Creating a Public Service Culture of Togetherness

The 7th Batho Pele Learning Network
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T
he delivery of services is the primary function of any public service. Therefore, it would be safe to say that all reform strategies within the South African Public Service are aimed at improving the delivery of services to all South Africans. This was also stated clearly when President Jacob Zuma announced his new administrative team on 10 May 2009. “We wanted a structure that would enable us to achieve visible and socio-economic development within the next five years,” President Zuma said. The need was for a structure that would facilitate effective implementation of government policies, a structure that would deliver on the mandate of the Executive, a structure that would make all citizens feel like real South Africans sharing in our country’s growing prosperity.

But allow me to link up with a thought of Karin Miller in her book “Public sector reform: governance in South Africa”. She refers to a Commissioner of the Presidential Review Commission who described South Africa’s reform of the Public Service in the words of TS Elliot: “Between the idea and the reality … falls the shadow.”

The newly created structure is a good and sound idea. It sets the scene for strategic planning from a single source that would ensure one national plan that all spheres of government would adhere to. It makes provision for monitoring and evaluation so that the performance of government at local, provincial and national level could be measured against the standards of an “efficient, caring and effective administration that is accessible and responsive to the needs of the people,” to quote President Zuma again. It aims to facilitate more focus on particular challenges and areas by splitting some of the ministries like education and by creating new ministries like the one for Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities to emphasize the need for equity and access to development opportunities for the vulnerable groups in society.

But … there is a very definite and noticeable shadow clouding the vision of a public service that strives to accelerate service delivery and thus propel our country along a sustained economic growth path to the benefit of all our citizens.

The reality, to some extent, is a picture of corruption; unsatisfactory performance and productivity; a need for managers in the civil service to inculcate ubuntu and embrace the principles of Batho Pele; lack of support of senior leadership, both political and administrative, in areas of development, planning and implementation, and so on. Many of the contributions in this edition of the Service Delivery Review (SDR) expand on these and other challenges jeopardizing the realization of the idea and vision of the reform referred to above.

There is, therefore, a definite sense that the principles of Batho Pele must be reaffirmed; that, in the words of Mr Mbulelo Sogoni, former President of the Eastern Cape, “every person who works in the Public Service should not only understand and uphold the eight Batho Pele principles of consultation; service standards; access; courtesy; information; openness and transparency; redress and value for money, but, most importantly, should know how each principle can be applied in the theatre of implementation”.

Batho Pele must be mainstreamed and institutionalized, and thoughts around these processes were shared at the 7th Batho Pele Learning Network, which is the focus of this edition of the SDR.

In turn, we share these thoughts with you, our readers. And we urge you to take up the challenge. Making Batho Pele the heartbeat of the South African Public Service is not the responsibility of the President or the Ministers or the managers or anybody else. Change begins with the individual … it is in your hands.
I am pleased to discuss the extremely vexing but important issue of our fight against corruption. On Sunday 14 June, the country woke up to what must have been the most disturbing news in a long time. A well-known and reputable newspaper reported on what it alleged was grand wholesale corruption in the tendering processes in the Public Service. A screaming banner headline read, ‘officials caught with snouts deep in trough’.

The paper reported that South Africa’s civil servants have scored more than half a billion rand in government tenders awarded irregularly. It claimed the tenders were awarded to companies owned by the civil servants themselves or their spouses and relatives. The report painted a bleak picture of an administration in shambles where corruption, misspending and flagrant abuse of public money are the order of the day.

Details about the affected provinces followed, leaving the reader in no doubt about the extent of the graft problem. The result is that an impression is created of poor and inept management and an utter lack of political oversight.

Despite the fact that, in the eyes of many of our people, corruption appears to be deeply entrenched in the system and that it sometimes seems inevitable, we need to fight on and improve our efforts to tackle this problem. It is our duty to do so if we are to remain true to President Jacob Zuma’s call to hold ourselves to the highest standard of service, probity and integrity. We must raise a hand, raise a finger, do anything, but never allow corruption to undermine our hard-won gains!

The story of the Public Service is the story of South Africa. Through the nature, shape and attitude of our public servants, people should be able to tell the story of South Africa.

However, when they tell that story, they will say just as our icon, former President Mandela, once said, “After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.” South Africa, together with its Public Service, have travelled a long way and climbed many hills. To some extent, we have managed to walk our talk as far as providing service delivery to our people is concerned. But we acknowledge that there is room for improvement and yes, there are blockages in our service delivery agenda. This is evidenced by the reality that in some parts of the country our people are expressing their dissatisfaction about the quality and the pace of our service delivery through mass action. Furthermore, one just has to look at the conditions under which the majority of our citizens live to be reminded of the fact that ours is a journey everlasting; a journey to social, economic and political emancipation.

The road we are travelling has seen many leaders of our times. The giants of the South African struggle for emancipation such as Yusuf Dadoo, Helen Suzman, Lillian Ngoyi, Bram Fischer, OR Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, and many more, have, in the past, been on this very road we are on today.

(continued on page 2)
In their quest for social freedom and equality, they did not once falter, nor did they ever betray their beliefs. I want to assure those like them who are no more that neither will this generation of public servants falter. We all know what is expected of us and we shall do all in our power to ensure that we deliver on the expectations of our people.

That is why there should be zero tolerance on corruption. As public servants, we must be committed to stop corruption in all structures and systems of government. We must speak with one voice in condemning corruption and corrupt activities to demonstrate our collective will to expedite the processes of delivering services to our people. But talk alone will not bear the necessary results; it is against our action that we will be measured.

We must learn from one another because there are frameworks that have worked.

Some departments have been very successful in implementing the public sector anti-corruption strategy of 2002 and some provinces have done remarkable work in the field of anti-corruption, for example, North West and Mpumalanga, to name but two of these. The provincial government of the North West has done wonders concerning communication and awareness campaigns, while the provincial government of Mpumalanga is doing a great job in investigating cases of corruption.

As we revisit our implementation of anti-corruption strategies, we must pay particular attention to the four aspects that make for an effective anti-corruption agenda. They are prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution. In our respective provinces and departments, we must identify our strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas so that we can continue to grow and improve.

I urge you to implement the policies that have been developed, starting with ensuring that your departments comply with the minimum anti-corruption capacity requirements. The DPSA will always be ready and willing to assist when requested.

On our part we are going to conduct an assessment on the common manifestation of corruption in our Public Service in terms of nature, sector of occurrence and geographical spread. We will identify the common perpetrators of acts of corruption in the form of position, area of location and area of deployment. We are going to analyse the impact of the national anti-corruption strategies in the Public Service through evaluating the effectiveness of the national anti-corruption forums and the implementation of the action plans resulting from the three national anti-corruption summits held so far. We hope to conclude this by the end of November.

Our journey has been a very arduous one and it promises to be longer and tougher still, but I am confident that with this generation of public servants we will not fail, nor will we falter in our historical mission of improving the lives of all our people. With corruption beaten, I have no doubt that the principles of Batho Pele, putting people first, will reign supreme in our Public Service, and with that improved service delivery to all our people.

The fight against corruption is not my fight or her fight or his fight or even their fight. It is our fight and working together we can eradicate corruption in the public sector. The road ahead is long. But let us strive together to find workable solutions to overcome corruption in our government system.

I have raised some comments that I hope will stimulate further discussion on how to build the nation while reducing, and finally, eliminating corruption to the benefit of everyone.

Let us leave the world a better place for our children. That much we owe them.
Applying the principles of *Batho Pele* in the theatre of implementation

*The Batho Pele policy remains government’s most important campaign to improve service delivery, transform the hearts and minds of public servants and put citizens at the centre of planning and operations, writes Mbulelo Sogoni, former Premier of the Eastern Cape.*

In the 2008 State of the Nation Address, former President Thabo Mbeki directed all of us in the Public Service to move faster to address the challenges of poverty, underdevelopment and marginalization confronting those caught in the second economy to ensure that the poor in our country share in our growing prosperity. Certainly, this will be best achieved when the government performs its role of improving service delivery. This requires effective implementation of government programmes. The President went on to say, “we must ensure that the machinery of government, especially the local government sphere, discharges its responsibilities effectively and efficiently, honouring the precepts of *Batho Pele*” – People First.

Hence, our drive as government is to establish service delivery partnerships among the three spheres of government through the promotion of collaboration in the spirit of a Single Public Service to enable us to serve our communities better.

A central component of any strategy to improve service delivery is rigorous service standards encapsulated in our Service Delivery Charters, which relay to citizens the commitment of the Public Service to deliver quality services that government can be measured against.

Our Service Delivery Charters, therefore, act as reference documents for government to account on promises made, thereby emphasizing the notion that “the people shall govern”.

One of the key opportunities on the road to service delivery improvement is the ability of the Public Service to implement policies in the most effective and efficient

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To promote the notion of government’s intention to adopt a citizen-orientated approach to service delivery, we expect that every person who works in the Public Service should not only understand and uphold the eight *Batho Pele* principles of consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money, but most importantly, we should all know how each principle can be applied in the theatre of implementation.”
manner while striving to be innovative in the delivery of services that will meet the needs and expectations of citizens.

This, therefore, talks to the need to go beyond the eight principles towards a framework for Service Delivery Improvement Strategies to transform the delivery of effective and efficient services to the public. This is of paramount importance.

Furthermore, the development of monitoring and evaluation systems to measure the resultant service delivery implementation improvement, to establish a feedback mechanism to customers and to provide a recognition and reward system for improved systemic performance, is a cornerstone of Batho Pele.

In order to ensure optimal delivery of services, an effective Service Delivery Programme would need to take into account the gap between the expectations that citizens have of government and the planned deliverables of departments at all levels in the system. This would require departments to plan, develop and implement innovative transformation strategies that would support and enhance service delivery improvement in key service delivery areas.

For example, while the 2010 Soccer World Cup will make an important contribution to our effort to accelerate our progress towards the achievement of the goal of a better life for our people, the whole world will be watching us carefully to judge whether we will be a worthy host for their future investment in this country. And the Public Service has to be exemplary in this. We, therefore, need to brand and profile ourselves in a manner that will impart a life-long experience to our visitors.

However, it would not be through projecting an excellent government image that our tourists and investors would consider coming back to our country, but rather because of the kind of service that they actually experienced first hand. I would, furthermore, like to argue that they would also report back home on the extent to which a transformed public service in the democratic South Africa had been effective in delivering services that meet the basic needs of all citizens, particularly those known throughout the globe to have been the victims of a system of apartheid.

I am convinced that the legislative regime that the democratic government has put in place over the past decade has created favourable conditions for all spheres of government to achieve accelerated service delivery, and thus propel our country along a sustained economic growth path. It is, therefore, incumbent on us that we respond to the hopes of the people by doing everything possible to meet their expectations. In that way, we will be serving the intentions of our vision of creating a better life for all directly.

The onus, therefore, rests on all of us to, through our concerted efforts, build a winning nation and crack the walls of poverty. Let us all beat the drum of service delivery in the spirit of ‘We belong, We care, We serve’. ■
Creating an enabling environment

Jane Matsomela, of the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration, says managers must inculcate ubuntu and embrace Batho Pele principles to create an enabling environment in the Public Service.

The civil service appoints people to positions of authority, whether lesser or greater, to serve the people. This includes people who are poor, illiterate, semi-literate, skilled, semi-skilled, highly skilled, rich and middle-class. Each of these groups should say of the service provided: “It makes me feel I am a real South African. I or my parents and next of kin fought for this country so that I can be better off, and I am happy because that very mission is served by my country’s Public Service.”

How proud would we be if citizens of our country could say that about us? How proud would a person feel, believing that the entire struggle we went through was not in vain? That is the spirit of Batho Pele.

A public service is not a profit-driven institution but a value-laden entity. We, the politicians, should embody such a spirit and value system. An acid test for a politician is when the next election comes and the electorate starts determining and assessing what candidates did in the five years that they were voted into Parliament, legislatures or municipalities. It is not difficult for objective citizens to see a politician’s milestones. They judge us fairly on what we have achieved or failed to do.

Therefore, it is up to us as politicians to sit on the back of the Public Service, demanding that it delivers on its mandate, because when the Public Service accounts to us, we can account to the people and say, “This is what we did. Vote for us again.”

Let me try to contextualize issues by emphasizing things that make governments lose elections.

An enabling environment

Our government’s duty is to deliver on the mandate of the Executive that inherently derives such a mandate from Parliament. Parliament is composed of people whose parties won elections or got a considerable number of seats, warranting an audible political voice. Our overall mandate is to deliver services to these, our people. A public service functioning within an enabling environment is a pre-requisite for the effective delivery of such services.

On its part, Parliament has created an enabling environment by empowering the Public Service, through legislation, to deliver a varied service. Concerning my portfolio committee, specifically, we have amended the Public Service Act continuously so that public servants can feel that, even though they are the servants of the people, they are human as well. It is my fervent belief that one cannot separate
work and non-work issues from individuals, because a public servant is a totality. To this end, we work with the Ministry and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to improve conditions of service, including wage improvements, labour relations and a number of human resource issues.

We try to create an enabling environment in which the Public Service can come and account to us at our instance and/or of its own accord so that we can know and understand what the successes and the challenges are. However, although we are concerned about challenges, we do not look at challenges only. We, mostly, want to celebrate with and encourage you when you do us proud by delivering on the mandate of the Executive.

Enabling issues and government

Let me come to government itself now. Government as an institution impacts on more lives than almost any other institution in the history of mankind. Government and its agencies process millions of people’s requisite services annually. This mostly happens by way of cumbersome tools and inefficient, paper-based processes. The result is a costly, time-consuming and often frustrating experience for both citizens and government employees.

World-wide, many governments face looming resource challenges and the daunting prospect of delivering more services to increasingly demanding publics with fewer resources than in the past. Government agencies often appear confusing and bureaucratic to the citizens they serve, and it is not always apparent who can answer questions and resolve problems. Furthermore, once the correct agency is contacted, the level of responsiveness may not match what customers have come to expect from public service providers.

Generally, governments must strive for both cost reductions by eliminating ineffective programmes and increased service delivery by increasing efficiency and creativity in satisfying people’s fair demands.

The public sector must equip customer service representatives in government call centres with timely, accurate information to respond to citizen and business enquiries. Work orders must be opened quickly and routed efficiently to appropriate departments so that operations are smooth and efficient.

I suggest we should engage in and work on the following paths:

- Promoting collaborative capabilities to help principal departments and agencies synchronize the resolution of citizen enquiries and work items while reducing duplication of effort, which improves both the efficiency and quality of service delivery.
- Adopting a holistic view of departmental and agency performance and service delivery so that these entities can make well-informed decisions about service delivery and its improvement.
- Entrenching the ability and desire to hold agencies accountable for poor service, while identifying high-performing agencies that deserve recognition and emulation.
- Creating a case incident for every citizen enquiry so that we can learn how to solve even mundane problems within a short space of time. Case incidents entrench knowledge creation because there is no small issue as far as requiring and delivering a service is concerned. A service client does not look at his or her problem as a simple matter that can be ignored.
- Providing a 24-hour, one-stop service that handles enquiries and complaints on service delivery matters and answers customer enquiries on government promotional projects and campaigns. By calling this single number, citizens will have quick, efficient access to the information they need.

Spending on priorities

The former president of the United States, Bill Clinton, once said, “Election results are often determined by the state of the economy; governments win elections when the economy booms, but are likely to be defeated during slumps.” In South Africa, there has not been much economic turmoil to warrant that, but the problem might be with spending on priorities.

Mr Derek Luyt, Media and Advocacy Head of the Public
Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM), had this to say about the enabling environment in the public service and the attendant challenges:

“South Africa is a case in point. The country has an excellent Constitution and Bill of Rights, justiciable economic and social rights and generally good pro-poor policies – and, according to the country’s Public Service Commission, as many as 29 966 government-funded projects have been established which are aimed at reducing poverty, as cited in the Public Service Commission’s 2007 Report on an Audit of Government’s Poverty Reduction Programme and Projects. Yet poverty levels in South Africa remain high, and have not been greatly reduced since 1994.”

Poverty has been fairly and relatively dented, but it has not been so dented as to make government and Parliament proud. This is because funds are being allocated year in and year out to alleviate poverty and other developmental programmes, but spending these funds still poses a serious challenge.

At the end of the financial year, we normally receive reports on the extent that funds for projects were spent, say, 50 to 60 percent of the allocation. These funds are then recycled back to the National Treasury. These are the very issues that might cost votes. The electorate does not see any ubuntu or manifestations of the spirit of Batho Pele when funds allocated to change their lot are not expended, are misappropriated or squandered. Budget spending is a management issue, it is not a political issue, but it costs government votes during elections. Public service officials may be apolitical, but they have to defer political supremacy.

**Performance-driven public service**

To entrench the spirit and principles of Batho Pele in our Public Service, government introduced the performance contracting system. It is aimed at binding government officials to their job descriptions through assessable and quantifiable performance. The terms of the performance contract make it impossible not to mentor, develop and sharpen an employee’s skill, but also, ultimately, allow the extraction from the employment contract of an employee failing to honour the terms of the contract.

This is what I believe is the creation of an enabling environment in the Public Service.

I believe that we should inculcate a performance-driven public service if we are to achieve even better milestones than we have already achieved. Performance, I believe, is a management facet that cannot be engineered. Performance requires people to perform, service delivery means delivering a service, measuring performance means there must be work output to be measured, performance contracting means people are evaluated from time to time to determine whether they are up to the task at hand.

Hence, the following question may suffice: Is performance measurement living up to its promise?

“The electorate does not see any ubuntu or manifestations of the spirit of Batho Pele when funds allocated to change their lot are not expended, are misappropriated or squandered.”
Benefits of e-government

The potential of measuring the impact of government programmes and services is now widely accepted. From monitoring the programmes that governments run, such as social services, to measuring the performance of internal administrative functions, such as personnel management, there are now plenty of governments that are at least asking the right questions about results.

But as the answers arrive, whether in the form of hard numbers or softer survey responses, another set of questions arises: What should government leaders and managers do with the information? What changes should be made in programmes, policy or management practices in response to the data on their results? How should budgets be modified?

And the ultimate question for all public officials, particularly those who are elected, is: Does measuring and reporting on performance have any political consequences at all? That is something that virtually all governments, including ourselves, are still figuring out.

My advice would be that we should promote the utilization and employment of the e-government strategy to fast-track service delivery and access to service and information for all and sundry.

The fast-growing area of e-government includes the following within its scope:

- Visioning and strategic planning;
- infrastructure development;
- management of technology;
- process redesign;
- electronic services delivery; and
- change management, all at national level.

In short, e-government is potentially the largest organizational transformation project within economies.

Over the past decade, there has been an increasingly intense movement towards a ‘re-invention’ of public services with a clear focus on better serving the needs of the constituents, i.e. citizens and corporations who need to interact with government agencies to provide or to receive services. With the advent and increasing pervasiveness of the Internet and other technologies, e-government has grown to become a key area receiving significant levels of attention and investment in countries the world over.

This innovation can yield tremendous results for quick and prompt services. Among a number of benefits derived from this service, I wish to highlight that e-government would help towards:

- Enabling citizen self-service for information, eligibility assessment regarding qualification for a specific service, and single application filing for multiple programmes.
- Expanding benefit services access through multiple channels of communication.
- Managing and optimally assigning large volumes of service delivery cases to employees with the right skills and availability.
- Integrating data from multiple channels and back-office applications, giving case workers a complete, easy-to-access view into a case.
- Improving collaboration and workflow-driven processes among case teams, agencies and partner organizations.
- Providing analytical tools and operational metrics for case and service performance reporting.
- Improving the training and support case workers need to drive more consistent, accurate case outcomes.

The media as a political actor

We, as the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration, would like to implore you as managers of our Public Service to really accede to the policies and mandates of the government, because this government was appointed by the people of South Africa. If we fail because you have failed us by not putting your shoulders to the wheel, we will not only be unhappy for our personal gain, but on behalf of the people of South Africa who voted for us.

On this note, we have to accept that most people get their political understanding through the media. Andrew Heywood (2002), a political scientist, posits the following statement:

“It is widely accepted that, through a combination of social and technological changes, the media have become increasingly more powerful political actors and, in some respects, more deeply enmeshed in the political process.”
Certain media may be averse or friendly towards certain individuals and leaders. To my surprise, subscribers to such media, whether rich, middle class or poor, learned or intermediate, take their media as authorities on issues. So, if the media do or do not like you as a ministry and department, they will applaud or criticize you for the way you spend your budget, offer your service, deal with the public, how you handle complaints and issues, and so on, and so on.

Readers take their cue from these sentiments and formulate opinions. This endows upon us the duty to be vigilant to minimize and mitigate adverse reports on government performance. The civil service must deliver and the politicians must monitor the civil service proactively so that gaps and challenges needing urgent attention can be pointed out quickly and promptly.

If the media engage the political socialization of society, we have to realize that they create abiding political allegiances and habitual voting patterns, thus giving way to a more instrumental political approach to politics in which people make political choices based on a calculation of personal self-interest. If we offer complacency and stubbornness to service recipients who have vested interest in the service we are mandated to offer, then we give away the inherent opportunity for the government and Parliament to serve our people.

I believe that I have managed to plead with, or even prod you, to inculcate ubuntu and embrace Batho Pele principles, and thus assist in creating an enabling environment in the Public Service.

References


Improving service delivery has been given priority since the adoption of the Batho Pele White paper in 1999. The 2007, wage negotiations brought to the fore productivity, performance management, remuneration and service delivery. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) then embarked on research and a business consulting process to improve performance and productivity. The result was a discussion document suggesting practical alternatives on how best to improve performance and productivity in the public sector. It noted that the productivity of the public sector is as important to the economic performance of a country as the productivity of the private sector. The following are the three main reasons why public sector productivity is important: the public sector is a major employer; it is a major provider of services in the economy, particularly business services (affecting costs of inputs) and social services (affecting labour quality); and it is a consumer of tax resources.

Status of Public Service Performance: Preliminary Findings

Sello Mosai, Productivity SA, provides feedback on research conducted to provide a detailed and comprehensive mechanism that could serve as a framework for improving performance and productivity in the Public Service.

In order to lead, generate discussion and make informed proposals, the DPSA appointed a service provider to conduct research into this subject. The objectives of the project were to provide a detailed and comprehensive mechanism that could serve as a framework for improving performance and productivity in the Public Service, by:

- demonstrating the link between productivity, performance and remuneration and other benefits in the Public Service;
- assessing how the integration of state machinery was hindering/enhancing service delivery;
- assessing or evaluating the basic performance measurement indicators applicable in the Public Service;
- identifying the constraints and issues in promoting a performance culture in the Public Service; and
- demonstrating how the work environment was hindering or promoting productivity and performance in the Public Service.

Methodology and tools applied

During the study, a comprehensive analysis of eight national departments, 16 provincial departments, labour, civil society and ordinary service users was undertaken to develop a report, in the form a discussion document, on how best to
improve productivity and performance in the Public Service. Most of the information used for assessment was based on departments’ strategic plans, annual plans, annual reports, performance agreements, the State of the Nation Address, government programmes of action, and other relevant information sourced via the Internet.

A qualitative research method was applied to gather empirical, recorded data and information with work teams in the sample departments. Three two-day Constraints Workshops with senior management and a representative sample of public sector unions were held (one for national departments, one for the four northern provincial departments, and, lastly, one for the southern provinces). This was followed by the validation of constraints listed by each workshop through a limited sample of face interviews with departments to gather additional information. After collecting all the necessary information and available data, an analysis was done to arrive at conclusions and recommendations.

In highlighting the findings of the study, I will look at the South African Police Services (SAPS) and the Department of Home Affairs.

**Findings: SAPS**

When looking at the SAPS, we realized that all its divisions and provinces compile operational plans, performance agreements and performance enhancement plans (PEPs) in support of the implementation of strategic priorities. We also noted that performance ratings are used to determine whether SAPS employees are entitled to certain compensatory benefits such as pay progression. This suggests that there is a link between productivity, performance and remuneration.

We then looked at the macro-organization of the SAPS. At the time, the police service fell under the then Department of Safety and Security. Its command structure is centralized. The strategic priorities at the Head Office are arranged within five programmes. Actual policing is done at provincial and station level. Provinces are required to set service standards in their operational plans according to planning information that is cascaded down from Head Office. Service Standards are provided for an in-service delivery charter, which provides specific information on policing at the provincial or station level (e.g. name of the officer, standards and service provided, etc.). A Performance Chart is used to set, monitor and evaluate standards, where applicable. Thus, indicators provided by the Performance Chart are used as service standards.

When looking at its performance indicators, we found that the SAPS has an extensive system of reporting developed in line with constitutional and legal provisions and to improve performance management at stations. The use of an information technology system to record the performance ratings of employees is entrenched within the SAPS. It also follows the standard Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used by most police services in the world (e.g. data on crime levels in relation to key selected crime categories, data on crimes against children under the age of 18 years, etc.).

We also looked at the constraints facing the unit, and found that the provinces with the highest raw contact data and frequencies do not have a proportionate police population ratio. We discovered that public mistrust of the police contributes to its performance, or lack of it. There is also an excess of management level staff, many of whom cannot be deployed to the street. Finally, there is low public participation in Community Policing Forums (CPF).

We noted that KPIs such as response time and customer satisfaction surveys, including improving rates and data gathering, do not form part of formal performance assessment. For example, concerning response time, it was interesting to note that, according to the 2007 National Victim Survey, the most common reason for respondents feeling that the police were performing poorly was the fact that they do not respond timely (56% of the respondents). These key indicators should be linked to the SAPS reward system to improve public confidence.

We recommended that the KPIs should be reinforced with other indicators, such as response time, especially in the case of crime. We also suggested that the manpower of the SAPS should be increased to match the UN acceptable standard of one police officer per 400 people. The deployment of this manpower should be aligned with the overarching objective of reducing contact crime. We further recommended that the quality of supervision (providing feedback on results being achieved, using more positive than negative reinforcement, allowing junior officers to participate in decision making about their jobs) should be improved. Lastly, the SAPS should involve business and the broader community more effectively to address crime and community safety issues by developing new approaches.

