is an obligation on public officials to provide services impartially, equitably and without bias.

In order to address the past inequities in terms of service delivery, there is an obligation on public officials to provide services impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias. The key finding here was that both national and provincial departments have not demonstrated significant efforts to ensure that this principle is observed. There is very little evidence that departments understand the legislation and therefore are effectively implementing the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2002 (PAJA).

It is proposed that the public service fully integrate the principles of Batho Pele in its work ethic and culture. Public participation and consultation on service standards in order to define the levels of services and standards to be expected are imperatives for a responsive citizenry, and therefore the implementation of PAJA in its entirety is a right for citizens.
Response to People’s Needs and Participation in Policy Making

The report notes that very few departments have clearly defined policies addressing public participation. This results in very informal and ad hoc public participation.

However, there is a need to single out provinces or departments with excellent track records in this regard. For example, the Gauteng Department of Health makes efforts to consult citizens in an innovative and systematic manner.

Accountable Public Administration

With the advent of democracy, the Auditor-General, Parliament and the provincial legislatures through the various committees are key institutions charged with the responsibility of promoting accountability in the public service. There is still notable under-spending by some departments.

Departments continue to set over-ambitious targets, with too many objectives, and subsequently often fail to achieve their set objectives. In this regard, there is a need for departments to develop clear, concise and measurable evaluation criteria that will enable them to assess performance in terms of the quality of their service delivery and financial management.

There is a need also for regular and accurate progress reports outlining achievements of set targets and objectives, which are accessible to the public. This way, the public, as citizens and beneficiaries, can hold them accountable for performance and the use of public funds.

Fostering Transparency through Timely, Accessible and Accurate Information

The departmental annual report detailing actual performance against set objectives has created a transparent approach to governance in the public service.

The quality of annual reports has notably improved however there is still room for further improvement in particular with regard to systematically reporting on strategic objective achievements.

However, some departments often neglect to use the expenditure statements as the basis for their reporting. In this regard, there is a need for departments to improve their annual reports to reflect accurately achievements in terms of their performance; these reports should also be timely, accessible and user-friendly to enable the public to understand contents thereof.

Good Human Resource Management and Career Development Practices

Undoubtedly, people are the most valuable asset in any organisation, and the public service is no exception. The development and advancement of human capital should therefore be a top priority.

The State of the Public Service Report notes that very few departments improve their annual reports to reflect accurately achievements in terms of their performance. In this regard, there is a need for departments to systematically report on strategic objective achievements.

However, some departments often neglect to use the expenditure statements as the basis for their reporting. In this regard, there is a need for departments to improve their annual reports to reflect accurately achievements in terms of their performance; these reports should also be timely, accessible and user-friendly.

Conclusion

The State of the Public Service Report gives expression to the extent to which the state participates in the reconstruction in particular here to the South African Public Service.

The public service is in the right track. There is, however, a need to continue to instil in the minds of the public servants that they need to maintain a high standard of professional ethics that depicts a zero tolerance to any form of corruption.

The public service is in need of officials that are professional and responsive to the needs of its citizens, promotes public participation and is accountable to its citizens and transparent in the manner in which it spends public funds.
Bolstering African Public Service

The United Nations General Assembly, through a resolution, designated June 23 as the United Nations Public Service Day to "celebrate the value and virtue of service to the community". In Africa, the First Pan-African Conference of Ministers resolved to institute the day for celebrating "public service" as a means of highlighting the critical role of the public service for development. Africa Public Service Day (APSD) is an annual event celebrated by public servants throughout the continent. It is a day characterised by events that bring public servants together to commemorate the values and virtues of service delivery improvement through initiatives that depict achievements in public service delivery. The APSD is also celebrated in the spirit of intergovernmental relations in Africa to rebuild the continent.

In 2005 the Minister of Public Service and Administration hosted a colloquium that included academics, commentators, policy analysts and government officials. The selected theme for the colloquium was: "The role of the State in the reconstruction of Africa".

The satellite linkage of various APSD venues across the country was used to stimulate debate among government leaders, academics, public servants, students and the public at large on matters that included sound governance, aid and development, continental solidarity, administrative justice and the building of capacity of the African public service.

State of the continent

Most African states are characterised by underdevelopment, poverty, wars and social instability. New initiatives have been taken within the ambit of NEPAD as a way of improving governance and collaboration among member states. Key to these initiatives is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) aimed at assessing the way states are governed. Poor governance has been identified as the main cause of challenges that characterise most African states. Good administrative justice and a capable public service on the continent would contribute towards sound governance.

The state should function as a catalyst...
for change in ensuring economic growth, social inclusion and ensuring moral regeneration. It should be the regulator of different sectors of society to ensure that public service meets the goals of the state.

The unification of different spheres of public service, including state institutions, could be an alternative to facilitate good governance. Those who are responsible for delivering services should do so within the confines of the law and not seek to enrich themselves with the state resources.

Leaders of African countries must be committed to the rule of law, accept accountability for the outcomes of developmental service delivery. The challenge therefore is to develop a leadership culture based on credibility and integrity, respected by society and public servants alike.

This requires that public servants be accountable and do their duties with integrity. They need to show compassion and the services they provide must be competitive so that there is no room for arrogance of the bureaucracy and hiding incompetence behind ideologies.

It is on the basis of a willingness to acquire relevant skills and mastering contemporary technologies that competitiveness in the public sector will be realised.

The combination of compassion and competitiveness will invariably lead to context-relevant customisation, which is a characteristic of good governance and a caring state.

Furthermore, government must encourage whistle blowing. The broader public interacts with public servants and are exposed to the manner in which public servants utilise state resources. By providing a platform with information on identifying corruption, the public will serve as an independent reporter who alerts relevant state institutions to wrongdoing.

Senior public servants must lead by example in managing state resources and curbing corruption. They should encourage public servants to be vigilant in helping to alleviate corruption in their ranks.

**Working in partnership**

Public servants, information and communication technology (ICT) and state infrastructure are the main facilitators of service delivery. Their strengthening will therefore lead to improved access to public services.

Partnerships between states, academic institutions and the private sector could provide means by which a speedy improvement of government capabilities could be achieved. Universities should be responsible for providing knowledge and skill to people who will provide public services. Research in academic institutions should be guided by the actual challenges facing governments and society at large. This research should provide possible solutions that government could take forward.

Programmes to deal with human resource liabilities should be developed by national, provincial and local governments. These programmes may be based on the findings of research relating to gaps in capacity. This will ensure that training is utilised effectively, enabling academic institutions to fulfil their role of actively participating in finding solutions to our developmental goals.

ICT should be used to innovate better processes of delivering public services. E-government enables access to required information, empowering citizens to know where to access services. It also provides government with alternative options to deliver services, reducing current limitations of time and location.

One can say that the current government infrastructure is not user-friendly. Service delivery points are located too far apart from each other. In most cases, the layout of service delivery points does not accommodate the needs of the elderly and the disabled. Alternative means such as mobile services and the amalgamation of services by various departments should be explored.

**Overcoming stumbling blocks**

One of the major challenges facing Africa and its public service in particular is continental solidarity. This is not only important to the internal development of Africa, but it is significant if African countries need to assert their role in international bodies including the United Nations, World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Globalisation is a big challenge and requires innovative ways to be applied. Continental solidarity is one of these. African states should move away from a relationship of dependence on developed countries and build partnerships that make them equal partners.

The recent transformation of regional institutions such as the Organisation of African Union (OAU) and the International Monetary Fund has gone a long way in forging continental solidarity. These institutions could be used to promote democracy, implement good values amongst states in Africa; manage the diversity of culture in Africa and develop trust, build public service capacity of member states; and facilitate benchmarking and sharing of experiences.

The second challenge is the lack of sustainable aid and the slow rate of development in Africa. In 2005, the plight of African countries received attention in the global arena. The commitment of the G8 Countries to help towards realising the UN Millennium Development Goals (halving poverty and underdevelopment in the world by the year 2015) needs to be pursued.
Regional and continental institutions should develop socio-economic plans that are home grown. Indigenous knowledge on the African continent and the Diaspora should be leveraged to produce possible solutions to address continental challenges. Thirdly, public participation of citizens in government initiatives is one of the major challenges. Citizens should be encouraged to participate in government programmes through consultative forums such as Imbizo, Letsema and Lekgotla. The state should balance the sharing of roles and responsibilities among the spheres of the public service by balancing centralisation with decentralisation.

Changes in demand for public services and other environmental factors should influence decisions on whether to centralise or decentralise. The state should be clear of what is expected from it. Lastly, public services are historically characterised by gender imbalances and racial disparities that need to be redressed. In redressing these challenges, issues relating to demographics, gender, disability, age, religion and ethnicity should be taken into consideration. A form of administrative justice is therefore necessary.
Appropriate Leadership Critical to Service Delivery

Occasions such as Africa Public Service Day (APSD) celebrations present us with an opportunity for deep reflection on events and processes in governance. Our main vision and mission is of course to ensure that future needs are met by building historic foundations today.

A comparative analysis of governance practices all over the world presents us with diverse public service functionaries of disparate persuasions. Public service delivery experiences and practices in both the countries of the North and the South are as varied as the challenges themselves.

The countries of the North have often been associated with the best practices in public service delivery, whilst those of the South have traditionally been lackadaisical. But then again, experiences on the ground do contradict this ill-reckoned assumption and generalisation.

Despite the advanced infrastructure in the more developed countries in the North, there are also disturbing reports of poor service delivery emanating from a few dissatisfied citizens in those countries even though not to the extent that we are accustomed to over here.

In the same vein, we do have centres of excellence in service delivery in some countries of the South, despite infrastructural challenges.

A leadership reflection on governance is likely to assist in bringing about clarity and better understanding of this milieu. Only strong leadership will enable us to deliver reformed public services. An appropriate leadership vision for the the Public Service must move away from negative stereotypes of being risk averse and having outdated processes.

Secondly, the vision needs to build on traditional strengths, such as integrity, dedication and responsiveness to events and combine these with new approaches, such as a focus on outcomes, rigorous prioritisation and risk management.

Finally, the new leadership vision must create inspirational, visible leaders, who take personal responsibility for delivering results effectively and swiftly, and are thus able to work in teams which are...
more than the sum of their parts. For these reasons, I am going to concentrate mostly on the theme of leadership.

Nature of leadership

The notion of leadership, for the purpose of this discussion, refers to the execution of the functions of guidance, alignment of people, motivation and inspiration of teams. Everywhere in the world, people are experiencing leadership. This leadership emanates both from politicians and public officials.

Leaders engage in alignment, that is, corrective actions by way of encouraging ethically acceptable behaviours and discouraging those that are not. At all instances, effective leaders must motivate and inspire their teams for the enhancement of performance in the public service. These functions are not the sole province of the political leadership, that is, those from high pedestals of the body politics, but are required of every public servant.

In the past, we have suffered greatly from the practices of public officials whose dealings were not only bereft of any morally desirable attributes but were outright saboteurs. Nevertheless, I am gladdened that today there is evidence of exceptional practices of leadership at both political and administrative levels on the African continent in general and South Africa in particular.

It is therefore proper and fitting that on an occasion like this, we celebrate this kind of leadership that is trail blazing. Take the proverbial phoenix bird rising from the ashes to greater heights, the African continent finds itself in the same direction, as a result of the new emerging leadership that she is experiencing in the Public Service domain.

Building a reputation

While we are not yet a hundred percent there, increasingly, the leadership currently experienced in the Public Service is that of performers who execute their duties without fail or complaint. Today, one state department after the other annually celebrates the role and contributions of these extraordinary men and women of goodwill. Here, I am referring to those agents of change who through their unique ways and approaches, continually transform the behaviours of their colleagues as well as the recipients of public services.

These are the exceptional cases of men and women who have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate their passion for the results. At times, these brave men and women are found to be increasing the workload in their stations. The Limpopo police services and the North Rand police units have recently won awards for demonstrating the kind of leadership that I am talking about here.

I want to cite another example. Mhluwi High School in the far northern parts of the Limpopo province has equally demonstrated remarkable leadership in service delivery and quality output year in year out.

The institutions cited, and many others, are found to be ahead in terms of finding innovative ways of improving on their performances. Rather than focus on problems, they prefer to build on the brighter spots in the gloom.

Take the case of Mhluwi, the school's infrastructure is typical of what one can find in any rural area, but the leadership that comes out of that school is the envy from the ashes to greater heights, the African continent finds itself in the same direction, as a result of the new emerging leadership that she is experiencing in the Public Service domain.

In the past, we have suffered greatly from the practices of public officials whose dealings were not only bereft of any morally desirable attributes but were outright saboteurs.

In so much as we celebrate the role of the abovementioned stars of the public service, we equally need to promote leadership by way of recognising such behaviours as part of our retention strategy.

Second, their needs will change and we must respond to social and technological developments with speed and flexibility to meet those changes. And third, how people expect their services to be delivered will also change as new delivery channels and systems become integrated ways of everyday life, so we must move with the times.

And we will need to deliver continually improving services to meet those expectations.

While looking ahead can be a difficult business, there are a few things we can predict with certainty. First, people's aspirations will go on rising and this is a positive and healthy sign. This is a sign of a dynamic society. A society that constantly wants to see situations improving, is a dynamic society. Raising expectations is an absolute characteristic of our time.

What the public admires in these officials is their ability to work with people. They are said to be instinctively respectful of both clients and colleagues. They are also visionary.

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And we will need to deliver continually improving services to meet those expectations.

Second, their needs will change and we must respond to social and technological developments with speed and flexibility to meet those changes. And third, how people expect their services to be delivered will also change as new delivery channels and systems become integrated ways of everyday life, so we must move with the times.

