

REVIEW

A learning journal for the Public Service



GEMS – new Kid
on the Medical Aid
Schemes Block

Calling ***Corruption***
by its proper ***Names***

Tackling
Unemployment
through the ***EPWP***

Can Technology
end Poverty

***DPSA gets new DG to drive
outcomes-based service delivery***

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We belong
We care
We serve

Invitation for contributions

The *Service Delivery Review* is largely seen as a tool for sharing experiences and therefore for learning within the Public Service. The journal is a forum for debate and continuous exchange of views. We therefore encourage public servants and beyond, to submit to us responses to articles or any other service delivery issues that they feel trigger debate and require engagement. Responses/letters should not be more than 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit long responses/letters. Contributions can be sent to mpumi@dpsa.gov.za or Dudley@dpsa.gov.za



Dudley Moloji

It's really all about *People* *-serving People*

This editorial was initially meant to touch on both President Jacob Zuma's 2011 State of the Nation Address (SoNA) and the Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance, Pravin Gordhan, except for two (or more cumulative) recent experiences that derailed the originally contemplated discourse.

In both instances, the operative word is service; bad service to be exact. The mere mention of these two words brings to mind fellow colleagues in the Public Service instinctively taking a defensive stance – after all, the Public Service is a regular punching bag in this regard!

Yet, this particular reflection on 'service' does not entail the usual flogging (perhaps for now) that so scars the body of the Service. It is rather directed at the novel idea of call centres, those beacons of customer satisfaction and service excellence in the mind of private enterprise.

As one of the fastest growing business outsourcing models, call centres are extensions of customer care or service. They are essentially meant to take the load off companies so that most of their energy can be spent on core business. Call centres typically handle routine enquiries, queries and complaints through a system of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), either through machines or machine-like consultants.

A call is usually fielded by a dead-pan voice prompt in English (rarely in any other language), which assures you that 'your call is important to us; please wait for the next available consultant'. Then follows the music, anything from Michael Jackson's *Beat it* to Bach's *Fugues*. And just when you begin to get into the groove of things, a well-manicured voice cuts in with the refrain 'your call is important to us'. Then the music starts again (from the beginning) and the cycle plays itself out again and again. If in luck, and some precious air-time minutes down the line, a recognizably human voice finally emerges!

The immediate reaction is to let off the pent-up steam – what with the long wait and the accompanying ear-numbing soundtrack. Often, the

freshly established human contact on the other side of the line leads to no resolution at all, just another kind request to please be patient for yet another minute while the issue is being 'escalated' to a higher level – in most cases, call centre consultants are not in a position to make decisions on the spot and solve problems. In any case, the call centre may be located as far away as India, depending on the nature of the business.

The 'escalation' invariably either signals the mysterious death of the line, or takes you back to a replay of the deceased artists' music, followed by deadpan voice-prompts assuring you that 'your call is important to us'. The assault on the ear goes on and on, until you are forced to hang up.

At the end of the day, the whole customer service charade can best be described as a public relations exercise, a milestone of which is often a furore over the millionth call handled by a call centre, but with no better results than an unhappy customer hanging on for dear life at the other end of a dead line.

Much as technology sets us free from routine and helps to improve efficiency in the provision of service (business or otherwise), it should not be used as a substitute for human contact, especially concerning activities that are primarily based on people relationships. Machines, however clever, cannot understand the concept (and practice) of *Batho Pele*, which is essentially about people and their well-being.

This edition of the SDR carries a couple of articles that reflect on the inseparable relationship between the deployment of technology and good service. The first of these is a piece by Kentaro Toyama, which considers the issue of whether technology could be regarded as the universal remedy for underdevelopment that could signal the end of poverty in developing countries such as South Africa. Toyama's interrogative article is deliberately paired with a short article on South Africa's laptop initiative in schools with the intention of providing contrast and food for thought. Those of us privileged enough to have unfettered

access to the wonders of the world-wide-web know what the resources of such an intervention could potentially unleash and harness – subject to the self-less and ongoing support of other humans, as Toyama concludes.

A related story is the case study by Govender and Dlamini, respectively of Addington Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal and the Department of Public Service and Administration. The case study documents how the hospital has done away with the notorious pile of records typical of patient record management in many a health service institution. By introducing a computerized records management system that ensures quick access to patient files and largely eliminates the loss of records, the hospital has managed to cut down on patient waiting time, which allows more time for consultation.

The other story worth noting when looking at service (and technology by operational

imperatives) is the case study on the Government Employees Medical Aid Scheme (GEMS). Most striking about the GEMS story is how the imperative to serve at both the political and administrative echelons of Government resulted in medical insurance for thousands of public servants previously shunned by mainstream providers. GEMS' story also throws the spotlight on the sometimes narrow-mindedness of private sector service and highlights the ever-present pursuit of profits. How was it possible that business could miss this untapped market of potentially huge numbers of clients until the intervention of the government-aided GEMS?

Perhaps the answer to this service riddle lies in the fact that the Public Service is run by people and not by machines. It is run by people who genuinely strive to belong, care and serve.

PS: Enjoy the first edition of 2011 and remember that your feedback is most welcome! ■

Calling *Corruption* by its proper *Names*

The word, corruption, is commonly referred to in public discourse, whether in relation to the conduct of business or the public sector. I was very pleased about the attention given to the vexing matter of societal corruption at the recent Business Unity South Africa (BUSA) gathering. This demonstrated that corruption is not only a concern of Government, but of society as a whole.

BUSA supports the fight against rampant corruption through its Anti-corruption Business Forum, which provides business with the rare opportunity of reflecting on issues like: 'what is corruption?'; 'how does it manifest itself in society?'; 'who is the corruptor?'; 'who is the corruptee?'; 'who should deal with this problem?'; and 'how should we deal with this challenge?'.
In trying to get to the bottom of corruption, we must, firstly, ask ourselves what the environmental factors are that support corruption.

We must also determine what resources are required and must be made available to uproot corruption decisively. In our quest to find answers to these questions, we are reminded of the great Chinese proverb: 'the beginning of wisdom is to name things right'. As a former teacher, I have always believed that the first step to make in understanding any word or concept is the dictionary. 'Corruption' as an English word is defined to include the following:

'the impairment of integrity, virtue or moral principle'; and 'inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means' (as in

'... (corruption) gnaws at the very fabric of societies as it undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability ...'



Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Masenyani Richard Baloyi

bribery). Some dictionaries even go as far as saying it is a 'loss of purity'.

Notwithstanding the above dictionary definitions, there is still no internationally-accepted definition of what corruption is, only an internationally-defined list of what constitutes corruption. Most heartening is that there is increasing consensus on how corruption manifests itself. This aids in the development of policy and provides coordinates for anti-corruption practice. According to the United Nations (UN) Convention on Anti-corruption, a definition of corruption would include reference to 'a complex social, political and economic phenomenon' that gnaws at the very fabric of societies as it 'undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability'. The UN Convention and many similar instruments list among the most common manifestations of corruption as being bribery; theft and fraud; nepotism and clientelism; conflict of interest; and improper political contributions.

As we all know, these manifestations remain contested terrains in anti-corruption debates. Yet, they are at the core of what society normally categorizes as corruption. They also form the body of core criteria used in the design of the various indices (bribery has actually been developed to a level where it commands its own index independent of other variables to the basket of manifestations) and it is through these manifestations that a country is measured in comparison to others.

Dismal science

The natural disposition of humans and, therefore, societies to judge one another in terms of how they compare on a particular matter has now become a science that forms the basis of an array of decisions.

For example, the Transparency International 2010 Corruption Perception Index ranks South Africa 54th out of 178 countries. In the same index, we are ranked 5th on the African continent, with Botswana occupying 1st position in Africa and 33rd position in the world. The index also indicates that our score of 4.5 dropped from the 4.7 we managed in 2007. Furthermore, according to the survey, the score below 5 indicates that we have a growing corruption problem.

The Bribe Payers Index, which measures the likelihood of the 22 top exporting countries bribing abroad, ranks South Africa 14th out of 22 with a score of 7.5 out of 10. Although this study was last undertaken in 2008, the score reflects an improvement on scoring 24th out of 30 countries with a score of 5.61 in 2006.

Another important index is the Global Integrity Index that assesses the existence and effectiveness of and citizen access to key anti-corruption mechanisms at the national level in a country. While this provides some data to understand corruption or the corruptible environment, it does not measure corruption *per se*. However, the integrity of this index is based on its reliance on empirical, on-the-ground research as opposed to reliance on third-party data or information from the other indices. According to this index, South Africa has strong to moderate measures in place to combat corruption. The 2008 survey further concludes that South Africa is moderately capable of providing its citizens with access to anti-corruption mechanisms.

Anti-corruption infrastructure

The emerging pattern from these indices is that South Africa has a strong input infrastructure to combat corruption, but that the perception of society is that we are not performing in accordance with this infrastructure.

Corruption is as much a team effort as anti-corruption, notwithstanding the fact that the team characteristics of the former resemble those of a gangster. It is becoming organic and, therefore, calls for organic solutions. One could imagine corruption as a triangle with the axes being that of the corruptor, the corruptee and the environment. At the centre of this triangle are money,

greed, materialism, patronage and entrepreneurial bullying. The players occupying the three axes are engaged in the struggle to the material centre of the triangle.

It is this context that creates within the sphere of Government a community of willing corruptees and able corruptors in the person of your otherwise innocent business practitioners. It is this context that creates within society a community of corruptors, even among innocent and literate learners that are perpetually bombarded with confirmations of 'success based on ill-gained proceeds'. The corruptee's vulnerability to the corruptor and an enabling environment create in the corruptee a sense of continued security to the extent that people even develop their own corruption *lingua franca* that makes their activities legitimate.

Hence, the corruption triangle provides us with a model along the lines of which we should create the context to fight corruption. The magic question is what business, as a sector, should do to either dismantle the triangle or create a new triangle with new players at the axis points. But let me hasten to say that this is not a matter for business alone. It is and must be a partnership engagement that must be so organic that it isolates corruption from its protagonists.