**Findings: Department of Home Affairs**

When looking at productivity, performance and remuneration, we found that, in terms of compensating
excellent work, promotion or pay progression, Home Affairs is guided by DPSA remuneration guidelines. Although a remuneration guideline was in place, some senior staff members were not submitting their performance assessments for review and it seemed that there was no mechanism to enforce compliance. Despite this, senior managers were rewarded merits.

The lack of performance assessments made it difficult to find a link between productivity, performance and remuneration. However, recent developments in the Department indicate that an integrated reporting framework has been introduced, which ensures quarterly reporting on progress. Furthermore, a new performance monitoring and evaluation section looking at the alignment and achievement of strategic objectives has been introduced.

When assessing the macro-organization of the Department, we discovered that it, recently, introduced a new structure and a service delivery model. According to the new structure, the Department comprises four programmes. Of the four, the two most important programmes are immigration services and civic services. However, migration from the old structure to the new one seems to be a challenge for the Department because of a shortage of skilled staff and difficulty in adapting to the new system.

When assessing the Department’s performance measurement indicators, we found that an in-house study was conducted on best international practice in similar home affairs departments. Based on the results, Home Affairs was found to be comparable. Its indicators are measureable and conform to public service standards, for example, a maximum of 60 days to produce an identity documents (ID) at the end of 2008, and six to eight weeks to produce travelling documents and passports. A programme to rescue the Home Affairs Department from its challenges has been implemented. This initiative is assisting in aligning departmental strategic objectives and performance indicators.

Constraints facing Home Affairs are mainly resignations and a shortage of skilled employees; a poor public image; inadequate funding to carry out its mandate; challenges in migrating from the old to the newly-proposed structure; and an entrenched culture of poor performance.

We also looked at the Department’s work environment and identified the following as some of the recent initiatives to enhance productivity and service delivery:

- Implementation of a track-and-trace system for ID applications at all regional offices.
- Expansion of the client service centre to offer a 24-hour service.
- Implementation of an integrated management system for managing immigration at ports of entry.

Concerning this Department, we recommended that it should improve its image by, for example, applying certain techniques, such as business process re-engineering, to improve the turnaround time in the case of important documents like IDs and passports. Also, when planning new service points, the Department should take the accessibility of such locations into consideration (e.g. the travelling distance to a service point for the community it serves, should be at most 20 km. In this regard, mobile offices could be deployed to rural offices.). Adequate systems should also be established to enhance consultation between the Department and citizens, and to ensure that the needs of internal and external clients are responded to speedily and effectively (e.g. both internal and external annual customer satisfaction surveys).

**Findings across all departments**

Policies, strategies and plans are adequate in all departments that made up the sample, both at national and provincial levels. However, short-term or frequent reviews and changes to strategic objectives, goals and strategies often leave the delivery process in a state of flux. Information from the records and documents obtained from departments suggests deficits or gaps in the business processes, especially concerning established decision-making, strategic, organisational and management processes and procedures. Moreover, it is not clear whether obtaining approval through a submission is a key step in performance and service delivery. If it is, there is no evidence of standards based on benchmarks or work-studies concerning the length of time it should take to send and receive the submission back with a decision (approval) without having to correct or resend.

Most departments apply public service remuneration guidelines when they have to reward excellence, consider promotions or pay progression. Almost all departments exhibit similar hierarchical structures and extensive reporting systems developed in line with constitutional and legal provisions, and to improve performance management, are in place from the Director-General to the senior managers of departments.

However, despite the availability of government structures to enhance effective communication and delivery of services,
unwillingness among staff to carry out their functions properly and a lack of clear communication to lower levels of management hamper service delivery in these departments. Some performance indicators are also not aligned with strategic objectives.

Some departments, for example, the SAPS and Social Development have made concerted efforts to enhance the delivery of services to their customers. Such efforts include the reduction of red tape, service delivery improvement plans and customer satisfaction surveys.

Constraints analyses identified the management of human resources (personnel) in the Public Service at both the national and provincial level as ineffective, which is an impediment to improved performance and productivity in the public sector. In some departments, the following were identified as constraints concerning improved performance and productivity:

- No alignment of overarching strategic objectives and manpower deployment.
- Excess management staff who cannot be deployed to the frontline of service delivery.
- Resignations and an inability to fill critical staff vacancies.
- A shortage of funds at operational level.
- Inadequate record management.
- Inadequate planning, e.g. succession planning and induction of new staff.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The Public Service should be more competitive in delivering quality service by developing a model that focuses on meeting customer expectation and ensuring customer satisfaction. It should also ensure that reliable information supports the performance measurement system. That will assist in optimizing the system.
Many departments are treating Batho Pele as an isolated set of principles rather than as a way of conducting the daily government business of providing services to citizens, writes Lawrence Tshwara Tsipane of the Department of Public Service and Administration.

In 2003, a survey was conducted on the effectiveness of Batho Pele. According to the results, some departments were reflecting service delivery improvements. However, the survey also showed that many departments were treating Batho Pele as an isolated set of principles rather than as a way of conducting the daily government business of providing services to citizens.

As a result, in August 2004, Cabinet mandated that all Senior Management Service (SMS) members should, during each performance review cycle, spend time observing and solving service delivery issues at the ‘coal face’. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) was then tasked with implementing the cabinet mandate, and as a result, developed Project Khaedu.1

Khaedu is a Tshivenda word meaning “challenge”.

1 Khaedu is a Tshivenda word meaning “challenge”.

... senior leadership (both political and administrative) is critical for the success of a project of this nature.

Lawrence Tshwara Tsipane

Project Khaedu – Implementation Realities
The nature of Project Khaedu

Project Khaedu has two main features. These are core skills development and the deployment of individuals that have acquired such skills to the ‘coal face’. During the core skills development phase SMS gets an opportunity to build ‘core skills’ for solving service delivery problems. The training is highly practical and case-study based. It also involves team-based problem solving. Deployment involves supervised deployment of five days to the ‘coal face’. The deployment comprises a problem-solving exercise and is not an ‘audit’. Deployed SMS members must leave the site of deployment with a report on two to three key issues that emerged from their work at the service delivery site. This report should be a practical report that could be accepted for implementation by the management of the relevant site.

Some departments have added a third component to Khaedu, namely follow-up exercises that are carried out in a manager’s own department and own environment. Trained managers are pushed to use the core skills acquired to solve current service delivery issues. This third component is a facilitated process of continuous action learning.

Project Khaedu was never designed to ‘fix’ a department’s problems in a two-week intervention. Rather, it is primarily a management learning programme. An added bonus, however, has been a number of high-quality deployment reports that some departments have made good use of (and yet others, not). In addition, there have been many instances of local best practices that could be utilized further at a departmental, provincial or even national level.

Many excellent deployment assignments have been completed in nearly all departments. Moreover, Khaedu has been delivered to over 3 000 managers in all nine provinces and many national departments.

What has been interesting and exciting is that Khaedu is rated very highly by its participants. One of the participants from the Department of Health stated that “all SMS members should attend this programme, starting from the top with MECs and HODs”. A speaker of the ZwaZulu-Natal Legislature, after having gone through Khaedu, said, “now I understand what managers really have to do to deliver”. There is a number of similar compliments that I cannot cover in this paper. However, suffice to say that, according to the findings of a survey conducted one year after managers attended Khaedu, all respondents would recommend the programme to other senior managers.

However, attendance of SMS members from national departments has been varied. For example, we saw a 98% participation in Khaedu from the Department of Correctional Services, which contrasts hugely with the 9% participation from the Department of Justice. The average participation in core skills development among departments has been 18%, with 11% participating in deployment. This is mainly because some departments barely attend, while yet others do not attend at all.

Provinces, on the other hand, are by and large doing well concerning commitment to Khaedu. The most active province is Mpumalanga, which has a 99% attendance of Khaedu. This is in contrast with Gauteng, which has an attendance of only 25%. In the provincial sphere, the average participation in core skills training is 51% and 29% in deployment.

Key lessons learned in delivering Khaedu

Through Khaedu, we have learned that the support of senior leadership (both political and administrative) is critical for the success of a project of this nature. Unfortunately, such support has been lacking in some instances. For example, very few Deputy Directors-General and Directors-General attended Khaedu. The survey conducted on the Khaedu project also highlighted the lack of leadership support. One of the respondents stated that “some members of the Executive Management have not been exposed to this training and do not appreciate the implementation approaches learned from the exposure”. I could quote a few more similar concerns from the survey.

Furthermore, only a few senior leaders sought any form of
Since Project KaeDu is aimed at empowering senior managers to identify, analyse and resolve service delivery challenges, maybe it’s time that we use our own, capable SMS members to solve our problems rather than external service providers who cost government millions of rands.

Computer, financial and general, numerical literacy remain challenges for the project. We also learned that the team-based action learning approach seems both effective and popular.

Another key learning point was that multiple, sustained deployments to the same area seem to have more impact than isolated cases. For example, in the Department of Labour, a number of local office visits identified and documented best practices in office management that are now being developed into national guidelines. On the other side of the coin, various visits to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, which were all well-supported by the Commissioner and senior management, uncovered significant opportunities for service delivery improvement, while multiple deployments in Mpumalanga resulted in cabinet action in a number of areas. Lastly, multiple deployments in the Deeds Office have built on each other to develop a robust plan for change across the entire Department.

**Conclusion**

Perhaps one of the most exciting findings resulting from Khaedu deployments is the number of best practices that are being uncovered across the entire Public Service. Many of these are from local managers, innovating around process and organization to produce real, on-the-ground results. Here I can mention queue management at Witbank Hospital in Mpumalanga; outpatients and records management at Addington Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal; the grant application process of SASSA in Makhado in Limpompo; and customer service initiatives (Track and Trade) in Taung’s Department of Home Affairs. The challenge that we face is to identify, codify and replicate these best practices at provincial, municipal and national levels.
Mainstreaming disability matters within Batho Pele

People with disabilities are part and parcel of mainstream society and should benefit from Batho Pele programmes, says Sello Makgato, Office of the Premier, Limpopo.

The dawn of the new South Africa brought new hope to many citizens who, for many years, were unable to access public services. The Minister of Public Service and Administration, Zola Skweyiya, captured it fittingly in the foreword of the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele) in 1997: “Access to decent public services is no longer a privilege to be enjoyed by a few; it is now the rightful expectation of all citizens, especially those previously disadvantaged.” The category of previously disadvantaged citizens encompasses, among others, women, black people and people with disabilities.

The purpose of this paper is to critically analyse the extent to which disability has been integrated in the implementation of the Batho Pele White Paper in the 11 years of its existence.

Disability and exclusion

Over the years, society developed negative stereotypes about people with disabilities, associating disability with incapacity, infectious disease, taboos and supernatural abilities. Negative attitudes members of society display towards people with disabilities include fear, shame, pity and hate.

With the passing of time, health professionals started acknowledging the right
of disabled people to life, medical treatment and disability prevention. This marked
the beginning of the medical model of disability, which maintains that people with
disabilities are customers of health professionals only, even concerning needs not
related to health.

The development of a human rights dispensation in the world brought with it the
social model of disability. This model maintains that people with disabilities have
rights and are entitled to be serviced by all the various line function departments.
Furthermore, this model advocates the integration of disability issues within
mainstream societal programmes.

**Explanation of terms**

*Who is a person with disability?* Disability specialists prefer to define a person with
disability rather than defining disability. There are two major approaches relating to
explaining who a person with disability is: the medical and the social disability
models. The Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998, gives this definition: “People
with disabilities means people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental
impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement
in, employment.”

In terms of Article 1 of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with
Disabilities, the following explanation is given: “Persons with disabilities include
those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments,
which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

The definition captured in the Employment Equity Act relates to the medical disability model, while the one in the Convention relates to the social disability model. The latter captures the element of barriers hindering the full and effective participation of people with impairments in society. Over and above this, the Convention makes reference to a wider variety of disability categories, i.e. physical, mental, intellectual and sensory disability types.

What is Batho Pele? Batho Pele is an initiative by government to get public servants to be service orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to be committed to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple and transparent mechanism that allows citizens to hold public servants accountable for the level of services they deliver.

Batho Pele is not an “add-on” activity. It is a way of delivering services by putting citizens at the centre of public service planning and operations. It is a major departure from a dispensation that excluded the majority of South Africans from government machinery to one that seeks to include all citizens for the achievement of a better-life-for-all through services, products and programmes of a democratic dispensation.

Policy mandates

There are a number of policy documents requiring the State to equalize opportunities for people with disabilities in South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, Clause 9, refers, among other factors, to the prohibition of unfair discrimination on the basis of disability and the need to put measures in place to redress the situation. The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy of 1997 gives a blueprint on how various government programmes can integrate disability equality. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997 provides a strategy on how to improve access to public services to all citizens, including people with disabilities. Furthermore, the South African government is a signatory to the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006, which outlines the rights of persons with disabilities to be met by different countries.

Service delivery challenges for people with disabilities

Development of the eight Batho Pele principles is geared towards improving service delivery to customers. If they were also implemented effectively for people with disabilities, they could enhance access to public services by the sector. People with disabilities face a number of challenges in accessing public services. The subsequent paragraphs will demonstrate how these challenges come into the picture. I will demonstrate this, using the eight Batho Pele principles.

Consultation: It has been observed that organizations of people with disabilities are consulted only on disability-specific issues and excluded on mainstream issues. Even on disability-specific issues, consultations are rarely made. Historically, government officials believe that they can develop strategies and programmes for people with disabilities from boardrooms. The disability sector has a slogan, “nothing about us without us”, which calls for engagement of the sector in issues affecting the sector.
The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy refers to organizations of people with disabilities as legitimate representatives of this sector. This implies that whoever would like to consult the disability sector should involve these organizations. At a national level, there is a forum known as the National Disability Alliance that embraces all disabled peoples’ organisations.

Over and above this, there is an Office on the Status of Disabled Persons (OSDP) in the Presidency and Offices of Premiers, which can facilitate linkage and consultation with the disability sector.

Access: Access to public services by people with disabilities implies a number of issues, among others: physical access into the building; access to public transport to the service point; ability of government officials to modify service delivery processes to be disability friendly; and ability to communicate with the person with disability.

People with disabilities face the challenge of accessing services from inaccessible buildings and using inaccessible public transport. Many government officials are not trained in how to work with people with disabilities and should perhaps undergo a disability awareness course. Some of them, in trying to assist the person with disability, address an assistant rather than communicating with the disabled customer directly. Sign language is rarely known by customer care officers.

There are some services that require medical proof of disability, e.g. RDP house application, admission to school, tender application, etc. People with disabilities are required to visit doctors, even if they are not ill, just to get medical proof to accompany application forms.

This system puts an unnecessary financial burden and inconvenience on people with disabilities in respect of access to services. The majority of people with disabilities prefer not to attach medical proof and to receive services that are not disability friendly.

Information: The saying that “information is power” cannot be emphasized enough. In most instances, blind and deaf people are disempowered in respect of information not available in Braille or in sign language.

Value for money: Some government officials use this principle to exclude disability aspects from their services. Disability support services are said to be expensive and are, as such, excluded.

Strategies to integrate disability into Batho Pele programmes

The following strategies are suggested to integrate disability equality into Batho Pele programmes:

- Creating awareness of disabled people in Batho Pele programmes.
- Developing a task team to work on disability integration into service delivery improvement programmes.
- Departments/municipalities without disability units should establish them.
- The Department of Public Service and Administration should develop a disability unit that should focus on transversal service delivery improvement programmes.
- Working with organizations of disabled people and the OSDP to mainstream disability into service delivery improvement programmes.
- Training significant numbers of government officials to communicate in sign language.
- Printing and distributing government documents in Braille to blind readers.
- Making more service points accessible in terms of ramps, lifts, parking facilities, toilets and signage.
- Training more government officials in disability management.

Conclusion

People with disabilities are part and parcel of mainstream society and should benefit from Batho Pele programmes. It is possible and it should be made possible for disability integration to become a reality. Every department, municipality and strategic business unit should play a role in achieving the vision of mainstreaming disability.
Affirming **partnerships** between **civil society** and **government**: a Black Sash perspective

*Elroy Paulus of the Black Sash outlines the rights education, advocacy and advice work being done by this organization to help marginalized communities.*

The Black Sash is a 53-year-old human rights organization that continues to empower marginalized communities and individuals to speak for themselves to effect change in their social and economic circumstances. We do this through rights education, advocacy and giving advice nationally and from several regional offices across the country (Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Gauteng, Cape Town and Knysna). We also support several satellite advice offices located in poor communities.

The Black Sash’s work includes rights education that aims to provide knowledge and training to enable vulnerable and marginalized communities to access their social and economic rights at a local level.

Our presentation as the Black Sash hopefully demonstrates the effects of both innovative thinking and affirming partnerships when government and civil society choose to work together constructively, within the true spirit of *ubuntu* on the one hand, and, on the other, the effects and consequences of what happens to our people when government departments “choose to treat the principles of the *Batho Pele* policy framework as an add-on function”.

Some departments, which do not have a direct interface with citizens, think they do not have an obligation to implement *Batho Pele*. Even worse, there are government departments that interact direct with people where, rather than promoting *Batho Pele*, the nature of their interaction has instead alienated people from government and fuelled resentment and distrust of government.

The Black Sash embarked on a new five-year strategic plan in 2008. We have three programmes and three strategies that shape our work. We are of the view that these are likely to succeed quickly if there is a positive response from government (national, provincial, local, or the appropriate public entity, and cooperation between them where necessary) or private sector entity (pension fund, insurance firm or company). These programmes and strategies work toward addressing the identified problems/challenges identified by a community or our organization, as informed by our casework, experience or context.
An overview – problem statements

Collective reflections by Black Sash staff on working relationships with government departments, public entities or public agencies that were in our view good practices and that are useful to emulate and underscore Batho Pele principles, yielded some interesting findings. Key challenges were also identified. The methodologies around these arrangements/ interactions were also insightful. These perspectives were from regional directors, national office staff and paralegals of the Black Sash.

Western Cape perspectives

Firstly, our engagement with the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) since its inception has been largely positive. Social grant administration “has been good for years in the Western Cape”. Access and process have been excellent, although there has been a problem of not having enough staff to address the need. We also reflected on some social insurance challenges.

Our staff have worked in, among others, Lwandle, Masiphumelele, George and Khayelitsha and report that, from the time of application, beneficiaries who qualify typically receive a grant within 21 days (as in the case of Khayelitsha). We are of the view that this has been in part due to the fact that SASSA, as a public entity, acknowledged, signed and committed itself to uphold the Batho Pele principles.
There have certainly been resource problems in the rollout of grants to beneficiaries. At certain service points people are waiting from 03:00 in the morning, largely because of the large number of people applying in certain areas. While the Black Sash has not monitored all service or pay points, there is common agreement that the numbers of people going to a service point are huge, thus creating comprehensive delivery challenges. In trying to understand why people spend such a long time in the queue at these service or pay points, e.g. the Cape Metro, people appear to assume that if they are turned away at a service point (as opposed to the physical pay point)\(^1\), they will have to come back another day.

Staff in our Knysna office report a very different scenario in the coastal and more rural parts of the Western Cape. In the George area (Eden and Karoo districts), people from the many surrounding townships contribute to queues. But this phenomenon is alleviated in these areas, since the services are offered weekly in George and bi-weekly in Knysna. Over and above this, once a week a mobile service visits farms around Knysna. We are of the view that increasing the frequency helps to reduce waiting times drastically.

In our formal monitoring of SASSA, people who fill in monitor sheets indicate that they typically wait between 30 to 60 minutes, some even less than 30 minutes, at pay points – once they are inside the hall.\(^2\)

These insights are based on areas that have been monitored, including, for example, Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Masiphumelele, Lwandle, Plettenberg Bay and Knysna in the Western Cape.

As an organization passionate about promoting a human rights culture in the arena of comprehensive social security, we regularly inform thousands of our clients (who visit our offices) and facilitate workshops in communities (often at their request) about their rights, explaining the various kinds of grants that are available to people in need, and what the criteria are to qualify for these grants.

On a weekly basis, we assist people in addressing bureaucratic, administrative or technical challenges regarding access to these critical services. A casual glance at our website’s “you and your rights section” informs readers with up-to-date fact sheets about nine different types of grants.\(^3\)

However, as with any service, whether public or private, key challenges remain:

- The grant administration appeals process that was previously managed by SASSA, has been removed from this agency. Former Social Development Minister Zola Skweyiya said that the tribunal was based at his Department in Pretoria and would hear cases from all provinces. There is a backlog of about 45 000 cases, most relating to disability grants, which will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis, with KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) prioritized, given the huge backlogs in this process.\(^4\) We remain frustrated that these tribunals have not been set up, except in KZN (8 000 appeals as at July/August). The management of these appeals also appears to be complicated by transfers between provinces.

- Transport issues (as reported from the Knysna area) require critical interventions and cooperation by and between various government departments and entities. Many taxi drivers do not have PDPs or operating permits in this area. However, people are forced to use taxis almost exclusively, since no reliable bus or rail service exists between, for example, George, Knysna and Plettenberg Bay.

Therefore, when an accident occurs, or traffic officers correctly pull over illegal taxi drivers, many traveling workers have serious problems with employers, or have their ability to acquire decent work, or get to work on time, compromised. This problem has been identified as particularly acute in this area, and we want to bring it to government’s attention. There are a plethora of cases we have opened where people struggle to claim from the Road Accident Fund as a result of the conditions described above.

New legislation pending will hopefully begin to address this urgent matter. In the absence of better service and inter-governmental relations, people have informed us that they have to travel to Goodwood if not successful in George, for example.

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\(^1\) Service points are where people go to apply for a grant; pay points refer to where people go to collect manual payment of grants.

\(^2\) Evidence from Cape Town Regional Office’s recent, October 2008 monitoring event.

\(^3\) www.blacksash.org.za - as at 27 October 2008

\(^4\) Business Day – 08 April 2008
Yet, the second highest cause of death in the Western Cape is road accidents. Very recently, the StatsSA publication entitled “Mortality and causes of death in South Africa, 2006: Findings from death notification” makes specific mention in its summary that the second most common cause of non-natural deaths was transport accidents (10.8%).

Figure 4.3: Statistics South Africa, Percentage distribution of natural and non-natural causes of death by age, 2006*

More shocking, however, is that the age cohort within which non-natural deaths occur (43% of all deaths), are young people in the 15-19-year age cohort. Scholars and teenagers are the most affected, with transport accidents playing a very significant role. Failure to address this will impact seriously on the economically active population over the next two to four decades.

These challenges and insights point to urgent interventions required:

- The need to process taxi transport permits urgently and to regulate the industry effectively – in other words, make transport policies people-friendly (and safe for people to use).
- Government services and opportunities to find work must be far more accessible and safely so, for unemployed, vulnerable or marginalized people.
- Claims that “95% of South Africans live within a 5-km radius of a health facility” must be challenged and intervention must not be measured by the existence of a facility or structure, but rather that the quality of these services is adequate and sustainable, and that beneficiaries/patients/people are treated with dignity.6

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* Excluding 1 293 deaths with unspecified age.

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5 StatsSA PO390932006 – 23 October 2008
At the tabling of the 2008 Social Development Budget to the Portfolio Committee for Social Development earlier this year, Minister Skweyiya emphasized the need for pensioners and beneficiaries to be treated with dignity and respect. To make this a reality, we are of the firm view that this requires better intergovernmental relations, cooperation between service providers, national and local government authorities, and local civil society organizations with adequate capacity.

**Eastern Cape experiences and perspectives**

**Insights from the SROD Rights Education Events** – The Black Sash Port Elizabeth Regional Office and local SASSA offices jointly ran radio interviews, informing clients about the Social Relief of Distress (SROD) grant in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. The impact of this was that clients now know about their entitlement to the grant. It is an example of an initiative that holds a government agency accountable to its mandate while simultaneously educating beneficiaries about a specific kind of grant.

Yet, within 130 km of this initiative, the application procedure had a very divergent interpretation of the applicability/eligibility of SROD. This often led to many unnecessary bottlenecks and administrative problems for clients. An example was the uncertainty about whether social worker recommendation was required for an SROD grant (none is required). This reflects poor awareness of policy and regulations, with dire consequences for beneficiaries, especially for beneficiaries in rural areas far from institutions that can help challenge a decision. The total national allocation for SROD was a mere R124 million for 2008/9 – and these funds have run out in certain provinces.

Another “partnership arrangement” this year culminated in the facilitation of very informative one-day training workshops for community leaders, paralegals and advice office workers. One such example was a Debt and Credit Workshop held at Rhodes University, Makana Municipality. It was a joint initiative hosted by the Grahamstown Regional Office and the National Office of the Black Sash, and co-presented by the Economic Affairs Directorate in the Department of Trade and Industry, the National Credit Regulator (NCR), the Competition Commission, the Council for Debt Counsellors and the Credit Ombudsman. The aim was to raise awareness about debt and credit issues following the promulgation of the NCR regulations, to give advice to clients and to inform them about the services (most of which free) offered by various stakeholders.

Important to note was that this initiative was almost entirely paid for by the various stakeholders – thus no additional money needed to be raised to hold this event. Similar workshops were held in KZN and Gauteng. On reflection, there may have been merit in requesting a presentation on the debt and credit management policies of the local and district municipalities.

More recently, the Black Sash Port Elizabeth Regional Office, with support from the National Office, embarked on its new programme (Making human rights real locally – helping to access social services and subsidies through community-based rights education and advocacy initiatives). We are working with a local group of women in KwaNoxolo. Thus far, we have assisted this group in identifying the following advocacy priorities:

- The establishment/building of a health clinic (the closest is more than 8km away);
- getting access to the *Umsobomvu* Fund for skills development and training; and
- working towards a multi-purpose community centre – including an advice centre.

These challenges and insights point to urgent interventions required, including:

- Advocacy and motivations for a massive increase in SROD.
- Greater strategic use of local community radio stations to share important information about socio-economic rights.
- Regular updates to government staff on the implications of new regulations regarding eligibility for grants.
- Improved intergovernmental relations, sharing of information and designing innovative strategies.

**Black Sash Gauteng Regional Office – experiences and insights**

A positive development has been the work of the Gauteng office and local Community-based Organizations (CBOs) and (Non-government Organizations (NGOs) with the City of Johannesburg Municipality. In working with organizations serving asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, a commitment was brokered to ensure that government completes 50 cases per day.