In so much as we celebrate the role of the abovementioned stars of the public service, we equally need to promote leadership by way of recognising such behaviours as part of our retention strategy.

We need to make use of multiple leadership strategies to acknowledge such people for both retention and sustenance of performance. Once we do this, then those few rotten eggs, those who only bring negative performances to the work place, will be so isolated that they will simply take a walk or risk being dismissed.

Our challenge is to build a public service that can match the renaissance project and its attendant challenges.
How to make the Integrated Justice System Sustainable

My focus here is on partnerships between business and the public service. I just want to talk about Business Against Crime. It can be summarised in the words of the former President, Nelson Mandela, when he said, “business should make a valuable contribution in supporting government in combating crime and the causes of crime by the transfer of knowledge and development of skills and capacities through a public and private partnership.” That actually gave birth to Business Against Crime.

Background to the Integrated Justice System

Business Against Crime was created in 1996 as a non-profit organisation funded by business sector donations. It operates in six provinces. The upsurge in criminal activities, especially organised crime, had given birth to the Integrated Justice System (IJS).

The criminal justice system was broken and was not responding to the needs of the new democracy. There was little or no management of information, lack of people skills, lack of technology, and there was no integration at all.

One of the major problems facing the ministers responsible for the justice system was the poor quality and paucity of performance in information at all stages. And when we talk about the justice system, it includes four ministries — Justice, Correctional Services, Social Development, and Safety and Security. Some people might be wondering why you have social development as part of the justice system. Simple: people commit crime...
because of the circumstances that they find themselves in and social development is part of that.

It has to be noted that there is a gap between the number of criminal cases being processed by the courts, and those which have been reported. This means that within the court process itself there is a disjuncture. The two processes are not working as efficiently as they should do. Crimes that were reported per month, were also increasing but not at a very high rate.

National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS)

The IJS was conceptualised within the national crime prevention strategy and approved by Cabinet in 1996. The National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) developed to improve the impact of the criminal justice system in both punishing offender and deterring those who were contemplating criminal offences. The NCPS set out to re-engineer the criminal justice system by looking at the elements of people, technology and processes to achieve specific outcomes.

In terms of the NCPS, they wanted to change the paradigm within which officials work. This meant teaching people that when there is talk about integrated justice system, they should not see it as an IT issue. There are still a number of people who work in those departments that are part of the criminal justice system, who, when you talk about the integrated justice system all they will say is, “no, there is no IT system in place, and so on” whereas this is about changing the paradigm on how people work.

Change the culture to one which was more strategic and cooperative. And change the business processes to streamline them and recognise the enterprise nature of many aspects of the criminal justice system.

The Integrated US Initiative

The issue of integration around the 1980s became a buzzword in governments around the world and it carried on in the 1990s. But the meaning and the benefits were often unclear. At that time it meant different things to different people. This case will explain what the concept means in the context of the South African criminal justice system. It is the creation of the integrated justice system which means the recognition that the criminal justice process is an enterprise.

The timely and efficient sharing of information between the various role players in the system is significant. And the development of cooperation to ensure that the handover of people and sharing were smooth.

That integration was intended to deliver improved data quality, and more accurate and reliable information available in the system, reducing duplication of work, improved sharing of information by the role players in the system, and the ability to track cases of accused persons through the system.

That is because there are cases where you find that there are people who have been described as the most wanted and dangerous prisoners. But because of poor information co-ordination, you find that the person you are looking for outside is already in jail.

There is a case where a guy was convicted and went to jail. He was released and went back to jail again and released. But he was still wanted by the police. When they caught him for the other offence which they wanted him for they asked him, “Where were you all this time?” They wanted to charge him for running away from the law. So he said, “I was in prison.” So these are real issues.

The IJS aims to trace the complete life cycle of a criminal case throughout all its stages, involving different government departments, as I indicated. It seeks to achieve a greater output of cases throughout the system thus reducing backlogs, fewer withdrawals of charges and prosecution, fewer postponements of hearings in courts, lost fines, reduced numbers of prisoners awaiting trial and high conviction rate. Better prioritisation of cases involving young offenders, sexual offences and priority crimes was also to be achieved.

BAC’s Intervention

One of the first activities of BAC when they were brought into the picture in the IJS was to assist in diagnosing problems within the criminal justice system, and also suggest solutions. The analysis
Case Study

which was done by BAC shows that there were blockages in the flow of cases through the system. Most of the blockages occurred at interfaces, when we have to hand over from the police going into prosecution side. That is where things went wrong.

Within the NCPS the Cabinet established a Committee of Ministers who met monthly. These Ministers were from Safety and Security, Justice, Correctional Services, Social Development, Intelligence and Home Affairs with SARS and Defence attending from time to time. This committee was supported by Directors-General of various departments. This Committee of Ministers appointed what they called the User Board for Integrated Justice System. It included senior representatives of key government departments. It consisted of senior managers, the deputy director-generals and they reported directly to the NCPS Ministers Committee.

The User Board then asked BAC to provide high level project managers to assist in the Board, who were all full-time senior government employees. And the BAC brief was to provide to government business skills and IT.

The BAC support in the strategy was to lift performance and capacity within government departments and guide the process strategically while focusing on the transfer of skills to the departmental officials. And once the skills level came to a satisfactory point, BAC would start to withdraw leaving the project in the hands of government.

In 1997, the User Board with the support of the project office drafted the tender document and appointed the contractor to deliver the initial design of the new streamlined justice system for the country. In preparation for this, they had to go out and do benchmark comparisons with other countries who implemented similar projects in the USA, Canada and the United Kingdom. This visit pointed a number of risks and key success factors.

The Work of Mulweli Consortium

There was a realised need for a study of the business process and the information flow in criminal justice system. A tender was advertised for this purpose, now referred to as the SD Study. The objectives included establishing current practices and to define and integrate the justice system — what is it that we want to see in the criminal justice system? The study also had to develop a plan from where the system was to where it should be.

A consortium called Mulweli was appointed to carry out this work. They developed a detailed map of the business process in the criminal justice system. For the first time this information was available and very clear to everyone. The analysis of the current status which found that the criminal justice system was not as effective and not a deterrent of crime. There were a high number of undetected cases, high rate of case withdrawal, low percentage of cases reaching conclusion, a very low conviction rate and low public confidence in the justice system.

In the period between and after the Mulweli process over 1 200 government officials from all four aforementioned departments participated in 130 interactive workshops facilitated by the IJS Project office. In those workshops, they identified some of the problems such as the lack of functional and business integration, lack of team work and team training, no common positive identification systems, no timely access to criminal history records, no timely notification of events within the system, and poor use of technology. And that the architecture of the IJS in the proposal was to be built through six cross-cutting enterprise level projects.

This is what was projected as the IJS architecture, which in support of business of the criminal justice system.

The State of Technology Agency (SITA)

It became apparent that in proposing improvements in the criminal justice system, it was not possible to do so without the provision of basic IT infrastructure in all the departments. The government provided funds for four of the fast track projects in 1998/2000 financial year. These were launched on 1 August 1999. Then in 1999 there were elections which meant that new ministers were coming. These ministers had to re-look at the criminal justice process within the IJS. National Treasury commissioned a study by independent international consultants who actually revised the plans that were in place.

The National Treasury then made provisions for funding of the entire project in the government medium-term expenditure framework. The proposal was that implementation should be at a slower rate than what was envisioned.

The new approach and the reduced funding generated a second version of the IJS model. It was just a permeation, just to adjust it in order to make sure that it uses what is available in terms of funding.

Dealing with Crisis: Awaiting Trial Prisoners

During this period, there was a major crisis in terms of awaiting trial prisoners. The number was increasing and the Minister then said, “We need to look into this issue of the awaiting trial prisoners. We have this ideal process taking place, but still we have a number of awaiting trial prisoners increasing.”

So they asked the team to actually focus on the reduction of the awaiting trial prisoners. The Awaiting Trial Prisoners Project was launched in Port Elizabeth, and later in several other places. The main objective of the project was to reduce the number of the awaiting trial prisoners detained in prisons by expediting those awaiting trial prisoners, and also revisiting the bail conditions of petty offenders who could the bail for small amounts.

Although this was crisis driven, it actually identified bottle necks in the criminal justice system. That resulted in a number of programmes being implemented.

In 2000 that is when BAC started reducing its involvement. There were some tensions in the process, between IJS projects and the government department. That tension was managed and the IJS Project office which was developed into the IJS Support Programme was estab-
lished to manage these tensions. Business Trust was approached to fund that project office because it is very important that you have a proper administration structure if you are dealing with a project of this nature.

At this stage there was an overall shift of attention to the court service business unit, because what has been identified in the Awaiting Trial Prisoners Project was that there were major bottlenecks within the court system. People would get arrested, but it would take years for them to be brought to court. That became a focus in terms of systems improvement.

Implementation

The Justice Department through this process actually organises itself into business units. The unit responsible for court services was established which recognises the urgency in resolving the bottlenecks in the court system and identify semi-automated interim solutions to provide the court simple computer-based case management systems. This concept was piloted at Witbank with Middelburg Magistrate offices from February 2001. And the courts services established a national implementation team to conduct data checks and train the users. In terms of this process, the project provided very good results which were subsequently implemented in 46 District Courts. And for now, court centres are models of integrated justice system in practice.

Initially, technology was not seen as an issue because this was a short-term solution without the technology which supports it. As I indicated, the early process was to focus on re-engineering the people and processes in court. And then afterwards the issue of technology is going to be added.

There is another project which is being implemented in courts, called the Integrated Court Management Model. It focuses on service delivery improvement in court. It actually separates the functions of adjudicating officers — magistrates, prosecutors, judges — from the day to day administration of the court. In most courts the magistrate becomes the head of that court and he is responsible for everything, hiring employees, financial issues and not focusing on their line function. This has resulted in improved collaboration at local courts and civil service level agreements, between stakeholders to ensure improved court performance. This model was piloted in Johannesburg and the Durban courts and later it was extended to the whole of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng by means of a joint programme of the Department of Justice, US AID and BAC which we call the Criminal Justice Support Programme.

The Current Status of the IJS

I want to close by identifying the achievements and what we have learned out of this process. Some of the achievements to date are the conceptualisation and major progress in the implementation of integrated justice system. The business requirements for the criminal justice systems were mapped out, understood and confirmed by all of the role players. In terms of the clusters of government that have been established, a lot of lessons came out of the integrated justice system programme. The issue of the traditional relationship between the criminal justice system and the role players began to give way to the collective recognition of responsibility. That is not only the responsibility of the police; all those departments are actually responsible.

The focus on the results within the management of the integrated justice system value chain has resulted in the dream of measurable performance indicators. Now you can go and ask, “What is the rate? How many people are we convicting?” We can now measure that.

The success of the partnership, the establishment of cooperation and buying in amongst departments which previously worked in silos, would not have happened if we did not have partnership with BAC. The partnership was able to bypass potential opposition by simplifying very complex processes into simpler projects which achieved support by generating understanding and results.

The influence of the project has become pervasive in the way that the Department of Justice, the South African Police Service and Correctional Services think today about the criminal justice system. The influence of the project has become pervasive in the way that the Department of Justice, the South African Police Service and Correctional Services think today about the criminal justice system.

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The influence of the project has become pervasive in the way that the Department of Justice, the South African Police Service and Correctional Services think today about the criminal justice system. In terms of the clusters of government the issue of the credibility and prestige of people you bring in terms of a project like this is essential. Government officials are very suspicious of people who come from outside because they think they come there to identify their inefficiencies. They always question why certain people are interested in helping and forget that this “country belongs to all who live in it”. We have to work together to ensure that it succeeds. Whether you are in government or civil society, jointly we can make this country work.
A n interest for developing a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system has been gaining momentum across all levels of government as a result of the need to increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

Some of the interest in M&E stems from government’s wish to be perceived as operating in a business-like manner, which has the effect of bolstering public confidence in government’s ability to deliver services.

The flipside to this is that manipulating M&E as a kind of ceremonial activity with ritual significance could easily create a perception that M&E has less to do with the actual performance but is more about maintaining appearances and validating an organisation.

To manage potential public cynicism of M&E initiatives, which still requires a lot of nursing, it is important to ensure that M&E systems provide useful information to their users because simply using M&E systems for ceremonial or symbolic reasons produces little, if any, gains in efficiency and effectiveness of government services.

An underhanded attempt to manipulate perceptions could easily backfire, resulting in long-term negative effects on people’s trust and confidence in government.

**Overview of the IDPNC project**

Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG), the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) are the main stakeholders responsible for the national implementation of the IDP Nerve Centre (IDPNC) information system.

The IDPNC is essentially an information portal containing applications for capturing data, management and reporting, planning, donor databases and programme and project management related information.

It is located at www.idp.org.za and currently has 1 000 registered users drawn from both local and international the
public and the private sectors.

Although the site has different functional areas and applications, it is designed in such a way that it looks and operates the same throughout.

The primary purpose of this web-based system is to enable multiple organisations involved in municipal service delivery to capture, maintain and support their respective strategic priorities, resource allocations and programme implementation over a multi-year period in a consistent manner. This prevents misunderstanding as a result of varied interpretations amongst participating stakeholders.

Its strategic importance lies with the fact that the IDPNC system will, once fully rolled out, be useful in promoting and facilitating intergovernmental planning and service provision in terms of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Bill (supporting the establishment of a system of Intergovernmental and Service Delivery Protocols) while assisting with the alignment between Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Provincial Growth Development Strategies (PGDS) and the National Spatial Development Programme (NSDP).

The system is up and running in the North West province. It is currently being integrated into the provincial M&E systems of Mpumalanga and the Western Cape. Implementation of the IDPNC in the remaining provinces should be completed by March 2006.