Government, as the biggest spender by any proportion, should take the lead in the creation of an environment that would, ultimately, kill corruption. As a partner in this struggle, it has embarked on the development of a number of policy instruments that are designed to make it difficult for corruption to thrive. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Global Integrity Index ranks us as moving along the points of moderate to strong in terms of anti-corruption mechanisms.

I also want to be the first to acknowledge that, in so far as we have put the policy instruments in place, we still face the challenge of making sure that these instruments attain what they were set to achieve. To deal with this, we are strengthening these policies. To date, Government has developed a *Public Sector Integrity Management Framework*, which regulates gifts, financial interests and post-employment and remunerative work outside the Public Service. The Framework further institutionalizes ethics officers and minimum conduct requirements in the Public Service. Over and above these interventions, Government is also establishing a special anti-corruption unit that will be responsible for investigating corruption cases involving senior managers that are not yet in the formal criminal justice system.

As Government, we have noted some of the subtle, yet behaviour-

altering mechanisms business has introduced to get community enrolment into in-company anti-corruption practices. Your **'phone this number to report bad driving stickers'** should now be extended to the Public Service and read 'phone this number if any of our sales persons bribes you or your colleagues' – that will be customer involvement at its best! ■



New DG at the Helm

The new Director-General of the Department of Public Service and Administration shares his thoughts on his new position with *Service Delivery Review* readers.

Newly appointed Director-General (DG) of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Themba Maseko, needs no introduction to the Public Service, and indeed to the broader South African population. Maseko is well-known among the public from his previous position as government spokesperson while he occupied the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Government Information and Communication System (GCIS) from 2006.

Apart from his previous position as Head of the GCIS, DG Maseko boasts a long and formal political and administrative lineage, which began with his tenure as a Member of Parliament after South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. This was followed by his appointment as Superintendent-General in the Gauteng Department of Education in 1995 and as Director-General of the Department of Public Works in 2003.

DG Maseko has a particular interest in matters relating to education, which goes back to the 1980s when he was part of the Mass Democratic Movement and the National Education Coordinating Committee. His involvement in the education environment continued with a number of positions outside Government, among which that as board member of the Adopt A School Foundation, member of the former Vista University Council and managing director of the Damelin Group.

During an interview, *Service Delivery Review's* Dudley Moloi asked the DG the following questions:

SDR: What strategic value do you bring from your previous position as chief government communicator to the current portfolio that deals with public administration or the back-office issues of running a government?

DG: *Considering that Cabinet strategic meetings and other high-level government interventions are primarily about public service delivery, one sees no real difference between interpreting decisions taken at that level and actually providing strategic leadership, not only to the DPSA but to the strategic improvement of the entire functioning of the Civil Service. I am hoping*

that the in-depth knowledge and expertise acquired over the years in both the performance and management of the Public Service will be valuable.

SDR: What balance do you intend striking between the administrative and the communication aspects of the Department, given your previous role?

DG: *Though it might not seem obvious to many, communicating at any strategic level involves a lot of administrative work, hence the two cannot be separated.*

SDR: The DPSA has not had a DG for a while, which most probably impacted on many things in terms of the functioning of the Department, especially administrative leadership in relation to Government's new output-based approach to service delivery. Do you think that your appointment offers you an opportunity to, in some way, start afresh and charter a more coherent path in the (re)-organization of both the structure and the vision of the DPSA?

DG: *My colleagues, who have alternated in this post in an acting capacity, have done a splendid job to the point that mine is to continue with the strategic management of the Department within the overall public service financial management, procurement and human resources management frameworks, while ensuring adherence to other key constitutional requirements.*

SDR: What would you regard as the ten top priorities during the first year of your tenure of office at the DPSA?

DG: *One cannot claim to have priorities different from those of the Department and Ministry.*

SDR: Any other matter (not covered by the questions) that you wish to share with the public (and its servants) out there?

DG: *My message to everyone is that public service delivery is the responsibility of everyone. Let us all put shoulder to the wheel for an ever-improving service. ■*



Director-General of the Department of Public Service and Administration, Themba Maseko

Government goes digital

– By Alan Meyer

Most of the staff of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) completed basic training in the use of the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) that went ‘live’ at the end of February this year.

The new system is expected to replace the largely paper-intensive back-office administration systems across the Public Service gradually in the future. Apart from shifting Government’s habitual reliance on paper-based administrative activities, the introduction of the IFMS is an important step in the integration of Government’s disparate information technology (IT) solutions that ‘do not talk to one another’. There are currently over a dozen IT solutions in Government, all with a human resources (HR) interface aimed at servicing one client, which is the Public Service, that are unable to communicate, let alone integrate into one another’s activities.

Although the IFMS is built as a ‘super system’ that incorporates many other functions, the pilot phases of the IFMS largely focus on HR management aspects as part of the drive to modernize Government. The IFMS’s many ‘self-service’ interfaces will, for example, enable employees to process their leave applications for approval in real time once the system is up and running (and certainly during the pilot phases). The HR aspects of the project are also aimed at achieving the following:

- Improving the capacity of the Public Service to manage its human capital;
- harmonizing and aligning the implementation of public service HR management policies and processes;
- supporting monitoring and evaluation;
- improving HR service delivery by automating and standardizing processes;
- improving the quality of, and access to, HR management information, which should lead to better planning and decision making;
- achieving the e-government objectives of interoperability, IT security, economies of scale and elimination of duplicated systems; and, finally
- integrating with the broader IFMS programme and contributing to the achievement of the relevant IFMS objectives such as enhancing the integrity and effectiveness of expenditure management and performance reporting to ensure effective service delivery across government institutions.

Although the idea of an integrated electronic processing system for the entire public government is an old one, it was only given impetus in September 2005 when Cabinet sanctioned the IFMS to be fast-tracked. Work on the project began in earnest in early 2009. The IFMS project is run in partnership by the DPSA, National Treasury and the State Information and Technology Agency (SITA), with implementation support by a consortium of private IT companies. ■

Poaching of pilots worrying – General Gagiano

Over the years, the South African Air Force has been experiencing problems with large numbers of pilots leaving the service. Addressing the media recently, Chief of the South African Air Force, Lieutenant-General Carlo Gagiano, expressed concern about the continuing poaching of pilots from the Defence Force by local and foreign aviation industries. However, some progress was being made in countering the problem and a plan was underway to entice current aircrew members to remain in the Force. Efforts were also made to improve representivity.

‘Unfortunately, this ongoing leakage of technical expertise is sufficiently significant to affect aircraft availability adversely, but this is a world-wide phenomenon in the aviation field,’ he said.

According to Lieutenant-General Gagiano, the helicopter line remained overstocked with junior co-pilots and a shortage of experienced pilots was to be found in all rotary-wing squadrons. As a result, the Department of Transport signed an agreement with the International Civil Aviation Organization last year to produce a new crop of aviation workers for South Africa and the continent. The agreement is expected to produce much-needed new pilots, aircraft engineers, air navigation officers and related aviation sector workers.

Lieutenant-General Gagiano also said there were fewer incidents and deaths reported in the last year. – *BuaNews* ■

More jobs in the fourth quarter: Stats SA

Pretoria – According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), South Africa created 157 000 jobs in the fourth quarter of 2010. Figures in the Quarterly Labour Force Survey indicate that employment increased by 1.2 per cent, which led to a total 13.1 million people being employed in the fourth quarter. Between the third and fourth quarters of 2010, the unemployment rate dropped by 1.3 per cent to 24 per cent. In the three months to September 2010, the unemployment rate stood at 25.3 per cent. ‘Even with the drop in the level of the unemployed, the total number of unemployed persons remained high at 4.1

million persons,’ said Stats SA, adding that 68 per cent of the unemployed were in ‘long-term unemployment’, since they were unemployed for a year or longer.

According to the Survey, the formal sector gained 120 000, while the informal sector gained 53 000 jobs between quarters three and four. The agriculture sector lost 13 000 jobs, while private households remained virtually unchanged.

In the fourth quarter, black South Africans had the highest unemployment rate at 28.1 per cent, followed by coloured people at 21.3 per cent. Indian and white people had the lowest unemployment rate

at 7.9 and 5.5 per cent, respectively. For youth and women, unemployment remained higher than the national average. The community and social services industry and the manufacturing industry contributed the most to employment, with increases of 5.5 per cent and 4.1 per cent, respectively.

The year-on-year estimates show that between 2009 and 2010, employment contracted by 1.2 per cent or 118 000 jobs. In its morning sheet, Absa Capital said it expected the numbers to continue to reflect relatively challenging labour-market conditions. – *BuaNews* ■

SA must proceed cautiously with BRIC countries

South Africa's invitation to join the exclusive Brazil, Russian Federation, India and China (BRIC) grouping has been welcomed by many, but some analysts caution that the country needs to tread carefully if it is to avoid being taken advantage of by its much larger fellow BRIC members.

South Africa was recently invited to join the grouping and President Jacob Zuma was invited to attend the next BRIC summit to be held in Beijing in April 2011.

South Africa, which is ranked as the 27th largest economy according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is dwarfed by China, the 2nd biggest economy in the world after the US; followed by Brazil, the 8th biggest economy; India, which is ranked 11th and Russia, the 12th largest economy.

Mzukisi Qobo, who heads the emerging powers programmes at the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), warns that it is important for the South African Government to devise an effective foreign affairs strategy if the country is to benefit from being a BRIC member.

He believes that there has been no sign – even in the White Paper on Foreign Policy of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, which was submitted to Cabinet last year – that the South African government has undertaken a serious process of mapping out how it will contribute to and benefit from being on the informal BRIC forum.

But the Department stands firm that it has developed a strategy on how it will relate to other members of BRIC.