To ensure fairness to applicants from the African diaspora,
the cases seen and addressed were divided by the ratio of applicants from various countries per day. Applicants had their status determined and various stakeholder meetings were facilitated. These arrangements required close working relationships with, among others, the City of Johannesburg Municipality, the Department of Home Affairs, CBOs/NGOs and faith-based organizations.

Challenges include the failure to renew permits timely; a blanket decision on the status determination of, especially, Zimbabweans; a lack of effective communication; and, again, no facilities for sanitation, shelter, water and social protection. These shortcomings invariably open up opportunities where recipients fall prey to, or engage in, acts of corruption and exploitation.

Logically, but thus far not adequately attained, are constructive interventions, including the provision of decent humanitarian facilities, such as shelter while waiting; sanitation facilities; an increased staff complement; a closer partnership with stakeholders in seeking solutions and support; allowing free monitoring regarding access points to produce honest, credible reports on the situation inside camps or holding areas; and respect of enabling laws (and regulations) to be open to providing information.

Black Sash KwaZulu-Natal Regional Offices (Durban and Pietermaritzburg) – experiences and insights

The KZN Black Sash offices work closely with the departments of Social Development, Labour (DoL), Home Affairs, Education and Finance. They also have good working relations with SASSA, the SA Human Rights Commission, local NGO and CBO networks and the local universities.
Highlights include the implementation of SASSA initiatives regarding the 24-hour turn-around time on grant applications; electronic data capturing that facilitates payment to beneficiaries; decentralization of power from district to local offices; and strong, on-going ties with SASSA, the DoL and other government departments.

A good referral strategy is in place with the DoL, which may be responsible for unemployment insurance claims now being processed faster.

Urgent interventions needed include a national strategy for the standardization of norms and standards to be developed on a range of issues (mentioned earlier). These include regular meetings with Directors-General of key government departments, the Mayor’s Office and other relevant government players/officials.

Our methods and strategies promote Batho Pele

Three programmes shape the Black Sash’s work for the next five years.

### Programme 1: Comprehensive Social Security –

Campaigns to close policy gaps and working for the realization of rights. Examples of these include the campaign for the extension of the Child Support Grant to age 18 and working towards a White Paper on Social Security to implement reforms in comprehensive social security proposals.

### Programme 2: Consumer Protection for the Poor –

Building a fair credit and consumer environment in South Africa. Examples of this work include the launch of the debt and credit guide for paralegals and community leaders; submissions to Parliament, the Competition Commission and the Competition Tribunal on food and consumer price fixing, collusion and anti-competitive behaviour; and advocacy towards realizing our recommendations.

### Programme 3: Social Services and Subsidies –

Developing community-based rights education and advocacy towards making human rights real locally. In March 2008, work on this new programme began in five communities or regions that are relatively close to the physical location of our regional offices in the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Gauteng: KwaNoxolo (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality); Welbedacht near Chatsworth in KZN; Zandspruit (Johannesburg); and Du Noon, Masiphumelele and Phillipi (Cape Town).

Examples of this local advocacy work include submissions to the Western Cape provincial legislature on disaster management regulations and related work between civil society and government/international human rights organizations in support of internally displaced persons; beginning to develop an understanding and community profile in areas where we are working to support their local initiatives; and the City of Cape Town municipality’s five-year Integrated Development Plan 2007/8–2008/09 Review.

Three strategies are employed to realize these programmes.

### Strategy 1: Rights Education

Here, individuals and groups are educated and informed about their rights to enable them to take action to access their rights within the area of social protection (social assistance, social insurance, social services and subsidies) and consumer protection (debt and credit).

These include:

- Leaders within unions, community and faith-based organizations and within the paralegal sector who will be trained and supported.
- People who will be educated in queue education sessions, workshops and meetings – and enabled to take action to access them within the area of social and consumer protection.
- People who will be given information through flyer distribution, posters and through the public media to enable them to take action to access their rights to social and consumer protection.

### Strategy 2: Advocacy

Our goal is to have South Africa’s own legislation, policy and delivery systems, supported by appropriate budgets that promote comprehensive social and consumer protection for vulnerable members of our population.
Strategy 3: Advice

The Black Sash assists individuals and groups in exercising their socio-economic rights prescribed by law.

The above programmes and strategies are provided through the work of advocacy programme managers at the Black Sash national office and regional directors and paralegals based at the seven regional offices.

The Black Sash also provides support to satellite offices that have been established in Du Noon (Cape Town) and Njoli (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality), and works with leaders in the paralegal sector.

Lessons learned and way forward from collective reflections

In order to develop a thorough understanding of the new programme’s context and challenges, the Black Sash joined the Good Governance Learning Network (GGLN) in mid-2008.

In a recent consultation with other CBOs and NGOs from other countries in Southern Africa engaged in local governance work, critical insights were gleaned regarding developments in Sub-Saharan Africa – these developments cross-cut service delivery and governance matters in all SADC countries. Briefly, these can be summarized as follows:

- **Decentralization** – what is meant to strengthen local government in reality is decentralization of functions and powers without the concomitant provision (from national government) of adequate resources (finances through taxes). Many organizations were of the view that this ultimately weakens local government, even though it purports to do the opposite.

- **Civil society participation** – the question was asked: “What construes ‘meaningful’ participation?” A proposal was made to assess participation by benchmarking studies on participation. Even the term “civil society” has contested definitions and different meanings.

- **A common theme was the “erosion of real participation due to patronage”** and the politics of national issues dominating at local level. There was also the erosion of low-income earners’ participation and therefore benefits from development initiatives because of the absence of this critical voice.

- **Coordination failure in terms of intergovernmental relations** – similar issues that have led to poor development or some paralysis in delivery.

- **Urbanization rates** in Sub-Saharan Africa are huge – movement across national borders is often uncontrolled. It is an African problem that civil society must help to address – when there is a problem in Angola, Zimbabwe and South Africa, and other countries should have civil society solidarity. We should find ways to have common regional and local coordinated activities.

The above factors have had a serious impact on development challenges in every municipality, province and district in South Africa. This includes our work as the Black Sash.

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7 LogoLink Conference (organized by FCR [secretariat for the GGLN]) – September 2008, Mont Fleur, Stellenbosch
The Black Sash holds two national meetings each year. At these meetings there are serious debates, and recommendations and strategic decisions are made to sharpen our collective efforts to realize the objectives of our five-year strategic plan. The most recent meeting was held in Fish Hoek. This was an extraordinary meeting in that regional directors, executive management, advocacy programme managers, paralegals and administrators were all together for the first time in years. Reflections and recommendations from this meeting were, therefore, particularly useful and insightful.

In preparing this paper, the Black Sash listed the various task teams that need to be bolstered or established to provide direction for realizing the objectives of the new Black Sash programme. These involve working in task teams to produce rights education materials, providing critical information, designing and facilitating workshops and identifying areas for support for community-based advocacy initiatives in the programme dealing with social services and subsidies for good local governance. My colleagues (around 35 staff) then prioritized these task teams and research initiatives as follows:

- Free basic services (water and electricity) and sanitation services.
- Indigency policy.
- Access to clinics – primary health care services.
- No-fee schools and school fee exemptions.
- Disaster management.
- Access to early childhood development.
- Transport.
- Corruption, poor practice and/or delivery mechanisms.
- Other.

The issues listed as “other” in the graph were identified as critical issues. However, at this stage, we do not find it core to our work. Furthermore, they require further research and understanding. These include:

- The need for coordinated and integrated services – interdepartmentally, interprovincially and between the three spheres of government, and with public entities and Chapter 9 Institutions.
- The impact of evictions on households and how and when these are legal. What constitutes legal evictions, rights and responsibilities of occupants and owners of buildings and land? Which organizations exist in the areas we work in that specialize in providing support on these issues?
- What environmental laws, ordinances and by-laws affect marginalized and vulnerable people – and what are the impact and requirements of relatively new legislation, e.g. the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA)?
- Municipal accountability and public participation in policy and delivery formulation and planning. Linked to this is the efficacy of ward committees and other community-led forums.
- A better understanding of the linkages between spatial planning and services, and access to these services (e.g. the absence of street naming in certain areas and the impact this has on emergency medical services reaching people in these areas).
- Moving towards real alignment of policy and practice between national, provincial and local governments.
This list, in our view, points to a plethora of gaps in the delivery of social services and subsidies, often referred to as the “social wage”, and more recently “social endowment”, contributions by government. Often, it is these gaps at a local level that are the last, yet critical factor that, because of its absence or poor implementation, has a cascade effect on other services provided by other spheres of government.

**Recommendations and conclusions**

I want to open my conclusion with the following quotation: “There is a peculiar form of self-abasement amongst development workers – donors and practitioners alike. It begins with the fairly righteous stance that we may not spend money intended for the poor on our own development. So we tend not to make time to learn. Yet, this lack of respect for ourselves as our most important ‘instrument’ in the development project results very quickly in a lack of respect-in-practice for those we claim to service … we value action over learning, often doing things to the poor that are inappropriate, even destructive. The benign and laudable claim that resources should go to those they are intended for quickly becomes a more harmful refusal to learn from experience.”

Partnerships between civil society and government must ensure collegial equality. Unfortunately, this important principle is compromised for a range of reasons. In our experience these include a poor understanding by communities of the role, function, powers and resources of a government department, public entity or agency. Also important is that, more often, funders (at times this includes government) call the shots, or the pursuit of money rather than public service, dominates decisions and discussions – Batho Pele principles cannot thrive under these circumstances. Here is also a lack of appreciating the real value of social grants, services and subsidies – namely that these, when made available to people who previously did not have/could not access these critical services, are able to help and enable poor people to participate in the economy, and become less dependent on the State, i.e. break the cycle of dependency.

In the light of the above, the social wage is therefore a poverty reduction strategy that must be realized by all government departments. The public servant must realize that to conform to Batho Pele principles, they must make significant attempts to engage with people in their municipality, district or province direct. Remaining in an office and trying to alleviate/eradicate poverty is not possible.

New initiatives by government, such as the implementation of the Public Transport Plan, youth development strategy, reform proposals in comprehensive social protection, improving access to free basic services and other initiatives provide ample opportunities for government departments to work together more closely and invite participation by organized community structures.

Guidelines for participatory information gathering, rights education and service delivery with local communities include:

- Consultation – sharing information, skills and experience. Government requires information from people that they do not know about, people require information, services and resources that they need – it requires a spirit of sharing.
- Transparency – “tell us again who you are, what you are doing, again and again” – often the best of intentions are compromised by the manner in which information is shared (or withheld). Sometimes information that is hidden or not shared eventually results in mistrust and animosity;
- Voluntary participation – often many decisions are made for people, rather than with them.
- Accountability – “how can we ever know what you are really doing?” – build bridges to ensure accountability, e.g. translate materials, report back continuously, allow communities to choose monitoring committees.

We as the Black Sash has the humble view that government officials would find great merit and become far more effective if direct engagement with people, especially the poor, vulnerable and marginalized, is sought rather than outsourcing or privatizing the service, as has been the habit of many. We wish to work together with government to make human rights real for all.

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8 Measuring Development (CDRA, 2001 pp 10-11)
9 Ideas for Development – Robert Chambers (EarthScan 2005) p.172
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Toronto Primary School is located in Sovenga, which falls in the Capricorn District in Limpopo. The mission of the school is to ‘attain and maintain a high standard of education through dedication, innovation and excellence in teaching and learning’. It is committed to community involvement and capacity building for learners, teachers and members of the community. The Toronto Permaculture Project is one of the areas through which the school seeks to advance its mission.

The permaculture initiative is a programme in which we try to follow ecological concepts to maximize production while, at the same time, dealing with the mindsets of people about the environment and sustainability. The main objective of the project is, therefore, environmental education. Within this, there are elements that we earmarked, such as poverty, climate change, food security and curriculum development.

We felt that, for a person to be productive there should be a programme that could be followed. Furthermore, a methodology for following such a programme had to be developed. In this regard, the school chose to follow greening as a programme and methodology. Greening is divided into two categories, namely ordinary planting and mind screening. Through this initiative, we sought to drive the development of the curriculum and respond to environmental issues such as climate change. In fact, I cannot boldly state that the school adopted greening, mainly because it is one of the key strategies of regulating climate change and energy.

To ensure the sustainability of the project, we created a basket of stakeholders. In fact, the strength of the Toronto project attracted local and national institutions, and also got the support of the political leadership in the province. The stakeholders included institutions such as Food and Trees for Africa; Woolworths; the departments of Environment and Tourism; Traffic and Safety; Education; Health; Agriculture; and Water Affairs and Forestry, and of course the local community who is an indispensable stakeholder. Each of these stakeholders had a specific role to play in the project. This is mainly because the permaculture method is like a basket that can accommodate a number of concepts.
The methodology catered for Indigenous Knowledge Systems by encouraging the use of herbs, medicinal plants and wild fruits, such as marula processing. Concerning the latter, we have an old woman who teaches the children in the school how to process marula.

The school modified the original permaculture method. Some elements have been added, while others have been compromised to suit the climate of Limpopo. For example, the school uses a borehole as an alternative form of irrigation, and as a result, our garden is able to survive severe drought conditions.

Toronto Primary School also runs activities beyond the school premises, such as gardening and feeding schemes in the community and assists in curriculum development.

With its gardening activities, the school empowers parents to start household gardens to ensure that there is a constant supply of food in families. The cultivation of herbs and medicinal plants in household gardens is also encouraged, as is the planting of vegetables that can be used as both a food source and as herbs. We also encourage the breeding of egg-laying chickens. This industry provides families with manure for their gardens, as well as with meat and eggs. Furthermore, milk goats have been supplied, which are used to provide milking skills to orphans.

The second activity that the school runs is the feeding scheme. From its gardens, the community is able to augment its own feeding schemes, which comprise mainly vegetables and indigenous fruits. The school initiated this project to address the loopholes in the nutrition policy creating a hand-out mind-set for survival. This is made worse by government departments that are supporting hand-outs, rather than providing skills to communities that will enable them to feed themselves.

In terms of curriculum development, the school provides guidance to institutions of higher learning such as the University of Limpopo on how gardening can be used as a learning tool. It identified that the curriculum is failing the ‘how’ part of survival and only providing production mechanisms. The school uses its learners to present Toronto’s permaculture methods to all stakeholders that are keen to learn more about the learning aspects of the initiative.

**Recommendations and conclusion**

Under the present climatic conditions, which are a problem to everyone including scientists, we recommend that all schools look at the implementation of permaculture concepts. Institutions such as Food and Trees for Africa are ready to assist emerging schools and communities in this regard. As a result of this initiative, the Capricorn district has, to date, established 22 greening projects in clinics and 43 in primary schools. This illustrates good integration and partnership between the departments of Education, Health and Social Development.

I want to conclude by stating that the curriculum should not only address the classroom situation; it should also address survival. If the lion cannot teach the young ones how to survive, they will die. The same applies to a child. To merely feed children at school through the current feeding schemes is not the solution. This is our message to the Department of Education and other departments.
Since the 1990s, multiple advances in HIV treatment have resulted in improvements in health outcomes for HIV positive persons and the reduction of transmission – most notably the introduction of highly active antiretroviral treatment. Treatment has also been linked with survival. Due to treatment advances by 2003, studies have projected a per-person survival increase of 13.3 years in treated vs. untreated individuals. World-wide there are currently an estimated 44 million people who are HIV positive, 5.5 million of whom live in South Africa. One thousand people die of AIDS in South Africa every day.

Unfortunately, rural people remain the most marginalized group in South Africa. Poor access to health care, high unemployment and a poor average skill set are common problems hundreds of thousands of rural people experience. Madwaleni Hospital is situated in just such a deep rural area – the Mbashe subdistrict (260 000 population) in the Amathole District (two million population) of the Eastern Cape (seven million population). Of the 130 000 people that currently have access to the HIV programme, HIV prevalence is estimated at 15-18%.

Research has shown that low health literacy among HIV positive individuals is both a barrier to effective self-care and an added stress. The concept of “HIV wellness” must, therefore, be a pursuable goal for HIV positive individuals and society as a whole, incorporating the populist antiretroviral rollout.

**Methods and interventions**

The HIV team at Madwaleni recognized that a health care model had to be implemented to look beyond the vital antiretroviral rollout in an attempt to promote HIV wellness among those infected and affected by the virus. An HIV programme was started in mid-2005 to try to address the HIV burden the community faced. The pillars of the Madwaleni HIV programme comprise voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) and the HIV Wellness Programme – one aspect of which is an antiretroviral (ARV) programme.

The team recognized the inadequacy of clients accessing VCT at health facilities alone. As a result, VCT coverage is limited and biased towards those presenting late in the course of their HIV disease – they are then more difficult to manage and utilize a disproportionate share of health resources. The HIV site coordinator devised a solution in the form of VCT outreach at disability grant pay-points each month. Data...
shows that high numbers were reached in this way, including a wide range of age groups and both genders.

HIV support groups form the backbone of the Programme in an attempt to promote patient advocacy, informed consent and openness/transparency as promoted by both the Patients Rights Charter and the principles of Batho Pele. The Madwaleni team believes there is no choice in the promotion of a forum of this kind; one that is integrated with the provision of health services. Adults, children and pregnant women are catered for to varying degrees, including a Paediatric ARV Treatment (PART) clinic and High Risk antenatal clinic tackling the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

The Programme is decentralized to seven of the 26 clinics in the subdistrict. The Magdalena health professionals team “supports the support groups” through capacitating a group of counsellors who run the support groups, and clinic visits once or twice a month. As of mid 2008, HIV Wellness Programme members amount to approximately 2 500, of whom 1 200 are on antiretroviral treatment. Although antiretrovirals currently receive most of the attention in the world of HIV, any HIV programme must in itself be holistic, including interfacing with other hospital and district health programmes.

Other such programmes include a new Home-Based Care Programme and an Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme. The Madwaleni experience demonstrates an enhancement of patient care and a guard against HIV team staff burnout where these programmes work hand-in-hand.

As realized with VCT, the importance of early access to health care in the course of the HIV disease was seen as applicable to in-patients at Madwaleni. A three-tiered model of care was introduced. It incorporates HIV education for all, but distinctions are made between ARV preparation and prescription and provision is made for in-patients, preparing an in-patient for ARV out-patient start and a small in-patient group started solely at doctor’s discretion without counseling.

The health research company, Aurum Health (the President’s
Expanded Programme for AIDS Relief Funding) and the Donald Woods Foundation are now partners. Funding is provided towards assisting different aspects of the Programme, but this assistance is given within a strictly government framework.

**Lessons learned**

Programme membership has grown, but the novelty has worn off and some “ARV veterans” are reluctant to remain involved. Lessons were learned about the low conversion rate from testing positive at VCT to joining the Wellness Programme. Hence, remedial action was taken. Another concern is the high proportion on ARVs.

The important challenge is to understand why people join the Programme and why they do not. It would be important to evaluate the perceived worth of the HIV support group as the core entity of the Programme. Interventions could then be implemented and renewed efforts made to increase the numbers joining the Programme earlier, reduce the percentage of patients on ARVs (while increasing the absolute number), and time the ARV starts appropriately while patients were still relatively asymptomatic.

Examples of vital requirements for the successful running of the Programme include the following in place at Madwaleni:

- A systems-orientated approach to running the HIV Programme;
- database support of patient management;
- counselor-led support groups and education helping to ensure very low numbers of patients are lost-to-follow-up; and
- an accessible and confidential HIV staff programme (although the numbers coming forward for VCT need to increase).

To the above can be added examples where the Madwaleni HIV Programme is lacking:

- Adequate support from the Human Resources function;
- challenges with the procurement function that hinder the provision of services;
- enough vehicles for the transport of patients and staff as part of a decentralized programme; and
- full integration of the HIV Programme within the out-patients function.

There is ongoing debate about the goal of broadening the access to the HIV Programme to PHC level conflicting with the goal of increasing the range of services offered. Both must be attempted, but initial piloting of new initiatives on a small scale is vital to ensure optimum use of resources in the long run. The merits of the HBC and OVC programmes falling under the coordination of the HIV programme manager are also being debated.

Regular communication between stakeholders at the levels of province, district, subdistrict, hospital, PHC and the community is vital but logistically difficult to and from Madwaleni owing to poor telecommunications in a geographically isolated area. Communication challenges extend to the marketing and promotion of the HIV care available in this community, as well as the necessity of innovative ways to enquire about patients considered lost-to-follow-up.

One extremely important lesson learned concerns project management and leadership.

The recent Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) for nurses resulted in higher salaries paid to nursing health professionals actively engaged in clinical duties. This is vital to attract and retain clinical staff within the public sector. At Madwaleni, the individual employed in the government post of ARV Assistant Director holds advanced qualifications in a non-clinical field. This is unique, since all other sites have nursing staff occupying this post. However, at Madwaleni, this role has evolved to focus on programme development and strategy (particularly concerning the vital objective of decentralization), database development and implementation, plus monitoring and evaluation of government/NGO budgets.

There is ongoing debate whether this post should qualify for OSD, but the debate is moot if occupied by a non-nurse. Were a nurse in the post, she/he would gravitate towards clinical duties in the interests of attempting to qualify for OSD salary increases (whether or not successful) at the expense of strategy and overall project management. At Madwaleni, the success of the Programme is in no small part owing to the qualifications, experience and capabilities of the incumbent, but there is a danger of suitably qualified candidates not applying for the role in future, given the low salary.

A solution is to divide the strategy/development and the clinical functions between two posts on the government
organogram. This can apply to other areas outside HIV; the “strategy” post can be replicated across TB care, outpatients and maternity departments and at other hospitals. The current Assistant Director post can principally remain a clinical role including the running of the HIV department and managing the training of health professionals.

A potential pitfall to avoid would be duplication of the two strategy functions at subdistrict and hospital level. The Donald Woods Foundation agreed to finance the first of these “strategy” posts at Madwaleni Hospital as a pilot exercise from October 2008.

Conclusion

Staff at the hospital started the HIV Programme two years ago based on some limited benchmarking with other local programmes (Lusikisiki and Queenstown Frontier Hospital). In addition, staff submitted an article for inclusion in the June 2006 edition of the *SA HIV Clinicians Journal* extolling the worth of a support-group-based wellness programme. However, a critical academic analysis of the effectiveness of the model has not been done, especially documenting the members’ perceptions of the success of the Programme. Plans are in place to undertake this research, but while much had to be learned and modified since programme inception, definitive successes are evident.
Embracing Batho Pele as an integral part of Municipal Business: A Case Study of the Ugu District Municipality

– By Dr Justice Ngesi, Ugu District Municipality

Ugu District Municipality (DM) is one of ten districts in KwaZulu-Natal and has six local municipalities. It has a population of about 738 504, 84% of whom is rural, with a lot of spatial inequalities. The key services provided are basic water and sanitation.

As one of the three spheres of government, legislation requires Ugu DM to implement Batho Pele to improve service delivery. Section 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, provides for the universal right of citizens to...
access to information held by the State to facilitate the exercise or protection of any right, for example, the right to access public services in an equitable, convenient and cost-effective manner, as provided for in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995.

These legislative frameworks compel all spheres of government to align their service delivery mandates and service delivery improvement plans with the overall service delivery priorities of the government, based on the needs of citizens. They further call for the formulation of service standards, the definition of outputs and targets and the benchmarking of performance indicators against international standards.

Consequently, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) team conducted a workshop for the Ugu and Sisonke municipalities to enable them to roll out the Batho Pele Change Management Engagement (BPCME).

Identifying the problem

In identifying and dealing with the problem, we started by looking internally and soliciting the sentiments of our own staff members. We were amazed by the level of frustration and lack of morale that were present in our organisation. Staff members pointed out that:

• Supervisors were demanding and inconsiderate.
• Supervisor interactions with staff were not empowering, but rather frustrating.
• Managers instilled fear in employees, and, as such, became unapproachable and not supportive.
• The workplace was discriminatory, upsetting and very stressful.
• The workplace was very frustrating because actions were not acknowledged and appreciated, and, therefore, no praise was forthcoming for a job well done.
• The workplace was boring and employees were treated like strangers.
• Mistakes were punishable without any consultation.

Based on these findings, we agreed that we had a problem in the back office. It further manifested itself when a customer asked for a refund. He was told that it would take four to eight weeks for a refund to be processed. He returned after eight weeks, very irate, to ask about the delay. The frontline official went to investigate the cause of the delay in the back office. She was told that they were busy with other things and that signing the cheque was not a priority. She was also not told when the cheque would be ready, since there were other important things to be done. She was scared to talk to the customer and wondered what had happened to Batho Pele in the back office if customers had to put up with such poor service. We received a range of complaints from communities in similar vein, among which:

• Poor service in the sense of customers waiting too long without being served.
• Dissatisfaction with water quality and lack of water.
• Irregular deliveries by water delivery trucks.
• Burst pipes that were not attended to immediately.
• Distant pipes, which necessitated walking long distances to fetch water.
• Lack of development such as roads and houses.
• Municipal buildings appearing physically unfriendly.

We had to come up with an intervention to address these concerns. We, therefore, resolved on a renewed implementation of Batho Pele in the municipality.

Strategic Intervention: Batho Pele Implementation Plan

Our intervention strategy focused on the eight principles of Batho Pele and an implementation strategy was developed for each of the principles. We also tried to mainstream the Batho Pele principles through budget road shows, izimbizo and other public meetings. We further cascaded Batho Pele principles to all staff and included Batho Pele presentations in all orientation workshops. Lastly, we also adopted an annual customer and staff survey.

For the principle of consultation, we focused on communicating the Batho Pele change management concept to extended top management, top management and EXCO through presentations.

On the principle of redress, we designed a template/form for suggestion boxes, formulated clear instructions on the usage thereof and encourage clients to make use of this medium. The boxes are collected on a weekly basis, the data captured and complaints referred to relevant managers. We acknowledge receipt of any complaints received in this way within 14 working days.

Concerning the principle of access, we updated our web site; procured appropriate sign boards indicating the location of offices; facilitated the launch of an Internet site; established
a toll-free helpline in all satellite offices; and refurbished offices to make them disability friendly.

To address the principle of **courtesy**, we advocated for ongoing exposure of staff to training on customer care and emotional intelligence workshops. We introduced name tags for frontline staff and endeavoured to change staff attitudes through exposure to *Batho Pele* training workshops.