The North West Experience

Buy-in and Communication

Due to the fact that the North West province was where the system was first piloted, it should not in hindsight come as a surprise that there was not enough information about the IDPNC.

The lack of information on the system brought about a range of challenges such as disjointed buy-ins that led to weak cross-cutting organisational support and acceptance and failure to understand the strengths and limitations of the IDPNC system.

In addition to the almost non-existent communication strategy during the inception stage of the IDPNC in the North West province, implementation was further complicated by the inability to quantify the impact the project might have on already stretched municipal or departmental human resources.

Information Requirement

Target organisations had disparate information regimes as a result of different information definitions and standards to those required by the IDPNC.

Process, Roles and Responsibilities

Implementation without the corresponding processes to sustain the capturing, maintenance and use of the IDPNC also presented a serious challenge. There was no single champion or dedicated driver to facilitate participation in the process across the municipality or department. This resulted in the IDPNC not being the first point of call for capturing and maintaining IDP information.

Capacity, Systems and Infrastructure

Computer illiteracy coupled with lack of e-mail and general Internet infrastructure posed the greatest challenge to the operation of the IDP Nerve Centre. And although municipalities operated similar systems, connecting these was not financially viable.

Miscellaneous

The IDPNC sometimes generated unrealistic information expectations across government, for example requests from organisations to add data field to the IDPNC that are unrealistic to maintain.

An even more discouraging trend was failure by participating stakeholders to use the IDPNC information output effectively, which tended to defeat the primary purpose of the initiative.

In conclusion

Lessons learnt thus far in terms of experiences from the North West IDPNC are basically an inverse of the challenges that faced the initiative particularly at its inception stage.

It is important to define the purpose of an M&E system from the onset. At times there is a tendency to substitute M&E systems suitable for service delivery improvement with government policy-making activities. In the same breath, it is also critical to clearly understand the role of IT in service delivery as this often leads to a dangerous assumption that merely setting up project management systems and databases equals monitoring and evaluation.

Because the primary objective of an M&E system is essentially about measuring performance and targets, it is highly dependent on quality information input with clearly identified sources and mechanisms to ensure credible measurement of progress at different intervals.

This, however, should not imply that output and the use of IDPNC information are less important than information input and maintenance.

Perhaps the biggest challenge in terms of monitoring and evaluation systems such as the IDPNC lies with the ability to consolidate the nature of reports from diverse stakeholders that depends on the availability of dedicated human resources.
A quick background in terms of the social security programme, covering what it is and what it entails will assist in informing our approaches to a number of challenges that confront us. This presentation will also deal with the country’s service delivery context at a very high level and across all public service delivery institutions. It will also define those challenges by looking at the capabilities and limitations of the current service delivery models.

Finally, the presentation will put up a set of social security proposals that SASSA hopes will provoke some discussions, and ultimately enrich the social security delivery process.

Significant gains

The thrust of South Africa’s policy is geared towards alleviating the plight of the poorest of the poor in society through the national social security programme that currently covers close to 20% of the population or over 9.8 million South Africans. This includes, when unpacking the numbers, 2.2 million people who receive old age grant pensions; 1.2 people who now have access to disability pensions and over six million children who get child support grants.

According to most studies conducted by government and independent research institutions, about 40% of South Africans would be poor and destitute were it not for the intervention of the social security programme. It is, for this reason, very important to acknowledge and note some of the significant gains thus far. For example, in 1994 we had almost two million beneficiaries, compared to the current 9.8 million people, which is almost three and a half times more.

Harsh terrain

As already indicated above, the programme has, without any doubt, opened up access to social security service to millions of people who previously fell outside the net. However, recognising these challenges also puts on a responsibility to recognise some of the current and future challenges in terms of the delivery of social grants.

The geographical spread of the country’s population, particularly in largely rural provinces like KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, is clearly among the challenges to the delivery of social security services. This also affects all other government service delivery efforts because the terrain is not what could be regarded as “First World” in nature and thus poses different and particular challenges.

Skills deficit

The dearth of critical and appropriate skills ranks as the second most important challenge for the social security system and programme. This has to be understood in the context that social security is a business.
It operates more like a bank, to be precise. Like a bank, it distributes cash to the millions of beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries, and yet we do not have the skills that are close to what an average bank has. Furthermore, there is also the issue of competition for the limited supply of skills. In many instances we are unable to recruit or retain the kind of skills that are essential to our business due to the peculiarities of our operations that place particular limitations.

**Fragmented effort**

Next in terms of the list of challenges that affects the social security delivery machine actually lie within the institutional arrangements within the system itself. This largely manifests itself clearly in terms of fragmentation in the system's government institutions.

In the current arrangement, for instance, the national department sets up policy, and the nine provincial departments are responsible for its implementation. As each of the nine provincial departments has their own databases and different sets of skills and implementa
tion, this results in the fragmentation of efforts, duplications and disparities in the realisation of this constitutionally guaranteed right to social security.

For example, grant payout transaction costs vary across the provinces and their respective agencies. So you find that a service provider in the Free State charging R40 per transaction, compared to R28 per transaction charged in Mpumalanga — and you ask yourself why?

The lack of uniformity across the provinces, coupled with inefficient processes, poor management that often fail to draw many deserving potential beneficiaries into the social security net, lends itself to litigation cases that we currently face. And so you find a situation where government does actually make contact with the people, but putting the worst performers in that environment. As a result, people do not understand the rules. This results in a lot of obvious mistakes and opens up the system to fraud and corruption.

**Business model**

I think at the heart of this problem is the quality of service delivery to the beneficiaries. In trying to grapple with this challenge, we have to look at the whole value chain. In other words, investigate our capacity weaknesses.

Over and above this, we also need to ask what are the systems that we should put in place in order to ensure that we have a better institution?

But first, we have to understand the value chain in terms of the disbursement of social security grants. People come in and apply. Their grants are approved, they are paid and then there is a review process.

This is a simple value chain, which incorporates a number of services — corporate services, finance, information technology, and strategy and business development — all designed to ensure the efficient delivery of the country's social security system.

As already noted, fragmentation across the three spheres of government is certainly an issue that has to be urgently addressed. Coupled with the challenges of fragmentation is the matter of capability constraints that stand on the way of creating an effective and efficient social security system.

The first issue that requires urgent attention, as I have already stated, is the fragmented institutional structure at the national and the provincial level, as well as the associated discrepancies. The second issue that the agency is prioritising relates to the business processes, while the third area relates to the corporate functions that support the issues within that value chain. This, at the conceptual level, gives a clearer sense of how to ensure that the agency and the social security system become customer-centred.

The strategic imperative to be more customer-centred is dependent on alignment with business processes and systems that have to do with the process of application, the delivery mechanism, the review and maintenance of beneficiaries, and also the support services that are all underpinned by performance management.

**SASSA service delivery model**

What is the agency doing to address some of the challenges and constraints raised throughout this presentation? The first line of call in terms of addressing the multitude of challenges that we face lies with the establishment of a public entity or the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) that will co-ordinate social security delivery across the country.

Although this independent agency will be removed from government or departmental policies, it will directly report to the Minister. It is envisaged is that the agency will have provincial, regional and district offices as well as a central head office either in Pretoria or elsewhere.

Perhaps the most significant benefit of the move towards the establishment of the agency and adopting the proposed service delivery model is that it provides clear lines of accountability. Instead of talking to nine provincial and national departments it will talk to one institution that is solely held accountable when things go wrong.

The establishments of a specialised agency makes it possible for us to focus on the core business of grant and benefit administration. It is also useful in terms of assisting us to understand what we are trying to do especially in terms of the strategic imperatives as outlined by the President in his State of the Nation Address in 2002. Let me just quote what the President said: “The government is working towards the creation of an integrated security system to improve the quality of social standing and to enhance its positive impact on those in societies who are in need.” The President further said, “Among the objectives we are pursuing, include improving management, financial accountability, and service delivery.”

These are the strategic imperatives that inform the development and the establishment of the social security agency. Indeed, as the Minister has said, the agency must make a difference because the expectations are high. And we need to ensure that the poor in our society are the beneficiaries.
This article provides a discussion on the mobile and wireless technologies demonstrator projects that State Information Technology Agency’s Research and Development (SITA R&D) unit and the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) have initiated and are implementing at two citizen-centred government departments. Some key aspects regarding the pilot projects are discussed. Their impact on service delivery and some lessons learned — including challenges experienced — from the implementation thereof are also looked at.

In June 2003, the CPSI, SITA R&D and the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research’s (CSIR) Meraka Institute published a collaborative research for the FutureWatch report entitled “Government Unplugged: Mobile and Wireless Technologies in the Public Sector”. This report and many other research publications provide strong evidence that mobile technologies could be instrumental in addressing slow response rates of government to citizen requests, poor access to services, particularly in under-serviced rural areas, and limited ability of citizens to provide feedback on services to government, as well as raising other issues of concern.

SITA R&D, in partnership with CPSI and CSIR Meraka Institute, has embarked on an unprecedented number of pilot projects involving mobile and wireless technologies. The aim of these projects is to demonstrate the feasibility and value of mobile and wireless technologies as enablers in government service provision.

The pilot projects have specific focus on citizen-centric departments and, as a result, the Departments of Health and Home Affairs have been chosen as “test beds”.

The main objectives of the projects are to:
• promote easy access to government services through the use of mobile and wireless technologies and thus provide alternative access channels to e-government;
• increase productivity for public service back-office operations;
• reduce costs by utilising existing hardware and infrastructure;
• provide information and querying facility for government services to the citizen, thereby promoting e-trans-
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Governance and e-democracy; and
• test the applicability of Human Language Technologies (HLT) in facilitating the above services for the visually impaired and illiterate citizens.

Rationale for Mobile and Wireless Technologies

Mobile and wireless technologies have become almost pervasive in recent times. Global surveys show that the mobile phone penetration is significantly higher than that of computers. In South Africa, the number of mobile phone units was estimated at 14 million in 2003.

Also given the increasing nature of the mobile worker, as well as the government's resolve to implement e-government, mobile government, is seen more as a complement — rather than a substitute — of e-government.

Some of the specific rationale for mobile and wireless technologies deployment can be attributed to a number of factors. These include the fact that mobile devices and networks can become alternative delivery mechanisms for e-government, especially in view of the low penetration of computers and internet among the population.

The mobile technology infrastructure, it can be added, is generally readily available and thus there is little or no need to invest in hardware. Perhaps more important is that the majority of the citizens, especially in rural and poor communities, lack land line connectivity due to telecoms operators' reluctance to deploy the infrastructure in those areas.

Most citizens are familiar with most functionalities and services that come with cell phones, e.g. Short Message Service (SMS) is a popular means of communication. Network coverage by the three mobile operators — MTN, Vodacom and Cell C — has widened significantly over recent years. Mobile platforms and standards continue to mature rapidly to enable broadband connectivity and voice/data convergence, e.g. GPRS, 3G, EDGE, etc.

An Overview of Pilot Projects

In providing an overview of the pilot projects that have been undertaken, I focus on two government departments: the Department of Health and Home Affairs.

On the former, two pilot projects were commissioned and implemented. The first project is called Dokoza. This is an innovative, cost-effective, and real-time interactive system. It was intended to fast-track critical services to the national healthcare sector. This system is developed for possible use initially in HIV/AIDS, e.g. Short Message Service (SMS) is a popular means of communication. Network coverage by the three mobile operators — MTN, Vodacom and Cell C — has widened significantly over recent years. Mobile platforms and standards continue to mature rapidly to enable broadband connectivity and voice/data convergence, e.g. GPRS, 3G, EDGE, etc.

The Dokoza system has been piloted at Johannesburg General Hospital and...

Government IT House of Values

Lowered Costs

Increased Productivity

Security

Interoperability

Reducing Duplication

Economics of Scale

BEE Enablers

Architecture
Helen Joseph Hospital in Gauteng province and it involves the use of mobile phones for data and transaction exchange for medical services and has the following functionalities: patient registration; to obtain patient history; to obtain blood test results from the National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS); and, lastly, to enable health practitioners to check prescriptions against nationally determined protocols.

The second pilot project is called AccessHealth. The project focuses on the implementation of a mobile application solution aimed at improving public access to healthcare services, as well as providing local clinics and district hospitals with more efficient and effective patient referral system. It therefore seeks to improve the quality of healthcare services provided to the public.

AccessHealth is piloted at Brits District Hospital and its feeder clinics in Northwest province. It involves the use of “smart cell phones” and PDAs and provides a range of functionalities. The first of these is the registering of the first time patients and scheduling appointment with the available doctor at the district hospital. Secondly, it provides an interface with the Patient Administration and Billing (PAAB) system through a simple application deployed on the PDA or smart phone. Thirdly, it provide for a search facility for patients records whose records already exist on the PAAB database. Lastly, it is a tool to remind the patient for the next appointment a day before the actual appointment via SMS.

The Department of Home Affairs has also started two pilot projects. The first of these is called the SMS Querying and Notification Facility. This system was piloted at the National Department of Home Affairs. It provides for a 24 hours a day and seven days a week service whereby the citizens will be able to, firstly, track the status of an application for an identity document, passport and unabridged certificate; secondly to get SMS notification when the documents are ready for collection; and, lastly, check marital status via SMS.