International Relations Deputy Director-General for Public Diplomacy, Clayson Monyela, says the Department has also looked at how it will use its BRIC membership to forge a new foreign policy strategy and studied a number of key areas that BRIC countries are involved in, including their respective development banks, their role in bilateral meetings and G20 meetings, involvement of civil society and research institutions.

A Standard Bank research paper, released in November last year, predicted that the BRIC grouping's share of Africa's total trade would increase from one-fifth to one-third in the next five years, with China representing more than half of all foreign trade with the continent.

Some who say China's inroads into Africa may represent a new plundering of Africa might remain sceptical of South Africa's invitation to join the BRIC grouping, arguing it may signal a new run on the country from BRIC member countries.

But Standard Bank chief economist, Goolam Ballim, believes that the move does not represent a new threat of neo-colonialism in Africa. Ballim does, however, caution that South Africa needs to 'keep its eyes wide open' when it attends the BRIC summit in April.

He says the risk if South Africa did not bargain hard, was that other, more sizeable BRIC members could take advantage of the country and the continent as a whole – all the more so as Africa lacks cohesive partnerships.

African countries have to steer away from the perception that BRIC would 'lean more sympathetically' to them when it came to trade and economic issues and, warns Balim, South Africans have to realize that membership in the BRIC forum will not result in an automatic inflow of billions of rand in foreign direct investment. He says foreign investors are particularly astute and have a qualified mandate that precludes them from being tripped by the 'vener of BRIC'.

Despite concerns that South Africa could lose out to other BRIC members when it came to trade and investments on the continent, an earlier Standard Bank research paper released in July last year, titled *South Africa: leading or lagging the BRIC's thrust in Africa?*, argued that despite increased trade by BRIC countries, in particular China, with Africa, South Africa was still in a better position than other members.

The report pointed out that South Africa still had historical and logistical advantages over Southern Africa when compared with other BRIC members and that the proposed merger of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC) trading blocs would support the country's move to increase regional trade.

Building on the benefits of regional integration would remain key to South Africa exacting great benefit from being part of the BRIC club, says emerging markets expert Martyn Davies.

Davies, the Chief Executive of Frontier Advisory, argues that an 'S' in 'BRICS' should really represent the SADC, which had a market of over 250 million people – bigger than that of Russia and Brazil.

He says one way to speed up regional integration is to integrate capital markets by, for example, opening up the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) to include companies in the entire SADC region. According to Davies, companies based outside South Africa stood to benefit from such a move, particularly as 95 per cent of portfolio investment inflows on the continent were to the JSE.

Davies dismisses those skeptics that may interpret South Africa's invitation to join the BRIC forum as a bid by its existing members to re-colonialize Africa, adding that more than anything, China's demand for resources had helped to at least triple growth on the continent.

Similarly, Professor Steven Friedman, Director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, says he is not convinced that China's invitation to South Africa to join the BRIC forum is based solely on an attempt by members to take advantage of Africa.

He points out that China and India have demonstrated that they are very capable of forging business links on the continent without the help of South Africa. Added to this was the very 'ambivalent attitude' that the rest of the continent held towards South Africa, he explains. 'South Africa would gain more from being in BRIC than BRIC members would gain from us,' says Friedman.

Despite this, he says the other BRIC members still saw a significant benefit in South Africa being a part of the exclusive club and points out that while the continent has about 5 per cent of the economy, it produced 26 per cent of its output. 'They want us in, as they see us as an economy with immense potential, given support,' says Friedman.

Analysts point out that Africa's most populous state, Nigeria, has the potential to pass South Africa's economy soon. A report, *The World in 2050*, released recently, predicted Nigeria's growth would average 7.9 per cent between 2009 and 2050 – compared with South Africa's 5 per cent.

Nigerian, Ayodele Akanbi, a senior economist at Pan-African Capital, says one could not compare Nigeria with South Africa. He believes Nigeria's economy would be ahead of South Africa's if it were able to 'get itself together'. It has, unfortunately been hamstrung by poor political leadership and corruption.

Akanbi also believes South Africa's invitation to join the BRIC forum was not a precursor to a new colonialization of Africa. – *BuaNews* ■

Civil servants show heart

– By Sydney Masinga

Musina – Six civil servants have decided to contribute R200 each from their own pockets every month to help child-headed families in Musina, Limpopo.

One of the civil servants, Ganja Manyuma, said he and his colleague, Thabo Mokone, first came up with the idea while waiting for their cars to be cleaned at a car wash recently. 'I told my friend that the amount of money we were spending on drinks and enjoying ourselves at the car wash could make a difference in the lives of destitute kids and child-headed families,' he said.

'My friend bought into the idea and we met the following day to finalize the logistics.'

Other colleagues, all of whom work in the finance section of the Musina Local Municipality, also joined in. Now there are six of them and they have already handed food parcels to three child-headed families.

'We are very happy that the initiative is now paying off and we invite other community members, and not only municipal workers, to join us in uplifting the poor in our local communities,' said Manyuma.

Mokone said it was rewarding to have a connection with the community that went beyond being a municipal official. 'We also grew up poor and know what suffering is all about. We will continue to give back the little we have to our communities,' he said.

The group has also roped in local business people who help to supply food. Contributing businesses include Matshivha Holdings, OBC Chicken and John Mashiane of M4 Attorneys. 'We believe that their contributions will motivate other business people to follow suit,' the officials said.

'We are seven children in the family and we are struggling to make ends meet. We are very grateful because we now know that there are people who care out there. We would like to thank the municipal workers for their kind hearts and wish them more life so that they can continue to assist indigent people like ourselves,' said Johannes Ndou, 19, who heads their household after their parents died.

Spokesperson for the Musina Local Municipality, Wilson Dzebu, welcomed the initiative. 'These kind-hearted municipal workers believe that public service goes beyond office work,' he said. – *BuaNews* ■

Zuma hands over houses in District Six

– By Francis Hweshe

President Jacob Zuma recently handed over 44 houses in Cape Town's District Six as part of an on-going process of providing victims of apartheid's forced removals with dignified housing. When the President attended the 'Second Homecoming' ceremony, he said that the handover was testimony that the Government's land reform and restitution process was 'yielding results'.

'District Six in Cape Town, like Sophiatown in Johannesburg, Umkhumbane (Cato Manor) in Durban and Marabastad in Pretoria, bears the heart-wrenching scars of the apartheid system.

'We always promise and always come around to fulfill it...it has taken time but we have come around to fulfill the promise...the time for healing has come,' he said.

Minister in the Presidency, Trevor Manuel, Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti, and Minister of Human Settlements, Tokyo Sexwale, were some of the government officials who attended the event.

Manuel, who grew up in the area, said that the restitution process should be speeded up. He said that the claimants wanted 'a life of dignity' and Government 'should hurry up on District Six'.

Nkwinti said that funds had been made available for phase two of the project but phase three was a challenge. He said that he had met Western Cape Premier Helen Zille and they had agreed that the people of District Six needed cooperation between the national and provincial governments.

One of the beneficiaries, Yusuf Kader, 50, whose family was removed from the area when he was 7, said that coming back was a way of 'restoring the dignity of our parents'. Getting a house there had not been easy, he said, indicating that he first applied for it over 20 years ago 'and the papers got lost and we had to apply again in 1995'.

Kader, who currently lives in Athlone, said that he expected to move into his three-bedroomed house soon. He said that the houses were government-subsidized and, depending on the size of units, beneficiaries would pay between R190 000.00 and R250 000.00. – *BuaNews* ■

SA growth projections lower in 2011, 2012

The South African economy is projected to grow by 3.4 per cent in 2011, down by 0.1 per cent from previous projections, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said recently. In its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) report update, the IMF said the country's economy is projected to grow by 3.4 per cent, a 0.1 per cent difference from the IMF's WEO 2010 projections. The South African economy is expected to grow by 3.8 per cent in 2012, also down by 0.1 per cent from previous projections.

The IMF's projection for growth in 2011 is in line with that of the Reserve Bank, which recently adjusted its figures for growth in 2011 to reach 3.4 per cent. The central bank left its projection for 2012 unchanged at 3.6 per cent. According to the report, growth in emerging and developing economies remained robust in the third quarter, buoyed by well-entrenched private demand, still

accommodative policy stances and resurgent capital inflows. According to the WEO, countries in sub-Saharan Africa have recovered quickly from the global economic meltdown with the region projected to grow 5.5 per cent in 2011. However, the pace of the recovery has varied within the region. Output growth in most oil exporters and low-income countries is now close to pre-crisis highs, while the recovery in South Africa and its neighbouring countries has been more subdued, reflecting the more severe impact of the collapse in world trade and elevated unemployment levels that are proving difficult to reduce. Growth in emerging and developing economies is expected to remain buoyant at 6.5 per cent, a modest slowdown from the 7 per cent growth registered last year. Asia, however, continues to grow rapidly. – *BuaNews* ■

Minister Motshekga encourages teachers

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga has emphasized that the key driver for success remains the 'Triple T' – teachers, textbooks and time.

Speaking to *BuaNews* after President Jacob Zuma delivered the State of the Nation Address, Motshekga said teachers needed to be motivated, responsible and accountable.

'I am very excited about the continuous

focus on education because it helps us focus as a nation and as a country. The continued focus by the President helps us to mobilize resources and to focus our energy on helping South Africans succeed.

'This is the time we need to protect teaching, especially in the poor areas where teaching occurs for less than three hours a day. Teachers have to teach from day one,' she stressed. On the issue of the matric

results, Motshekga said the 7 per cent increase in the pass rate was achieved because the nation realized that education was a societal issue. 'People came on board,' she said. 'We agreed that the 7 per cent had to be maintained and we are doing all we can; all provinces are on board, already running,' she added. – *BuaNews* ■

A model correctional centre

Correctional Services National Commissioner, Tom Moyane, said many correctional centres needed to emulate the good example set by the Zonderwater Correctional Centre in Gauteng.