On **openness and transparency**, we embarked on a campaign to inform the public who our heads of departments are. We also distributed annual reports to the public and the *Ugu News* to both staff and members of the public. Any additional developments/changes are communicated to staff at monthly staff meetings. We also keep clients and staff informed about policies, procedures and budget changes.

To address the principle of **information**, we launched the intranet site; update the Internet web site regularly; continue with radio slots, especially on Ukhozi and Sunny South; and distribute internal and external quarterly newsletters.

To address **service standards**, we developed a service standard manual and distributed it to all departments. We also communicate standards to the public through *Ugu News*.

Lastly, in dealing with the principle of **value for money**, we are enforcing expenditure controls. We also arranged a workshop with the procurement component to agree on acceptable procedures and improved both internal and external change processes.

I have mentioned that staff members are given training on *Batho Pele*. I just want to describe the training briefly. As a first action, frontline staff and supervisors are sent open-ended, projective questionnaires intended to assess their conscious and subconscious needs. The training progrannemmes are then packaged accordingly and based on identified needs.

**Batho Pele flagship projects**

We have initiated a range of *Batho Pele* flagship projects to ensure that we entrench the *Batho Pele* principles in our daily conduct of work. One of these flagship projects is the **Municipal Service Week**. The Municipal Service Week was implemented to expose top and middle managers to service delivery challenges by deploying them to the coal face of service delivery. It also intends to identify frontline challenges and develop plans for corrective action, and to encourage the senior managers of all municipalities to interface with citizens. It also seeks to take some EXCO members to service sites for observation.

The other flagship project that we have embarked on is the **Know Your Service Rights Campaign**. The campaign was implemented to promote awareness about citizens’ rights concerning the level of municipal services they receive and to educate citizens about appropriate actions that can be taken when such rights are infringed on. It was also implemented to exert positive pressure on the Municipality and its officials to foster a people-and-service-centred culture that would elicit the requisite behaviour and attitude. Moreover, it seeks to emphasize the need to strengthen
partnerships between the people and the Municipality in the delivery of services, thereby ensuring citizen participation.

The third and last flagship project I want to highlight is the Service Delivery Improvement Plan (SDIP). The SDIP was developed in 2007/2008 and reviewed in the 2008/2009 financial year. A budget has been allocated to it and it is linked to the performance contracts of every section 57 employee. Hence, it is in all departmental scorecards. Bi-monthly reviews are conducted to monitor the implementation of the SDIP. The departmental awards, in terms of PMS policy, will be given to the department that best implemented the SDIP.

**Impact of the intervention**

Most significant have been increased accolades from the public. For example, Sbusiso Graham wrote to us and said: “I would like to congratulate the following employees Mrs. Sidaki, Mrs. Ncama, Mrs. Msomi and Dr. Mabuyi Mnguni. Their standard of service is very high; they take care of us the NGOs they respond quickly. We request that they get promotion until they are at Parliament because they are hard workers. We, Masakhane Organization have grown although we do not have our own buildings because they encourage us. Forward our heroes! The Municipality can increase help to those who are disadvantaged due to the virus (Sbusiso Graham Mtshali Private Bag X38366Izingolweni 4260072 782 4274).”

A similar letter was received from Tembe who wrote: “This is an appraisal. I’ve been having water problem for six months not getting help. In January I was help by a child with good manner of approach, who listened when I reveal my problem. Stating that I’ve been reporting often. The child gave me the reference number of 02/01/024/TM and the problem was solved and we got water properly. This child bothered to phone and find out if we were satisfied. Thank you very much. Although I have forgotten the surname but the name is Thabile (N.E. Tembe Mbayimbayi Location-MurchisonOffice: 10188743039 687 7428).”

The last letter I would like to quote is anonymous and it reads as follows: “I was once sick in a way that I was referred to one of Ugu offices where I was going to get a person to advise me what to do when things are in this situation. I would like to thank a lady who welcomed me with overwhelming love her name is Mrs. N Mkhize. She counseled me with great patience and love. I even decided to go to the hospital after being traditionally medicated. I would like to pass my sincere thank and gratitude to Mrs. Mkhize. I say long live
Mrs Mkhize in your care about the people. The fact that I’m still alive is because of you. Thank you may God bless you.”

With these accolades, there has also been an increase in the number of complaints the public brought to the Municipality. In July 2007, only 44 service delivery complaints were received. This number increased in November, when 148 complaints were received. To me, this marked the impact of the Know Your Service Rights Campaign. However, by June 2008, service delivery complaints dropped to 130, and mainly concerned access, courtesy, information, consultation and openness.

Other flagship projects also shows signs of positive impact. For example, as a result of the Municipal Service Week, management seems to have gained insight into the work dynamics on the ground. This has influenced policy formulation on aspects like overtime for the VTS employees and fleet management. There is also a marked shift from a top-down approach to a bottom-up approach in management. On their part, employees welcome the initiative as an opportunity to build positive relationships with top management.

Consultation with staff and the wider community is also beginning to contribute towards a credible Integrated Development Plan, with the public being much more responsive to change.

Lessons learned

Through this initiative, we have learned that for a programme to take off and succeed, it must be located in the Municipal Manager’s office and fully supported by top management. Furthermore, we are convinced that a visionary municipal manager is central to the success of a project of this nature.

We have also learned that Batho Pele is not just about service with a smile, but about concrete service delivery.

We noted that an intervention like the Know Your Service Rights Campaign will be met with scepticism on the part of top management, because it may, indeed, make things worse for the service provider and we learned that there was a big gap between top management and employees, and Head Office and satellite offices.

We further learned that it helps to start with your internal customers (staff) so that you can prepare them to face irate, external customers. In addition, we established that some employees and people are not easily receptive to change.

Lastly, it was unveiled that policies developed without proper consultation were not effective.

Conclusion

Batho Pele is continuous service delivery and customer care. It is about our commitment, the values of ubuntu and a change in attitude towards our people. This change and customer care begin with the individual from where they spread to others at home, at work and into the world. Let us all work together as South Africans, and strive to enhance our performance and work ethics to reach world-class standards by putting people first.
Building **Infrastructure Planning and Management Capacity through the Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme**

--- By Jan Koster, Development Bank of Southern Africa

President Zuma strongly emphasized the relationship between socio-economic growth and development and infrastructure delivery in his recent State of the Nation address to Parliament. Infrastructure delivery is crucial in supporting the Government’s objective of extending access to social services to the poor and especially to rural communities.

Provincial governments are primarily responsible for the delivery of social infrastructure through the education, health and the road sectors. However, as early as 2000/01, it became evident to the South African government that this objective could not be achieved by only increasing the infrastructure funding flows provided in the form of conditional grants (such as the Provincial Infrastructure Grant) and an enhanced equitable share to provide for the stepping up of infrastructure for health, education and roads in the provinces. It became evident that public assets do not get built qualitatively if provincial governments only receive more funds and the funding does not coincide with sufficient capacity to plan and manage the delivery of infrastructure effectively and efficiently. Therefore, the precondition for providing the right infrastructure that will contribute to growth and development, is building the right enabling environment in all its dimensions.

Public sector spending, which is generally directed at basic bulk infrastructure, is economically important. It creates multiplier effects for the economy and stimulates private sector investment. However, providing and maintaining infrastructure have a greater significance. It is about sustaining and strengthening South Africa’s young democracy. The government has done much to transform the public service and improve service delivery by introducing new legislation and raising infrastructure budgets. However, the actual spending on physical infrastructure is hampered by bottlenecks, red tape and a lack of skills.

“Infrastructure delivery is crucial in supporting the Government’s objective of extending access to social services to the poor and especially to rural communities. … However, providing and maintaining infrastructure have a greater significance. It is about sustaining and strengthening South Africa’s young democracy.” – Jan Koster, Development Bank of Southern Africa
Responding to infrastructure delivery challenges

The South African government initiated the Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme (IDIP) in 2004 to support the improvement of provincial government capacity to plan and manage infrastructure delivery in the health and education sectors. The IDIP is being implemented through a multi-stakeholder partnership between the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), the national Departments of Health, Education and Public Works, and the National Treasury. This partnership, which has been established at national government level, has been extended to the provincial government departments of Public Works, Health and Education, as well as the provincial Treasuries, with the objective of promoting cooperative governance for infrastructure planning and management in the health and education sectors.

The IDIP is a capacity-building programme designed to address the causes of the problems related to the planning and management of public sector infrastructure delivery. It aims to give the provincial departments of Public Works, Education and Health the appropriate management systems, and to support them with the development of appropriate skills to plan and manage infrastructure well.

The IDIP has been implemented in phases. The first phase, which started in July 2004, was implemented as a pilot that developed and tested the methodologies and tools used to build and sustain capacity in the host departments. The second phase commenced in June 2006. Taking on board the lessons learned in the pilot phase, a well-conceived programme approach and management system was developed for the full roll-out and implementation of the Programme.

The IDIP methodology is based on a programme cycle approach, which consists of the following interrelated phases:

- assessment and design, which entailed the development of a business case for IDIP support to the targeted departments in each province;
- inception; and
- implementation.

The programme cycle for the IDIP is embedded in a continuous monitoring, reporting and review process to measure progress, effectiveness and impact. It is implemented through provincial technical assistant teams with multi-disciplinary skills that work closely with provincial officials, thereby enabling the transfer of skills. It is unique for a programme of a highly technical nature such as the IDIP to also provide experts who assist with the management of change and the intended and unintended consequences of the systems and learning introduced through the Programme.
A decentralised programme management system has been established with a Programme Management Unit (PMU) consisting of representatives from all the national partners and provincial management systems. Its responsibility is the management of the IDIP in the different provinces on a day-to-day basis.

**The IDIP’s unique offerings**

The IDIP operates in a largely dysfunctional infrastructure delivery management system characterized by uncertainty about the responsibilities and functions of departments in relation to infrastructure delivery. As a consequence, departments tend to operate in silos and they do not adhere to the principles of co-operative government and intergovernmental relations, which are stated in Chapter 3 of the Constitution. The absence of interrelated national and provincial infrastructure strategies and priorities as a key component of the infrastructural delivery management system implies that infrastructure delivery is not anchored in government’s strategic intent regarding infrastructure delivery and is, therefore, “floating”.

The IDIP offers real benefits to its partners, mainly because the Programme has developed and tested uniquely South African systems and tools for the enhancement of infrastructure delivery. These systems and tools include the IDIP Toolkit, which ensures appropriate infrastructure planning; the Infrastructure Alignment Model, which ensures alignment between infrastructure priorities, plans and budgets; and the Infrastructure Reporting Model. Elements of Module 2 of the IDIP Toolkit have been enacted in the Division of Revenue Act.

Skills development is being facilitated through the deployment of technical assistant teams to each province. However, the IDIP’s capacity building is not only focused on the development of the skills and competencies of relevant officials, but also on the development of dedicated organizational capacity in departments and cooperation and coordination between departments.

The IDIP has demonstrated good progress since its inception. It enjoys high-level leadership support at both a national and a provincial level. With its focus on improved capacity of government to plan and implement infrastructure delivery, the IDIP is a well-established vehicle for promoting sustainable socio-economic development and growth.

**The benefits of the IDIP are:**

- It enables beneficiary departments to identify gaps and inconsistencies in their infrastructure delivery systems, design a solution and appreciate their role in resolving their capacity constraints;
- establishes a well-functioning programme management system that ensures effective allocation and utilization of resources;
- enhances cooperative governance and teamwork among role players;
- provides tools to guide the prioritization of infrastructure needs, planning and budgeting and to ensure the alignment between infrastructure priorities, plans and budgets; and
- it provides a knowledge-sharing and lesson-learning facility and a network that provides access to building the following expertise: infrastructure planning; budgeting; monitoring and reporting; programme and project management; procurement; change management; organisational development; capacity building and service delivery management systems.
The Minister of Finance commissioned an independent, international review of the Programme in March 2009 and the Review Team found “that IDIP as a Programme has already made significant interim impacts in its immediate as well as beneficiary environment in the limited period that it has operated. These impacts include the establishment of a significant technical and planning capacity at the national and provincial level, the use of IDIP monitoring and reporting results as a qualitative instrument by National Treasury and the institutionalization of sound systems and processes, including a toolkit in order to establish long-term sustainability in Provinces”.

The Review Team also found that a number of best practice innovations have been apparent in the Programme and it is recommended that case studies be developed in these areas. In so doing, these lessons may become available in written format for consideration by future programmes to promote further knowledge management sharing practices. In particular, and in addition to comments already made, the following best practices were identified:

- The establishment and development of the IDIP as a technical assistance programme is regarded as a best-practice example of how support programmes should be developed and managed. It was found that the initial pilot phase, the assessment and design phase, and the inception phase followed by the implementation phase, constituted a best-practice example of thorough preparation and planning.
- The development and implementation of the Change Enablement Model are regarded as best-practice examples of the management of change. Although some problems were encountered in the provinces, the national IDIP PMU provided excellent guidance in this respect.
- The development and use of the infrastructure toolkit remains a pivotal cornerstone of the IDIP. The application and use of the toolkit in the provinces have already impacted on the efficiency of provincial infrastructure delivery.
- The Review has shown that capacity building takes a longer time at the organizational or institutional level than at the individual level. Organisational capacity building lags behind technical training.

The Review Team noted that a culture of evaluation and self-criticism is not well-developed in the South African public sector and that the IDIP has set an example of the effective use of evaluation regarding technical assistance programmes through the development of business cases, the initial review and commissioning the Medium-Term-Review, of which this exercise forms part. The practice of conducting evaluations in the IDIP is regarded as a best-practice example of how monitoring, reporting and review should be conducted in programmes of this nature.

Lessons learned

- The success of capacity-building programmes is closely linked to the way in which they originated. From the initial design phase of the IDIP, there was high-level buy-in and commitment from senior political leaders and senior managers in the Public Service.
- The participative approach that was followed during the design process created a solid base for the development of strong partnerships during the remainder of the Programme.
The Programme is embedded in the strategic priorities of government, which prevented it from “floating” and which enhanced institutionalization.

The IDIP has clear objectives and indicators for the measurement of progress against each objective, which remained mostly unchanged. This helped the Programme to steer through political leadership and public service management changes.

It is important for programme partners and beneficiaries to develop a common understanding of the preferred future the Programme is intended to create. This assists in building smart partnerships built around a common vision for the future.

Changing political support into administrative action is difficult. The challenges posed by moving from design to implementation are straining the partnerships that were built during the design phase.

There is benefit in having strong national partnerships at the national level that could ensure the alignment of the Programme with national priorities and “protect” the provincial initiatives of the Programme from being hijacked by strong personalities and/or vested interests.

There is a similar benefit in having credible and capable provincial partners who can assure that the Programme meets the needs of the benefiting provincial departments.

Capacity building with the aim of enhancing infrastructure management is not merely about the filling of vacant public service posts and training of staff. It requires a comprehensive approach that, among others, also embraces the development of management systems and approaches and appropriate organizational designs for infrastructure delivery planning and management.

The existing and preferred infrastructure delivery management processes must be mapped to create a better understanding of the different phases of the process and to understand that different government entities have different roles to play during the process. Too often departments follow silo approaches that are to the detriment of the constitutional principle of cooperative governance.

Enhancing infrastructure planning by government departments will have limited success if infrastructure planning is not aligned with strategic priorities for infrastructure delivery and the multi-year budget cycle. Too often infrastructure plans are developed for purposes of complying with legislative requirements without being anchored in strategic priorities and the multi-year budget. This means that they are ignored or randomly changed.

Since capacity building and change programmes like the IDIP do not start on a clean slate, but are actually interventions by existing institutions to change the way infrastructure is managed, the development of a change management model to navigate the intended and unintended impact of the Programme assists in managing resistance and institutionalizing the systems and approaches that are being introduced.
The main purpose of the CBR Project is to bring appropriate peer support and counselling services to people with disabilities and their families where they live, and to increase access to relevant information and social services in general.

Demystifying Disability: A Community-based Rehabilitation Project in Mpumalanga

Pringle Mhlabane, Rehabilitation and Disability Services, Mpumalanga Department of Health and Social Service, found the province’s CBR project exhilarating, frustrating, overwhelming, revolutionary and a real rollercoaster.

Mpumalanga, which means ‘Land of the Rising Sun’, borders on Mozambique and Swaziland in the east, Limpopo in the north, Gauteng in the west and KwaZulu-Natal in the south. It has an estimated 3.4 million citizens, with the majority living on farms and in deep rural areas.

The province is divided into three districts: There is the Gert Sibande District comprising the impoverished deep rural areas around Swaziland’s southern border. It has large farming communities, the industrial hub around Sasol and is the home of a few coal mines. The second is the Nkangala District, which consists of the impoverished deep rural areas of the former KwaNdebele and parts of the former Bophuthatswana and Lebowa Bantustans. There are also large farms and the wealthy provincial towns of Witbank and Middelburg. The third district is the Ehlanzeni District, which consists of the impoverished deep rural areas of the former KaNgwane, Gazankulu and Lebowa Bantustans, wealthy citrus and sugarcane farms, scenic areas with great tourism potential, and the capital city of the province, Nelspruit.

In 1997, the Mpumalanga Department of Health and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) signed a service level agreement to pilot the Community-based Rehabilitation Project (CBR) in the Ehlanzeni (Lowveld) District at a cost of R67 000 for the first year.

Disabled People South Africa Mpumalanga, an organization for disabled people, accepted responsibility to control, manage and administrate the Project. This includes employing, capacitating and supporting disabled CBR Field Workers, accounting for the funds received and ensuring that the project objectives are achieved. The Mpumalanga Department of Health provides funds, collaborates and supports the implementation of the CBR Project and ensures that people with disabilities who are referred to formal rehabilitation services receive the assistance requested.

The Mpumalanga CBR Model

The vision of the Project is to contribute to poverty alleviation among people with disabilities, their families and communities by empowering them with information,
peer support and skills that will enable them to champion their own development, advocate for the removal of barriers that hinder their full participation in community activities, and that will ultimately lead to a better quality of life.

The main purpose of the CBR Project is to bring appropriate peer support and counselling services to people with disabilities and their families where they live, and to increase access to relevant information and social services in general.

The employment of disabled activists as frontline workers (field workers) ensures that people with disabilities and their families are able to relate better to the information provided to them, and to speak more freely about their fears and needs. This is critical for the successful re-integration of people with disabilities into their communities. It also plays an important role in transforming the attitudes of professional service providers who often find it difficult to relate to people with disabilities as equals. The presence of disabled activists in service delivery teams creates a platform for equal relations.

CBR is both an evolutionary and a revolutionary process. In terms of being evolutionary, we started out small; experimented; learned from one another; learned to listen and trust; built on available skills and knowledge; and grew with the project. In a revolutionary sense, we aim to go where no one has gone before, namely to integrate grassroots activism with formal service delivery. We seek to address power relations and form true partnerships. We also want to empower and enable the rehabilitation of both ‘professionals’ and disabled activists.

From 1994, a lot was achieved concerning evolution. When we started, there were six rehabilitation ‘professionals’ working for the Mpumalanga government. In 1997, our budget amounted to R67 000, which constituted a very humble beginning. Moreover, fewer than 500 people with disabilities accessed rehabilitation services every year. However, during the course of that period, six disabled activists were contracted to work in four local municipalities in one of the districts and by 2008, we had 38 rehabilitation ‘professionals’ working for the provincial government. Our budget grew to SAR3,225 million per annum and the initiative now employs 27 disabled activists working in 18 local municipalities in one district. About 7 006 people with disabilities have been identified and referred to social services and 11 706 people with disabilities accessed peer counselling and disability information services. An evolutionary process indeed!

The CBR includes the following strategies:

- Appointment of 27 disabled CBR field workers, two of whom are deaf to ensure that the service reaches the deaf community, and two sign language interpreters.
- Development of an appropriate, accessible and sustainable service.
- Ongoing CBR service in all 18 provincial municipalities.
- CBR orientation of Disabled People South Africa affiliated to disabled people organizations (DPOs).
- Capacity building and training.
- Materials development for the dissemination of information on disability.

... we aim to go where no one has gone before, namely to integrate grass roots activism with formal service delivery.

(continued on page 56)
Hoedspruit is about an hour’s drive from Nelspruit in Mpumalanga. It is nestled in South Africa’s lush lowveld region that it shares with the bottom part of the Kruger National Park (KNP), one of the crowning achievements of world conservation. Besides low-intensity agriculture, the town has all the trademarks of a safari town. It is dotted with private nature reserves and lodges and is stalked by quasi-military vehicles with raised tops for game viewing. Unlike in the big cities and towns, that symbol of consumerism – the shopping mall – is less of a display of urban pomposity and more about modest provisions.

The town is also home to one of South Africa’s air force bases (AFB) that shares its name. Save for meagre road signage, the Hoedspruit AFB is understandably inconspicuous (you don’t want the enemy to figure out your position!) and a game reserve in its own right. Driving through the base, one sort of expects to see a lumbering elephant or one of the dangerous big five game known to roam this part of the world. But instead of the big five, equally fierce, multi-billion rand military aviation hardware and military personnel with austere salutes and friendly nods to visiting civilians prowl the AFB.

When not soaring with eagles, it is at this idyllic “office park” in the wild that Lieutenant Phetogo Molawa spends much of her out-of-sky time. Her office is basic, with an old style desk-top computer and a telephone on an uncluttered, brown wooden table. Clad in trademark air force office uniform, a navy blue suit and powder blue shirt with the two-stripe insignia indicating her Lieutenant’s rank, Molawa is not your typical Amazon. She is a big young woman with a chubby face and fleshy arms who, deceptively, looks somewhat like a high school girl in uniform. Yet, behind the school-girl exterior are the steely characteristics of a military aviation pilot. At the age of twenty-three, Lieutenant Molawa is South Africa’s first black woman Oryx helicopter pilot.

The Oryx helicopter, like most weapons of war, is a fierce-looking mass of steel 5.14 m in height, weighing in excess of 3 600 kg when empty and capable of carrying a load of
Lieutenant Phetogo Molawa is South Africa’s first black woman Oryx helicopter pilot.
more than half its size. Some of the other technical specifications punted by military aviation experts include a maximum speed of 306 km/h and a climb rate of 915 m/min. And Lieutenant Molawa loves the medium aircraft transport Oryx for its versatility in diverse terrain, either during war or in peace-time operations.

“You can go in and out of hostile situations for casual evacuations. Or use it in fire fighting and humanitarian interventions in inaccessible areas, as was the case during the floods in Mozambique [in 2000]. It plays many roles,” says the Lieutenant with restraint admiration.

Apparently brimming with a passion for flying, it comes as a surprise when the Lieutenant says that aviation was not her first love, career-wise. She initially thought of becoming a pharmacist when she was a child growing up in Thaba Nchu and Bloemfontein in the Free State. But that changed during a process she described as “learning more about oneself”. It was while in grade eleven in 2002 that Lieutenant Molawa began to consider a career in aviation earnestly, although, at the time, she was not aware of career opportunities in the South African military aviation sector. She considered cadetship through the South African Airways and the prohibitively expensive private flying school sector until finally settling on applying for university admission to study a mechanical science degree, majoring in aeronautic science. She was provisionally accepted pending her grade twelve results.

It was chance that set Lieutenant Molawa on the course that led to her current position as a helicopter pilot in the Air Force. Her father found out about the Bloemspruit AFB, just outside Bloemfontein. As fate would have it, the AFB was, at the time, recruiting particularly previously disadvantaged young people for possible careers in the military aviation sector under the South African Air Force’s Siyandiza Programme. After completing a series of pre-selection tests successfully, Lieutenant Molawa was amongst the first group of participants in the inaugural Siyandiza Programme.

“You see, most people would say (they) have been passionate about flying since childhood. It was not like
that for me. When you are five or ten and you see a plane flying over you, it does not occur to you that some day you would be flying that plane,” she reflects on the journey to the cockpit, adding that “the main reason I wanted to take up flying is because of the challenges and the fact that it is not monotonous ... that is what I love about it ... each working day is different from the previous one ... that is what I wanted and that is what I got”.

With the interview taking off in earnest after the mundane, but necessary preliminaries of biographical information, the Lieutenant’s steely persona starts to emerge. While talking about traits that predispose one towards a career path such as hers, Lieutenant Molawa’s gestures punctuate a stream of self-descriptive words like “challenging yourself to do extra-ordinary things”, “moving out of the comfort zone” and “pushing yourself to the limit”, phrases that hint at an enormous reservoir of self-confidence.

With her being one of the pioneering “first blacks to”, the talk inevitably progresses to the subject of barriers to entry into a largely white-male-dominated field. Although sympathetic to apartheid legacy issues, Lieutenant Molawa provides a psychological and motivational take on the dearth of black people, particularly women, in the military aviation sector. She pins it down to fear of failure and self-doubt.

“People doubt themselves. They just say no, I am not going to be able to do this or that. I think that is the biggest downfall. A lot of people would look at where they come from and their background and immediately cut themselves [off from opportunities]”.

Underscoring her point, she shares a story she read somewhere of a township girl who lost her parents in childhood. The moral of the story is that the young girl pursued her passion for basketball, which in turn opened up doors to other opportunities, like going to the best private school in Johannesburg with the aid of bursaries, despite the odds of a disadvantaged background.

“It is not one thing that can get you where you want to go. People are very narrow-minded when it comes to that. Obviously, one’s circumstances do affect the way one thinks, which is why we have to always go the extra mile. But your situation does not determine where you could go,” she stresses.

Where to now for the Lieutenant? The next step, says the twenty-three-year-old Lieutenant Molawa, is graduating to the position of flight commander of the Oryx helicopter. She is currently co-pilot of the helicopter’s crew of three members, which includes the flight engineer and the flight commander. It will take Lieutenant Molawa between two to three years to complete a commander’s course, “depending on progress and the needs of the organisation [SA Air Force]”, she concludes.