The second pilot project undertaken by the Department of Home Affairs in called Using Mobile Technology to Support ID and Passport Application Process. This project is being piloted at the Pretoria Regional Office of Home Affairs. The system uses both Unstructured Suplementary Services Data (USSD) and SMS to provide for, firstly, an information dissemination service in respect of location of nearest Home Affairs offices; secondly, office hours, application processes, size of photos and documentation needed; thirdly, a scheduling/queueing facility to enable citizens to book available dates and time slots to streamline the application process; fourthly, an alerting service to notify citizens when their documents are ready for collection; and lastly, to provide a system that will enable illiterate and visually impaired citizens to make use of the alerting service through a voice mail, in a language of their choice.

**Impact on Service**

**Delivery and Benefits**

All the functionalities described in the pilot systems have positive bearing on two critical elements with regards to service delivery: front-office applications (enhancing service delivery) and back-office applications (improving efficiency and quality of internal operations).

There is a range of benefits that the pilot projects bring. Firstly, the productivity of public service personnel is increased. The reduction of administrative burden of paperwork by being able to register patients and get blood test results on the cell phone, the laborous effort of searching and updating patient records in paper-based files is minimised, thus enabling health practitioners to concentrate on their core function, i.e. care for the patient.

Secondly, the effectiveness of the public service personnel is also increased. Scheduled appointments for the district hospital and rural clinics mean that health workers can better plan for the patients coming on a particular day. Also, being able to get blood test result almost in real-time, anywhere and anytime allows for quicker health care service since the health practitioner does not have to wait for the results to be delivered, sometimes in a matter of days or even weeks, before taking necessary actions to help the patient.

Thirdly, duplication is reduced. Accessing patient records through a mobile device means that the patient movements can be tracked and monitored effectively. This implies that a patient cannot show up at one hospital one day, and then go to another hospital the next day for the same condition and receiving the same medication. This has the potential to save government a lot of money.

Fourthly, it is convenient for citizens. This is evidenced by the provision of SMS reminders for taking medication, scheduled appointment and alerts and notifications regarding identity documents and passports documents application status, thereby reducing unnecessary long queues at government offices. Furthermore, the provision of voice mail notification and alerts for visually impaired and illiterate citizens, in a language of their choice, renders an convenient and effective way for the citizen to access government services.

Lastly, it narrows the digital divide. Delivering government information and services on the palm of the citizen addresses the problems of digital divide to a greater extent. The majority of the citizens will now be able to access and receive government services on mobile phones, something unheard of in the not-so-distant past, due to the lack of computer and internet facilities.

**Lessons Learned**

The implementation of these pilot projects brought along a wealth of lessons that could be useful when planning for post-pilot implementation. Significant here is the fact that mobile devices offer the public servant increased access to critical information that would not normally be possible because of lack of ICT infrastructural access to most public servants, especially those in the coalface of service delivery.

Furthermore, the health workers, despite reservations with the use of the more sophisticated PDAs, received the
systems favourably. One should also state that the use of open standards and open source software provided for seamless integration with the existing legacy systems, which proved that adoption of these technologies in the future, might not pose much problems.

It was also discovered that the quality of data interaction was questionable initially due to the size and functional limitations of most mobile devices. However, this was adequately addressed by the fact that only critical data elements could be captured and uploaded and some of the systems are complemented by fax and web interface for more detailed data sets, as is the case with Dokoz.

In terms of data integrity, some systems, e.g., AccessHealth, are designed in such a way that the data record received from the clinics is stored in a temporary table until the administrator at the district hospital verifies it when the patient arrives. This verified data is then integrated into the permanent database.

Lastly, the use of simple command structures for SMS and menu-driven USSD systems provide for user-friendly interface and this made the technology uptake much easier as evidenced by Dokoz, SMS Query and Notification System, as well as the USSD/SMS based Information and Alert Systems for Passport and ID applications.

However, AccessHealth has more conventional computer interface by virtue of its usage of PDAs. This initially posed some problems with the user acceptance, especially those with minimal computer literacy. Nonetheless, users became more and more comfortable with the devices as training progressed.

This lesson provided the project team with a very important lesson that the training for systems that are deployed on PDAs require more time than those that use normal cell phones.

Challenges encountered

Over and above the lessons learned from these pilots, some challenges that were experienced during the pilot projects roll-out. The first of these was the issue of security. Security remains the most crucial issue relating to the use of mobile phones and PDAs. As these devices are more personalised than the normal PCs, system and physical security remains a big challenge.

In the case of systems for internal processes, e.g., Dokoz and AccessHealth, maximum care has been taken to ensure that access to the system is controlled by user authentication and authorisation provided through passwords. Over and above passwords, some systems also provide for an audit trail functionality that ensures better administration of the systems.

Another issue regarding security lies with the external facing services like the SMS and USSD-based systems for marital status and passport application query and notification services at Home Affairs. The contentious issue here relates to the potential abuse of the service by bogus agents who might try to cash in on the unsuspecting citizens.

This will be mitigated by vigorous awareness campaigns once the systems are ready for full implementation.

The other challenge is around the issue of data intake. The limited data intake provided by the mobile devices means that the user cannot capture and upload as much data sets as it would be possible with conventional computer systems such as desktops and laptops. This is, however, mitigated by the fact that all the systems can allow for only critical data that is necessary for sufficient information to be processed.

The last significant challenge involves the buy-in by top management. Top management buy-in has also been established as one of the critical success factors for the pilot projects. Some of the projects have experienced significant delays due to the fact that top management and other important stakeholders were not taken on board early enough to achieve sustainable support for the entire pilot project life-cycles.

Obtaining top management buy-in and doing thorough stakeholder analysis during the initial stages of project conceptualisation is critical for the successful implementation of the pilots.

Conclusion

It is abundantly clear that mobile and wireless technologies are ready for deployment. The value-adding that these technologies can bring in enhancing government service delivery cannot be overemphasised. As shown by Gartner Hype Cycle of 2002, the technology has almost reached maturity status now and what remains is for all stakeholders to continue to seek best innovative ways in order to ensure that the application of these technologies provide the opportunity for government to reach even the under-serviced citizens, thereby helping to narrow the digital divide.

The pilot projects discussed above have proven to be in line with the objectives of the South African Government IT House of Values, namely; citizen convenience (as espoused by the Batho-Pele principles), cost reduction and increased productivity. While acknowledging the challenges and problems that continue to plague these pilots, it is hoped that the lessons learned will help pave a smooth way for the development and ultimate implementation of the m-government strategy that will benefit not only the test beds departments, but the whole of government.
This article will tackle a number of issues that are at the core of innovations that our government has embarked upon in an attempt to improve service delivery. Over the last ten years we have made considerable progress in trying to give people access to resources and services they rightly deserve.

For example, statistics show that the number of identity documents issued by the Department of Home Affairs has increased three-fold over that period, which is quite an achievement considering the department’s existing staff and other constraints.

Novel ways of broadening access

The over-arching Integrated Service Delivery framework continues to play a crucial role in broadening access to services through instruments such as Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) and other forms of one-stop service centres. The Community Development Workers (CDWs) programme further enhances the process of broadening access to services.

A number of government departments have implemented mobile services units to reach communities in isolated rural areas who have trouble getting to service points. Moreover more and more government departments now have online services that help expedite service delivery processes.

There are still problems, though, as not many people have access to the internet. The Post Office is also playing a sterling role in expediting the process of providing social grants in provinces.

Defining services

Services can be defined in a number of ways. We have those basic services such as water, sanitation, housing and so on that are based on infrastructure requirement and performance. Then there are services of an administrative nature such as applications for identity documents and social grants and the registration of businesses.

Then we have financial services, both from citizens to government and from government to citizens in the form of Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) payments and different types of grants our people rely on to sustain themselves and their families.

Perhaps the most type of services, which I call the advisory support and other services, are primarily about interacting with people, for example, victims of domestic violence. Also falling under
this category are business advisory services for setting up a business. Prosecution can also be regarded as a service because people also get a service by going to prison for doing what they are not supposed to do. So it is important to understand the different types of services. It is important to understand that these services interact with each other.

Service access challenges

Despite the considerable effort thus far there are still a number of challenges to broadening access to services through integration. Some of the key challenges we confront in this regard include: how do we bring down the cost of telecommunication services? How do we ensure that we get those telecommunication services to rural areas?

Hopefully we can solve the problems that came about around the basic issues of connectivity.

In addition, connectivity related issues also come with their own huge challenges that we need to be talking about and tackle.

Government has made strides in terms of integrated service delivery, as some of the examples cited earlier illustrate. However, the integration of services now has to go to another level that begins with a more close alignment of business processes and practices across the public sector. For example, an online ID application for replacing lost documents without the person necessarily going to Home Affairs.

Finally, we need to make more rational choices on the channels that are most appropriate because there are costs and benefits to every delivery programme, for example, exploiting online services as opposed to employing more community development workers. We in fact do not have a framework to integrate these kinds of trade-offs and maximise our ability to get service delivery to the people.

Multi-channeled Services

Internationally there is an increasing focus on providing multi-channeled access to services. I am talking about those services that are not of a basic need nature. These include a range of mechanisms, from face to face, on-line transactions to telephony and so forth. International experience indicates that a combination of these channels works best because people have different preferences.

Some like to talk over telephone and some may prefer going on-line and all these preferences should be catered for where feasible. The channels must however be aligned to each other.

As citizens get more sophisticated, they want to know that “this government department knows that I am qualifying for pension already, so I should get it with other range of services”. Citizens want to know if government has an interest in them as human beings not as just service consumers. This kind of service provision is reflected in international trends from as diverse countries as Canada, USA to Singapore and developing countries like Brazil.

Conclusion

Governments all over the world generally do not have an adequate understanding of services. They rarely actually speak to service beneficiaries about how services should be delivered despite the fact that providing a service or a range of services can be quite complex. Just getting that alignment going requires partnerships with business.

If you just take a single service such as the issuing of ID documents or registration of a business — each of these services has a detailed requirement and where that service should be accessed. Let me give an example, the Post Office is not supposed to play a social work kind of responsibility.

They do not really advise people who are in abusive relationships, but they can deliver grants. A grant can be accessed from a Post Office, but for other social work service a citizen can be referred to another government institution where there is privacy.

So services must be the starting point for thinking about enhancing service delivery. Each service can have its set of legislation, administrative and institutional dynamic.

Any active strategy that we develop might have a strong focus on the second economy. For me it is not a challenge, but an opportunity because in fact those communities that have been neglected in the past have an opportunity that others never had. •
In this short case study, SP Vilakazi, Project Manager, HOD Programme outlines the steps that have been taken to empower the KwaZulu-Natal provincial heads of department in the execution of their duties.

The transformation initiatives brought about by the introduction of the new Government in 1994, its evolvement into a new organisation and the changing roles and responsibilities of the Provincial Heads of Department compounded the challenges pertaining to the delivery of government services to the citizens of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Moreover the environment under which they operated was constantly changing and was becoming more and more complex. The need for assisting the Heads of Provincial Departments with some form of capacity building and development programme to enhance their skills as leaders and managers of their respective departments became imperative.

A needs assessment that included interviews with all Heads of Department and documents review was conducted in order to establish the development needs and the content of the programme.

The programme was officially launched on 20 November 2003 by the then Premier of KwaZulu-Natal. The first Module was presented in October 2003. The Integrated Provincial Support Programme (IPSP) funded the initiative with a budget of R250 000. The allocated amount was mainly used for the facilitators’ fees. The Provincial Administration paid for the venues and refreshments where training was conducted.

Generic Core Management Criteria and Standards

The interviews were based on the Senior Management Service (SMS) 11 Core Management Criteria (CMCs) and standards described below as determined by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSPA).

- Strategic Capability and Leadership
- Programme and Project Management
- Financial Management
- Change Management
- Knowledge Management
- Service Delivery Innovation (SDI)
- Problem Solving and Analysis
understand how to compile and manage budgets, control cash flow, institute risk management and administer tender procurement processes.

Linked to this module, is an equally important Economic Literacy module which seeks to equip HoDs with tools to understand economic context, environment and the impact of changing economic climate in the implementation of government policies.

The other two modules that were identified seek to enhance structural abilities of HoDs. The first one of these is the Organisational Performance module. It intends to help HoDs develop a systems view of organisational performance, and the difference between individual performance and organisational performance management.

The second module that focuses on the organisational aspects is called Organisational Development (OD). It seeks to enhance HoDs understanding of both the application of OD in organisational change and ways of improving departmental performance.

Closely linked to these is the module on People Management. Through this module, HoDs will be enabled to manage well and encourage people. They would also be able to optimise the outputs and effectively manage relationships. They would also be better placed in understanding government’s approach to integrated human resource management.

HoDs would also be trained in Project and Programme Management. They would be able to plan a project, manage and complete a project and distinguish between a project and a programme. Lastly, Policy Implementation was identified as one of the ten modules. HoDs would be trained on the policy process, critical success factors for policy implementation, integrating analysis with policy making and implementation, and on monitoring and evaluation.

Methodology

Pre-course material would be made available to participants three weeks before the date of presentation of the relevant module. Experts in their respective fields facilitated the sessions and made extensive use of action learning through case studies and experiential exercises. Formative assessment was built into the programme and was done in the form of assignments.

Challenges and Achievements

The change of Government in KwaZulu-Natal necessitated the review of the schedule of dates for presentation of the Modules and the project completion date had to be extended. Some Provincial Departments had acquired new HoDs which meant new training and development needs.

The following nine Modules had been presented:
- Inter-Governmental Relations
- Strategic Planning and Management
- Policy Implementation (Evidence based)
- Leadership and Management
- Financial Management
- Project and Programme Management
- Organisational Development and Change (Design)
- Economic Literacy
- Transformation and Change

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During the past four centuries, scientists have become highly adept at discovering and creating knowledge, to the general benefit of modern society. Traditionally, once knowledge has been created and added to the scientific literature, the work of science is seen as finished and it moves on to the next discovery.