In terms of cleanliness and productivity, the centre stands head and shoulders above many other correctional facilities in South Africa. It annually produces 307 tons of vegetables, as well as yoghurt, red meat, milk and poultry to supply a number of correctional centres in the Gauteng region. It also boasts a large stock of artworks created by offenders as part of their rehabilitation, and furniture and steel utensils are produced extensively to supply a number of government departments.

Commissioner Moyane undertook to negotiate the sale of the artworks produced by offenders with National Treasury and directed that a dedicated week for showcasing such artworks and selling them to the general public should be organized this year. He said highly productive and revenue-generating centres like Zonderwater that could ensure self-sufficiency in the correctional system should be encouraged.

Moyane addressed about 100 correctional managers from across the Gauteng region at the Zonderwater correctional centre and visited a poultry yard, a poultry abattoir, a yoghurt factory and large vegetable fields on the 2 400-hectare correctional centre farm.

Passing through the wood and steel factories, Moyane committed himself to ensuring that some of the older production equipment used at the facility was replaced with more modern equipment to improve productivity. He went on to congratulate the management of the Department and the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority on their innovative project of bringing ordinary, law-abiding young men and women from the surrounding community into the factories to be trained in critical life and

production skills alongside offenders.

In his interaction with managers, Moyane called for the entrenchment of key values such as integrity, commitment to excellence and accountability as pillars that would steer the Department forward in performing ever better. He praised the managers for their commitment and contribution in helping the Department to achieve a 92 per cent reduction in escapes during the festive season under Operation Vala and attributed the Department's rating as the third best-performing government institution in the fight against fraud and corruption to correctional managers who have demonstrated character, sometimes under very trying working conditions.

Moyane continued to say that hundreds of vacant positions were being filled since the lifting of a two-year moratorium and promised to ensure that greater capacity was built to deliver better and smarter and to meet the targets set by Minister Mapisa-Nqakula for the fourth term of government.

He called on all correctional centres to spare no effort in ensuring that challenges of overcrowding, low victim participation in the parole system and low levels of offender access to rehabilitation programmes were addressed, because South Africans were investing more than R15 billion each year in correctional services so that they could feel and be safe.

'South Africans deserve better than what we have delivered thus far,' said Commissioner Moyane, who have already visited regions in the Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Eastern Cape, Free State and Gauteng regions to address correctional managers. Visits to KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape are also being planned. – *BuaNews* ■

R2.4m to fight Rift Valley Fever

– *By Nthambeleni Gabara*

The Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform in the Eastern Cape has put aside R2.4 million to respond swiftly to the Rift Valley Fever (RVF) outbreak across the province.

In January, an outbreak of Rift Valley Fever was confirmed in Graaff-Reinet and the Kei Mouth area and a joint operations command committee comprising the Department, the Department of Health and the Amathole District Municipality was formed to deal with the situation.

Consultation meetings with communal and commercial farmers

were conducted in January, while awareness campaigns and livestock censuses are continuing.

A total of 550 000 doses of vaccine will cover the affected areas bordering the Kei River in Mquma Municipality, mainly Centane, Mbashe Municipality (adjacent to the Centane coastal area) and Ngqamakwe.

A few fatalities, including sheep in Kei Mouth and Hereford cows in Graaff-Reinet, have been confirmed. The joint operations team continues its efforts to manage the outbreak. – *BuaNews* ■

Government's GEMS – the new Kid on the Medical Aid Schemes Block

The Government Employees Medical Aid Scheme is in many ways and by many comparisons the 'new kid' on the block in the medical aid scheme industry. In this case study, Dudley Moloi looks at where it all started from and tracks the Scheme's remarkable performance since then.

Just over five years ago, nearly half of South Africa's 1.3 million public servants fell outside the private medical aid scheme environment. They were considered 'uncoverable' in terms of the conventional business model used by most medical aid schemes. With earnings considered too low to make business sense, the estimated half a million or so government workers at the lower end of the salary scale were the equivalents of the so-called 'unbankables' of the financial sector.

The other anomaly, at least in terms of conditions of employment within the Public Service, was that these particular employees unwittingly forfeited their portion of government medical aid subsidies, because access to the government subsidy was subject to medical aid membership.

Administrative justice

As far back as 1999, the Auditor-General's (AG's) review on remuneration in the Public Service expressed concern about disparities among public servants regarding macro-benefits like pensions, housing allowances and, more specifically, medical aid subsidies. The AG's review proposed an overhaul of the discriminatory macro-benefits dispensation in the Public Service and the battery of subsequent changes and investigations resulted in the establishment of the Government Employees Medical Aids Scheme (GEMS) in 2005.

The status quo before GEMS was an expression of the all too familiar peculiarities of South Africa's racial legacy, which meant that the majority of the uncovered

public servants were black people in general and black women in particular. Only white, Indian, coloured (and a smattering of slightly better-paid black) public servants could access government medical aid subsidies due to the twin barriers of income and race.

'It was found that the majority of employees at higher income levels were enjoying the subsidy of R1 014.00, because they could afford to belong to a medical scheme,' says Dr Eugene Watson, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of GEMS.

The ground work that preceded the formalization of GEMS involved numerous feasibility studies, informed by actuarial modeling and a closer look at existing players, and tracking down the medical aid preferences and subscriptions' of the majority of public servants. It was found that public servants were spread across some 68 schemes, with the vast majority belonging to six of this total.

Spurred on by the mixture of mergers, redundancies or bankruptcies, the landscape of the industry was also changing slowly. Yet, such changes were still not far-reaching enough to take advantage of new markets presented by uncovered public service employees. Moreover, in preliminary explorations for solutions, none of the existing schemes seemed to provide helpful lessons towards a possible government-wide restricted medical aid scheme for all public servants.

Comparative analyses of the benefit and cost structures of the existing schemes still failed the test of access, equity and affordability for thousands of public servants. This was largely due to the historic baggage they carried, which fundamentally went against the principles of access, equity and affordability envisaged for a government scheme.

'We wanted to design a scheme that covered the health needs of public service employees, but also the kind of scheme that would be familiar to them and something that they would understand. More importantly, when the scheme was designed there was a request through the ongoing engagement of public sector trade unions that we introduce an option that was inexpensive and that used both public sector and private hospital facilities,' says Dr Watson.

When GEMS was finally registered in 2005, its presence in the health sector was immediately felt, sending jitters throughout the medical aid schemes industry. It was feared that the potentially



over-a-million-member-strong medical aid scheme posed a risk to private medical aid funds because of the likelihood of thousands of public servants jumping ship and throwing in their lot with the new arrival.

Untapped market

Five years after its launch, GEMS had a total of 409 839 principal members employed in the Public Service, with 1 148 911 beneficiaries, according to the government scheme’s 2009 annual report. At the beginning of 2011, over 540 000 employees were registered.

GEMS’ overall benefit structure is designed around five benefit options, namely:

- Sapphire;
- Beryl;
- Ruby;
- Emerald; and
- Onyx.

The size of the individual subscription options of principal members and their beneficiaries ranges between the top range, Onyx, and the least expensive, Sapphire. As the most popular option, Emerald accounts for 76.6 per cent of the GEMS membership.

It is perhaps also worth noting that some 6 per cent of the total membership (through the Sapphire option) is made up of public servants at the lowest end of the salary scale. They receive a 100 per cent subsidy entitlement, or ‘free’ medical aid. GEMS’ recent annual figures indicate that Sapphire has 23 175 principal members and 55 859 beneficiaries.

As Dr Watson points out, the numbers of those public service employees (salary levels 1 to 5) who potentially qualify for a 100 per cent subsidy could more than double if one takes into account that an estimated 100 000 of these employees have instead opted for the Emerald option, which offers a wider range of medical benefits.

‘The vast majority [of level 1 to 5 members] are on the Emerald option and that is by choice,’ he says.

GEMS, a senior public servant remarked, is illustrative of one of many instances where Government got something right. Government, literally, brought millions of previously medically uninsured South

Fast Facts

Did you know?

Second biggest restricted scheme

- GEMS actively started enrolling members from January 2006 and by the beginning of September 2010, it had more than 500 000 principal members and close on 1.4 million beneficiaries, making it the second largest restricted medical aid scheme in South Africa. The Scheme continues to grow by more than 10 000 members each month.
- Despite its size, the Scheme has remained close to its members. GEMS touches the lives of thousands of people on a daily basis. More than 11 000 members contact the GEMS Call Centre daily, while at least 1 000 visit the regional offices located throughout South Africa.

Governance

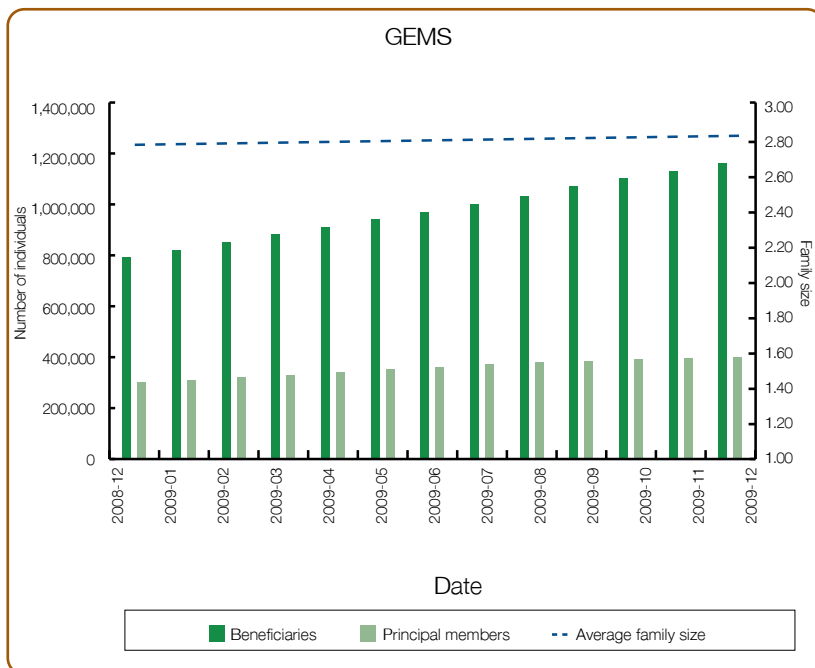
- GEMS’ operational structure consists of a Board of Trustees that directs the Scheme’s activities, a principal officer (CEO) who implements the directives of the Board and a scheme executive that supports the CEO in monitoring and managing the service levels and contractual obligations of outsourced services. Cabinet approved this operational structure in November 2004. The Board comprises 50 per cent trustees elected by members through a transparent and fair election and 50 per cent appointed by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration. The trustees are authorized to perform the duties of the Board in accordance with the Scheme’s rules.