Given her positive attitude and an unwavering belief in her own abilities, she will no doubt achieve anything she applies herself to successfully. A shining example to us all, indeed!
As indicated above, our project also comprises revolutionary elements. To date, Mpumalanga’s Department of Health is the first and only provincial government department that has entered into a service level agreement with a DPO. It is the first provincial chapter of Disabled People South Africa that delivers rehabilitation services to people with disabilities in the province. In addition, the whole partnership called for power relationships to be addressed for true and sustainable partnerships to develop. Disabled CBR ‘workers’ mostly have low educational levels, come from poor, rural villages and townships and survive on social grants when recruited. On the other hand, rehabilitation ‘professionals’ have high levels of education, come predominantly from wealthy and middle-class urban backgrounds, and, for the greater part, do not understand local customs and languages. These elements make it difficult to deliver appropriate rehabilitation services. As an intervention, we called the disabled CBR ‘workers’ CBR consultants and later fieldworkers. This was initially met with resistance, but it was quickly replaced with respect, since the workers became a major resource for rehabilitation professionals.

Furthermore, the groups had to be empowered to do their work effectively. As a result, all CBR fieldworkers undergo at least one three-day training course in basic counselling and facilitation skills; a five-day human rights workshop; and training to equip them with basic communication and counselling skills; time management and planning skills; an understanding of the causes and types of disability; and disability prevention and health promotion skills. They are also trained in cross disability issues and the different types of barriers people with different disabilities experience. Furthermore, training is provided on the legal and policy framework that guides the delivery of services to people with disabilities and on the services available to people with disabilities.

Impact and achievements

Firstly, the initiative has provided employment to disabled people. About 33 formerly unemployed disabled activists with different disabilities, including parents of disabled children, are employed as CBR fieldworkers. This has provided them with incomes ranging from SAR2 300.00 to SAR5 990.00 per month, which have liberated them from poverty. In addition, a comprehensive network with district education authorities, welfare authorities, paralegal advice centres, NGOs and the Human Rights Commission has been established with the aim of improving access to opportunities and social services for people with disabilities. About ten CBR fieldworkers attended a Rural Women Trainer Training Workshop and people with disabilities now have access to peer support and information while still in hospital immediately after onset of their disability. Information pamphlets, which provide alternative approaches to the now out-dated charity/medical approach, have also been developed in four official languages and CBR fieldworkers have become much more confident and independent. On this note, seven CBR fieldworkers and provincial administrators have gained permanent employment through the empowerment they received while being involved in the Project. Furthermore, about 11 706 people with disabilities have accessed peer counselling in the past year. Over the past ten years, the Project has also seen to about 16 058 people accessing manual wheelchairs, 227 people power chairs and 5 561 people hearing aids.

Challenges

There is considerable difficulty in getting all departments on board, which means that there are still many doors closed to disabled people. The formalization of the training programme through NQF accreditation to open new opportunities for CBR fieldworkers also remains a challenge. In addition, we struggle to maintain momentum when decision makers in Disabled People South Africa and/or the Department of Health change, since new incumbents often have to be exposed, orientated and convinced of the value of the Project before their support is solicited. However, the biggest challenge so far is the attitudes of other officials towards the CBR Project, which results in even further exclusion for people with disabilities.

In conclusion

The past ten years have been exhilarating, frustrating, overwhelming, revolutionary and a real rollercoaster! Everyone who has been part of the CBR Project in Mpumalanga emerged from it more empowered and liberated.
The vision of Itshelejuba Hospital is ‘to render a quality health service to all persons in our catchment area’. Our mission is ‘to provide integrated, coordinated and comprehensive health care, utilizing resources effectively and efficiently and emphasizing community participation’. The establishment of the **Pongola Truck Stop Wellness Centre** was driven by the quest to fulfill our vision and mission. However, before I get into the details of the project, I would like to give a brief background of the community that we are working in.

Pongola comprises a population of about 119 000 people. Its unemployment rate is 50%. About 85% of employed people are earning less than R1 600 per month. We have cross borders with Mpumalanga and Mozambique. In terms of the disease profile of the area, the most prominent diseases are Tuberculosis (TB), HIV/Aids-related diseases, chronic diseases and trauma cases.

The **Pongola Truck Stop Wellness Centre** is situated in the uPhongolo Municipality, 35 km from Itshelejuna Hospital. It is along the N2 highway bordering Mpumalanga and surrounded by Swaziland borders. There is an influx of trucks on this road and they use Pongola as their truck stop area. Commercial sex workers use this opportunity to sell sex to truck drivers.

There is, therefore, an important rationale for this project. We identified a problem of inaccessibility of health services among truck drivers and commercial sex workers around the truck stop area. Initially, this was based on our observation as people working around the area. However, we felt that we had to conduct a feasibility study to confirm our observations.

A Task Team comprising various stakeholders, including government departments (the Departments of Health, Education, Social Development, Agriculture and the South African Police Services), the uPhongolo Municipality, the House of Traditional Leaders as well as faith-based organizations, was formed.

We conducted a week-long study, mainly at night. Interviews were voluntary and were based on questionnaires. The questionnaires were formulated for both target groups, namely the truck drivers and the commercial sex workers. In total, 291 people were interviewed. Of the 291, 187 were truck drivers and 104 sex workers.

After conducting the study, we had to analyse the results.

**Lessons learned:**
- An emphasis on a team approach assists in ensuring success.
- Stakeholder involvement is vitally important.
- Maximum commitment outweighs limited resources.
- Management buy-in is a key requisite.
- Interdepartmental decision making facilitates implementation.
Results of the Feasibility Study on Truck Drivers

Concerning the truck drivers, it was found that they came from different regions. About 46% came from KwaZulu-Natal, 15% from Mpumalanga, 13% from the Western Cape, 14% from the Free State, 10% from Gauteng and 2% from Mozambique and Zambia. 62% were married and 38% unmarried.

The research also told us that 39% of the truck drivers used the route three times a week, 37% used it twice a week, 20% used it daily and 4% used it once a month. Therefore, most drivers used the N2 route three times a week.

We also gathered information about their knowledge of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). We discovered that 90% of the drivers had knowledge of STIs, while 10% didn’t know much. When probing about access to condoms, 75% of drivers said they had access to condoms, while 25% said they did not have such access. Those who had access were getting them from other areas or buying them, since there was no supply in the truck stop area.

Taking the Batho Pele principle of consultation as our point of departure, we wanted to know what kinds of services they required. About 76% said they required health services, 20% required social services and 4% required showers and parking.

Results of the Feasibility Study on Commercial Sex Workers

We found that 70% of the sex workers were aged between 20 and 29. About 30% were below the age of 19. About 95% were not married and 5% were married. About 42% serviced five clients per night. About 36% serviced according to need and this varied from one to five clients, with about 22% servicing two clients per night.

In terms of condom usage, 69% said they used them, while 31% said they did not always use condoms. Concerning the cost of their services, 51% said they would change prices for non-condom use, while 49% said they would not do that. About 66% charged less than R50 for their services, while 44% charged R100 or more.

With regard to STIs, 63% said they had suffered from STIs, while 37% had never suffered from them.

Concerning services required, 81% wanted health services, 13% wanted a brothel, 3% required a formal job, and 3% were not sure.

After conducting the study and analyzing the results, we sat down and came up with the intervention.

Intervention

Our intervention was to establish the Pongola Truck Stop and Wellness Centre in response to the needs of the citizens established with the feasibility study. The objectives of the intervention were to:

- Strengthen prevention and management measures for HAST (HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB);
- Increase access to health services;
- Strengthen an intersectoral collaboration approach;
- Reduce the incidence of HAST; and
- Strengthen the support system.

The project had its own milestones. These included an intersectoral approach to planning and project implementation. To achieve this, the meetings of the Task Team were held on a monthly basis. There was also feedback to stakeholders once every two months. A Business Plan was developed and benchmarking was done at the Tugela Truck shop.

We identified the truck stop area and temporary structures were put together and renovated. Medical and domestic equipment was purchased and staff from Itshelejuba Hospital was allocated to the new establishment.

Achievements

The main achievement of the project was the implementation of health services, based on the health service needs of the target groups. These include voluntary counseling and testing (VCT); STI management; health education; screening for chronic disease and reproductive health; and a referral system.

The targeted groups now have access to the required health services, while the Pongola Truck Stop and Wellness Centre has also become a useful health facility for the farm workers from surrounding areas, since they do not have access to health services because of awkward work hours. In addition, intersectoral collaboration has been strengthened.

About 238 patients per month are treated at the facility. Of these, 162 have been diagnosed through VCT. About 121 of these people have been tested and 61 (51%) were found positive. About 18 patients have been treated for STIs. In terms of chronic diseases, nine are diabetics and 27 suffer from hypertension.
I should also state that, since opening the facility, we have distributed about 2070 condoms among the target groups.

**Challenges**

Our main challenges are awkward hours because of the target groups we are working with and budget constraints. This has resulted in a shortage of human resources. Another problem is that we are operating from a temporary structure, which the community perceives as just another PHC clinic.

**Lessons learned**

What has ensured the success of the project has been the emphasis on a team approach. We also learned that the involvement of stakeholders was of vital importance right from the planning stages and that a lot could be done with limited resources if there were maximum commitment behind it.

We noted that buy-in and ownership by management were key to the success of the project and a very exciting aspect of this project is the fact that health services are now also being utilized by people not initially identified as a target group, namely the farm workers.

Joint decision making by different government departments was important, particularly concerning the sharing of resources and responsibilities. We also realized that voluntary service was possible in government departments!

**Conclusion**

Success does not really have anything to do with geographical location (e.g. rural) or limited resources (HR, budget). It depends mainly on attitude and a desire to be creative and innovative. A participative management style also helps.
South Africa is slowly emerging from a past of exclusion, disadvantage and deprivation with the legacy of that past manifesting itself in the lives of many South Africans who experience underdevelopment and poverty on a daily basis. The public service is by and large the only hope these people have to extricate themselves from poverty and marginalization. Yet, the same public service has been disappointing at times by being too slow to respond to the needs of the people and less caring and effective in addressing the needs of the poor. This is compounded by the lack of a caring, respectful and people-centered culture within the Public Service.

In response, the Department of Social Development (DSD) commissioned the development of a business case for a responsive, high-quality, accessible and service-driven customer care function to respond to the challenges of quality of service within the Department. The business case will provide business intelligence about the type and location of service offerings, as well as product or service promise concerning the adopted and lived values in relation to key public service programmes such as Batho Pele. It will also include development and address the training needs of back-end and frontline employees who deal with and advise customers on a daily basis. Furthermore, it will ensure accessibility to and intensify services and customer engagements; prioritize customer needs and choices; integrate existing and future systems with a view to establish appropriate channels; and resolve customer-related appraisals and complaints.

Customer care at the DSD

The DSD is expanding its frontiers and moving towards an integrated customer care function (in line with its Integrated Service Delivery Model) and hopes to incorporate pro-active elements to customer service management in addition to complaints management, which is currently in place and undergoing review. This paradigm seeks to import the progressive elements of customer service in the private sector and is the expression of government’s commitment to a people-centered government.

This requires that the Department’s service delivery capacity must be aligned towards this vision, which includes infrastructure, systems, people, processes, and so on. One of the main elements of integrated customer care is definition and communication of service standards, quality management systems and monitoring tools (including complaints management).
The Department is already actively looking at modernizing its complaints management service to incorporate effective tracking and dynamic reporting to inform planning and resource allocation processes within the Department.

The use of the term, *customer*, which is sometimes used interchangeably with the term, *service user*, is a new invention in the public service and epitomizes a culture that used to be the preserve of the private sector. At present, the Department is grappling with the meaning of these terms and defining who its customers are, since that will provide direction about how it should model and remodel its service delivery machinery.

The easiest answer to the question would be that everyone is the Department’s customers. However, the fact of the matter is that the Department’s customers can be differentiated in terms of needs, profile (demographics, psychographics, etc) and sociologies. The customers of the DSD encompass all who are in need of the protection/rights guaranteed by the Constitution in relation to social security and of accessing the rights and programmes that flow from the legislative framework that relates to social development.

Customer care refers to the approach of an organization towards winning and retaining customers, the most critical activity of any organization that wishes to remain relevant. Customer care is achieved through putting customers at the centre of all activities and is seen by many as an integral part of quality, pricing and product differentiation. On one level, customer care means keeping customers fully informed, turning complaints into opportunities and genuinely listening to customers. On another level, being a customer-focused organization means ensuring that all activities related to operations of the organization are built around the customer and that every team and individual employee understand and share the same vision and values. The essence of customer care is the management of customer experience in its entire value chain.

One tool that is available for effective customer care and dealing with aspects of customer care is Customer Relations Management (CRM). CRM is an integrated information system fulfilling the same function as one-to-one marketing. In the private sector setting, CRM brings together information about customers, sales, marketing effectiveness, responsiveness and market trends. It helps businesses to use technology and human resources to gain insight into the behaviour of customers and to value customers.

The public sector has not been gearing itself to look at and benefit from these capabilities, which would be useful for policy development, policy implementation and programme development despite the fact that the life span of any government is driven by the choices of people that are based on perceived satisfaction with the programmes of the government. CRM makes use of software and Internet capabilities to manage the colossal customer database and helps the organization to have customized communication with each and every customer. As time progresses, the communication between a customer and an organization becomes mutually beneficial, with customers giving information in return for personalized service that meets their individual needs.

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**The advantages of CRM include:**

- customer-centric operations;
- improved management of customer information;
- improved interaction and lasting relationships with each and every customer;
- effective communication based on needs and a demand for services;
- information empowerment at all customer touch points;
- improved customer satisfaction; and, ultimately,
- transformation of the customer into a partner, resulting in increased returns.

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The goals of the public sector and the customer-centered paradigm of departments like the DSD must inform the value and use of CRM in the public sector.

**Status quo of customer care**

The effectiveness of customer service at the DSD must be tested against its purpose, derived from its mandates and the policy framework that seeks to regulate and encourage customer service. The following areas have been identified in the analysis of customer service in general and customer care in particular:

- Its constitutional mandate;
- the eight principles of *Batho Pele*; and
- the overall strategy of the Department.

The most effective mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of the Department’s interventions to foster the ideal of being
a people-centered department, is to evaluate its performance against Batho Pele, with the main focus on the principles of consultation, value-for-money service, access to services and redress. This neither discounts the other eight principles nor suggests that these principles can be looked at in isolation, but seeks to identify the salient features of the customer service and customer care environment at the DSD.

Consultation

This principle states that **citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.**

The Public Service Commission (PSC) conducted a study to assess the extent to which government departments comply with the principle of consultation in Batho Pele. It was found that most government departments had a superficial understanding of this principle and lacked an understanding of its interactive nature. This manifests itself even in the kind of initiatives and strategies that are used for consultation.

Most departments surveyed on the services and service aspects they consult on indicated that they consult on departmental programmes (35%), while 11% indicated that they consult on service delivery. An even lower proportion (5%) consults on service standards.

The main challenges highlighted in consultation include:

- budget constraints;
- the geographic distribution of service users;
- language/literacy issues;
- capacity constraint;
- feedback not being used;
- poor public participation; and
- lack of infrastructure.

Most of the above challenges also informed the service delivery challenges outlined in the Strategic Plan of the DSD.

The study makes a couple of recommendations concerning this principle. It recommends that departments should prioritize the concretization of consultation standards and the purpose of such standards to ensure that consultation is not implemented for compliance sake. It also states that they should examine different consultation mechanisms and ensure that the most efficient ones are implemented, given the profile of their stakeholders. Those mechanisms could include citizen satisfaction surveys, citizen forums, Izimbizo and service delivery hearings. Effective monitoring mechanisms should also be in place to monitor and evaluate consultation with a view to addressing areas of ineffectiveness pro-actively.

Value-for-money service

This principle states that **public services should be provided economically and efficiently to give citizens the best possible value for money.**

A PSC survey was conducted to evaluate the performance of departments against this principle. The results were published in August 2007.

67% of social development departments surveyed indicated that they had average systems and processes in place to ensure value for money. 33% indicated that they had good systems in place. However, none indicated that they had excellent systems and processes available. Almost all departments surveyed indicated that they monitored user needs and preferences. However, only 89% of social development departments indicated this as opposed to 100% among surveyed departments of health, housing and agriculture.

Two thirds of social development departments surveyed indicated that they collected user perception information continuously, with a third indicating periodic/annual collection. The packaging of this information and its use in decision making could not be verified.

Access to services

The principle of access **aims to ensure that government services are known and are easily accessible to members of the public.**

This principle must be looked at in the context of a cruel apartheid system that denied access to government to the majority because of the colour of their skin. It was a system that created the current settlement patterns, which means that the majority of those needing government services most are located in areas from where they must travel long distances to access these services. Services were also rendered
inaccessible because of a lack of access to information about services and the inability to navigate through the government system to access the services required.

In the Social Services cluster, which includes most of the departments involved in large-scale, direct service delivery, such as the Departments of Education, Health, Housing and Social Development, three provincial departments felt that services were not sufficiently accessible at the district or regional level, although this response was not substantiated. In short, these departments are looking at ways of improving access, including introducing multi-channel interfaces with customers, strategic partnerships with external service providers and widening their footprint. They also want integrated indicators and strategies in both their strategic and operational plans.

**Customer experience and interaction**

Drawing from the findings of the PSC, external programmes of the DSD tend to perform better than internal programmes. The implication is that in terms of the overall CSI score, citizens who receive social security grants are far more likely to feel that their expectations are being met by the Department than those who receive services provided by social workers or NGOs or through social development projects. The quality of service delivery within the Department, however, did not quite meet the expectations of those receiving social grants and those coordinating development projects.

The variance between the high expectations of service users and the capacity of the Department to provide services raises serious concerns and calls for action on the part of the Department in terms of determining and communicating service standards and ensuring that it meets those standards. This will help to ensure that service users do not determine the standards arbitrarily. The fact that both social workers and NGOs felt that services were not delivered trouble free is a further indication that sound customer care standards have to be determined. Care should also be taken that these are applied without variation at every site and function of the Department.

The Department has identified its customer care shortcomings and is keen on improving in this area. As a result, a new customer care model has been developed.

**The new customer care model**

The rationale behind the new model is to develop a new experience for customers who interact with the Department. It will focus on ensuring that the Department delivers a responsive service, that quality service provided to customers is managed and that access to departmental services provided is ensured. The model will be guided by the vision of the Department ‘to deliver excellence by putting our customers
and our partners at the heart of everything we do and thus providing a consistently high-quality, responsive service that is accessible and satisfies our customers’ needs’. We will work to achieve this through our frontline services, and will drive the new customer strategy as we work with partners and services across the Department.

The mandate and functions of the Department define the services that the Department must develop and deliver. The model was developed in the context of a transforming organization, which will see a new service delivery model being developed and implemented. The new service delivery architecture of the Department will be defined by the following:

- **The Service Delivery Model** articulating the approach, design and functionality of the new service delivery machinery of the Department.
- **The Service Delivery Strategy** defining the mechanisms for operationalizing the model and delivering on the needs of people.
- **Business Processes** simplifying the business processes around the new model and seeking to improve efficiency in terms of turnaround times, the cost of service provision and effectiveness in delivering on the needs of the people in pursuit of the new strategy.
- **Capacity** defined by human capital, physical infrastructure and operational resources.

The interventions related to the new customer care model and will be expressed in both the customer-facing operations of the Department and the back-office support. The customer care function will also be interfacing with the communication machinery of the Department. This will require good collaboration between customer care and communication to ensure that the two benefit from investments by either unit.

The Customer Care Model will have the following elements:

- **Service Standards.** This element is the foundation of the model and focuses on the definition of the environment within which customer care must take place through tools like a customer service charter and customer service standards.
- **Quality of Service.** Flowing from service standards, this element concerns itself with actual service delivery focusing on the customer service culture that should permeate all the actions of the Department; the emotional disposition/values of employees towards customer care; care and support provided in the course of service provision; and care/support provided after service delivery.
- **Customer Experience.** At the centre of the model is management of customer experiences through instruments such as an integrated customer relations management system and highly effective monitoring and evaluation services flowing from the system.
- **Tangibles.** The identity, image and functionality of the tangibles are critical in the management of customer experiences and deal with the appearance and feel of physical infrastructure, staff members and communication material distributed by the Department.

What brings the interrelated elements of the model alive, are the operational elements of the model, which include the following:

- **Targeting.** Playing the coordinating function, this element focuses on understanding the customer and segmenting customers in terms of communication and service delivery. It informs the setting and management of service standards.
- **Match Product and Customer.** The product design process must be informed by the targeting and guided by the service standards defined by the customer care model. This element also talks to activities geared at directing customers towards new standards and, thereby, new products.
- **Service Delivery.** Informed by quality of service and tangibles on the customer care model, this element looks at the cost of access to service delivery (this includes both direct service fees and indirect costs like traveling and accommodation costs as a result of the distance to delivery sites). The most important activities within this element include the care and support provided to the customer during and after service delivery.
- **Customer Development.** Almost underpinning all the other elements, but flowing from them, this element focuses on the development of the customer through public awareness, public education, profiling of the customer and rallying of service ambassadors to sustain the entire system and feed in to the customer experience management element of the model.

**Conclusion**

The new model does not define and is not based on a service delivery strategy, but will contribute to the development of a service delivery strategy and modeling. The new model’s benefit will be derived when the elements of the model are implemented in an integrated fashion to harness the cross benefits between the elements.
Effective service delivery in the spirit of Batho Pele requires all arms of government to work together. The Office of the Premier (OTP) holds an oversight role in the governmental structure of the provincial government and is, as such, mandated to be reliably informed about the status of government in the province. This could be described as the single view of the province; a view transcending organizational structures and creating a reliable, timely and accurate picture of the status of the province. Furthermore, the long-time concept if e-government creating a single view of the citizen also pushes government to act as one front-and-information-clearing house for citizens.

Background of the project

With the advent of democracy in 1994, one of government’s key priorities was to eradicate poverty. Therefore, addressing the multiple needs of the citizens of the province continues to be the focus of the provincial government in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Although the vulnerable and impoverished have benefited through targeted government development programmes, in the 2005 State of the Province address, the Premier referred to the need to contextualize provincial developmental efforts spatially to give poverty a geographic address. He argued that we needed to understand where the desperately poor people were concentrated to develop social safety net interventions and employment-creating programmes aimed at lifting such communities out of extreme poverty and perpetual dependence on welfare assistance.

Problem

To fulfil its oversight role, the OTP requires data from the various branches of government to:

- understand the current status of the province;
- gauge the effectiveness of government programmes and initiatives;
- predict trends, movements, etc. reliably;
- channel resources most effectively; and
- measure the performance of government against set targets.

Yet, as a department, the OTP creates very little operational data outside the large transversal systems, namely the Basic Accounting System (BAS) and the Personnel and Salaries System (PERSAL).

On the other hand, the various provincial government departments create, store and process a vast array of data through their operational systems. Firstly, all make use of the above-mentioned operational systems of government, the BAS for financial
transactions and the PERSAL to manage some 160,000 employees. In addition to these inherited systems, each department collects data in terms of its specific legislative and operational mandates. Such data may be about learners and teachers, the number of TB cases treated in hospitals, the condition of roads, and so on. In KZN there are in excess of 400 different systems across departments.

**Solution**

The provincial government places the highest priority on the development of tools that will allow it to understand, at a very specific level, which areas and which people must be prioritized to receive the services of government and how it should deal with challenges. Making this priority a reality and realizing other achievements are made possible through the prioritized development of public sector skills and institutional systems for better delivery. The KZN Provincial Nerve Centre is one such key initiative undertaken to strengthen the machinery of government.

**The aim of the Nerve Centre**

The main aim of the Provincial Nerve Centre is to provide an automated and integrated information management system that will help to monitor and evaluate government service delivery in KwaZulu-Natal. The Nerve Centre will also aim to ensure that citizens have information at their finger-tips and receive better service delivery in line with the Batho Pele principles. It will, furthermore, empower public servants through collaborative information management and good governance. Lastly, the centre will develop efficient and responsive accountability relationships.

To achieve these aims, the Provincial Nerve Centre will seek to:

- fulfil the mandate of oversight and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the OTP;
- ensure that all provincial data is consolidated and readily accessible to the executive and management;
- fill the Provincial Nerve Centre with life;
- create a single view of the province;
- break down data silos between departments;
- replace current, mostly manual, reporting;
- create one version of the truth;
- add value to both the OTP and individual departments;
- improve the efficiency of the OTP by establishing a government intelligence platform within the Nerve Centre;
- track the progress of the KZN provincial growth and development strategy (PGDS), which will be rolled out over multiple builds/projects;
- transfer implementation skills and support solutions;
- align people with processes and technology;
- integrate relevant data into the system;
- minimize data quality issues;
- provide quick accessibility to information;
- provide financial analyses;
- report on procurement;
- analyse issues of fraud;
- compile a BEE scorecard;
- ensure HR reporting;
- oversee integrated programming and reporting – drilling down to specific areas; and
- create a Soccer 2010 M&E Framework.

**Scope of the project**

The scope of the project is broken down into five interventions that will run until the year 2012. The first phase (Phase 0) of the project has been completed. In Phase 0 an assessment of departments was conducted to understand the current environment. The first intervention, “Build 0”, entailed the delivery of technology infrastructure, a link to data from Statistics SA and certain key reports and dashboards to be used to launch the Nerve Centre. The other interventions are currently broken down as follows:

- **Build one** – the delivery of the Social Cluster Business Intelligence Solution and 2010 Programme Tracking System, focusing on the Millennium Development Goals Poverty Watch;
- **Build two** – the delivery of the Economic Cluster and the SAS Strategic Performance Management System;
- **Build three** – the delivery of the Governance and Administration Business Intelligence subsystem; and
- **Build four** – the establishment of the Environmental and Infrastructure Cluster.

**The Nerve Centre and M&E**

The mandate of the M&E Unit in the OTP is to: “Monitor and evaluate the performance of government against set goals, targets, equitableness of resource allocation and effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery across all relevant levels of spheres of government”. M&E is defined as “tracking changes in programme performance over time” and “attributing programme outcomes to their causes”. The business intelligence solution will assist the M&E Chief Directorate in tracking performance with ease through the
Manipulation and storage of data required to track performance, and disseminating the information to end-users via a web-enabled environment.

M&E tracks changes between the services provided (outputs) and the desired results (outcomes), providing the basis for accountability in the utilization of resources. It enables management to improve initiatives by identifying aspects that are working according to plan and yielding positive results, and identifying those initiatives that need corrective actions. The M&E Unit also provides recommendations on strategic interventions required in respect of policy improvements, and provides key information to aid strategic decision making. The system makes an integrated development planning process possible through the use of cross-sectoral data (spatial and non-spatial) that provides a firm foundation for local integrated development planning and the PGDS.