Progressive S&T organisations have demonstrated that shifting a modest fraction of the amount invested in creating knowledge into managing it as an organisation’s most valuable asset can substantially increase its value (Buckman, 2004). It has also been demonstrated that knowledge management increases the value of forestry knowledge, from creation through innovation (Van Horne, et al 2005).

Yet, in many S&T organisations, managing knowledge continues to compete for resources, often as a lower-class island of “non-science” surrounded by a scientific ocean.

The Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service (CFS) is a science-based policy organisation within the government of Canada. It’s mandate is to conduct forestry research in support of forest policies that promote the wise stewardship of Canada’s forests and the competitiveness of Canada’s forest sector. The information and knowledge revolutions provide technology and processes that enable the CFS to manage the knowledge that it creates so as to leverage its value not only for internal use, but also for use by the forest sector and all Canadians.

This paper tells the story of how the CFS responded to the challenges and opportunities that it will face in the knowledge economy of the 21st century.

Strategic Planning

Eight years ago, the Canadian Forest Service recognised a need to better manage its data, information and knowledge, support the synthesis of new knowledge, and improve access to its knowledge assets. In May, 1997, the CFS established a steering committee to create a framework for developing and implementing a knowledge infrastructure.

By 1998, this group had produced four documents describing the context, concepts, framework, and terminology of a
proposed corporate knowledge initiative, as well as a presentation to increase awareness and promote the idea. In 1999, the documents were consolidated into a single report that was formally published (Simard, 2000).

In October, 2000, a Knowledge Management Division was established under the functional direction of a corporate Director-level Steering Committee. During the next two years, this group produced a series of consensus-based knowledge management planning documents. These were presented to senior management and various audiences as they were completed, and covered the following:

- **Business Case** — to focus on a direction and level of investment in knowledge management and to prioritise what is most important (current status, business drivers, vision, opportunities, challenges, options, implementation, and recommendations).
- **Governance Structure** — to address simple but crucial institutional questions such as place in the organisational hierarchy, authority and accountability, and roles and responsibility (principles, framework, supporting documents, roles and responsibilities, external linkages, conducting business, amendments).
- **Implementation Strategy** — to map out a path for reaching the destination laid out in the business case within the context of the approved level of investment (principles, approach, management framework, KM community linkages, launching the KM Program, path forward).
- **Framework** — to organise KM Programme components into a relational hierarchy: goals (management, integration, sharing, preservation), dimensions (people, organisation, process, tools, content), scale (strategic, functional, project), and definitions.
- **Evaluation Framework** — to ensure that best practices are followed with respect to evaluating the KM Program throughout the full life cycle of development and implementation. (context, process, criteria and indicators, next steps).
- **Communication Plan** — to ensure that the KM Program is communicated, understood and supported by all staff and groups in the CPS (strategy, objectives, messages, target audiences, action plan, timing).

As a final step in the planning process, an external KM expert was contracted to review the plans that had been developed. As with any scientific endeavor, this insured that the work was sound, met professional knowledge management standards, and had overlooked nothing important.

This resulted in a few revisions to improve some of the KM plans. The revised package was presented to senior management who decided that an enterprise KM solution would be postponed until such time as a corporate reorganization was completed.

During the planning process, a number of project-scale activities had been started with the understanding that they would be needed regardless of the ultimate direction of the KM Program. They had been funded with available resources, so no new funding was needed. Much of the work was being done by volunteers who saw the need, usefulness, and importance of various projects, so additional staff was also not required.

Subsequent to the decision by senior management, it was decided that the KM projects would constitute pieces of a “KM puzzle” that we would assemble one piece at a time. Unofficially, this was dubbed a “KM by stealth” approach. Each project would design a useful user-friendly tool that solved a specific, well-recognised business problem.

Although the “picture” that integrates the KM puzzle into a program would be downplayed, the tools would be connected to each other to enable users to easily move among them. After a critical mass of tools had been implemented and being used, promoting a KM programme would be resumed.

This strategy is a hybrid of the two most commonly employed successful KM strategies used today. An enterprise solution that is supported by senior management and properly integrated into the organisation is usually the most efficient and most successful in the long run, but it requires the largest up-front investment, in the short run.

At the other end of the spectrum, many groups have successfully developed one project-scale element of KM. This reduces initial resource requirements and results in early success, but it does not yield the broad spectrum of benefits and return on investment of a full KM programme, which was our long-term vision.

Two aspects of the KM framework guided the selection of projects. The first was that all projects involved one or more KM goals to distinguish them from other activities, such as database or information management. Second, all projects involved at least three of the five KM dimensions to span the breadth of KM.

The remainder of this paper briefly summarises some of the KM projects that have been undertaken under the “KM by stealth” strategy. They have been classed into two groups: KM processes and forestry content. Process projects focus on knowledge management solutions for business problems related to running the organization. Content-based projects focus on knowledge management solutions to create and disseminate forestry content.

### Knowledge Management Processes

The five process projects described here focus on solving business problems by accomplishing one or more KM goals across multiple content domains. They are presented in order of ascending goal hierarchy: preservation, sharing, integration, management, and policy.

The Knowledge Management Division led the development of consensus-based solutions for most of the KM process projects. All process sites, except Metafore, are only available internally through the Intranet.

As government of Canada sites, all Web templates are available in English and French, although in some cases, content may be captured only in the language of the author.
1. **Preservation:** Briefing Note Database (BNDB)
   - **Problem:** It was difficult to find briefing notes previously written by other authors. This led to duplication, inconsistency, and slow response to requests for information.
   - **Solution:** Capture briefing notes in a database with multi-criteria search capability.
   - **Status:** Implemented (May, 2004); 800 briefing notes; quarterly usage reports.
   - **Lesson learned:** KM projects must be integrated into existing organisational processes.

2. **Sharing (groups):** File Exchange Server
   - **Problem:** It was difficult to share files among both internal and external members of working groups and associations that were supported by the CFS.
   - **Solution:** Develop a secure Web-based extranet that allowed administrators to organise documents according to the working needs of a particular group and allowed members to share documents with all members of the group.
   - **Status:** Implemented (July 2005); 20 user groups at the time of implementation.
   - **Lesson learned:** If a system solves a real business problem, it will be used.

3. **Sharing (corporate):** Directory of Expertise and Skills (DOES)
   - **Problem:** It was difficult to find what CFS employees know and rapidly bring inhouse expertise to bear on emerging issues.
   - **Solution:** Develop a process to capture and organise CFS knowledge and know-how and develop a searchable database to easily and quickly find expertise.
   - **Status:** Pilot testing.
   - **Lesson learned:** Some input control is much more complicated than full or no control.

4. **Integration:** Regional Libraries (Metadata)
   - **Problem:** Library users had to make six separate enquiries to access all CFS holdings. Further, each library had its own system of managing their holdings.
   - **Solution:** Develop a process to map regional library catalogues to a single metadata standard. Develop a search engine and Web portal to facilitate internal and external access to all libraries through a single query.
   - **Status:** Operational (2003); 1 million (internal), 1 million (external) records.
   - **Lesson learned:** Considerable time is needed to develop a consensus on integrating existing infrastructure.

5. **Management:** Knowledge Asset Inventory (KAI)
   - **Problem:** Knowledge has not been traditionally viewed or managed as an asset. It was difficult to locate knowledge assets in the CFS.
   - **Solution:** Develop a process to inventory CFS's knowledge assets. Develop a searchable database to enable all staff to find these assets by searching any field.
   - **Status:** Implemented (April 2005); 700 records; currently populating the database.
   - **Lesson learned:** Management support is needed to secure participation by a majority of staff.

6. **Policy:** Access to Knowledge Policy (ATKP)
   - **Problem:** Scientists are motivated to control data and information that could lead to authored publications. This results in a reluctance to share unpublished material.
   - **Solution:** Develop and implement an Access to Knowledge policy that outlines roles, rights and responsibilities with respect to scientific content.
   - **Status:** Implemented (April, 2005), communication under way.
   - **Lesson learned:** Policy development depends on subjective opinions that can unexpectedly derail a project in multiple ways.

### Forestry Content

Content projects focus on using knowledge management approaches to solve forestry problems in Canada. The projects are presented in the order in which they became operational. Development of content projects was led by domain experts, with some advice and recommendations provided by the KM Division. The following examples represent only a small sample of CFS content-based projects that use KM solutions.

#### Automated monitoring: Forest Fire in Canada

- **Problem:** There was no national view of predicted fire danger or actual fire activity. National resource mobilisation was predominantly subjective. National-scale data was too massive to be processed with traditional methods.
- **Solution:** Develop a fully automated system to access weather data and large fire activity via observation and satellite networks, integrate and process the data, produce national fire danger and fire activity maps, and disseminate the maps via the Web.
- **Status:** Operational (1994); this is the fourth generation of fire information systems.
- **Lesson learned:** Technology can accomplish great things when there is a will and adequate resources to move forward.

#### Project integration

Integrating KM projects can be illustrated with a scenario of preparing a briefing note in response to a short turn-around request from the minister’s office. The Briefing Note Database is the first stop for someone who is unfamiliar with an issue, needs to know the latest CFS position, or is simply updating a previous note. The Directory of Expertise and Skills can be used to find experts who can help with new issues or new questions related to existing issues.

Accessing regional libraries enables analysts to dig deeper and cite relevant scientific sources. Finally, the Knowledge Asset Inventory can be used to find unpublished material that can contribute to policy analysis. What traditionally required a few days can now be done in a few hours.

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**International Case Study**
Compiling national data: Compendium of Canadian Forestry Statistics

- **Problem:** The cost of manually compiling and publishing national statistics had become prohibitive. National tables could not be published until the last agency submitted data. Data had to be manually entered into analysis applications.
- **Solution:** Develop a Web-based template for submitting and compiling data. Update tables as agency data are received. Publish the data in a down loadable digital format.
- **Lesson learned:** Transforming a knowledge service from a traditional to electronic format can yield substantial cost savings and efficiency.

Distributing knowledge: National Bookstore

- **Problem:** CPS publications were distributed by six regional centres. Users had to send separate mail requests to each center to obtain copies.
- **Solution:** Develop a Web-based single-window site for ordering all CPS publications. Enable direct downloading for digitised publications.
- **Status:** Operational (2000); 17,000 CPS publications listed; 11,000 are down loadable.
- **Lesson learned:** Patience and understanding are essential to integrating distributed organisational processes.

Enhancing Client Service: E-800 Service

- **Problem:** Many common questions must be answered repeatedly, leading to redundancy and duplication. A lack of links between query channels or responders leads to inconsistent responses.
- **Solution:** Develop a process to capture queries and responses from all channels. Develop a process to publish Frequently Asked Questions on the Web. Develop a searchable Web database of FAQs and responses.
- **Status:** Operational (2003); 1,500 queries in the repository, 70 published questions and answers.
- **Lesson learned:** Publishing answers to frequently asked questions requires formal organisational work processes to support the system.

Preservation and learning: Forest Ecosystems of Canada

- **Problem:** Thousands of forestry photographs taken over decades were at risk of being lost. The photos were not catalogued and unavailable to anyone other than the original photographer.
- **Solution:** Develop a process to capture, catalogue, and archive the photographs. Develop a web site to provide subject and map-based access to the photographs. Extend the site to support learning about Canada’s forest ecosystems.
- **Status:** Operational (2003); 14,000 photos archived.
- **Lesson learned:** Securing adequate resources for KM activities is critical to success.

Conclusions

As with building a house, “one piece at a time” does not mean randomly choosing projects. There is a KM blueprint in place, in the form of a strategy and framework that shows all the necessary pieces and how they fit together. There is a proper construction and assembly sequence, in that some things must precede others. Process projects are like the foundation and framing, in that they focus on organisational infrastructure by accomplishing one or more KM goals across multiple content domains.

KM processes are necessary regardless of the final design, which is likely to evolve as organisations learn. Content projects are like the finish and furnishings, in that they are what people see and relate to. They use knowledge management approaches to provide domain-specific goods and services to clients and to all Canadians.

Working at a project scale minimises the risk of high-profile and high-cost failure. Multiple projects further spread the risk, in that most are likely to succeed. Projects also minimise the need for large up-front investment with returns that are difficult to demonstrate in advance. Projects can often be supported on the basis of near-term cost reduction and increased efficiency. It is also easier for people to see how projects relate to their specific knowledge work.

Over the long run, there is a potentially much larger benefit to a structured piece-meal approach.

Culture change — which is at the heart of knowledge management — takes many years to implement. Starting by attempting to change a culture has a high risk of failure. Change is too scary; there is too much resistance; the goal is too nebulous.

However, through the use of KM tools that help people do their work, culture gradually begins to change in response to the use of the tools without considerable overt hype or effort.

Thus, KM by stealth would appear to have many advantages and few disadvantages as a strategy for transforming organisations of intelligent people into intelligent organisations that can succeed and thrive in the 21stcentury.

### Bibliography

Lebowakgomo Hospital has its origins in the old Dr MMM Hospital, which had 800 beds that were subsequently brought down to 252 acute beds, eight ICU beds and 20 sub-acute beds. The district hospital is located 52 kilometers South East Polokwane, formerly Pietersburg, in the Lepelle-Nkumpi municipality, in the Capricon District, which is at the centre of the Limpopo province.

Lebowakgomo Hospital serves a catchment population of 312 513 through a health infrastructure that includes 20 fixed clinics and six mobile clinics.

Dr MMM Hospital was one of the four hospitals identified by the Health Facility Audit as requiring an intervention that was implemented between 1998 and 2004.

Towards a centre of excellence

Lebowakgomo Hospital began the journey towards becoming a centre of excellence in 2004 as part of the hospital revitalisation strategy aimed at improving infrastructure, health technology and overall quality improvement.