Products offering

- GEMS offers its members five different benefit plans, namely Onyx, Ruby, Emerald, Beryl and Sapphire. These benefit plans are 10 per cent to 25 per cent less expensive, with similar or increased benefits, when compared with other medical aid schemes in the market.

Pricing

The GEMS pricing model is based on sound risk management principles that have carefully considered the risk profile of public service employees and makes use of conservative actuarial assumptions. The savings that can be realized through the use of the full collective purchasing power of public service employees are also an important playing card. Public service employees are, furthermore, eligible for medical aid scheme subsidies provided by the employer (when joining GEMS) of 75 per cent and, in some cases, even 100 per cent, up to a limit of R2 570.00. ■



Africans into the realm of private health care with the stroke of a pen. This massive shift also had a knock-on effect in the public health sector, since it contributed to easing some of the strains commonly experienced by the public health system and generated revenue for these facilities when members were treated there.

The benefits of this shift to both individuals and the health sector as a whole are yet to be established fully. Anecdotal and personal testimonies on how the intervention had changed many people's lives abound, especially in the areas of preventive medicine and widened access for female employees.

'It does not mean that when you're poor you don't understand the long-term value of taking yourself or your dependents for regular check-ups,' says a public servant and gender activist.

She further argues that those public servants and their dependents who had no medical aid coverage previously, could now attend to seemingly small health problems that could potentially deteriorate or inevitably raise future medical costs, or even lead to fatalities if not detected and attended to early.

Dr Watson concurs that the single most important success of the Scheme thus far had been securing medical cover for thousands of public servants who fell outside the medical insurance security net. 53 per cent of the total GEMS membership had no prior medical aid coverage and neither did they benefit from government subsidies. The intervention of GEMS meant that a huge number of people were transposed from the public to the private health system.

Business savvy

Perhaps the most intriguing question is how a scheme, which is hardly a decade old, managed to occupy what is the enviable position of being the largest restricted medical aid scheme and the second largest overall in South Africa in such a short period of time? The answer is political will, blood and sweat, business savvy and a lot of aid from market forces.

Most of GEMS' private sector counterparts are individually several decades old, while their combined market foothold and industry experience runs into many more decades. The oldest restricted scheme for public servants dates back as far as 1905, while the others were founded in the 1970s and 1980s.

It had been argued in certain industry quarters that GEMS' firm foothold at the lower end of the restricted medical insurance market could, to a large extent, be ascribed to the highly visible hand of Government. In other words, the sheer volume of potential public servant membership, prodded by policies that encouraged migration to the government scheme, essentially created a captive market.

Although such a view may arguably have a ring of truth to it, attributing the successes of the government scheme exclusively to Government's hand misses many other salient success factors, chief among these perhaps being the fact that the private medical aid industry was increasingly becoming a victim of its own success – forgetting the sole purpose of its existence.

Much of this found expression in saturation at the top end of the market and over-capitalization, which benefit few of the total client base, among many other maladies. The net result of the well-documented inefficiencies within the medical health industry saw a rise in non-health costs and soaring premiums, often without visible value-add to subscriber benefits.

With GEMS,
Government, literally,
brought millions of
previously medically
uninsured South
Africans into the realm
of private health care
with the stroke of
a pen.

A major advantage of being a newcomer in any industry is the benefit of being able to gain wisdom from the experiences of pioneers. A particular lesson learned, which was to GEMS' benefit, was the need for clear demarcation between the core business of health insurance and superfluities that have become industry norm.

For example, intrinsic to the business model of GEMS was cutting out the quintessential middle men and women of the medical insurance industry in the interest of cost reduction and lower premiums for subscribers. This posed a threat to medical aid brokers relying on government employees to contribute substantially to their income through commission. In addition, the multi-billion rand private hospital and clinic facilities cast a wary eye on the new player's stated preference that its subscribers use public facilities as part of Government's strategic intervention in public health sector reform and funding.

With a staff complement of 40 people and a business unit complement of 1 500, including two offices in each of South Africa's nine provinces, the CMO reiterates the importance of keeping the eye on the ball, stating that while back office activities are crucial, these do not determine the direction of the scheme.

An open secret to the success of GEMS, when the reduction of non-health costs is measured, is its tight use of a battery of service providers in a relationship in which GEMS is seen as the 'the brain' and the outsourced elements as the 'hands and feet'. The result of this approach is a lean administration, with only 6.5 per cent of GEMS' turnover going to non-core activities compared with the industry average of 13 per cent. There are many other statistical tidbits that serve as indicators of the GEMS success story, like the Scheme's ability to collect R1.2 billion monthly and process fortnightly claims amounting to R1 billion on the basis of healthy reserves (see Fast Facts side-bar).

'Private health care today is not the most efficient and is not always cost effective. The private sector, it can be argued, has different objectives. Role players want to make money,' says Dr Watson.

According to Dr Watson, GEMS operates on the 'principle of social solidarity', with members pulling resources together and the Scheme deploying these in the most cost-efficient manner to the benefit of all, especially those in need.

Where to next?

'If one looks back over the less than half a decade of the existence of GEMS,' says Dr Watson, 'it is clear that the government scheme is a phenomenal success. Government's policy decision was correct. It currently provides medical cover to over 43 per cent of public service employees.'

Naturally, he says modestly, there is still a long way ahead, especially concerning the recruitment of public servants in the higher-income echelons. Since medical insurance is a high-involvement service, it is characteristically a slow process to wean people from existing schemes, despite the evident benefits of an alternative such as GEMS.

With 170 000 low-income earners (levels 1 to 5) enrolled compared with the current 400 000 employees in these categories, GEMS still sees more growth in this market segment – and so is the competition, the envious eye of which GEMS has to keep outpacing. ■

Hospital Efficiency through effective Patient Records Management: *the Case of Addington Hospital*

By Sagren Govender, Addington Hospital, and Nsizwa Dlamini, Department of Public Service and Administration.

In 2004, Cabinet took a decision to engage senior management services (SMS) members at the 'coalface' of service delivery. This decision gave birth to what is currently known as Project *Khaedu*, which requires SMS members to spend at least a week during the annual performance cycle at the coalface of service delivery. There they receive on-the-spot training in problem-solving methods and the implementation of solutions that are directly linked to the problems being experienced at a particular service delivery point. A number of hospitals served as service delivery points for *Khaedu*. These visits resulted in Addington Hospital being identified as a best-practice hospital for its records and queue management systems.

Addington Hospital is situated on Durban's famous Golden Mile. It was built on the present site in 1897 and several constructions have since then been added to the original complex. The Hospital has 570 beds and admits 31 630 patients per annum. It has a staff capacity of 2 500. 15 people are employed in the Medical Records Department. These employees deal with approximately



Sagren Govender



Nsizwa Dlamini



300 000 active medical records and approximately 500 000 inactive medical records.

The mission of the Hospital's Patient Administration Department is 'to provide an efficient, effective and empathetic service to (its) clients at all times'. Its objectives are to:

- ensure that there are high levels of efficiency, accuracy and productivity in keeping with the *Batho Pele* principles;
- maintain and protect the confidentiality of patients and patient records at all times;
- minimize waiting time for the registration of patients and the retrieval of medical records; and
- obtain comprehensive patient details to enhance revenue collection.

The mission and objectives of the Department are the main drivers of the Hospital's records management system, which ensures that patients do not spend hours waiting to be served. The system starts when new patients arrive at the Hospital.

It all begins with the registration of new patients

When new patients arrive at the Hospital, a clerk captures their relevant details on the Hospital Information System. These details include the financial status of patients, which means that patients have to disclose their income to the clerk. A patient's financial situation is then assessed and he/she is subsequently billed according to his/her financial situation.

This is followed by the generation of a unique hospital number that is assigned to the patient. This becomes his/her 'life number' that will be used every time he/she visits the Hospital. On receipt of payment, a medical record folder is created. The patient can then receive assistance. Staff members of the hospital are also registered on the system to ensure that the system recognizes them should they need medical assistance.

The computer programmes that are used in this process are the Admissions 4.9 System and the Medical Records 4.9 System.



When patients return to the Hospital for consultations, an efficient retrieval and distribution of health records system is in place to minimize the time officials have to spend searching for patient medical records.

Retrieval and distribution of health records

Nursing staff capture all scheduled appointments on computer. An appointment list is printed out two days before a patient arrives, which assists in allowing medical files to be drawn and signed out on computer to the relevant clinics for use during consultations.

On its return, a file is signed back immediately to the Medical Records Department on the computer system. Files are then sorted out and filed into relevant sections by the clerks, with each clerk responsible for ten sections.

Implementing colour coding

The Hospital implemented the colour coding of records as part of its Medical Records Quality Improvement Programme. A situation analysis was undertaken and it was found that, despite the computer system, files were still getting lost because of human error. As an intervention, a meeting was held with staff to discuss a process of minimizing this occurrence.

The first solution identified was the removal of all old and inactive files from the current system. In this process, the visits of patients are considered. If a patient's last visit took place 18 months ago, his/her file is removed from the system to the archives to create filing space. Such files are signed out to the archives on the computer system. They are then retained in the archives for a period of five years before they get destroyed. It is important to note that, even when a file is destroyed after five years, the patient information contained in it remains available on the computer system and can be retrieved at any time.