This will be accomplished in phases over the medium-term, with each phase encompassing an increasing scope to manage for development results. Scope will increase in terms of sector performance indicators (from simple and basic indicators to those incorporating multifaceted relationships to results requiring more data) and in terms of management hierarchy.

In terms of development planning and the M&E process, the provincial executive will focus on development results. There will be commitment to the principles of managing for development results. The emphasis is also on a sector commitment towards unified efforts to develop indicators and other M&E instruments.

**A management information system**

A management information system has been put in place to facilitate operational management reporting. It supports management’s directives on accountability and reporting by covering the status of progress in all operational key result areas. It also accommodates and facilitates bottom-up reporting.

We have incorporated the Millennium Development Goals into the provincial priorities as part of the operational objectives of the system. There is also a roadmap that accommodates technical and strategic processes, using focus on results. Separate working groups have been established within the provincial M&E Forum to take ownership of data.

Of importance is that all provincial systems have to be linked to the Provincial Nerve Centre and GIS applications will be used as a monitoring tool.

**Improving internal and operational focus on results**

The Nerve Centre will strengthen the channels of information and feedback between field operations and management for decision making. It will fine-tune future operational directions (business processes) based on results.

Internally, we want to review business processes towards meeting the strategic demands; improve the knowledge management framework, public communications policy and internal human capabilities; refine the resource management strategy towards development management; and incorporate results techniques into operational and administrative policy reviews to ensure progress in addressing the results agenda systematically and coherently.

The challenge would be to influence an appropriate degree of reorientation and change management among public sector officials. Despite this, we are hoping that we will be able to achieve cross-cutting results, especially given the multidimensional nature of poverty.

**Measuring results is not enough**

However, we feel that measuring results is not enough. Therefore, while work has been on-going to improve the indicators of outputs and the immediate outcomes of operations, there is increasing recognition that such data must be used primarily to improve achievement of future outputs and outcomes.

We are emphasizing the “learning-by-doing” approach to address these areas. In doing so, capacity building has to become more systematic and sector strategies must become results-orientated. Moreover, management information systems based on information and data collected through M&E at project and provincial level must be improved.

We are also embarking on internal capacity building and an awareness campaign to create stronger ownership, designing a knowledge management framework. The human resources strategy is being revised and the evaluation process upgraded. We also intend to implement appropriately designed information technology.

Delivering effective assistance requires that the experience and good practice of others must be assimilated. For this reason, participation and learning forums to exchange views and share knowledge are critical. Of significance in this regard is the nurturing of champions of change.
The decentralization of human resource (HR) management functions within the South African Public Service forms part of global trends in public administration that gained impetus in the early 1990s. This was a consequence of a growing consensus, both within developed and developing countries, that it was not only undesirable for a state to aim to control and plan for all aspects of economic and social life, but also that highly centralized systems of public management led to bureaucracies that were excessively regulatory, did not deliver services efficiently and were often unresponsive to the needs of the populace as a whole. In addition, the globalization of the world economy meant that countries faced more economic competition in areas that were previously thought to be domestic concerns.

Different types of public service reforms had been undertaken in various countries since the end of the 1980s. These all pointed towards a broad trend of decentralizing, or devolving, human resource and management functions to other parts of government.

In Britain, it involved the re-organization of the relationship between central and local government and the delegation of executive tasks of government to subordinate and accountable bodies. Specifically, heads of departments (renamed Chief Executive Officers) became the employer of all staff within their departments. In France, an initiative launched in 1997 made all individual matters with legal or financial implications the responsibility of departmental heads (Prefects). In other countries, such as Trinidad and Tobago, Chile and Uruguay decentralization required legislative and constitutional changes.

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Traditionally, most public services were characterized by a high level of central control and direction. Trends form the mid-1990s onwards showed that many countries were shifting the focus of their public services to service delivery performance, with line departments and agencies being granted greater autonomy by transferring HR functions to them. This was accompanied by a parallel process whereby more responsibility over HR issues was delegated to individual line managers. This was to promote accountability, flexibility to local or sector-specific circumstances and to assist in unifying similar responsibilities within a given ministry’s or department’s personnel office.6

Furthermore, a general change emerged in the role of civil service commissions, from exercising direct control over the management of the public service towards acting as a watchdog agency reporting on both the performance and management of the public service.7

**Broadly speaking, it is, therefore, possible to identify the following objectives in the reform measures governments implemented in the way public services operate:**

- Decentralization or devolution of authority within government.
- Clarifying the boundaries between policy-making and administrative functions in government.
- Increased efficiency through increased autonomy for managers in financial and HR matters.
- Enhanced service quality through the delegation of powers closer to citizens.
- Improved accountability and reduced opportunities for corruption.8

**Public Service Reform in South Africa**

The current HR delegations regime in South Africa resulted from the comprehensive re-organisation of the State that occurred after the transition to democracy in 1994. While the nature of the apartheid system had been extensively documented elsewhere and need not be discussed at length here, a brief overview should suffice to illustrate the scope of the changes initiated in the democratic era.

By 1990, the apartheid state had established a pervasive state national bureaucracy that administered the ‘homeland’ areas of Gazankulu, Qwa-Qwa, Lebowa, Kwa-Zulu, KaNgwane and KwaNdebele; the ‘independent republics’ of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei; three own ‘affairs administrations’ (for white, coloured and Indian affairs); four provincial administrations in the Cape, Free State, Natal and Transvaal provinces; and 1262 municipalities.9 The predecessor to the modern day Office of the Public Service Commission, the ‘Commission for Administration’, was responsible for regulating the Public Service and set policy on all organizational, administrative and personnel issues. The Public Service was highly centralized, as the powers of the Commission attests: It set salaries and standards for all public sector institutions, including local government, parastatals, public corporations and universities. The Commission had disciplinary authority, was responsible for pensions, leave, promotions, and evaluated staff qualifications and requirements. It was also responsible for the grading of posts, the setting of wages and salaries, recognition of staff associations and regulations for work conditions.10

With the dawn of the democratic era in 1994, the country undertook what amounted to both political and administrative decentralization. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (the “Constitution”) enshrines the separation of powers and outlines the duties of the executive, legislative and judicial parts of government. The Public Service Act (PSA) of 1994, which established new national departments and created new provinces, came into effect on 1 July 1994 and had a profound impact on the way in which the Public Service is managed. In line with the Constitution, the South African Public Service was re-organized to comprise, in its current shape, 47 national departments that include nine offices of premiers; one government component; and nine provinces

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with 100 departments\textsuperscript{11} and 284\textsuperscript{12} municipalities. The nature and manner in which the State discharges its functions is interwoven in the intergovernmental relations system described in the Constitution.

The PSA made specific provision for the decentralization of a host of HR functions, which were formerly administered by the Public Service Commission, to Executive Authorities (EAs) that could, in turn, delegate these to either Directors-General (DGs), provincial Heads of Departments (HoDs) or to departmental managers. These included, among others, organization and staff issues; the appointment, promotion and transfer of members of staff; and the obligations, rights and privileges of officers and employees. The provisions were augmented in 2001 when a revised set of Public Service Regulations (PSRs) came into effect. In terms of the original Regulations, the President had the powers to appoint and manage the career incidents of DGs at national level. However, these powers have now been delegated to the Deputy President and national Ministers. Premiers, in turn, had the power to appoint and manage the career incidents of provincial HoDs. Such powers have not, in all instances, been delegated to provincial Members of the Executive Council (MECs) to mirror the national arrangement.

Furthermore, in 1996, changes occurred in the Public Service Commission at both national and provincial levels. It was also renamed the Office of the Public Service Commission (PSC). The policy-formulation and decision-making functions of the PSC were unbundled. This turned responsibility for civil service reform over to the Ministry of Public Service and Administration and a newly created Department of Public Service and Administration (the DPSA) to be headed by a Minister. The new Commission, like similar bodies in the Commonwealth, has a research, monitoring and watchdog role concerning the Public Service in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, values and ethics.\textsuperscript{13}

The post-1994 system for managing the Public Service represents a comprehensive change from a system that was highly centralized and managed by the Commission for Public Administration to one in which HR resource functions have been delegated extensively to EAs.

### A Survey of Public Administration and Management Delegations

In January 2008, Cabinet instructed the DPSA to “conduct a survey on the status of Human Resource delegations from EAs to HoDs”. During the course of the survey, recent academic and governmental publications, and documents from national and provincial departments, were used as source material.

The DPSA also requested all national and provincial departments to provide it with documents dealing with the delegation of powers and duties from the relevant EA (Premier, Minister or MEC) to the HoD in terms of the PSA and the PSR of 2001 (sometimes referred to as HR delegations). Of 111 departments, 73, or slightly more than half of the total, responded.

The DPSA evaluated the documents according to criteria that included Chapters II to VIII of the PSA, and the general conditions set out in Chapter 1 of the PSR. The relevant sections were scrutinized and the presence, or absence, of delegations was recorded onto the DPSA’s database. The database also distinguished between delegations to HoDs and officials.

This system allowed for the development of rating criteria that measure the status of HR delegations in departments. For example, a department that showed delegations under each of the seven chapters of the PSA, received a score of seven (the maximum) and its delegation regime was described as ‘extensive’, while one that reflected none received a score of zero, with its delegation status described as ‘none or limited’.

Similarly, a department that registered delegations under each of the nine parts of Chapter 1 of the PSR received a score of nine and its delegation regime was described as ‘extensive’. A department that e.g., had delegations in place for three of the nine categories only, received a rating of ‘average’, and so on.

In order to generate a rating for the status of delegations under both the PSA and PSR, the scores departments received under both were combined. The maximum rating was 16. This

\textsuperscript{11} Schedules 1 to 3 of the Public Service Amendment Act No 30 of 2007


reflects the seven chapters of the PSA in terms of which powers/duties could be delegated to the EA and the nine sections of Chapter I of the PSR. The rating system is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total of combined delegations in terms of the PSA and PSR (maximum 16)</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>None/Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>Above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 upwards</td>
<td>Extensive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart below shows the status of HR delegations from EAs to HoDs in terms of the PSR and PSA.

According to the information the DPSA received, 33% of the departments that responded had a limited set of delegations from EAs to HoDs. For a further 39%, the number of delegations to HODs could be described as ‘average’. 17 departments showed an ‘above average’ set of delegations, while in the case of seven an extensive delegation regime to the HoD had been developed. These trends are also reflected broadly in breakdowns of delegations under the PSA and PSR, as well as in individual delegations, as will be shown on next page.
Delegations in terms of the PSA

Graph 1 below shows the status of delegations to HoDs in terms of the PSA according to the number of departments that formed part of the sample. It suggests that an even number of departments operates delegation regimes that can be described as either ‘none/limited’ or ‘average’ (28 for both, making up 78% of the total). Departments where the status could be described as either above average, or extensive, comprise 21% of the total.

In order to further illustrate the current nature of delegations in terms of the PSA, an example in the form of section 9.1 of Chapter II of the PSA should suffice. This states that ‘the appointment of any person or the promotion or transfer of any officer or employee in the employ of a department shall be made by the relevant executing authority or by an officer or officers to whom the said authority had delegated his or her power or appointment, promotion or transfer’.

Chart 2 on the next page shows that of the departments that responded, just 32, or 44%, delegated aspects of this function to HoDs. For departmental officials, the corresponding figure was slightly lower with 28 departments, or 38% of the total, having delegated this power to officials.
Delegations in terms of the PSR

Graph 2 below shows the status of delegations to HoDs from EAs in terms of the PSR for the departments that submitted these to the DPSA. It shows a trend similar to that detected under the PSA in that departments where delegation regimes were rated either ‘none/ limited’ and ‘average’ made up 83% of the total. By contrast, departments that were rated ‘above average’ made up 12% of the total and ‘extensive’ 4%.
Regulation B1 of Part VIII: Performance Management and Development of the PSR, will be used to provide more depth on the status of delegations in terms of the PSR. It states that ‘An executing authority shall determine a system of performance management and development for employees in her or his department other than employees who are members of the SMS, consistent with the principles in Regulation VIII A’. Chart 3 below shows that 40 departments (or 56%) had not delegated this power to HODs.

The relationship between delegations and departmental performance

Graph 3 below tracks the correlation between the rating for departmental delegations and scores the DPSA’s Public Management Watch (PMW) generated for departmental performance. The PMW scores departmental performance on a quarterly basis according to a set of 19 HR-related indicators (the status of delegations is not included at present). The PMW uses a rating system that varies between 0.10 (meaning highly satisfactory performance) and 0.79, which indicates below par performance.

The scores generated by the PMW are shown on the Y-axis and ratings for departmental delegations to HoDs on the X-axis. The trend is represented by the line graph.
The trend identified in the graph suggests that, with some exceptions, a positive relationship exists between the ratings allocated to departmental delegations from the EA to the HoD and the scores generated by the PMW. In other words, departments that received a good score under the PMW, and are therefore performing well, were also likely to have delegated a fair to high proportion of powers and duties to HoDs.

**Looking ahead**

Following the July 2008 Cabinet Lekgotla, Cabinet instructed the DPSA to “develop a delegation model outlining principles and criteria to assist departments and a standard template”. The DPSA subsequently designed the draft ‘Guidelines on Public Administration and Management Delegations’ (‘the Guidelines’) and the Delegations Register (a standardized template), which Cabinet approved in principle at the January 2009 Lekgotla. Both the Guidelines and the Delegations Register are still in draft format, and departments will be approached for comments before publication and distribution.

The Delegations Register will contain all the powers and duties vested in EAs and HoDs in terms of the PSA and the amended PSR (expected later in 2009) that may be delegated in one template. An example of the format is provided in Figure 1. (The delegation-specific information on the template is meant for illustrative purposes and does not pertain to any specific department.) It has also been proposed that the PSR be amended to state that “an EA and Head of Department shall keep a register of delegations in the format prescribed by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration and submit the register annually to the Minister by 30 April of each year”. It is foreseen that such a system will lead to greater uniformity in the recording of public management and administration delegations across the Public Service and will also allow for comparisons to be generated across sectors, departments and provinces with a view to identifying best practices.

The Guidelines will contain an overview of international delegation trends; provide general conditions to be attached to the delegation of powers and duties; explain the purpose of an effective set of delegations; and outline the principles and processes that accompany delegation. Some principles suggested in the draft Guidelines to assist managers in being more effective concerning delegation, follow:

(a) Explain the reasons for delegating. Subordinates should understand that delegation has advantages for them, for the manager and for the department.

(b) Set clear goals and standards. Functionaries should participate in the process of formulating goals for the delegated powers and should agree with the criteria laid down for measuring their performance. Such participation will foster successful delegation.

(c) Ensure clarity of authority and responsibility. Subordinates must understand the powers and duties delegated to them, recognize their responsibility, and be held accountable for the results.

(d) Involve subordinates. Managers should motivate subordinates by including them in the decision-making process, informing them about their progress and enabling them to improve their knowledge and skills in the delegated powers and duties. An informed functionary is more likely to accept well-designated powers or duties and perform them properly.

(e) Request the completion of tasks incidental to exercising the delegated powers and duties. By providing the necessary direction and assistance, managers can see to it that functionaries complete the tasks delegated to them according to the agreed standards and goals.

(f) Provide performance training. The effectiveness of delegation depends on the functionary’s ability to perform tasks. Managers should evaluate the responsibilities delegated continuously and provide training to help functionaries overcome shortcomings.

(g) Provide feedback to the subordinate. Timely and accurate feedback should be provided to subordinates on a regular basis. The feedback should include both positive and negative feedback about the functionary’s performance. The way forward should then be discussed with the subordinate.
Implications of the Global Economic Crisis for the African Public Service

– By Dr Mataywa Busieka, Department of Public Service and Administration

Introduction

The current global economic crisis has united the world in an intense public discourse like not witnessed since the end of the Second World War. The epoch of technological advancement that has virtually rolled the world into a global village has been assisting this intimate conversation greatly. The thrust of the conversation is whether the world is slipping further into deeper recession or a search for what has come to be known as “green shoots” springing up on the lawns of the worlds’ bourses. The debate is essentially a mix of doomsday prophecies propagated by incorrigible pessimists and banter of hope for a swift recovery by optimists.

Concerns about job shedding have received more than their fair share of analytical commentary in both national and global electronic and print media. For obvious reasons, talk about job losses has focused almost exclusively on the private sector. To a limited extent, some commentators in the developed world have ventured into the probable implications of the recession for the public sector. There is a dearth of information on the implications of the global recession on the African public service.1

President Jacob Zuma’s remarks that Africa should harness the opportunities the global recession presents to reclaim skills lost through the brain drain (come) closer to providing a glimpse of (the effect of the current global economic crisis) on the African public service.

This input is an attempt to contribute to the ongoing debate, but more specifically, the implications of this enthralling global phenomenon for the African public service. A brief review of an analysis of the global economic outlook prefaces this public service perspective. This intervention is necessary to provide context to the germane reflection on the implications for the African public service. A brief reflection on the implications of the global economic crisis on the European and American public services provides further impetus and insight into the extent of the implications for the African public service. The brief historical preview of the African public service provides the contextual setting to explain that Africa’s public service is deeply rooted in colonial tradition. It also shows how African countries responded to past recessions.

1 The need for a macro-narrative on the impacts of the crisis was put forward: Two issues seemed to have been left out of the ‘narrative’ to date. Firstly, the human development story and the likely impacts on development targets which were already hard achieve (e.g. the Millennium Development Goals). Secondly, minimal attention had focused on the political opportunities of the crisis – where can African economies position themselves to be part of the future upturn? One political opportunity put forward is that in future, many developed countries will be paying for the fiscal stimulus. This could allow for faster growth within African economies.

2 President Jacob Zuma: Speech to the World Economic Forum: 10th June 2009
and why the concept of a developmental state gained currency. Possible solutions to the crisis are proposed and the viability thereof interrogated. Some concluding remarks wrap up the contribution.

The global economic meltdown

The genesis of the current global economic crisis has received fair coverage in a variety of communication media. This contribution will, therefore, not delve into what is common course at present. Suffice, however, to belabour the refrain that the world is in the doldrums of a crippling recession on a scale not witnessed since the wakening of the First and Second World Wars. The economic outlook is as poignant. Economists are for once united in the assessment that the world economy is in its deepest and most synchronized recession in our lifetime. The downslide is caused mainly by a global financial crisis, which, in turn, is deepened by a collapse in world trade.

The global financial crisis has spread with steady rapidity since early 2008, leading to a global downturn of uncertain severity and duration. The crisis has had a ripple effect with the impact of turmoil reverberating in economic activities world-wide. The austere effects of the crisis have become increasingly evident, propagating beyond its initial epicenters to affect other advanced economies, emerging markets and low-income countries, including those in Africa. World trade and industrial activity are falling sharply, while labour markets are weakening at a rapid pace. As a group, the advanced economies are facing their sharpest post-war contraction with economic activity expected to decline from 3.5 percent in 2008 to 0.5 percent in 2009, pushing more than 100 million people into unemployment and poverty worldwide.

Pundits are oupping one another in pronouncements predicting that the global meltdown will exacerbate the complicated phenomenon of international migration. The most poignant diagnosis is, as always, reserved for Africa, the poorest of the continents. There is almost unanimity in the diagnosis that the current crisis has the potential to stunt African economic growth and worsen the continent’s already diminished food security reserves. The resultant mayhem of rising food prices, tenuous prospects to secure international loans, deteriorating export avenues and shrinking labour markets will cause brain drain, societal unrest, and re-ignite conflict in a region reeling from the effects of protracted civil wars.

Over the past year alone, there have been a number of coup d’états (e.g. Guinea, Mauritania and Madagascar) and a worsening of the security situation in Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). There is no doubt that the global recession reinforces and, in some cases, worsens pre-existing challenges and complicates security problems. Therefore, while there has been some political victims of the crisis in Europe (e.g. Latvia and Iceland), in an African context, this is likely to have much more long-term repercussions. Add to this deadly concoction a worsening human rights record and you begin to contemplate catastrophic prospects that are better consigned to the dustbin of history.

It is not hard to decipher that Africa is the continent most vulnerable to the economic downturn. Most African countries lack the economic and social levers to cushion themselves against a crisis of this magnitude. Countries like Zambia and Angola are hurting from the decline in commodity prices. Even the regional economic powerhouse, South Africa, is reeling under the impact of massive layoffs in its mining and car manufacturing sectors. Next door, Botswana – one of the wealthiest and best-managed economies on the continent – has been forced into the ‘hat-in-hand’ begging club. The African Development Bank has recently advanced a $1.5 billion loan to that country to help it cope with the collapse in diamond prices, the mainstay of its economy.

Initially, the predominant view was that Africa would not be affected significantly by what was perceived to be a ‘western’ crisis. Furthermore, the global financial crisis was seen as a crisis in the financial markets, which Africa would be relatively shielded from. Added to this, the perception was that Asian countries would be able to support Africa during the crisis. However, there is an emerging view that many African countries will, indeed, suffer severe impacts. The assessment overlooked the vulnerability of African economies that are increasingly interlinked to international markets. There has been a slump in demand for African exports in North America and Europe, while Chinese companies have started scaling back their operations in the

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5 Ibid
6 Although there is debate about whether the resignation of Marc Ravalomanana as Madagascar's president on 16 March 2009 and the handing over of power to the military a day after soldiers stormed his offices in the capital was a coup d'état, both the African Union and SADC considered it as a coup and suspended Madagascar from all their activities. The US and UK have both declared th episode “unlawful transfer of power” which in any case amounts to a coup
7 Ibid
DRC, Liberia, Guinea, Angola and Sudan. Gradually, investors are realizing that African economies will, indeed, also be affected by the global recession.8

Closer to home, South Africa is Africa’s leading economy and by far the most integrated into the global economy. Resulting from this exposure, the South African economy has been one of the first African countries to be struck by the global financial hurricane originating from sub-prime mortgage bubble in the United States. Thus, the effects of the global recession have started manifesting themselves in South Africa, especially in the manufacturing and export sectors.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) has sounded alarm bells that companies in the mining, automotive, leather and textile industries have embarked on large-scale retrenchments. Analysts predict growth to slow down to 10-year lows9 and Trevor Manuel, South Africa’s Minister in the Presidency responsible for National Planning and immediate former Minister of Finance, told Parliament that the country’s export earnings, especially from minerals, would be severely affected by the reduced demand and plummeting prices owing to the global recession. Manuel added rather poignantly: “Declining commodity prices and lower growth in (our) major trading partners will lower demand for South African exports and reduce the income we derive from them.”10 That means South Africa has joined developed countries and other emerging markets in the fight to mitigate the destabilizing effects of the global economic melt-down.

The opportunity for Africa to engage in the ramifications of the global economic crisis with its developed western counterparts presented itself at the 19th World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa. The WEF was held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 10 to 19 June 2009. The Forum, attended by more than 350 leaders, was held under the appropriate theme: “Implications of the Global Economic Crisis for Africa”.11 Disappointingly, while leaders examined the changing global landscape and identified key challenges that African countries needed to be most prepared for in the coming year, the Forum did not venture into an assessment of the impact of the crisis on the African public service.

Discussions at the WEF meeting were based on five general themes in the fields of politics, business and economics, namely, Global Shifts, Regional Effects; Drivers of the Economy; Change Leadership; Collaboration across Borders; and Growth through Innovation.12 The meeting concluded with a clarion call on African countries to seize the opportunity to turn the current economic crisis to their advantage and reshape global institutions long dominated by the West. Incidentally, the published Forum report showed Africa again languishing at the bottom of global competitiveness rankings because of bottlenecks in infrastructure, finance and communications.13

Speaking at the Forum, former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, warned the world not to turn its back on Africa despite its reputation as a basket case because of wars and corruption. "We ignored Somalia and it has now come back to bite us with piracy and destruction to global trade," Annan warned.14 All was not gloom and doom for Africa. Annan expressed optimism that Africa, given visionary leadership, would wither the current economic storm. In particular, he noted that Africa achieved above global average economic growth rates of 5.5 percent last year. Annan further observed that Africa made remarkable strides towards meeting its developmental goals. The number of people living in abject poverty is leveling out, democracy and market reforms are entrenched in many countries and there have been significant achievements in rolling back the scourge of killer diseases such as AIDS and malaria.

A preview of the African public service

The public services in most African countries have been molded on the format of former colonial administrators. The Anglophone African states like Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, those in the Francophone sphere, notably Guinea, Senegal, Benin, Togo and Gabon, as well as the Luzophone colonized states of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome & Principe, have their public

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8 The Monitor: May 19 2009
10 http://www.twnfrica.org.index
11 www.chinaview.cn 2009-06-10 17:52:40
12 Ibid: Among high-profile topics discussed were Macroeconomic Shifts in the Global Agenda, Economic Crisis and Impact on Africa. Economic deliberations will be closely linked to important social and environmental issues including food security, climate change, health care and education.
13 Clare Nulis: Associated Press at the WEF 11th June 2009
14 Koffi Annan at the WEF Cape Town 10 June 2009
services replicated as prototypes of their former colonial masters. In addition, the British, French, Portuguese, etc, maintain strong links with their ex-colonies, even in the post-independence era.

An imperative of the technologically engineered global village is that African public sector administrators and managers constitute themselves into professional workforces and work towards retiring the continent’s massive developmental backlog. Therefore, as benefactors, colonial powers take it as an important, ancient obligation to provide their protégés with much needed technical and human resource assistance to build and maintain capable states. This assistance is aimed at enhancing public sector performance to ensure that these countries are globally competitive.

The global economic recession of the early 1980s inflicted untold suffering on the public services in Africa, derailing societal players like the private sector and civil society. In response to that crisis, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) sponsored rationalization programmes in the African public sector. Efforts at rationalizing public services included reducing their size and embarking on massive cost-cutting measures. As a result of the massive retrenchments, many public servants were laid off. This affected the ability of states to meet their service delivery obligations adversely. Prof. Richard Levin attributes these austerity measures to the emphasis on free markets and an insistence on lean states. The cumulative effect of these austerity measures was the shrinking of states, which, in turn, had the unintended consequence of impacting negatively on the developmental agendas of governments.