Turning Lebowakgoma Hospital Around

As the hospital’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms MC Mohapi, illustrates through this case study, that the motto of Lebowakgomo Hospital is, indeed, “serving with passion”...
better placed to lead the turnaround strategy aimed at making Lebowakgomo Hospital a centre of excellence.

The team had different interpretations of where and how the hospital could be turnaround. What was common was a deep desire to change the status quo, using the above intervention model.

Paying off

The gruelling work undertaken over the 12 months of implementing the turn-around strategy is paying off, starting with the savings made from turning an 800-bed hospital to the current 252 beds. The hospital’s outreach programme, involving medical and social welfare staff, visits 20 clinics at least once a week.

Inculcating the spirit of Letsema or community voluntarism for the hospital, organising Open Days, commemorating World Tobacco Day, the institution of Service Excellence Awards and conducting Client Satisfaction Surveys are among the successes resulting from the turnaround.

The ripple effect of the intervention is demonstrated by the improvement in the general management of the hospitals as a result of the introduction of financial and organisational management systems. Without any doubt, none of these successes would have been possible without the role played by the hospital board.

Challenges

While the hospital can boast of its successes and chart progress over the past 12 months, not acknowledging some of the persistent challenges will be less than honest. More seriously, not acknowledging problems means that the hospital is not learning from the efforts to transform the institution, which is an ongoing process.

The hospital is certainly picking up a couple of lessons on how to manage relations with the nascent local Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) sector, for example, tackling poor workmanship and not completing projects on time.

Challenges such as the hospital’s inability to retain health professionals reflect the general trends in the national health system and are driven by factors that are largely out of the control of Lebowakgomo Hospital.

But as indicated by the positive results achieved in the course of the implementation of the turnaround strategy, the hospital is well poised to tackle most of the challenges within its reach depending on the extension of the revitalisation project.
Two fundamental questions come to mind and beg for honest and clear answers in discussions on the notion of a unified public sector. The first question is whether the integration of the three spheres of government implies alignment of the three spheres of government — and is that really the intention? Or, secondly, is integration ultimately about the actual incorporation of local government into the public service?

An exploration of issues arising from these questions raises further questions, particularly around the constitutional status of local government. They also raise questions relating to the consolidation and sustainability of local government.

What the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) has picked up in the past few years when the debate began is that local government, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in particular, has been more in favour of the alignment of the operations and systems across the three spheres of government as opposed to outright incorporation of local government into the other spheres. MDB has also learnt that there are quarters that are in favour of the incorporation of local government into the public service.

Status quo

Although the debate is framed by the apparently bi-polar interpretations of the notion of and the move towards a unified public service, the debate should as well be understood in the context of South Africa’s current political dispensation, especially in the absence of an amendment of the Constitution.

Also central to the debate is the need to locate and interrogate the challenges that require attention as we discuss integration. These include matters around the powers and functions across the three spheres of government that are located differently and often lead to overlapping responsibilities.

Schedules 4A and 5A of the Constitution list the powers and functions (including concurrent competencies) of all spheres of government. They also list the exclusive competencies of provincial government in relation to those of the national sphere. Although both Schedules provide a broad canvas of parameters across the three spheres, there is no definition of the powers - which creates some problems in terms of planning and budgeting for services that are supposed to be administered by municipalities as per their competencies.

For example, when an under-resourced municipality is asked to provide transport by national or provincial government in terms of a concurrent competency without defining who will be up the tap, this places a financial burden on the part of the receiving municipality. To give effect to “finance follows functions”, a detailed assessment of costs of government services is needed as part of the integration process. This will feed into a review of the Intergovernmental Relations Fiscal System (IGFRS).
Unlike in other countries where there may be clear distinctions between discretionary versus mandatory competencies, in South Africa that is not the case. The Constitution does not distinguish between mandatory and discretionary responsibilities (rights versus duties). These issues have at some of the Constitutional intricacies, which are further complicated by the all too familiar challenges of uneven distribution of competencies and disparities of conditions of employment, which must be fully considered in terms of the integration debate and process.

Local stability

Another critical issue, which seems to slip off in the debate on integration, is the need to strive for a balance between improving the performance of local government while also allowing for consolidation after years of restructuring. Whereas national and provincial government were established in 1994, local government, in reality, came into being only in 2000, which is just about four or five years of existence and development.

It has to be recalled as well that in 2000 there was general consensus that local government be given the space to breathe, stabilise, consolidate and be sustainable. And so any legislative framework that seeks to destroy that consensus acts against the overall desire of stabilising the local government institution. The debate on integration must take into account the original thinking so that local government is not destabilised.

What is emerging as well is that while we are discussing the integration of the three spheres of government and creating a single coherent public sector system, there are a number of things that have not been addressed. Provinces, for example, have Provincial Growth and Development Plans, but it is questionable as to where local government’s Integrated Development Plans fit into these. It is also unclear, in practice, how the National Planning Framework, the District Spatial Development Framework feed into each other’s processes. The lack of coordination is of course not helped by the financial cycle discrepancies across the three spheres. Local government planning cycles begin in July and those of national government in April.

Ambiguities within local government itself, for example, between district, metro and local, have serious implications in terms of the transformation and stabilisation of local government. And given the trend towards centralisation at national level, this raises the question whether the envisaged goal of a developmental local government will be realised. To what extent do we balance central command and the sustainability of local government and service delivery operations?

What about the provinces?

Although the Constitution provides for provinces to assess and capacitate local government, there is a serious lack of capacity by the provinces to assess the capacity of local government, let alone theirs. Drawing from its work and experiences over the past six years or so, it is the MDR’s well-considered view that there is a need for a serious review of the current structure, form and content of provinces, without necessarily advocating for their dissolution.

The political imperatives that we had prior to 1994 and the compromises there-of are understandable, however, we have to re-examine the cost implications of managing provinces and their inherent inefficiencies. This view is not popular with provincial officials and politicians because it is often a bread and butter issue. It is nevertheless critical to the overall strategic direction of the country and the lessons learnt thus far.

Although much has been said and agreed upon about the need for creating a legislative framework for the mobility of staff and functions across the three spheres of government, the debate would be incomplete if the status of politicians in the system is not interrogated as well. There is also a need for a mechanism that will allow for the mobility of political leadership across the spheres.

A lot of effort has been put towards making sure that the three spheres of government work as an integral whole. And by the end of the year or some time next year legislative frameworks that will assist with the alignment of conditions of services, the integration of collective bargaining arrangements and staff mobility should be in place. The unfolding debate and integration process will perhaps be much enriched if the following recommendations are considered:

- The objectives of the integration process have been endorsed to address service delivery problems that are linked to fragmentation and to enable more equitable skills distribution.
- The integration process should seek greater alignment between the three spheres, rather than amalgamation.
- The review of Schedules 4A and 5A should lead to greater clarity regarding roles and responsibilities and to greater consolidation of the local sphere within the context of its development mandate.
- The actual timing and sequencing of the inter-sphere planning cycles be finalised as a matter of urgency.
- A common approach is developed across the three spheres for the development of systems (particularly relating to information and performance management).
- The rationalisation of conditions of service should not only focus on mobility, but also on promoting institutional flexibility and increased performance within the context of the macro-economic framework.
- The Public Administration Management Act to be overarching legislation instituting common norms and standards, while separate legislation should be integrated approach to skills development should underpin human resources mobility, security sector specific issues.
- PAMA should not only focus on HR issues but also the systems and operations vital to integrated delivery.
- Current progress regarding the development of a policy framework for the transfer of human resources be noted provided that: 1) Its applicability to public or municipal entities is clarified. 2) Incentives to encourage transfer are further explored.
A grass-weaving factory was established near Phuthaditjaba in the Free State (formerly the QwaQwa homeland) with funding provided by the Integrated Provincial Support Programme and the Free State Department for Social Development. The motivation for the project was the need for job creation in the area, the availability of abundant, cheap raw material, skilful grassweavers and a burgeoning interior decorating market that would buy quality grass products.

The factory was officially opened in October 2003, but very soon after the factory began to struggle and operations at the factory came to a standstill a few months later. Currently, attempts are being made to resuscitate the factory and it is hoped that these attempts will bear fruit in the near future.

In the beginning, the future looked bright and rosy. Various events and opportunities all pointed to the success of this project, and, it seemed to its originators, that it could not possibly fail. But it did. It is said that the benefit of hindsight is 20/20 vision. However, in a complex, multi-stakeholder project, the reasons for failure are by no means clear.

In discussing this project in further detail, there are many voices that describe “the problems” of this project differently and it is hoped that these different voices are fairly represented throughout.

Challenging beginnings

The QwaQwa area is significantly underdeveloped and unemployment is rife. A series of smaller IPSP-funded projects had, through the Provincial Department of Sports, Arts and Culture (DSAC), sought to improve the craft industry in the area through capacity building workshops for crafters (including business and entrepreneurial skills), the establishment of a crafters forum and the development of an electronic database so that DSAC could provide better support to the craft industry.

Grassweaving emerged as a niche product due to the abundant availability of grasses in the area and a long tradition among residents of the area in grassweaving. Some time before, a group of women had applied to the Department of Social Development in the Free State for a grant to establish a community grassweaving initiative.

However, since the grant was made, the enormity of the task, the lack of business skills and not knowing quite where to start, resulted in the money remaining untouched in a trust account.
DSAC officials came to hear of the initiative of this group of women and their desire to access further support and expertise to make their project a reality. The idea emerged to approach the IFSP for funding, which, together with the money from Social Development, could be used to establish a grassweaving factory. Specifically, the project involved securing the inputs of a service provider to provide the necessary technical assistance and to develop and mentor managers and employees of the factory, also to establish sound business processes and purchase the necessary equipment for the running of the factory.

It seemed to good to be too good to be true when a service provider was found who had specific expertise in the grassweaving industry and who already had a grassweaving business in a nearby province. His proposal was to assist in the establishment of a sustainable factory in the Phuthaditjaba area and that he was willing to enter into an agreement with this factory once established to purchase a large percentage of their output and to distribute it on their behalf through their already established client base.

In hindsight it could be argued that this created risks and vulnerabilities for the Phuthaditjaba factory but at the time the reality was the need for the Phuthaditjaba factory to break into a notoriously difficult interior decorating market and that they needed time to develop their own expertise in sales and marketing before risking full market exposure. The preferential sales agreement with the sister factory would have a limited time span and assist the Phuthaditjaba factory in the short to medium term.

**Seeking outside help**

The project was tracking well and the excitement was mounting — when this factory was standing on its own feet, government would be able to add to its short list of poverty alleviation projects that had actually worked. A big launch was planned in October 2003. However, some “small” problems had already begun to surface and small cracks had begun to show. These small cracks would eventually become craters whose presence could no longer be ignored.

The bulk of the project consisted of providing management training to the three women who had initiated the project and also to develop work processes, financial and human resource management processes to support the project. This part of the project went well. The consulting process was being reinforced through formal learning in combination with experiential learning as the factor was in the process of being set up. In addition, the consultant was providing much-needed mentorship and guidance.

One need that emerged once the consultant’s contract came to an end and he left, was the need for ongoing mentorship of the management of the factory. While the technical skills had been mastered, still lacking were an in-depth and experiential knowledge of the grassweaving and interior decorating market.

Local weavers were trained in the use of the looms and the most successful learners were then employed by the factory. Those not initially employed, would be called upon once the production volume of the factory grew. In the meantime, they had been capacitated with weaving skills and could use these skills to make craft products and sell these to make a living.

One problem that emerged was that weavers were employed on a fixed rate or salary basis. Salary costs had to be borne before sales and profits of the factory were able to cover these. Salaries were a drain on the capital available to the project and when unforeseen events (see next paragraph) placed additional pressure on available resources, this became unacceptable.

An insight that emerged is that it might have been wiser to employ weavers on a piece basis (i.e. for items produced) rather than on a fixed rate regardless of work performed or required. This would have ensured that the factory’s costs were directly related to its outputs and profitability.

Looms were ordered and soon put into operation to make samples of the designs that the Phuthaditjaba factory would be producing. However, before the first orders came in, the sister factory was liquidated as part of a divorce settlement. The consultant was therefore no longer able to avail the existing sales and marketing network of the liquidated factory. It was at this time that the consultant’s attention was being ever more diverted by events in his personal life and the reality that when this Phuthaditjaba project came to an end, he had no factory to go back to. The project management team who were overseeing the project on behalf of the provincial government and the management of the factory decided to divert some of the project money to employ a marketing person to develop and implement a marketing plan for the Phuthaditjaba factory.

This diverted critical financial resources from production (and salaries) however and put the factory into a catch-22 situation: To get orders, they needed to spend money on marketing. To fill the orders received, they needed money for raw materials and salaries.

**When the consultant left**

In the meantime, additional looms had been ordered to supplement the initial set that had been ordered, in anticipation of the big orders to come. This had been...
Starting all over again

In view of the failure of this project, a task team was established to determine a way forward. A representative of the original project team who would also represent the interests of the factory (managers and weavers), a representative from the Office of the Director-General who would ensure the coordination necessary at the highest level for the project and its resuscitation and a representative from the National Coordinator’s Office of the Integrated Provincial Support Programme (IPSP).

A representative from local government from the Thaba-Mofutsanyane District Municipality was also invited to be part of the Task Team and was kept informed throughout as this project inevitably formed part of the local economic development of the area.

The individual members of the Task Team had, through their own networks, sought to resuscitate the factory. By forming a Task Team, it was possible to combine efforts. One of the downfalls of individual attempts to resuscitate the factory, was the lack of an objective/independent analysis of the project and why it failed. It was decided to commission a small study to diagnose the problem and suggest possible models for turning the factory around.