As a second solution, deceased and maternity records are filed separately from the main medical records system. This ensures that active files are easily accessible whenever they are needed. In addition, records for babies born in the Hospital are kept in a separate room. Such babies are issued with a hospital number at birth and are, therefore, immediately registered patients of the Hospital.

The third step in dealing with missing files was the implementation of measures to prevent files from being filed incorrectly. Firstly, file jackets were repaired and replaced. A Policy and Procedure for Colour Coding was then implemented, which required that stickers in ten different colours had to be ordered so that patient files could be colour coded according to the colour coding chart developed to match the ten different sections that a clerk takes responsibility for. Each clerk had to colour code the patient files in his/her filing section by sticking coloured dots onto the spine of the patient record.

The process took three months to complete and current practice dictates that no records may be filed before they have been colour coded.

Overall, the system allows for easy and quick identification and access to files. The process is being evaluated constantly to ensure its effectiveness. However, the fact that 208 files went missing over a period of two months before the implementation of colour coding and only 83 (which included files doctors kept in their rooms and files taken home by clients) over the same period after the implementation of the system, augurs well for the future success of the system.

Lessons learned

The most important lesson learned is that an efficient records management system can have a positive impact on queue management. It can also reduce overcrowding in a hospital. At Addington, this is further supported by the practice of accommodating waiting patients in different areas of the Hospital so that, even when there is a lot of pressure, one does not get the impression of the Hospital being overcrowded.

Another lesson that can be learned from the Addington case study is that the innovative use of space for filing can make a huge difference. Moving inactive files to the archives instead of keeping them with active files has ensured that the space allocated for the storing of files is used effectively and that there is space for new records. On this issue, one can also state that the manager responsible



Before



After



for records management has to be proactive as far as decisions about the effective utilization of space is concerned. This assists greatly in streamlining all efforts to ensure smooth operations, such as locating patient records close to relevant departments, which assists in ensuring that it does not take long to take files to patients.

To ensure that there is adequate capacity for filing, registration clerks have been given the added responsibility of assisting in filing patient records. They take care of registration for a certain number of hours, whereafter they are required to assist with filing. That has helped to ensure that there is personnel available for filing. This in itself is a lesson: everybody must be trained in all aspects of the work so that they can be utilized in different areas of the Hospital as and when required.

Another lesson learned, is the fact that the information technology (IT) that runs the computer system is managed by the patient records department and not outsourced. The hardware section is staffed by five network controllers who work shifts and are on site until 22:00 daily. The software section has three staff members.

Accountability is also essential for the system to function. By making clerks responsible for certain sections in the filing system, they become accountable for their sections. Accountability, in addition to the colour coding system, has ensured that missing files are minimized. At Addington, human error is actively discouraged.

If a challenge is identified, innovation should be part of the solution. Earlier, the innovative use of filing space has been mentioned. Another innovation at Addington is the colour coding system, which has made it easy to see when a file is in the wrong place, because its colours will not match the rest of the files in the section.

Final lessons learned are:

- The division of labour strengthens supervision.
- The electronic system used in Addington is customized for the needs of the Hospital.
- The separation of chronic files from general files is helpful.
- Staff must be motivated through a customized reward system.

Replication of best practice

In accordance with *Khaedu* recommendations, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) joined hands with

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German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in identifying hospitals that are facing challenges with their records management systems. Such hospitals were afforded an opportunity to learn from Addington Hospital and the DPSA convened a workshop at Addington Hospital from 7 to 8 October 2010 with the financial support of GTZ. The following hospitals were invited to participate: Klerksdorp Tshepong Provincial Hospital Complex, Moses Kotane District George Stegman, Themba, Tonga, Malamulele, Siloam and Cecilia Makiwane Hospital. The only hospital invited that did not send delegates is the Nelson Mandela Academic Hospital.

Everyone who attended expressed appreciation of the Addington records management system and its impact. They indicated that they would like the system to be replicated at their hospitals to assist in solving their own challenges ranging from failing systems to overcrowding.

GTZ committed itself to support the replication of this best practice at the above hospitals financially. The DPSA will lead the process.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it must be mentioned that the best practice system described above has its own challenges. The major challenge, especially concerning colour coding, is that the exercise is time consuming. In addition, available colours pose a challenge. At present, further colours are being negotiated, since the section has started running out of colours to include in the coding system. Linked to this are financial implications. The system is not cheap. Apart from the need to purchase further colours, the system comprises filing space and money is needed to create archives and shelf space. In addition, despite the innovations, the Hospital continues to experience a shortage of staff.

Yet, the medical records filing system of Addington Hospital has taught us that challenges should not stifle innovation. Any hospital that is keen on replicating the Addington system will have to start somewhere, knowing that what has been achieved at Addington was not achieved overnight. Furthermore, the need to improve on what is already in place remains a constant requirement. What we have to know and embrace is that the management of records is not just about where you file your records; its impact goes beyond that. ■

Can Technology end Poverty?

In this summarized version of an article that originally appeared in the *Boston Review*, Kentaro Toyama shares his views on why the optimism and exuberance around new technologies are often dashed by disappointing realities when it comes to development and the alleviation of poverty and why education and the nurturing of human capability would be of greater value.



Kentaro Toyama

It was April 2004, and I was visiting a ‘telecentre’ in the tiny village of Retawadi, three hours from Mumbai. The small, dirt-floored room, lit only by an open aluminum doorway, was bare except for a desk, a chair, a PC, an inverter and a large tractor battery that powered the PC when grid electricity was unavailable. Outside, a humped cow chewed on dry stalks and a goat bleated feebly.

As I encouraged the boy, I wondered about the trade-off his parents had made in order to pay for a typing tutor. Their son was learning to write words he would never use in a language he did not speak. According to the telecentre’s owner, Dhyaneswar’s parents paid a hundred rupees – about \$2.20 – a month for a couple of lesson hours each week. That may not sound like much, but in Retawadi, it is twice as much as full-time tuition in a private school.

Such was my introduction to the young field of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D). The goal of ICT4D is to apply the power of recent technologies – particularly the PC, the mobile phone and the Internet – to alleviate the problems of global poverty. ICT4D sprouted from two intersecting trends: the emergence of an international development community eager for novel solutions to nearly intractable socioeconomic challenges, and the expansion of a brashly successful technology industry into emerging markets and philanthropy.

The latter prompted my own move to India. I was working as a computer scientist for Microsoft Research in the United States during a time when India’s rise as an information-technology superpower drew to that country increasing investments from multinational firms. In 2004, I was asked to help start a laboratory in Bangalore and I jumped at the opportunity. While the lab’s broader mission was to engage India’s science and engineering talent in computer science research, I would have the chance to start an ICT4D research group, where I hoped to devote my expertise to something of wider societal value.

At the time, telecentres were the poster children of ICT4D. Telecentres are like Internet cafés, except they are placed in impoverished communities with the intention of accelerating socioeconomic growth. The telecentres are often sponsored wholly or in part by outside agencies – governments, NGOs, academia,

industry – harboring a variety of secondary aims, from profits and publicity to increased interaction with a voting constituency.

In Retawadi, the telecentre was created jointly by a for-profit start-up company and a local non-profit company. The partners believed that the telecentre would provide social services to the community and income for a local entrepreneur, and, in fact, it did a bit of both. When I visited, the telecentre had two students. Occasionally, a college-aged youth would come in to use the Internet for the equivalent of \$0.25 per hour. And the owner boasted that he earned additional income by using the PC himself to provide a local hospital with data-entry services.

Some telecentres have been successful. One operator in South India reported saving a farmer’s okra crop by facilitating a timely video teleconference between him and a university agriculture expert. Another boasted a threefold increase in income after opening a computer training center. The press headlines have been unabashedly flattering: ‘India’s Soybean Farmers Join the Global Village’ (*The New York Times*); ‘Village Kiosks Bridge India’s Digital Divide’ (*The Washington Post*); ‘Kenyan Farmer Lauds Internet as Saviour of Potato Crop’ (BBC).

These stories have sparked high hopes for telecentres: distance education will make every child a scholar; telemedicine can cure dysfunctional rural health-care systems;

citizens will offer each other services locally and directly, bypassing corrupt government officials. MS Swaminathan, widely credited with India’s ‘Green Revolution’ in agriculture, called for a telecentre in each of the country’s 640 000 villages. Other countries have followed suit, proclaiming their own national telecentre programmes.

The excitement around telecentres has spread to the rest of ICT4D. We know of Nicholas Negroponte, founder of One Laptop Per Child (OLPC), a project devoted to getting inexpensive laptops into the hands of every poor child, whose project has the public backing of Kofi Annan. Another example is a recent, world-wide survey commissioned by the BBC that found that 79 per cent of the nearly 28 000 adults polled, mainly from richer countries and those with Internet access, strongly agreed or partially agreed with the statement, ‘Access to the Internet should be a fundamental right of all people’.

A ten-year-old
boy named
Dhyaneswar looked
up for approval after
carefully typing the
word, Alaska, on a
personal computer (PC).
‘Bahut acchaa!’
I cheered,
‘very good!’



Yet, the successes of ICT4D are fleeting and few and far between. In Retawadi, the telecentre owner made approximately twenty dollars per month, but monthly costs of hardware, electricity, connectivity and maintenance were a hundred dollars. The telecentre closed shortly after my visit.

Over a span of five years, I traveled to nearly 50 telecentres across South Asia and Africa. The vast majority looked a lot like the one in Retawadi. Locals rarely saw much value in the Internet and telecentre operators couldn't market even the paltry services available. Most suffered the same fate as the Retawadi telecentre, shutting down soon after they opened. Research on telecentres, though limited in rigor and scale, confirms my observations about consistent under-performance.

As I soon discovered, these mostly failed ventures reflect a larger pattern in technology and development in which new technologies generate optimism and exuberance, only to be dashed eventually by disappointing realities.