The failures of the rationalized states and a new wave of democratization have led to a revival in the legitimacy of the state, with a new emphasis on ‘building state capability’. Levin argues that the requirements of ‘good governance’ have led to the search for ‘capable states’ that are, inter alia, able to implement the Millennium Development Goals. Levin adds that state capability is necessary to fight poverty, establish a sound macro-economic framework, conduct democratic elections, fight corruption and establish people-centred, decentralized service delivery mechanisms underpinned by sound systems of public administration. It is difficult to begrudge this sound postulation. It is also trite that, today, the weak state remains a major constraint on sustainable development in a number of African countries. Indeed, one of Africa’s major challenges is to strengthen capacity to govern and develop long-term policies. At the same time, there is also an urgent need to implement far-reaching reforms and programmes in many African states.

Impact of the crisis on the developed world’s public services

Job losses are not confined to manufacturing, retail and financial services alone. Redundancies and recruitment freezes are also hitting the public services of the western world. It is reported that in the first three quarters of 2008 there were 34,000 redundancies in education, health and public administrations.

UNISON, a public service trade union in the United Kingdom, predicts that, in 2009, the number of people claiming job seeker allowances will increase to as much as 2 million and the total number of unemployed persons will swell above the 3 million mark. It has advised European governments to invest in public service jobs during these challenging times. Hence, the redundancies referred to above was offset by greater recruitment so that total employment in these sectors grew by 84,000 over the same period.

UNISON reports further that, despite such redundancies, many councils, health trusts, and other public service employers have seen the credit crunch affecting their finances adversely. By the end of 2008, 13 percent of local authorities said they enforced redundancies as a direct result of the economic slowdown. 22 percent introduced a recruitment freeze. Surveys indicate that planned council job losses could total more than 70,000. Housing associations and voluntary organizations are also shedding jobs and leaving vacancies unfilled. It is as well predicted that public service job losses will further deepen the recession by taking demand out of the economy.

On the obverse side of the coin, the USA and the UK are reportedly experiencing a boom time for the public service. In the difficult job market resulting from the current global economic crisis, young adults are increasingly opting to join

15 AAPAM Aide memo Ghana Accra October 2008: http://www.aapam.org/
17 Levin Ibid.
19 www.unison.co.uk
20 Supra p. 2
21 Supra p. 3
the public sector, despite prospects of low pay. The recession is said to have curtailed many traditional career paths, pushing record numbers of 20-somethings, and even many established professionals, to venture into the public service as a result.

In the USA Peace Corps, applications are reportedly up by 16 percent. Teach for America applications increased with 42 percent22 and AmeriCorps (the American entity that oversees recruitment of US Peace Corps personnel) administrators are sifting through more than three times the number of candidates that applied in the previous year.23 In the past seven months, more than 110,000 people applied for public service projects in some of the poorest parts of the country with the AmeriCorps programme. In exchange for a year of service, if selected, volunteers stand to earn a meager stipend – roughly $11,000 – and a small allowance for future educational expenses or student loans.

It is clear, at least in the USA and UK, that many college graduates are no longer distracted by Wall Street’s siren call – or the lure of other fields where openings are scarcer and competition fiercer than ever before. The Obama White House project has spurred this quest for public service by making volunteering a priority for his administration. In some ways, the economic melt-down has simply brought out the best in people.

Faced with an excess of applications for public service deployment, administrators have had to caution that the public service should not be taken as a viable “Plan B” for the unmotivated. The Peace Corps, for example, requires a 27-month commitment to live in what are likely to be rugged conditions. In part, the appeal for applicants is that these positions offer a way to build résumés and develop new skills while waiting for the market to improve. Some insist, however, that they have always wanted to do this kind of work. The recession just propelled them in the right direction.24

### Effects of the crisis on African public services

A sound case has been made for the centrality of establishing and sustaining state capability. Most African countries have learned the hard way that weak states are a sure recipe for relentless conflicts and, therefore, unmitigated turmoil. It cannot be disputed that the development challenges and opportunities of the 21st century are complex.25 They require new and strengthened capabilities that can respond to changed contexts. This is why in successful developmental states, great emphasis has been placed on the capacity of the state and the creation of social capital. President Barrack Obama of the United States adds an interesting dimension to this thesis. He says that Africa needs strong institutions, not strong men.26 In view of the overarching imperative of the need for a capable state, one can deduce with a measure of certainty that it is unlikely that the current recessionary effects will trigger public sector retrenchments – at least not to the scale witnessed in the 80s.

However, that said, most African governments are already taking precautionary measures in the form of cost cutting and cost saving. Such measures would include a freeze on further employment as well as rationalizing functions so that public servants are re-deployed to other under capacitated spheres of government. Some countries like Malawi and Cameroon have opted not to fill – at least for now, vacancies resulting from natural attrition and other causes. South Africa has taken the route of programme and project re-prioritization as opposed to a freeze on the further hiring of personnel. The new administration has, in any event, increased the number of government departments. This decision is in line with government’s resolve to tackle the scourge of poverty and underdevelopment in especially rural areas27 effectively.

One area that might fall victim to recessionary feelers in most African countries is the reform agenda in the public sector. Under pressure of competing national priorities, many states may be compelled to put the public sector reform agenda on ice until the world emerges from the current economic gloom. The Hon. Julia Joiner, the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, sensed this inclination when she cautioned against the temptation to postpone reform. Commissioner Joiner urged that:

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24 Ibid
25 Prof. Levin supra at p. 2
26 President Barrack Obama in his Speech to the Ghanaian Parliament, 11th July 2009
27 Ironically, the anti-poverty intervention strategies will be very costly and the Finance Minister has already indicated that Government is currently faced with a cruel choice in light of the current crisis: either to cut down on public spending or to borrow more. Cutting down on public spending does not bode well for the ANC’s ambitious manifesto – unfortunately. But also borrowing more will not enable the country to immediately take advantage of a recovering world economy – whenever that happens; for there will be a huge debt overhang that the country will have to deal with. Again the previous regime is praised for managing to bring debt levels down - but there is acknowledgement that this took a very long time. Emphasis by Zamokwakhe Somhlaba – see note 45 infra
“on the face of the realities that stand before us, the approach to reform and change cannot and should not be about skimming the surface of what needs to be done. Our efforts need to be broader, deeper and faster. The crises provide both the chance and necessity for change on a larger scale, with the attendant need for an immediate and decisive intervention. Thus, to postpone reforms until a crisis is resolved may not be the best approach, as we know too well that a crisis period is usually the best time for us to engage in change.”

It remains to be seen whether African Union member states will heed Commissioner Joiner’s call to remain committed to reform agendas. As for South Africa, one thing is for sure: the Minister for Public Service and Administration, Minister Masenyani Richard Baloyi, has stated in no uncertain terms that the reform agenda remains on course, notwithstanding the global recession. In his budget vote speech to the National Assembly, Minister Baloyi assured Parliament that among other reform agendas, the much vaunted Single Public Service project would be pursued to its logical conclusion. The introduction of a single public service is considered a major policy shift in the South African public sector.

It is expected that loss of government revenue resulting from shortfalls in remittances will affect the functioning of especially local municipalities adversely. This development has the unwholesome effect of serious cash-flow challenges for municipalities that may, in turn, find it difficult to pay workers. It is common course that, even in a healthy economic climate, municipalities – especially those in rural areas – struggle to meet salary obligations. In fact, in some countries like the DRC, Congo Brazzaville and Somalia, rural municipal workers go without pay for months. The economic crisis will exacerbate this situation.

In the current economic gloom, even Africa’s economic giant is not immune to this significant challenge. The Deputy President, Kgalema Motlanthe, recently cautioned that the current economic crisis has the potential to affect the revenue and tax base of municipalities, which may hamper service delivery. He advised local authorities to devise means to lessen the adverse effects of the current economic crisis on the viability of our programmes.

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28 Commissioner Julia Joiner on: “Partnership Key to Improved Service Delivery”: In a speech delivered at the Continental Africa Public Service Day on the 18th June 2009, in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania at p. 2
29 The Ministry of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) Budget Vote Speech delivered on the 29th June 2009 at p. 7
30 The Ministry of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) Budget Vote Speech delivered on the 29th June 2009 at p. 7: Deputy President Motlanthe’s address to the South Africa’s Local Government Association (Salga) national members’ assembly in East London. Sapa 10 June 2009
With diminished revenue, African governments will find it increasingly difficult to meet salary obligations, leave alone acceding to calls for pay hikes. A heavily unionized public service like that of South Africa may opt for strike action to persuade government to own up to its previous commitments. Some have even declared “a season of strikes”. Going by what has been happening across the continent, this statement may not be far-fetched. Recently, teachers in Kenya and Nigeria went on strike demanding higher pay. The same happened in Zimbabwe and Malawi. With a debilitating economic meltdown, public servants, like other workers, are hard up and want salary increases to cushion them against the obvious erosion of their purchase power.

In South Africa’s case, COSATU says it understands that the global economic crisis will affect government’s ability to implement its plans. However, it is quick to point out that it is equally aware of the severity of the economic meltdown on the livelihoods of all workers and their families. When the previous administration tabled its budget in February 2008, the economy was expected to grow at 1.2 percent in 2009, with a ballooning budget surplus to cater for increased social spending and infrastructure development. Unfortunately, this did not happen and the country is now in recession. Some economists have predicted ominously that the economy will contract by as much as 1.5 percent this year. While government’s financial woes may strengthen its hand in wage negotiations, what about ailing public enterprises that are also in need of more money?

As indicated earlier, perhaps the best insight into the global economic crisis is President Zuma’s appeal to fellow African Union member states to harness opportunities presented by the crisis to reclaim the skills lost to the developed world. President Zuma’s forecast is vindicated in reports from the African Diaspora. Bleak economic conditions have rendered African immigrants in the US more and more disillusioned with the American dream and many are looking at returning to life back home in Africa. Recent studies affirmed that immigrant professionals from Africa are increasingly leaving the US and heading to their home countries.

The return to Africa is in line with studies indicating that a sense of optimism driven by economic growth has lifted spirits in large parts of the continent in recent years. A recent study by the Pew Research Center has found that people's level of satisfaction with their quality of life is rising, while it has stayed level or decreased in the US. Apparently, this ‘return home’ phenomenon has affected Chinese and Indian immigrants as well. Lately, increasing numbers of Chinese and Indian workers have started heading home in the hope of finding better opportunities and improved lifestyles.

For a country like South Africa, which has for a long time suffered a chronic scarcity of skills in some core sectors, this ‘return home’ phenomenon is clearly an important advantage. It may result in a brain gain, which will enable government to address the skills shortage at especially local government level. Zimbabwe is another African country that has hemorrhaged core skills owing to the recent political stalemate that caused economic stagnation. It too, could do with the advent of the brain gain.

The same cannot be said of other African countries already beset with unemployment rates of over 30-50%. For a long time, most African countries have been battling to grow their economies to create jobs for their burgeoning graduate corps. Hence, it would be safe to argue that for such countries ‘the exodus to return home’ may not result in brain gain. Quite to the contrary, this otherwise welcome phenomenon may, in fact, exacerbate already complicated unemployment equations. It cannot be argued that for most sub-Saharan countries, emigrants are an important source of foreign reserves, with foreign remittances estimated at a staggering $40 billion annually. These countries are, therefore, bound to suffer revenue shortfalls in the eventuality of a massive homecoming by emigrants.

However, in contrast to the above, there is another school of thought on emigration. According to this school of thought, the slow-down in private and public credit resulting from the cutting of ongoing projects and a reluctance to plan and implement new ones, will retard or altogether halt the job
markets for workers in, for example, education, health and social services. Emigration and brain drain will ensue, in particular concerning those who have sufficient international experience and contacts. The proponents of this viewpoint further contend that brain drain may also ensue from the drop in foreign and development aid from Western countries that are grappling with the effects of financial crises. Skilled public servants in development projects may find their jobs vanishing because of decreasing foreign aid that funds their salaries. Emigration may then be the only means to remain employed.

Whether there will be brain drain or gain will depend largely on each African country’s economic fundamentals. There is merit, however, in the argument that thriving economies experiencing scarce skills like South Africa will definitely welcome and harness significant brain gain. The opposite is true for many other African countries, e.g. Somalia and the DRC where peace and stability have been compromised by incessant civil strife. Yet others have to cope with severely crippled economies. Such countries will continue to witness a study brain drain, despite the brain gain opportunity spawned by the global economic meltdown.

**Africa’s response to the global economic crisis**

There has been varied reaction to the economic meltdown. Most developed economies have devised elaborate recovery plans to jump-start job creation and put money into people’s pockets. Efforts have been made to reform the banking systems. Robust and sustained economic and fiscal stimulus plans are being implemented throughout Europe and the US. In the US in particular, President Obama has signed into law an economic stimulus plan worth about $787 billion aimed at boosting the US economy. A number of companies in both Europe and the US have been rescued by governments and others have been compelled to restructure their operations, including mergers and staff reductions. Yet others have crumbled or were bought out, while some, including banks, have been nationalized.

In Africa, countries have been devising their own, very individual mechanisms of responding to the economic meltdown and commentators have been quick to interrogate the nature of the responses and to suggest which African governments have been quick in recognizing the gravity of the crisis. Uganda and Tanzania have been put forward as countries that potentially had the fiscal space to respond to the crisis effectively. Mauritius has also been singled out as a country that had responded quickly to the crisis by establishing a taskforce. South Africa has adopted a similar course of action. It has located the crisis at the centre of the agenda for the quadrate forum, the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), which involves government, business, labour and civil society.

Against this background, many pundits view the economic downturn as providing both challenges and opportunities for the continent in particular and the developing world in general.

Africa can build on its human resources: its young and growing population. For example, South Africa has invested heavily in an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). This is a proactive government programme aimed at enlisting thousands of jobless people, particularly those in rural areas, into employment. In addition to this, President Zuma has proposed that those who lose their jobs be put into retraining programmes. This measure would ensure that such individuals acquire necessary skills in readiness for the expected recovery. Another option would be to make apprenticeships a prerequisite for private firms contracted to provide public services. Such a measure would carry a multiplier effect on growing the skills base in anticipation of economic recovery. Other African countries may do well in heeding President Zuma’s appeal for expanded public service apprenticeships, learnerships and internships.

Furthermore, international industry and management experts say that developing nations such as Nigeria and South Africa can recover much faster from the global economic recession than developed nations. However, this would only be possible if such recovery leveraged properly on technology, especially mobile broadband technology. International experts, speaking at the recently concluded Mobile World Congress of the Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) Association, in Barcelona, Spain, stressed the unique role that mobile broadband technology could play as an economic stimulus globally. Participants observed that technology,
particularly mobile broadband, could help developing economies leapfrog economic and other divides by facilitating the deliverables of government, business, education, health services and financial transactions through electronic means, with emphasis on e-government.

Ultimately, in South Africa, as is the case elsewhere, government’s proposed interventions depend on an effective public service. It is in this light that Minister Baloyi’s commitment to stay the course of public sector reform should be viewed and applauded. The public sector reform agenda, painful as it may appear in these fluid economic times, stands to position the country to better deal with similar or other unforeseen calamities in the future.

**In conclusion**

Ultimately, the developed world, from whence the crisis emanated, is obligated to provide leadership in resolving the global economic melt-down. The buck stops right there. Necessary measures include the need to monitor impacts; enhance financial regulation; ensure some of the fiscal stimulus is directed to developing countries; and avoid protectionism in trade and migration. Other related interventions are to maintain aid commitments and reshape multilateral institutions. To date, progress is under way for some of these (e.g. monitoring and aid commitments by most donors) but on others, there is much less clarity.41

41 ODI’s monitoring study of the financial crisis has identified four key transmission belts for the impacts of the crisis. These are private capital flows, trade, remittances, and aid (although there is much less data available on aid). The same transmission belts affect different countries differently.
Know Your Service Rights Campaign

Folusho Mvubu of the Department of Public Service and Administration expands on the process embarked on to ensure that the majority of South African citizens are educated and well-informed about government services and aware of the various mediums that can be applied when public service officials infringe on their rights.

Introduction

The Know Your Service Rights Campaign is a project that the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) has embarked on in response to government’s commitment to improving the quality of life of all. It has to be understood as one of the Batho Pele initiatives that are meant to transform South African society by ensuring the realization of human, economic and social rights for all citizens. “A better life for all” is in line with the spirit of our Constitution that promotes the Bill of Rights enshrined in chapters two and ten, which focus on the basic values and principles governing public administration.

The Promotion of Justice Act of 2000, the Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 and the Act on the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination of 2000 gave rise to the promotion of access to all organs of state, private companies and public bodies by those who need help to exercise any of their socio-economic rights and who require written reasons for decisions made. They also provide the means to appeal for the reconsideration of a decision during the recourse process.

Background

The Know Your Service Rights Campaign is one of four strategic themes Cabinet approved on 4 August 2004 for the programme to revitalize the promotion and implementation of Batho Pele within the Public Service.

There has been mounting concern within and outside the Public Service about the extent to which citizens are aware of their rights concerning the level of services the various government departments provide to them. Studies conducted by the Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC) and the DPSA confirmed this concern. These studies assent to the fact that most government departments are doing little to inform citizens about the level of services they are entitled to. The absence of service charters or service standards in most government departments supports this finding. Service charters reiterate the commitment of departments to provide services that will go a long way towards improving the lives of South Africans.

The 2003 research studies of the OPSC and the DPSA served as the basis for the development of the four themes of the Batho Pele revitalization programme.
The themes of the revitalization programme are:

- Theme one: Taking Public Services to the People
- Theme two: Know Your Service Rights Campaign
- Theme three: People First – for real
- Theme four: Mainstreaming and institutionalizing Batho Pele

The Know Your Service Rights Campaign seeks to address the challenges mentioned above by raising awareness among citizens about their rights concerning services provided and by educating them on ways of exercising these rights.

Although government departments are compelled to adhere to the principles of democracy and transparency to ensure that the rights and privileges of every citizen of this country are promoted, the actual process requires acceleration.

Services that South African citizens deserve to access

The views of the current President, His Excellency Jacob Zuma, have also given justification to the services that the people of South Africa have to access. He has been quoted from his inauguration speech on 9 May 2009 as saying: “There is no place for complacency, no place for cynicism, no place for excuses. Everything we do must contribute in a direct and meaningful way to the improvement of the lives of our people…

“To achieve all our goals, we must hold ourselves to the highest standards of service, probity and integrity. Together we must build a society that prizes excellence and rewards effort, which shuns laziness and incompetence…

“Therefore, we need to make real the fundamental right of all South Africans to freely express themselves, to protest, to organise, and to practise their faith.”

Here, reference is made to the key/main services provided by the Social Cluster departments, namely Social Development; Labour; Housing; Home Affairs; Water Affairs and Forestry; Provincial and Local Government; Health; and Education and the Justice Cluster departments like the South African Police Services; Correctional Service; Justice; and Constitutional Development. The possibility of focusing on other clusters will be explored in the near future.

Objectives

The Campaign has a range of objectives. Among these, it seeks to develop and distribute information booklets that will serve as an information source on the Know Your Service Rights Campaign, with special reference to the Social Cluster. These booklets will inform citizens about the different types of services that government provides in the eleven government departments mentioned above, as well as about the rights that emanate from these.

It also intends to exert pressure on the Public Service, especially on the eight departments that are our focus areas in the Social Cluster and its officials, through a
concerted public awareness effort that is aimed at educating citizens about their rights as far as service delivery is concerned.

Furthermore, the Campaign seeks to educate citizens about how and where such rights can be exercised, including redress mechanisms, and aims to explain these rights in a user-friendly and easily understandable manner to citizens to create awareness among them of their obligations when accessing government services.

Lastly, it seeks to discourage complacency among public servants, since citizens would be more aware of and knowledgeable about their rights, service standards and the recourse process should their rights be violated, and to strengthen and emphasize partnerships between the public and government in ensuring citizen participation in the service delivery continuum.

The above-mentioned objectives resulted in the Know Your Service Rights team developing a communication strategy that made them look afresh at the Constitution, the Batho Pele principles, the APRM self-assessment report and the other three themes to ensure that the Campaign was well integrated into the Batho Pele revitalization programme and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

The relationship between the Know Your Service Rights and other government programmes

The Batho Pele principles

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele) of 1997 identifies eight principles that government has to promote towards an improved public service. The Know Your Service Rights Campaign is a campaign that serves to assist government in advancing the “redress” principle. The redress principle states that if the promised standard of services is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy. When complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic and positive response. The implementation of this principle does not happen in isolation and is related to the Batho Pele principles of access, information and openness and transparency.

The African Peer Review

The African Peer Review (APR) process that took place in 2005/2006, provided South Africans with a situational analysis that has led to the development of a Programme of Action. The governance situation in South Africa is described in detail in the APRM Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR).

In essence, the Report notes the progress that the country has made in moving from an oppressive and discriminatory system to one based on democracy and human rights, respect for the rule of law, the centrality of the Constitution as the supreme law of the land, and a government based on the will of the people.

The Report also shows that South Africa faces critical governance challenges as it strives to prioritize the needs of the poor while ensuring sustainability of social development. The APR Programme of Action is a response to the major problems identified in the CSAR and the APRM Country Review Report written by the
Country Review Mission. For purposes of this launch, our focus will be on some of the elements of economic governance and management, namely inadequate public consultation, education and feedback in policy making; underdeveloped capacity and skills in public expenditure management and monitoring; and blockages to service delivery.

In government’s endeavor to address the challenges highlighted in the APR Report, the APR Programme of Action has been aligned with other existing government programmes. These programmes, which are aimed at addressing the blockages to service delivery, include:

- Implementation of Batho Pele.
- Implementation of service delivery plans and standards.
- Fighting corruption in the public sector and society at large.
- Provision of free basic services.
- Strengthening the capacity of local government.
- Integrated planning.
- Equity and development.
- A comprehensive anti-poverty strategy.

**Implications for government**

From the initiatives and challenges highlighted above, government still has to improve service delivery through an increase in the number of formal partnerships with various stakeholders and engagement with citizens. It also has to combat corruption through the reduction of resources lost and to prioritize disadvantaged urban and rural nodes by increasing the number of support services provided to these areas.

Moreover, it has to ensure that vulnerable groups, including women and the disabled, get access to basic government services; improve the management skills and capacity of local government authorities; and increase the management of service delivery effectively.

From these APRM plans of action and government’s Programme of Action, it is clear that the **Know Your Service Rights Campaign** has to play a major role in ensuring that people are aware of their service rights, access the services that they are entitled to and to engage and participate in government processes. It is a vital element in ensuring our democracy and addressing service delivery backlogs.

It is, therefore, also clear that we have to deal with programmes in an integrated manner. We should not lose sight of the role of these programmes, not just in the development of South Africa, but also in the contribution made towards the development of the region and the African continent as a whole.

**The Know Your Service Rights roll-out plan**

The objectives mentioned in paragraph 3 above led to the development of a more detailed, developmental roll-out plan. It is a plan that includes an incremental approach towards raising awareness within the public service, followed by the empowerment of the citizens.

**Stage 1**

The roll-out plan has to culminate in a series of formal engagements with respective Directors-General and Executive Managers from the eight Social Cluster departments with a view to mobilizing support and sponsorship for the Campaign. This process must be followed by the establishment of roll-out teams within each department and provincial administration. These teams must be made up of:

- **Content champions**, who were identified at the beginning of this exercise to, among other things, provide content on specific areas of services provided in their departments; key programmes and projects aimed at improving service
Information on the Campaign is to be disseminated through:

- Trained public service officials at key service delivery points or frontline institutions.
- Community radio stations across all provinces.
- Community newspapers.
- Flyers and posters.
- Thusong Centres.
- CDWs.
- Traditional leaders.
- Municipalities.

This process ultimately aims to ensure that the majority of South African citizens are, in effect, educated and well-informed about government services. It also aims to ensure that citizens are aware of the various mediums to use when public service officials infringe on their rights.

The roll-out plan of the Justice Cluster booklet will be worked out in a different way because of lessons learned from the roll-out of the Social Cluster booklet.

**Stage 2:**

Stage 2 involves the roll out of the campaign to chapter nine (9) institutions and non-governmental organisations like the South African Human Rights Commission, The Public Protector, the Commission on Gender Equality, IDASA, SANGOCO and ODAC. This must culminate in structured engagements with executive managers from these institutions. The purpose is to mobilize buy-in and support for the campaign, as well as leverage on existing platforms and initiatives that might be nuanced on the same principles of the Know Your Service Rights Campaign.

**Stage 3:**

This stage involves the actual roll out of the project to the general public. This is to culminate in structured road shows with key stakeholder groups such as NGOs, CBOs, CDWs, traditional leaders, municipalities, and so on.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it should be noted that the core aim of this Campaign is not only to improve service delivery, but to build a relationship between the Public Service and the general public. It is, therefore, incumbent on public institutions to combine their energies and intensify their efforts to ensure that they nurture this relationship by being responsive to the needs of communities. This will, in the long run, contribute positively towards restoring confidence in the public service system.
This article sets out to explore the theme of innovation in the public sector from a UK perspective. It seeks to set out problems with regard to innovation that are currently experienced in the UK, showing difficulties that public services have had in developing and successfully delivering innovative, citizen-centred services. Following this, a simple model will be put forward that demonstrates a technique through which innovation can be nurtured and implemented, helping to create citizen-focused services.

Innovation and the UK

In recent years, the issue of innovation and the need to create innovative new services has steadily moved up the public sector agenda. Once solely seen as the hallmark of the private sector, with all government efforts focused on enabling innovation among private companies, there has been a growing recognition that innovation also has a key role to play within the state and its many activities.

2007 saw a landmark change in the status of innovation in the UK, more generally with the creation of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, a ministry with an explicit remit and responsibility to stimulate innovation in both public and private spheres. The creation of this central government department was followed in 2008 with the publication of a government strategy paper “Innovation Nation” that made plain the government’s plan for innovation, setting out challenging and stretching targets and ambitions for itself with clear implications for every level of government and all aspects of delivery.1

While there is, therefore, a heightened level of focus and interest on this issue, progress remains very slow. This eagerness for innovation must be seen against the fact of years of inertia and unwillingness to seek change that are characteristic of much of the UK public sector.