While there are some “facts” regarding the failure of the factory, the rest is opinion and we realised on receipt of the consultant’s report that what we now had was yet another version and opinion of what had gone wrong. It was nevertheless useful to have an external perspective added to the mix of existing perspectives.

Our next step was to call a high-level meeting of representatives of provincial stakeholder departments to present to them a composite report and to discuss the potential availability of both expertise and funding within these departments for the resuscitation of the factory.

The meeting referred to above has resulted in expertise being identified within the provincial government, primarily in the Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism and the Department of Sports, Art and Culture. The resuscitation initiative is being coordinated at the centre of the provincial government and is discussed regularly within the relevant cluster meetings of the province. The outcomes of the resuscitation initiative will take time to be seen and it is hoped that the team involved in this initiative will write a “Part II” to this article detailing some of the lessons learnt in fixing problems of this nature.

Not denying failure

It was stated at the beginning of the article that no attempt would be made to give the definitive description and diagnosis of the Phuthaditjhaba Grassweaving Factory Project. To do that, one would need a series of articles written by the various stakeholders and project team members each giving an individual perspective.

The primary purpose of this article is to discuss what happens when a project fails and to focus on the lessons we learnt in terms of what we could have done to prevent failure and what were some of the more productive and positive ways in which we responded to failure.

The first, and most important lesson is to not deny failure. Many project teams believe that failure is a direct judgement of their ability to plan and manage the project. In the case of the Phuthaditjhaba Grassweaving Factory Project, the only potential failure in planning was that not all contingencies were planned for.

However, when there are limited resources, timeframes or achievable deliverables (as is the case for all projects), it is seldom possible to plan for every contingency. As the project team did, when contingencies arose, e.g. the liquidation of the sister factory, they made the best available plan with the available resources.

As a project manager, that may be the best you can do. The need to continuously revisit and monitor project plans is critical so that the time, resources and scope dimensions of the project can be proactively managed as contingencies arise. Ignoring or denying failure (and potential failure) is a dangerous game to play.

Challenges define the solutions

Projects, by their very nature, usually involve a certain degree of complexity and require the involvement of multiple stakeholders. We often gloss over the
importance of stakeholder involvement and buy-in. Stakeholder involvement goes beyond the planning and project implementation phase of projects, and extends to how we evaluate the project outputs and impact.

Inevitably it is the “human factor” that causes a project to succeed or fail. As human beings, we look at the world through our own window of values, judgements and assumptions. In drawing from the lessons learnt from the failure of the Phuthaditjaba Grassweaving Factory Project, it was important not to engage in blame fixing. None of the stakeholders in our project were wholly responsible for the failure of the project and none would be able to provide a definitive explanation for its failure.

We needed to listen to each other carefully to better understand the composite picture of what went wrong and to realise that we all brought useful and important interpretations of the facts. This lesson is essential in light of the corollary: your solutions are determined by how you define the problem.

In the case of the Phuthaditjaba Grassweaving Factory Project, the management and contract management went hand-in-hand. Many government projects require the identification and management of external service providers. As project managers we are called upon to manage a consultant or a team of consultants to achieve desired deliverables.

An observation, from a variety of projects including the Phuthaditjaba Grassweaving Factory Project, is the importance of maintaining ownership and control over the project. There are many reasons why we sometimes allow the consultant free reign to “run” with our project:

• We’re often busy with a variety of other projects at the same time and it is tempting to just “let the consultant get on with it”.

• We are in awe of the expertise of the consultant and feel inadequate to comment on and ask for what we want. In the case of the Phuthaditjaba Grassweaving Factory Project, the consultant was exceedingly well qualified for the project that it was difficult to dispute his methods or his recommendations.

• When there is limited expertise in a certain field, we are sometimes compelled to work with a particular firm or consultant, or at least have a limited pool of candidates. The consultant may then attempt to dictate terms (cost, timing of project, method of implementation).

• In the case of the Phuthaditjaba Grassweaving Factory Project, the project was geographically removed from Bloemfontein, it was not always possible to go and check up on a regular basis. Regardless of the above, or any one of a host of other reasons, it is important to retain ownership and control of the projects we are responsible for. In the absence of a system to blacklist errant consultants or prescribed requirements for doing background checks on consultants, it is up to individual project managers to check the credibility of the consultants they are dealing with.

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If consultants include information in their proposals of past work/project and or references of past and current clients, it is important to take the time to phone around, speak to others who have used their services. If not, to ask for references, contact relevant professional councils where the consultant may be registered, etc.

Power of collaboration

A specific comment must be made regarding the contracts we enter into with service providers: We need to be more aware of how we write contracts — it is usually wiser to contract consultants on the basis of actual deliverables rather than on a time/cost basis.

This requires very deliberate wording in our Terms of Reference (TOR) and contracts to define the deliverables we want, when we want them, and the specific qualities that the deliverables should have in terms of, for example, the physical or functional attributes. The onus is then on the consultant, as an expert, to accurately determine the cost of the work to be done.

A final lesson learnt must be mentioned in terms of the resuscitation initiative that is underway. In the great majority of cases, the way we seek alignment and integration of government programmes requires deliberate intention. It was only when we drew together a high-level meeting of representatives of provincial stakeholder departments that we learnt of, and obtained involvement, of experts and initiatives in a variety of departments that could be deployed to assist the Phuthaditjaba Grassweaving Project.

It must be said that, from the beginning, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture worked with Social Development and a variety of other initiatives to implement the project. However, the full extent of other expertise and assistance that could have been called upon before the project actually failed, was not known.

In addition, the mechanisms for accessing internal (government) expertise and assistance are complex and different government departments still effectively operate in silos. At the level of our projects, and at the broader level of governmental functioning, we need to continue to strive for greater integration and continuously be on the look-out for linkages and collaboration.
The intention of this article is to explore the issue of how we align leadership development in order to improve service delivery. This article, unfortunately, is not meant to provide a blueprint or any formulae for your institutions. The article would have achieved its primary intention if it succeeds in exploring and opening up conversations on leadership development.

And in advancing my ideas, I will make reference to the notion of Ubuntu and the works Paul V Bredeson (Leadership and Architecture for Professional Development) and Andy Hargreaves (Sustainable Leadership). This exercise will be followed by a synthesis of what (in my opinion) appear to be the key components of leadership.

Lessons from Albert Luthuli

What is Ubuntu? What is its relevance in terms of leadership? In trying to answer these questions I found myself drawn to Luthuli Albert Luthuli who, in my view, is one of the African leaders who epitomises and embodies all the aspects and principles of ubuntu. The leadership legacy that is left by Luthuli Albert Luthuli is of enormous value in terms of guidance on structuring and thinking about leadership development programs.

An obvious starting point in this regard is to look at the biography of Albert Luthuli who is arguably one of the greatest South Africans. He was born in a small town in Natal called Groutville and studied in Groutville and also in Edendale. He worked at Adams College, and went on to become a principal in a small village outside Ladysmith. He married a teacher and, interestingly, one of the things he always said in interviews about his work was “I like teaching”.

What is the value of rethinking our conceptions of leadership development? The value is largely a reaction to perceptions that government is in many cases merely happy to send and pay for staff to go on leadership courses despite the fact that it is generally acknowledged that these courses do not add value in many instances.

Most of the time the people that government entrusts with the responsibility of developing leadership are actually taking off-the-shelf training programmes that may be 20 years old and irrelevant to the needs of the concerned individual. And so the training becomes, in most instances, an exciting three to four days long programme. But beyond that, there is no relationship between training and the actual work content.

What also clouds the purpose or objectives of leadership development is an
undue preoccupation with credentials and qualifications. South Africa is a diploma and certificate-crazy nation. Unless the leadership development programme leads to a certificate — it cannot be paid for, people in HR portfolios often argue.

But how many of the service providers have the required accreditation? Sometimes when you look at the certificate and you look at the person holding that certificate, there is no relationship. It is essential to keep in mind that developing leadership capacity is not about credentials, certificates or three-day programmes. It is something that should be thought through in much more profound ways than we have been doing.

Leadership development is about people, not about programmes. It is not getting everybody through a Master of Business Administration (MBA) that should be the concern. It should be about what the needs of that particular individual are. How does the training enhance their performance on the job? And therefore it is not taking any programme and thinking that when people go through that programme they will come out as different people.

Leadership development is about caring for people. It is not a series of mindless activities without critical reflection on how they impact on practice.

Another important aspect to this discussion is how and when does leadership development “happen”? What is clear, as far as I am concerned, is that leadership development does not take place in a fancy lecture hall room with a lecturer standing in front saying 90 percent of the things that the students do not understand. There is a need to strike a balance between theoretical and foundational competencies and providing opportunities for cohort networking.

A common complaint in the public service is that people hardly talk about each other’s work experiences because there is often no space or platform for sharing.

Architecture of leadership

What does architecture have to with leadership development? As noted earlier, the other useful reference can be found in the work of Bredeson who uses notions drawn from architecture to inform his leadership programme. There are three things that architects consider when they present a plan for approval: function, structure and beauty.

Picking up the most complex of the three architectural principles, which is structure, it is tempting to ask: how can a leadership programme be beautiful? The truth is it is possible. It can be beautiful when you think about using material creatively and effectively. It is about using spaces for engagement in a critical and effective way. It is about ensuring that the programmes give opportunities for participants to learn, reflect and reconstruct their reality. More importantly in terms of our work as public servants, beauty comes from a commitment to social justice.

Unhealthy drive-through training

The other dilemma that I sit with as a public-funded entity is the way that we make decisions about leadership development. Somebody looks at you (I don’t know whether it is the way you look, the way you talk and the way you write) and then decides to “in-service you”. This “in-service” often has no bearing on the target’s perceived needs or relationship to the job.

It is for this reason that before engaging or sending people off to one of the many convenient courses that promise “strategic planning” if you pay a couple of thousand in five days. It is not just possible to attend a three-day course in monitoring and evaluation and emerge on the other side as an expert on the subject.

Some of these are designed in a drive-through mode — like you can drive-through for a meal in McDonalds. These courses are designed in such a way that they put profits before principles, which is why it is important to determine what principles or value will be delivered by the service.

I think we should allow ourselves enough space to both engage and interrogate leadership development bubble around us such as the tendency by people to invoke the concept of a “framework”. Often when they say “give me a framework from Mathew Courtw”, And I say, “Tell me exactly what do you want.” And they say, “What is your model of funding?” and I say, “What do you want?”

Depth and impact

Let us take seriously the things that we are engaging in. Leadership development programmes should have depth. They should be deep enough to make the necessary impact. One of the frustrations that I have personally encountered is when asked to deliver a development training programme for a couple of thousand. When you say no, people think you are being arrogant. Not so long ago, one of the biggest districts in Gauteng, Megashort, paid about R400 000 to train nine parents from each of the 4 000 schools, which is unrealistic because you cannot do justice in that particular context.

The principle should be — if you do it, do it well and let it have depth and you have to be assured that it will lead to the necessary impact. And let it have endurance so you think critically about your two or three day programme. It should have breadth, so that if a person is run over by a bus, the organisation continues to run. It does not go with that one individual and ends with that one individual.

It should lead to justice, promote innovation and promote diversity, which is a reality of our South African society. At the Institute we believe that if the development does not improve practice than we discourage it. We should campaign tirelessly to ensure that what we pay for is what we receive. If not, we will continue to pay for these people to go to leadership development programs without any change happening.

“Seek truth, encourage innovation and earn the right to be called a leader”, Mao Zedong famously said. Unless we seek the truth about the merits of the leadership programmes we are engaged in, unless we are innovative, then we cannot begin talking about leadership programmes.
Usualy, researchers assume that research method guides and approaches are universal. This assumption implies that one can use the same research guides and methods when conducting surveys anywhere in the world. This is evidenced by the research methods texts that are used in tertiary institutions, most of which are written by American and British academics.

These methods and approaches are usually dogmatically adopted by research students and ultimately almost always used by those who later pursue social research in their careers.

With a focus on government department’s based research organisations, this paper calls for radical learning and unlearning by government researchers, not only in approaches and methods, but also in attitudes and behaviours. The paper explores means and approaches that can contribute towards making social research more sensitive to the “urban-rural divide”, and looks at how we can make government research more meaningful to the service delivery agenda of government.

The paper does not in anyway pretend to provide solutions to all issues raised in it. It is an attempt to open a new discourse in the development research endeavour, sharing practical experiences of the Research Unit in the Office of the Premier in working with rural communities of Mpumalanga Province.

Characteristics of rural communities of Mpumalanga

Unlike in some parts of the world where agricultural activity is used as a sole determining factor of rurality, the Mpumalanga rural population lives in varying and different circumstances. A significant part of the population resides in traditional authority villages, situated on the western and eastern boundaries of the province.

These areas are marginalised, and are characterised by high population densities and poor access to basic services. There are also small, dispersed rural settlements situated on farms throughout the province, normally consisting of between two and 50 households. These settlements often consist of homesteads...
on farms as well as the houses of farm workers. According to the DBSA’s latest figures, the province’s rural population is estimated at 1,857,000, which amounts to about 59.5% of the population. The table illustrates distribution of population and households per area.

According to the study conducted by TRAC-MP, “Study into Human Rights Violations in the Farming Community” (2003), Mpumalanga has the second lowest education levels of all the nine provinces, with 29.4% of the population having no schooling whatsoever. The majority of this category resides in the rural areas where educational facilities are sparse.