Academic observers have deconstructed telecentres and other ICT4D projects, enumerating the many reasons why the initiatives fail: ICT4D enthusiasts don't design context-appropriate technology, adhere to socio-cultural norms, account for poor electrical supply, build relationships with local governments, invite the participation of the community, provide services that meet local needs, consider bad transportation infrastructure, think through a viable financial model, provide incentives for all stakeholders, and so on. These criticisms are each valid as far as they go, and ICT4D interventionists sometimes focus narrowly on addressing them. But this laundry list of foibles ultimately provides no insight into the deeper reasons why ICT4D projects rarely fulfil their promise, even as their cousins in the developed world thrive in the form of netbooks, BlackBerrys and Facebook.

Nothing would have pleased my group more than finding a way

“... Technology, no matter how well designed, is only a magnifier of human intent and capacity. It is not a substitute ...”

for technology to advance the cause of poverty alleviation. But as we conducted research projects in multiple domains (education, microfinance, agriculture, health care) and with various technologies (PCs, mobile phones, custom-designed electronics), a pattern, having little to do with the technologies themselves, emerged. In every one of our projects, a technology's effects were wholly dependent on the intention and capacity of the people handling it. The success of PC projects in schools hinged on supportive administrators and dedicated teachers. Microcredit processes with mobile phones worked because of effective microfinance organizations. Teaching farming practices through video required capable agriculture-extension officers and devoted non-profit staff. In our most successful ICT4D projects, the partner organizations did the hard work of real development and our role was simply to assist and strengthen their efforts with technology.

If I were to summarize everything I learned through research in ICT4D, it would be this: technology, no matter how well designed, is only a *magnifier of human intent and capacity*. It is not a substitute. If you have a foundation of competent, well-intentioned people, then the appropriate technology can amplify their capacity and lead to amazing achievements. But, in circumstances with negative human intent, as in the case of corrupt government bureaucrats, or minimal capacity, as in the case of people who have been denied a basic education, no amount of technology will turn things around.

In the developed world, there is a tendency to see the Internet and other technologies as necessarily additive, inherent contributors of positive value. But their beneficial contributions are contingent on an absorptive capacity among users that is often missing in the developing world. Technology has positive effects only to the extent that people are willing and able to use it positively. The challenge of international development is that, whatever the potential of poor

communities, well-intentioned capability is in scarce supply and technology cannot make up for its deficiency.

Technology has no benefit unless positive human intent and capacity are already present, or unless significant investments are made towards developing human capability and institutions.

The converse belief, accepted as faith by technocrats and technopians, is that the large-scale dissemination of appropriately designed technology, *per se*, can provide solutions to poverty and other social problems. Believers jump to address the scale of global problems before confirming the value of the solution. They equate technology penetration with progress. For example, OLPC seeks to enable ‘self-empowered learning’ – the claim is that teachers can be altogether absent. OLPC has consistently sold its technology with little discussion of the realities of pedagogy, namely training teachers, redesigning curricula, strengthening weak school systems, and so on. As for technical maintenance, the students are supposed to provide it themselves. OLPC’s very name implies that its goal is, primarily, widely disseminated technology. Yet, few of us would choose PC-based education for our own children.

This *myth of scale* is the religion of telecentre proponents, who believe that bringing the Internet into villages is enough to transform them. Most recently, there is the cult of the mobile phone: one *New York Times Magazine* headline ran: ‘Can the Cellphone Help End Global Poverty?’ The article went on to assert, ‘the possibilities afforded by a proliferation of cellphones are potentially revolutionary’.

The myth of scale is seductive because it is easier to spread technology than to effect extensive change in social attitudes and human capacity. In other words, it is much less painful to purchase a hundred thousand PCs than to provide a real education for a hundred thousand children; it is easier to run a text-messaging health hotline than to convince people to boil water before ingesting it; it is easier to write a mobile phone application that helps people find out where they can buy medicine than it is to persuade them that medicine is good for their health. It seems obvious that the promise of scale is a red herring, but ICT4D proponents rely, consciously or otherwise, on it to promote their solutions.

Estimates of annual, world-wide ICT4D expenditure are hard to come by, but they range from hundreds of millions to tens of billions of US dollars, depending on what is counted. Given the extent of the investment, the opportunity costs become significant. OLPC’s target cost of a hundred dollars or less per laptop (in practice, the machines have been more expensive), sounds affordable, but that’s about half of India’s per-student education budget, most of which is currently devoted to teachers’ salaries. Does a hundred dollars for a computer make sense when \$0.50 per year per child for de-worming pills could reduce the incidence of illness-causing parasites and increase school attendance by 25 per cent?

Despite critical needs in all areas of development, ICT4D proponents tend not only to ignore the opportunity costs of technology, but also to press for funding from budgets allocated to non-technology purposes. Presumably, this was one of the reasons behind OLPC’s brazen doublespeak in claiming to be ‘an education project, not a laptop project’ while expecting governments to spend \$100 million for a million laptops, the original minimum order. In a fine example of the skewed priorities of ICT4D boosters, Hamadoun Touré, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunications Union, suggests, ‘[governments should] regard the Internet as basic

infrastructure – just like roads, waste and water’. Of course, in conditions of extreme poverty, investments to provide broad access to the Web will necessarily compete with spending on proper sanitation and the rudiments of transportation.

Disseminating a technology would work if, somehow, the technology did more for the poor, undereducated and powerless than it did for the rich, well-educated and mighty. But the theory of technology-as-magnifier leads to the opposite conclusion: the greater one’s capacity, the more technology delivers; the lesser one’s capacity, the less value technology has. In effect, technology helps the rich get richer while doing little for the incomes of the poor, thus widening the gaps between haves and have-nots.

This ‘digital divide’ persists even when the technology is fully sponsored. For instance, most public libraries in the United States provide free access to the Internet, but poorer residents have less leisure time in which to visit them and a harder time reaching them because of transportation costs. There may be social barriers too: many of the rural telecentres I’ve visited in the developing world were not accessible to the least privileged people in their villages due to social injunctions against comingling of caste, tribe or gender.

Technology producers also reinforce the digital divide. As for-profit companies, by and large, they naturally cater their products toward larger groups of richer customers, who are more likely to buy. Technology amplifies shareholder interest in profit, and, globally, this means hardware tends to be designed for people working in climate-controlled offices with stable AC power; software tends to be developed in languages understood by the world’s largest, wealthiest populations; and content tends to be written for audiences with the greatest disposable income. Even when products appear to be free, as with TV or Google, they are frequently supported by advertisers who seek consumers with more disposable income. The result is, again, that

the disadvantaged are further disadvantaged. India has more than twenty nationally recognized languages, yet almost all software in use there is in English, making it difficult for those literate only in their local languages to use computers. And this inclination reinforces itself: if a technology is not designed for someone, she won’t buy it; and if she doesn’t buy it, the producers won’t design for her.

It is possible to fight against this differential access. Telecentre projects, in fact, typify such efforts, as the centers are always targeted at poorer clients. But progressive practices with respect to technology are not particularly effective on their own because of other differentials that technology doesn’t undo. A level playing field doesn’t address the underlying issues, which are the inequalities among the players themselves.

Even if differential access to technology could be countered through universally distributed technology, differential capacity in terms of education, social skills or social connections remains. Clients of telecentres are limited in literacy, education, social ties, political influence, and so on and are, therefore, constrained in the value they can extract from the Internet. With limited capacity, technology’s value is minimal.

Along with differential access and capacity, a third mechanism – differential motivation – contributes to the widening divergence between the privileged and the marginalized. What do people want to do with the technology they have access to? Those of us who have worked in interventionist ICT4D have often been surprised to find that poor people do not rush to gain more education, learn about

6 ... The myth
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them ... 9

health practices or upgrade vocational skills. Instead, they seem to use technology primarily for entertainment. Telecentre surveys find that when a village has ready access to a PC – connected to the Internet or otherwise – the dominant use is by young men playing games, watching movies or consuming adult content. Many become proficient at the software incantations required to download YouTube videos from a PC onto a mobile phone. But these same users typically forsake software-based accounting and language lessons. What interventionists perceive to be ‘productive’ use of technology is trumped by the ‘frivolous’ desires of users. Even users in the developed world rarely take advantage of their technologies for purposes of self-improvement – the most popular iPhone applications are games and other entertainment, nothing that would improve

productivity or health. And this tendency is exacerbated among those who have grown up with lessons of learned helplessness and low self-confidence.

I’m not blaming the victim. None of the three mechanisms necessarily speak to failures on the part of those who are poor or poorly educated. Blame, if it must be attributed, falls readily on historical circumstances, social structures and the rich world’s unwillingness to invest in high-quality, universal education. In fact, one reason for valuing education is that it generates the appetite for and capacity to use modern tools. All the more reason to focus on nurturing human capability, rather than trying to compensate for limited capacity with technology. ■

Laptop initiative at Schools

By Andile Ndlovu*

The Education Labour Relations Council launched the Teacher Laptop Initiative aimed at about 370 000 teachers at schools nationwide. The initiative, which resorts under the Department of Basic Education, was the result of months of intense deliberations.

According to the Council’s media manager, Heins Worst, teachers will not receive laptops readily. They have to qualify for a government subsidy to assist them in obtaining a laptop. Each qualifying teacher will then receive a monthly allowance of R130. To this they will have to add whatever amount is outstanding after having made their choice from packages that range from R250 to R390 a month from suppliers that are accredited with the Department.

The laptop packages include school administration material, the national curriculum and internet access.

But Worst cautioned: ‘Because provincial departments are restricted in terms of budget and resources, the roll-out will take place in cohorts depending on seniority. Targeted teachers will receive letters about their qualification or not from their provincial departments.’

SA Democratic Teachers’ Union President, Thobile Ntola, said the initiative would ensure that the country produced scholars who would be able to ‘compete in the technological world’.