The difficulties inherent in actually making innovation a reality on the ground and from the citizen’s perspective are neatly encapsulated by the current system in the UK through which new services are developed. The development of new services for citizens – be they in the domains of health, crime, employment, transport, education...

or housing – is characterised by a focus on process and procedure over and above a focus on what citizens require and the timeliness of the response.

Typically, therefore, the genesis of almost any new service will involve the following stages:

1. **Identification of the problem**
2. **Planning** (determination of exactly what the nature of the response should be)
3. **Decision making** (a formal response to the reporting stage)
4. **Analysis of the data** (either by specialist research divisions within the civil service, or outsourced to academic institutions or private companies)
5. **Collection of data to illustrate the extent of the problem** (data collection will often draw upon both quantitative and qualitative sources)
6. **Reporting** (identification of key findings and an outline of potential responses)
7. **Delivery of response**

Of necessity there are a number of problems with this service development structure. Crucially, the process is very slow – a fact necessitated by the number of stages that are contained within the process. While speed may not always be of the essence, a slow response does run the risk of letting a problem exacerbate, or at least become entrenched before a response can be activated. The ability to “nip the problem in the bud” is therefore lost, meaning that the scale of any eventual response will likely be larger and more expensive.

Given the number of stages involved, the process is also expensive. It draws upon significant numbers of man-hours in its various stages – drawing upon the work of many people to gather, analyse, report and respond. All of this places a burden on the public purse, since each stage either has an explicit cost (for instance, paying organisations to carry out some of the work) or an implicit cost (time spent by staff that could be utilised elsewhere).

Perhaps of crucial importance in the structure set out above is the lack of a citizen focus. The process is not one that puts a focus on citizens at its heart, but sees citizens...
solely as bearers of a problem that must be remedied on their behalf. They are, therefore, not involved in either an analysis of the problem (even to determine whether they feel the problem identified is a real and significant one in their lives) or the development of the solution.

The process, therefore, marginalizes citizens who are only truly being engaged when they are required to become the recipients of the eventual service created. Given this, service development in the UK is currently contrary to a genuine citizen-focused approach.

**Citizen-centred services**

So, if the current style of response sees citizens solely in terms of the locus of the problem, and so as the “client” to receive the service, what would a genuine citizen-engaged model look like? Perhaps it would be easier to describe by setting out what some of the key features would be:

**Key features of a genuine citizen-engaged model**

- A system that enables communities to explore and express issues that are of importance to them – to let them identify their own priorities.
- Awareness that communities will use non-technical language to describe their problems, and may therefore find the technical language of professionals confusing or difficult.
- A means by which genuine dialogue can be fostered between front-line staff and the community – this is based on an acknowledgement that for most people, front-line staff (be they police, health care workers, social workers and so forth) are largely their only point of contact with most government agencies.
- Allowing front-line staff to translate the problems the community express into a form that the relevant agency can act on.
- Ensuring that the community and front-line staff become equal partners in exploring and defining the problems that citizens experience.

It is from this open and genuine dialogue between front-line staff and communities that we see the opportunities for innovative practice emerging.

**The Government Office for the South West: an innovation case study**

The Centre for Public Innovation (CPI) has put into practice a model for community innovation based on the thinking set out above. We have utilized this in several locations across the UK, using it to unpick problematic social and health problems that mainstream service provision has failed to tackle. We offer this as a brief case study to stimulate your own thinking.

The CPI was asked to address the issue of anti-social behaviour for the Government Office for the South West – the branch of central government that leads and coordinates activity in the south west region of the UK.

Anti-social behaviour is an issue high on the political agenda and involves the kind of behaviour that is borderline or low-level criminal, but which has a disproportionate effect on communities – such behaviour can involve drunken behaviour, rowdy behaviour, vandalism and intimidation. The south west of the UK is an area characterized by a dispersed population in a largely rural setting, with high levels of unemployment and relatively high levels of poverty.
Working with the Government Office for the South West, we adopted a simple, three-step response:

1. Identify the problem;
2. quickly develop a possible solution; and
3. implement the solution using a cheap pilot.

The Government Office allocated a total grant budget of approximately R940 000 to pay for the implementation of pilot schemes. While a large pot of money, the funding arrangements were such that no single project was entitled to more than around R31 000. The intention was, therefore, to use micro funding to many small scale, locally based initiatives, which were the product of dialogue between front-line staff and the communities they served.

Through advertising the scheme to community workers, we were able to identify and work with 29 projects in total. Each project was provided with brief training about how to implement its idea, was allocated a pot of money and then given three months to implement the idea. A further condition was that the work had to be delivered by front-line workers in conjunction with members of the community, thereby ensuring that citizens were involved in working alongside professionals to improve their communities.

Given the diverse nature of anti-social behaviour, the projects that were funded were diverse – both geographically and thematically. The following list gives a flavour of the kind of projects that were delivered:

- The creation of a lunch club for vulnerable elderly people;
- a project to help integrate migrant families into a local community;
- the development of a local youth council for a small town;
- engaging young men in a project to promote safer driving;
- the creation of diversionary activities for drug users; and
- a media project looking at issues around gun crime aimed at young people.

Just to reiterate, all projects were set up and delivered in under three months, each receiving no more than R31 000.00 in funding.

In addition to the impact that the delivery of projects had on the problems identified, the project enabled services and solutions to be developed that were grounded in the lives of citizens, and which reflected their priorities. Furthermore, citizens were engaged in the delivery of solutions, rather than being just the passive recipients of assistance from the government. Finally, it allowed rapid responses to be developed to social problems as they arose, allowing solutions to be tried and tested quickly.

Implications for South Africa

While the model developed was tried and tested in the UK, the underlying principles are likely to have as much validity in non-UK circumstances. While the issues being explored may differ, it is likely that a citizen-focused response that draws on the idea of communities and engages them in the delivery of solutions is a model that will have as much relevant in South Africa as it does in the UK.
**News in Brief**

*Eastern Cape pulls out all the stops to improve matric results*

– By Vuyolwethu Sangotsha

*Bhisho* – The Eastern Cape Education Department has pulled out all the stops to improve the province's matric results. The Department’s spokesperson, Loyiso Pulumani, said they aimed to improve on the province's 50.6 percent pass rate that was achieved last year. He said last year was particularly significant, since it was the first year that the new National Senior Certificate was awarded to learners who passed their Grade 12 examinations based on the new curriculum known as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

Some of the measures the Department has put in place include the Learner Attainment Improvement Strategy (LAIS). "The Department's LAIS, which was introduced from the beginning of this year, seeks to ensure that underperforming schools receive all the requisite assistance to ensure that issues like resourcing, skilling and district support are availed on an ongoing basis," Mr Pulumani said. He further said the Department's winter schools, which host learners across the province and focus specifically on problem learning areas, are currently being intensified as the Department enters the third and crucial quarter.

On the issue of comparing last year's results with this year, Mr Pulumani said it would be inappropriate as it would be "like comparing apples and oranges". He said last year was the introductory phase of the curriculum and some of the requirements were only unveiled partly. "For me, it's too early to make substantive judgments or comparisons, for that matter. I think it's important to note that this year has not had any typical mid-year examinations as was the norm in the old curriculum. The new NCS is instead assessed through a series of planned tasks and assessments over a specified timeframe," he added.

Announcing the provincial matric results last year in East London, Education MEC Mahlubandile Qwase said his Department would put more effort into improving school support and monitoring, right from the provincial head office and districts to the schools, in 2009. He said they had demonstrated an unwavering commitment towards refocusing all their operations primarily on achieving quality teaching and learning. "The Department will continue to appoint Subject Planners at Head Office and Subject Advisors as well as Education Development Officers in districts. This is a significant development, which will take some time and careful budgeting to achieve," Mr Qwase said. – BuaNews

*Economic downturn will not change SA's development*

– By Vuyolwethu Sangotsha

*Durban* – President Jacob Zuma reiterated that the economic downturn will not change the direction of South Africa's development.

"The economic downturn will no doubt affect the pace at which our country is able to address the socio-economic challenges it faces and will slow down the creation of decent jobs.

"But, as we said in the State of the Nation Address, it will not alter the direction of our development. The policy priorities that we have identified and the plans that we placed before the electorate, will not change," said President Zuma.

Addressing members of the Durban Chamber of Commerce, President Zuma said while South Africa had not been affected to the extent that a number of other countries had been, the effects of the economic meltdown are now becoming evident in the economy with the country truly entering a recession. He said the country's framework to respond to this crisis was concluded by government, labour and business in February this year and teams were established to work on this. Some of the immediate actions include the introduction of a training layoff. Workers who would ordinarily be facing retrenchments due to economic difficulties would be re-trained and kept in employment for a period of time. Furthermore, the Industrial
Development Corporation also developed a programme to fund companies in distress.

"We also have to ensure that government buys more goods and services locally, without undermining our global competitiveness or pushing up costs beyond acceptable levels," President Zuma said.

He added that government was paying serious attention to the protests of and was sympathetic to the concerns of people who have genuine grievances. The President said government meant what it said during the election, namely that for as long as people lived in poor conditions, it would not rest. "We know what it is like to live in conditions of squalor without water, basic sanitation or electricity and are working hard to improve the situation throughout the country," he said. "We are a listening government and working with our people, we will implement mechanisms to respond faster and more effectively," he said.

However, he warned that, while government understood and accepted the right of people to take to the streets in protest if they were unhappy, they lost government support if the protests were accompanied by violence. On that issue, the Police had been instructed to respond with sensitivity towards protesters who acted within the confines of the law and the Constitution, but to take swift action against those who broke the law.

"We urge employers and workers to negotiate in good faith and try to finalize the discussions speedily and amicably so that all sectors can get back to work," said the President.

President Zuma continued by saying that during the term of this administration, government would focus intensively on the local government sphere. He noted that while it might be tempting for government to shout at colleagues in local government and say they were not doing their work, it needed to delve deeper to check what kind of provincial and national support was provided to local government, especially in the very rural municipalities with no resources. "I intend to have an intensive interaction with local government colleagues to hear first hand from them what the challenges are so that, working together, we can look for solutions," he said.

He further urged business people to form partnerships with municipalities in surrounding areas and to see what kind of support they could provide in terms of skills development and infrastructure. He assured business people that everything seemed to be going well, adding that government was on track and pleased with the progress made so far. – BuaNews

**SA will have adequate accommodation in 2010**

– By Professor Ndawonde

**Johannesburg** – Soccer fanatics visiting South Africa next year for the FIFA World Cup can rest assured that they will have adequate accommodation.

"South Africa will have adequate accommodation for the tournament and people must stop circulating fictitious information regarding this issue," said Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, in response to some media reports that FIFA President Sepp Blatter was concerned over a shortage of 15 000 rooms for the 2010 football spectacle.

"Although we have a few [other] challenges, I want to stress that South Africa has no accommodation challenges whatsoever. We are constantly working with all host cities in ensuring that our visitors have adequate accommodation come the 2010 World Cup," Minister van Schalkwyk said during a meeting attended by the Minister of Sport and Recreation, Makhenkesi Stofile, and LOC Chief Executive Officer, Dr Danny Jordaan, to discuss the challenges South Africa faced ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

The Minister said that Mr Blatter was possibly referring to the challenges faced by FIFA's MATCH (a professional services company selected by FIFA to provide ticketing, accommodation and event information technology services to FIFA during the World Cup) concerning the contracting of rooms for the FIFA family, which included players, match officials and FIFA delegates. “He was misquoted. As for South Africa, we do not have any challenges concerning accommodation. FIFA has requested 55 000 rooms for its family and we have set aside 100 000, so we really have no problems in this regard,” he said.

He said this despite the accommodation challenges
Bloemfontein faced during the recent FIFA Confederations Cup, which forced thousands of soccer enthusiasts and journalist to miss the Bafana Bafana and Spain game. According to Minister Van Schalkwyk, Bloemfontein and other small host cities would have sufficient accommodation next year, "there was no doubt about that". "We are meeting with these cities and our plans are all set. We expect many people in this country next year and accommodation is important. So, we will not fail," he said, citing as an example the more than 6,400 luxury tented camps that would be erected in the Kruger National Park (KNP) to expand accommodation in Mpumalanga.

According to Dr Jordaan, neighbouring countries like Namibia, Lesotho, Botswana and Mauritius would be forming partnerships with South Africa to ensure that accommodation would be sufficient during the tournament.

The transport system, security, logistics and the volunteers programme were among the other major issues discussed at the meeting. Concerning transport, Minister Van Schalkwyk said that the airport in the KNP was going to be re-opened and would be operational during the World Cup to ensure that fans had enough and efficient transport in that part of the country. Dr Jordaan added that the details about accommodation and the transport systems in small cities would be monitored closely soon after the tournament's final draw scheduled to take place on 4 December in Cape Town.

Government outlines five-year programme

Pretoria – Government released a framework to guide its programmes over the next five years, providing with it a fiscal posturing of how and where it would spend its money over this term.

The Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), adopted by Cabinet a few weeks ago, outlines government's policy and programmes to improve the conditions of life of South Africans and serves as a guide to planning and resource allocation across all spheres.

Over the next five years, government has prioritized economic services; social infrastructure, including basic services and housing; infrastructure and personnel for education and health; and infrastructure and personnel to render the criminal justice system more integrated and effective as the areas requiring the greatest expenditure.

However, the document makes it clear that while all priorities will be given the attention they deserve, the strategic focus of the MTSF as a whole is the understanding that economic growth and development, including the creation of decent work on a large scale and investment in quality education and skills development, are at the centre of government's approach.

The document also states that while the priorities will be given adequate attention, it may be necessary for government to phase them in and sequence their implementation, taking into account the availability of infrastructure and human and financial resources.

Head of the Policy Unit in the Presidency, Joel Netshitenzhe, said it was necessary that a comprehensive review of the expenditure patterns of departments was undertaken.

"This should open up areas of savings and reprioritization. We need such a review to ascertain our reprioritzstion," he said.

This is in line with the revitalization and renewal of the new administration and its constant search for new and more effective ways of doing things.

The expected slowdown of public spending for the next two to three years, as a result of the global economic crisis, brings with it a set of challenges and opportunities for government. And this will require government to make some tough choices and serious trade-offs.

"For example, despite the serious economic climate, we won't cut expenditure on infrastructure," Mr Netshitenzhe said.

In principle, government has decided to maintain the steady increase in expenditure in especially areas that will protect society from the worst effects of the global and domestic economic crisis and prepare the country to take advantage of an upturn in the early years of the five-year period.

However, this fiscal posture could lead to large budget deficits and it would, therefore, be necessary for government to take tough decisions that would lead to a reversal of such deficits.
How the new administration goes about its tasks of doing more with less and constantly searching for new and more effective ways of doing things, central to which is the review of the expenditure trends of departments, will form a large part of unleashing the money that is required to fund government's programmes over this period.

Mr Netshitenzhe added that the priorities outlined in the MTSF must be translated into the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of government ministers against which their performance over this term will be measured.

"The President will use the KPIs to assess the performance of the ministers and they will, in turn, use this to assess the performance of their directors-general," said Mr Netshitenzhe. – BuaNews

**Soweto gets a new clinic**

– By Nthambeleni Gabara

**Johannesburg** – A state-of-the-art clinic, which opened in Protea Glen, Soweto, will go a long way in providing comprehensive reproductive and antenatal services to patients. Operating between 07:30 and 16:00 daily, the Protea Glen Clinic will also offer services to Tuberculosis (TB) patients.

A member of the Mayoral Committee of the City of Johannesburg, Councilor Matshidiso Mfikoe, who opened the clinic, said the clinic was built to increase access to health services in the area and that it was now up to the community to take advantage of the clinic and look after their health. "I am proud to say that we have made great strides in bringing health services closer to our people so that they do not have to travel many kilometres to the nearest clinic," said Ms Mfikoe.

She said local government would continue to address health inequalities by ensuring that facilities are properly staffed and have the necessary resources to function effectively.

The decision to establish a clinic was taken in 2007. Previously, the community was serviced by a mobile clinic that operated only on certain days. Construction started in September 2008 and the clinic was completed in May 2009.

Other services that will be provided by the new health facility include child immunization, comprehensive Primary Health Care services and voluntary testing for HIV.

The opening of the clinic forms part of the city's ongoing programme to ensure access to primary health care services across the City of Johannesburg, said Ms Mfikoe, who added that this would be complemented by the refurbishment of clinics such as OR Tambo Clinic, Nokuphila Clinic, Jeppe Clinic, Riverlea Clinic and Yeoville Clinic. – BuaNews

**Government to promote women economic empowerment**

– By Chris Bathembu

**Pretoria** – Government will step up its efforts to ensure increased participation by women in South Africa's economy.

"There is no doubt that policy response that builds on women's roles as economic agents can do a lot to mitigate the effects of the crisis in development," said Social Development Deputy Minister Bathabile Dlamini.

Speaking at an event to commemorate World Population Day, Ms Dlamini said government had put in place mechanisms to ensure that women were integrally involved and targeted in the design and implementation of economic empowerment and development initiatives.

She further said sexual and reproductive rights had become a central part of government's policy development. In 1994, the world's population of 5.6 billion was growing at 93 million per year. Today the growth is 77 million per year, 17 percent slower. "The quality of life in general has improved substantially in the world and we can proudly say that the Cairo Agenda has ushered in important changes in many parts of the world," said Ms Dlamini.

She said South Africa had done well in integrating the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) goals into the national health programme through the ICPD Programme of Action. Compared with other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa had been more successful in improving health indicators, with a low total fertility rate of 3.1 and low infant mortality of 41 deaths per 1 000 lives.
There was also strong consensus that maternal health, newborn and child health programmes would only be effective if there were a continuum of care from pregnancy and childbirth through to childhood.

"Up to 40 percent of child deaths are in the neonatal period and nearly three quarters of these could be prevented if women were adequately nourished and received appropriate care during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period," said the Deputy Minister.

For women to be productive and participate in the country's social, economic and political processes, their rights had to be fully protected by law. "It is only when women are healthy and empowered that they can raise and educate healthy children. These are the building blocks of stable societies and growing economies, and imperative in their own right," she said.

Tackling poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals can only be met when the untapped potential of women in eradicating extreme poverty is recognized and supported.

"By assisting women to earn a decent income, we will help keep children in school and improve household food security," she said. – BuaNews

More rural schools to benefit from e-learning
– By Tshwarelo Mogakane

Nelspruit – Fifteen more schools in Mpumalanga are to benefit from an initiative enabling children from different schools to be taught mathematics and science at the same time.

Through video conferencing technology and the use of interactive whiteboards, the initiative of the Ligbron Academy of Technology in Ermelo has already linked three schools in 2008.

"The Ligbron e-Learning Project allows for the sharing of SMART interactive educational technology between five schools in the region. Expansion to a further 15 schools is also being planned," said Frans Kalp, technology teacher and project manager.

Mr Kalp said the programme was piloted at Camden Combined School and Umzimvelo School outside Ermelo and Ermelo Combined School in town. The schools connect wirelessly to conferencing software to share their lessons with the Ligbron Academy, which has 920 pupils.

The Ligbron e-Learning Project is the first of its kind in South Africa, according to Mr Kalp.

"With the blessing of the Mpumalanga Department of Education, Ligbron started sharing mathematics, mathematics literacy and science lessons with the first three schools within a 50 kilometre radius of Ligbron," he said.

E-learning is possible through the connection of SMART interactive whiteboards, with each having an LCD screen with a digital camera connected to the computer showing the image of teachers from linked schools.

Mr Kalp has facilitated the training of teachers in computer literacy, teaching them how to use the SMART interactive whiteboards and educational software. He said healthy competition had developed among pupils, with some rushing to the front of class to work on the whiteboard at the same time as pupils from other schools.

This also taught pupils to be open and confident in their lessons. "An added advantage of the Bridgit-based approach for the rural schools is that pupils can ask more than one teacher questions. This enriches their learning experience," he said.

Departmental coordinator for the Ligbron e-Learning Project, Dr Harduza Martiz, said rural pupils had benefited greatly from the Project. "The Project has proven most successful in bridging the urban-rural digital divide and a positive attitude has been created. Being able to share quality teaching among the geographically dispersed classrooms has had a marked improvement in the quality of lesson content and teaching methodology," he said.

Departmental spokesperson Jasper Zwane said the additional 15 schools would be introduced before the end of the 2009/10 financial year.

"Funding for the expansion is through a public participation process where the Department matches contributions from the private sector on a rand-to-rand basis," Mr Zwane said.

He said the fund was located under the management of the Mpumalanga Education Development Fund. – BuaNews
The late politician and former president of Malawi, Dr Hastings Banda, 1905–1997, once said about western culture: “I wish I could bring Stonehenge to Nyasaland to show there was a time when Britain had a savage culture.” (The Observer, 1963.)

Fifteen years after the dawn of democracy in South Africa, various social and political commentators; intellectuals; and, recently, also pastoral commentators are lamenting the death of African culture. One of the pastoral commentators to take a swipe at the slow death of African culture is one Pastor Dick Khoza who is one of the first black pastors with more than twenty years of service in the Rhema Church and serves on its Board.

For a long time, it has been viewed as a taboo subject to discuss how African culture has been denigrated within the church, especially within the Pentecostal/charismatic churches frequented by our black brothers and sisters. However, in his book, God of Diversity — a Personal Encounter with Cultural Diversity, Pastor Khoza addresses and laments the death and celebrations of African cultural practices within the charismatic churches.

Pastor Khoza argues that black people attending formerly white churches are throwing away their culture and assimilating western culture as the preferred culture of God. Furthermore, he makes the critical point that churches and pastors cannot continue to overlook the culture of the people when spreading the good news. This is the same argument that has been bandied about by academics and proponents of black languages who argue that the reason why the majority of black matriculants continue to perform dismally during the final exams is precisely what Pastor Khoza is arguing about with the church fraternity. Black students continue to shun their mother tongue as a medium of communication, equating English with intelligence.

According to Pastor Khoza, Africans, especially those in charismatic churches, must begin to find ways of celebrating unity in the church in the midst of diversity. Our black brothers must begin to incorporate our African values into Christianity without contradicting the Word of God, and restore sound African cultural practices that have been lost but could enhance our Christianity.

According to Pastor Khoza, the challenge is to identify those aspects of the African culture that may be contradicting the Word of God and to find ways of assisting believers to resolve them in a godly manner.

While challenging us to appreciate and practise those elements of our African culture that are not in conflict with the teachings of the Word of God, Pastor Khoza takes the reader on a journey of how colonization and the policy of apartheid caused the death and discarding of African culture by its own people. “As a continent, Africa has been colonized by different European powers for many centuries. In spite of their political, ideological and theological differences, these were all united in the purpose of christianizing the African people. As a consequence, they religiously sanctioned a cultural superiority that was later used as a benchmark for all inferior cultures.”

Pastor Khoza challenges the Church to begin to address the cultural issues openly with sensitivity. Obviously, it cannot
endorse everything that is cultural or traditional, but it must explore those areas of African culture that do not violate the fundamentals of its doctrine.

Pastor Khoza concurs with the argument Dr Banda posed when he said that there was a time in history when Britain had a savage culture. Khoza goes further, and says: “Churches with their headquarters based in Europe and USA denigrated African culture and religious traditions to nothing, and made black people believe that there was nothing good in them. The Bible and western culture have been made synonymous, and unfortunately the majority of black people have accepted this as gospel truth.”

Viewing the emergence of the black middle class in retrospect, we in South Africa can learn from the achievements and failures of African Americans. South African blacks have been over-exposed to the American lifestyle and culture through the media and this has caused us to benchmark ourselves as Africans by American standards. This is evident both in the secular world and the Church in the preference for American music, movies and fashion.

According to Pastor Dick, the majority of upcoming and existing charismatic preachers dress, look and talk like charismatic ministers from North America. It has become so bad that English has become the predominant medium of preaching and teaching, even in the rural areas, with no consideration given to those who may not comprehend without a translator. When confronted on the issue of language, they will say with conviction that anointing flows better in English than when using their mother tongue.

Pastor Khoza further comments that culture and politics, unfortunately, do not fly away when one becomes a Christian; they must be faced up to and dealt with. The Pastor appeals to his black brothers and sisters to change and to not only appreciate their language, cultural practices, etc, but also to respect their black counterparts. “Black rage arises out of knowledge that, although whites are primarily to blame for historical oppression, the black middle class and the rich are also sadly adding to the agony of poor blacks. Many middle-class blacks know that they have abandoned their poorer brothers and sisters, even while realizing that their present circumstances became possible only because of the one-drop rule of the underclass.”

Pastor Khoza narrates how a clash of views between white churches and black Christians led to bitter differences in the past. These may have resulted in blacks disrespecting their culture and dismissing it as inferior.

1. Africans were forced to accept Christianity as interpreted by whites without thinking or questioning for themselves.
2. Farm workers were forced to be members of the church of their masters.
3. Africans could not understand why missionaries treated them like virtual slaves in their own fatherland, the land of their ancestors.
4. Africans felt they were considered not as clean as their fellow white brothers and sisters, as evidenced by the separate seating practice.
5. African culture and tradition were demonized and reduced to nothing.
6. Africans could not join in fellowship and express their feelings in their customary style of singing, dancing and praying together aloud.

In conclusion, Pastor Khoza is of the opinion that it is possible to be one while accommodating our cultural diversity. Jesus, after all, was able to surround himself with disciples who came from different backgrounds. He supports this opinion by postulating that even the Bible supports diversity. After all, “it is God who allowed us to have different shades of colours. We need to accept the features that we were born with, instead of bleaching our skins wanting to be white”. Finally, Pastor Khoza moves that in order to embrace our diversity, we must utilize all our available resources. Diversity needs to be promoted through workshops in our churches, our mosques, our synagogues, our institutions of learning, imbizos and kindergartens. In fact, the author is of the view that there is no better place to promote diversity than in kindergartens. Children of kindergarten age are still young and their minds have not yet been poisoned with racism, tribalism and religious intolerance.

As part of his contribution to promote and celebrate diversity in the Rhema Church, Pastor Khoza has developed a strong passion for teaching about the Bible and culture and has, over the past ten years, created awareness through workshops and cultural celebrations. He started with 500 people attending, while these events attract over 6 000 people today.

In sympathy with the late Dr Banda who must have been very unhappy to have uttered the introductory statement, we should not, and cannot, take it at face value that everything that is western is clean and associated with God, while everything that is black is immoral and associated with savagery.
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.