Long travelling distances, poor public transport and unfavourable labour conditions, especially in the farm settlements,
Unavailability of baseline data

Mostly, research exercises are a “once off” event commissioned by politicians or government bureaucrats, and their scopes are dependent on available research budgets. The interest in the researched issue tends to have a short attention span, perhaps only for the purpose of taking a certain specific decision. There is no continuity, and not much time is spent on establishing baseline information. Adalgot Komba (2003), commenting on Tanzania’s Poverty Reduction Initiatives asserts that “The damage done by the research enterprise can be most devastating, especially to those complex social problems such as poverty, where understanding and problem solving require accumulation of knowledge over a long period of time.”

Meaningful baseline information for a society that is in a constant state of flux, like the South Africa of today cannot be obtained in a “once off” research exercise. This problem has made it difficult for government department-based research organisations to establish poverty patterns and changing trends between urban and rural populations over long periods of time.

Case Study

Contradictory and unreliable information

The difficulty encountered in finding reliable information on rural communities in South Africa is well documented in many studies (Human Rights Watch: 1998), and our practical experience has proved it. This difficulty exists primarily because there is little research information available on rural communities in South Africa. It is common to find information from municipalities that contradicts information obtained from StatsSA and that obtained from the Demarcation Board.

When conducting an Investigation on the State of Service Delivery on Farms in the province, we found gross discrepancies in the figures from StatsSA, Demarcation Board and local municipalities. For instance, Thembisile Municipality estimated the number of farms to be around 200, while according to the Demarcation Board the area had only 78 farms.

Hostile attitude towards research

Hostile attitude towards any type of registration or inquiry is well known in rural areas, particularly among farm owners and sometimes, traditional leaders. Farm owners and traditional leaders are often suspicious of requests to study their workers or subjects respectively. It is a rural problem experienced by our researchers in dealing with predominantly rural areas in the province.

In many of our studies, it has been established that this rural hostile attitude to research is linked to certain degrees of illiteracy, ignorance and suspicion, but mostly to a current political environment in an area.

This situation has often forced us in some instances to resort to “catch and grab” techniques — waiting at assembly points such as shops and pubs for potential respondents. In deep rural areas of Mpumalanga, the limitations of interviewing techniques such as questionnairenaires have become apparent in many of our studies, hence we complement or substitute them with the unconventional methods to be discussed later, including the “catch and grab” mentioned above.

Dissemination of research information

One of the issues that has concerned us, of which there is silence even among the advocates of “methodological pluralism” is the fact that illiterate people are subjected to conform to the language and communication methods that they do not understand. This inherently denies them access to critical information on subjects that directly affect their daily lives — such as HIV/AIDS, employment trends, census, etc.

Every year government departments and agencies produce bundles of research information. However this information still remains the monopoly of the elite. For instance, most rural community dwellers still do not understand why they are supposed to be counted every five years. They do not know the significance of a census to their lives.

They still do not understand for instance who came up with the figure that 30 percent of the population of Mpumalanga is HIV positive or suffering from AIDS, and how they came up with that figure; or the projection that by 2009 the province will have 200 000 orphans (PGDS, 2004), and so on and so forth.

This is what Thomson and Sim (1993) refer to as “documentary bias” — a function of the third world communities, always divided into two worlds “the world of oracy” and “the world literacy.”

It is our belief that massive campaigns to demystify research information using communication methods and language that enable non-educated and poor communities to make sense out of these research figures will result in significant contribution to the government’s efforts to fight the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other diseases and social ills prevalent in rural communities.

Use of gatekeepers

Our interaction with rural communities and involvement in the izimbizo and the Executive Council Outreach Programme
has revealed to us that many organisations that are used as entry points service delivery agents are not democratic partners in development as it is always assumed, and do not practise effective “bottom up” approach to community development.

These are organisations that do not value the knowledge of their “constituencies” about themselves and their ability to make rational decisions on issues that affect their lives. Some of these organisations don’t even enjoy the full support of the communities they claim to represent. These include some NGOs, CBOs, and traditional and municipality authorities, and some councillors.

Now, how does one conduct community development research, and expect to obtain authentic information from such communities, using conventional research methods? Margaret Peil (2000) attests to this when she writes, “Power relations are important at every stage of a research project … Students, and even experienced researchers often assume that once top authorities have given permission, everyone lower in the hierarchy will fall into line.”

**Intentional or unintentional creation of false expectations**

There is a general tendency by both government researchers and research agencies conducting research for government to garner community participation and cooperation by creating false expectations, making communities think that the research exercise will result in positive spin-offs in their community. Our experience shows that in areas where research has been conducted on any subject, it is common to be asked the question: “Last year you guys were here asking us many questions. What have you done for us since then?”

**Alternative methodologies**

We see the role of the development researcher as a resource person who acts as a catalyst to support service delivery, assisting disadvantaged communities in defining their problems clearly and supporting them as they work towards effective solutions to the issues that concern them. This is in contrast with the role of an academic researcher, whose preoccupation with formal research principles such as objectivity/subjectivity has hindered a meaningful interaction with the participants restricted by conventional scientific research procedures and practices.

To an academic researcher this view might sound unscientific, but our experience has shown that community based research techniques such as focus groups, informal community meetings, in-depth interviews, etc normally yield more authentic and detailed information. Robert Chambers (2003) sees the role of a development researcher as the one who “enables others to do their own appraisal, analysis, presentations, planning and action, to own the outcome, and to teach, learn and share knowledge.”

The product of the research exercise (research report) is therefore a record of the knowledge and experiences shared during a mutual or partnership interaction between the researcher and the researched.

The limitations of research methods that are used by many if not all government department based research organisations are well documented in various research texts. In deep rural areas of Mpumalanga, the limitations of interviewing techniques like questionnaires have become apparent in many of our studies. Hershfield (2000), in his book *Fieldwork in Rural Areas*, cites an incident in one province in the Philippines where interviewers were mistaken for sales agents and tax collectors. We have observed that in some of our studies, despite concerted efforts to explain our presence, the researchers are mistaken as collectors of information on a project to be implemented.

**Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

Social scientists have for many decades, if not a century, focused their research exclusively on the external observable facts of human behaviour and using logic to deduce the object of scientific inquiry. The folly of this approach is that it ignores the fact that people are not always rational, and that everyone is influenced by prior experience, and by their cultural and personal values.

As new forms of community organising became necessary, especially in communities whose social fabrics had been shattered by institutionalised socio-economic brutality such as South Africa, a new movement of research scholars arose in Latin America and Asia who called themselves “participatory action researchers” and adopted revolutionary methods in the social scientific inquiry endeavour.

PAR is not just a research methodology, but a community development approach that has been tested and used effectively in many third world countries. PAR does not perceive research as a mere data collection exercise, the results of which can be acted upon by others. Its ultimate aim is to understand the conditions underlying the problem, and seek to solve it by transforming those conditions together with the people directly affected.

Distinct methodologies within PAR are:
- RRA — Rapid Rural Appraisal
- PRA — Participatory Rural Appraisal
- PLA — Participatory Learning and Action
- PAR — Participatory Action Research

Robert Chambers (2003) defines these methodological approaches as “a group of family of approaches, methods, attitudes and behaviours that enable and empower people to share, analyse and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, monitor, evaluate and reflect”. In some countries like Nepal and some districts of Tanzania the use of these approaches has become normal. We strongly recommend that these methods be adopted by government as official guides for conducting research in rural communities in South Africa.

**Need for participation of the researched**

Our research experience among the rural and poor peri-urban communities has
shown that development in these communities seldom involves people who are identified as the actual beneficiaries. Participation is limited to particular categories of “privileged” or “educated” individuals who are frequently not directly affected by the problem.

This is very evident in the acute need our government is faced with, that of housing the poor, which sometimes manifests itself in the rejection of the houses provided. It is because of this reason that some projects meet limited support or resistance from some community members. We have found that even the IDP process does not penetrate deep into grass root rural communities.

For instance, farming communities claimed not to know what IDP was, and that they had never been consulted about it. (Research Unit’s Study: 2004)

In the evaluation study of MPCCs, we encountered difficulties when organising all-inclusive focus group discussions in some areas, because many community members were not aware of their existence.

Slim and Thompson (1990) call for “professional reversal”, a call for development researchers and workers to become the listeners and learners, and allow those whose lives they intend to “question” and “develop” be their “teachers and experts”. Stringer (1990) argues that PRA is most effective in that it:

- enables significant levels of active involvement and participation;
- enables people to perform significant tasks;
- provides support for people as they learn to act for themselves;
- encourages plans and activities that people are able to accomplish themselves; and
- deals personally with people rather than with their representatives or agents.

Under this situation, we fully embrace Jonathan Stadler’s (1995) view that, development research should be conceived as an educational process for both the researcher and the researched. It respects the respondent’s capability and potential to produce knowledge and analyse it, therefore rejecting the notion of knowledge being the monopoly of “professional researchers” only.

Development Research as an empowerment and consciousness raising tool

Unlike academic research, government research should be used as a community empowerment and consciousness raising tool through knowledge and experience sharing. Slim and Thomson (1993) comment that sharing knowledge through research — community partnership can become a cooperative exercise in social action.

Our emphasis on the use of techniques like focused group discussions, informal meetings, catch and grab technique, etc has created awareness on the number of social issues, and helped to stimulate development discourse among the communities we work with.

Need for government researchers to adopt PRA methodologies

The limitations and failures of conventional research methods as discussed in the foregoing necessitate the adoption of alternative methods. Application of “participatory methodologies” will help to minimise these limitations especially when dealing with poor and less educated or illiterate rural communities.

Government should therefore take a fresh look at the manner in which research for government is conducted if its development and service delivery agenda is to be realised. PRA practitioners need to be developed in government, and in engaging external service providers the methodology to be utilised must be stated in the terms of reference.

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South African Human Rights Commission Institute of Race Relations, Economic and Social Rights: 5th report 2002/3


The Shackled Continent

Reviewed by Nelson Kwete

At a time when leaders of African states demonstrate more commitment to the development of the continent and its people, some, like Robert Guest, the author of The Shackled Continent, get increasingly pessimistic. Guest is the Africa editor of the British publication, The Economist, and has spent three years travelling around and reporting on Africa. His brutal frankness and pessimism about the future of sub-Saharan Africa and its people may earn him a place in the camp of the so-called “Afro-pessimists”.

The author admits to having deliberately missed out a lot of good things about Africa, such as “the kindness of its people; their passion for life; the extraordinary hospitality of the poorest of the poor; the joy of Congolese rumba music; the sunset over the Okavango delta; the list goes on”. But Guest isn’t sorry for having painted a negative picture of the state of affairs on the African continent. “This is a book,” he says, “about why Africa is poor, so it has to grapple with war, pestilence and presidents who think their office is a license, literally, to print money.”

Reading Guest’s book may make you laugh and sometimes make you very angry. He narrates the misery of the people of Africa as if they were born to serve as a warning to other continents about the destructions of poverty, diseases and underdevelopment. Guest is particularly pessimistic about what the future has in store for African children. “The prospects,” according to Guest, “are not quite so good” because “they live in Africa, the poorest continent on earth, and the only one that, despite all the technological advances that are filling stomachs and pockets everywhere else, has actually grown poorer in the last thirty years”.

What Guest misses in his pessimistic narrative is the fact that Africans are a determined and resilient lot. And so the book is worth reading in as far as it strengthens our resolve to continue working hard and contributing in whatever small way to prove that Africa is not meant to be “The Shackled Continent” Guest thinks it is.

Title: The Shackled Continent
Author: Robert Guest
Price: R140,00

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In the twenty-first century, every business controlling reality is human capital. That means that your competitive future depends on how capable you are to maximise human capital. Inspiration prepares people for development and makes to participate in their own growth. Over the course of sections on Philosophy, Psalms, Proverbs, Paradigms, Practices and the Process of inspiration, you will be armed with the understanding and skills you need to:

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Author: Dr John Tibane
Price: R159
ISBN: 1869221249
Series Name: Knowres Publishing

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A successful business person must be persuasive and be able to think on his or her feet. These are some of the key features of the top business presenters. This book provides practical advice on how to create and make compelling and persuasive presentations to employees, colleagues or customers. It looks at practical examples and techniques and offers tips on presentation skills that managers will need throughout their careers. The book covers the following:

• choosing the best equipment for presentations;
• building a logical sequence of topics;
• involving your audience;
• dealing with questions effectively; and
• practicing and polishing your presentation.

Authors: Jennifer Rotondo, Mike Rotondo, Mike Rotondo Jr
Price: R213
Series Name: Briefcase Books
Dear Staff,

It is advised that you come to work dressed according to your salary.

- If we see you wearing a gold chain, Nike sneakers and carrying a Gucci bag we assume you are doing well financially and therefore you do not need a raise.
- If you dress poorly, you need to learn to manage your money better, so that you may buy nicer clothes and therefore you do not need a raise.
- If you dress in-between, you are right where you need to be and therefore you do not need a raise.

Personal days:
Each employee will receive 104 personal days a year. They are called Saturday & Sunday.

Sick days:
• We will no longer accept a doctor statement as proof of sickness.
• If you are able to go to the doctor, you are able to come to work.

Have a nice week.
Management

Management Lesson

Never start a project unless all resources are available

The Phone bill was exceptionally high and the man of the house called a family meeting.

Dad: People think this is unacceptable. You have to limit the use of the phone.
I do not use this phone, I use the one at the office.
Mum: Same here, I hardly use this home telephone as I use my work telephone.
Maid: So what is the problem? We all use our work telephones.

Van goes to a builders’ supply shop and asks for 3,500,000 bricks.
“Sjoe! What are you building?” the guy at the till asks.
“A braai,” replies Van.
“Three and a half million bricks for a braai. You sure about that?”
“Ja boet... My flat’s on the 14th floor.”