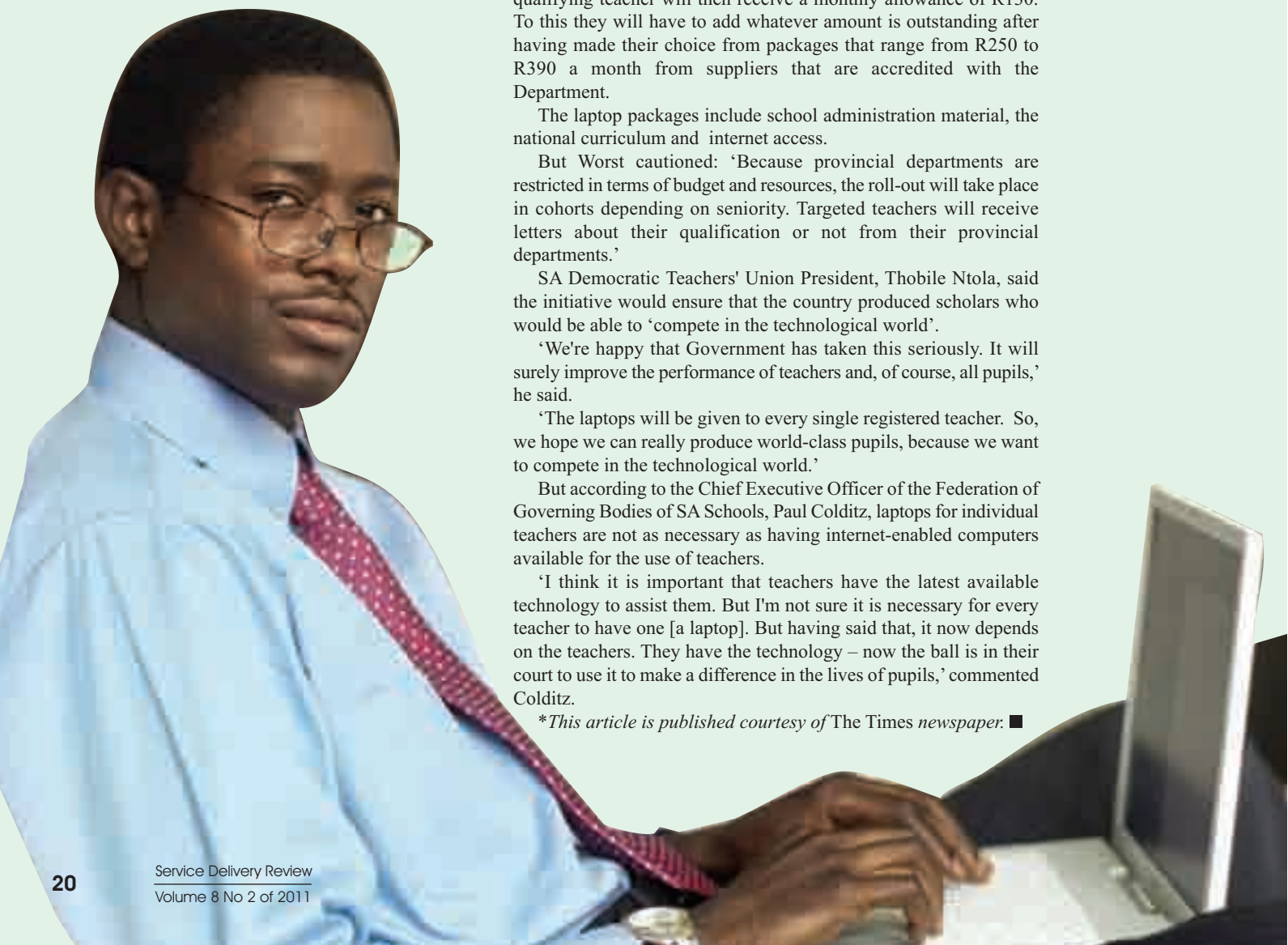
‘We’re happy that Government has taken this seriously. It will surely improve the performance of teachers and, of course, all pupils,’ he said.

‘The laptops will be given to every single registered teacher. So, we hope we can really produce world-class pupils, because we want to compete in the technological world.’

But according to the Chief Executive Officer of the Federation of Governing Bodies of SA Schools, Paul Colditz, laptops for individual teachers are not as necessary as having internet-enabled computers available for the use of teachers.

‘I think it is important that teachers have the latest available technology to assist them. But I’m not sure it is necessary for every teacher to have one [a laptop]. But having said that, it now depends on the teachers. They have the technology – now the ball is in their court to use it to make a difference in the lives of pupils,’ commented Colditz.

**This article is published courtesy of The Times newspaper. ■*



17737 – Hotline to the President

Manaseh Tshiguvho of the Department of Public Service and Administration provides some insight into the role of the Presidential Hotline in Government's aim to respond to President Jacob Zuma's call for a responsive and caring government that belongs to, cares for and serves its people.



Manaseh Tshiguvho

One of the tendencies in a developmental state is that the well-being of the citizenry becomes the standard used to judge the success of participatory democracy. Furthermore, what with the post-colonial model of government in action and noting the definition of a modern democracy, dialogue on global governance issues could be regarded as an aspect generally assisting in 'oiling Government's machinery'.

Among other things, the ruling party placed the issue of good governance in a developmental state on the agenda in its Manifesto. Hence, South Africa's citizens will judge how well Government advances their well-being, using this mandate as a yardstick.

Good governance is a mammoth task and unlike in some other parts of the world, public services in South Africa are not a privilege but a right enshrined in the Constitution. Therefore, to provide South Africa's citizens with the services they are entitled to by way of good governance requires a crop of dedicated public servants who have the expertise and will to deliver on the mandate contained in the Manifesto.

In an effort to facilitate dialogue with the aim of enhancing governance performance in South Africa, the President pronounced the Presidential Hotline number on 14 September 2009 and invited citizens to lodge their dissatisfaction on any service delivery matters by calling 17737.

The Presidential Hotline is not a public relations exercise – its aim is to position the Presidency as a catalyst to unblock service delivery bottlenecks and encourage an improved service delivery culture across Government. The Presidency has set a 36 hour turn-around time for the investigation and resolution of calls. Consequently, all three spheres of government have put measures in place to respond to Presidential Hotline queries. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) is also actively involved in this initiative and three public liaison officers have been appointed to attend to queries routed to the Department.

In its annual report on the performance of the Hotline, the Presidency singled out DPSA cases as milestones in the unblocking of service delivery bottlenecks. The cases routed to the DPSA are mainly concerns about employment opportunities, pension payouts and the lack of service delivery at municipal level. Our analysis has shown that employment stands out as a serious challenge for both young and old and, through departmental intervention, we have achieved a measure of success in this regard, an example of which is the employment secured for a teacher in Limpopo who were unemployed for more than ten years. We are also continuously liaising with the Department of Labour on matters pertaining to employment and, where possible, ensure that opportunities are created for people to become employed. Furthermore, as the custodian of service delivery, the Department is constantly engaged in attempts to ensure that steps are taken where citizens are not satisfied with the services they are entitled to.

What makes the DPSA hotline stand out, though, is that not only members of the public benefit from DPSA responses to hotline queries, but internal staff as well and many a staff member can bear testimony to this.

Do complaints and call centre management initiatives have any bearing on the improvement of good governance?

To answer this question, I want to point out that the service delivery challenges that the DPSA tackles are those that require the three spheres of government, and national departments in particular, to work together to resolve bottlenecks without the need for reports or submissions. These are service delivery challenges that can be resolved within a short space of time with the assistance of dedicated officials who are shining examples of public servants who are responding to President Zuma's call for a responsive and caring government that belongs to, cares for and serves its people.

The Presidential Hotline network allows for such harmonious intervention. However, getting a quick response from government departments and provinces remains a major problem. This can be attributed mainly to a lack of serious coordination and strategies to deal with complaints in most departments. As a remedy, the President entrusted directors-general with the overall responsibility of resolving the queries and complaints relevant to their departments.

The Department for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation also undertook to conduct a first-year assessment of the hotline to look at problems, successes and opportunities to improve the service. The ultimate aim is to further ensure easy access to the Presidency, and to promote citizen care and a government that is responsive, interactive and effective.

Is there a proper complaints and call centre management strategy in place to respond to the pressures of quality and timely service provision in the country?

At present, Government has neither a uniform complaints and call centre management strategy nor appropriate guidelines in place. This has been identified as a gap in Government's ability to respond to the President's call that we, as a public service, treat the queries of citizens as though they were our only concern. However, generally, each department has developed its own measures to address citizen complaints. For its part, the DPSA has noted the need to address this particular challenge and a strategy will be put in place that will aim to ensure that complaints are seen as complimentary to enhancing service delivery. DPSA Outcome 12 also mandates us to ensure that proper mechanisms are put in place to address service delivery bottlenecks.

I want to conclude by saying that it is through initiatives such as the Presidential Hotline that Government's principle of *Together we can do more* will be realized. ■

Statistics are in his Blood

The man behind making numbers work for a better life for all in South Africa talks about his love for statistics and stresses the importance of the quantitative evidence that is provided by a census in a democratically run country.

Tsuppose statistics are what I enjoy' says the man with a warm laugh. Just as well he enjoys working with figures – Pali Lehohla is the country's chief statistician. He was appointed as South Africa's first Statistician General in 2000.

'My wife always says "for so long you have said that once you finish with the business of statistics you will have more time for the family". And I say: "But you are part of statistics!" I enjoy statistics,' he says and another hearty laugh follows.

Lehohla carries the responsibility of handling the country's statistics on his shoulders, a job which he describes as interesting. 'It's a very interesting job because of the nature of statistics. It brings you close to politics that you cannot actually participate in. Once you do that, then you're referee and player at the same time. Statistics talk to authority. It is about holding those in power to account,' he says.

'It places a burden on you as the person who has to collect the results. It asks of you (to be) of high morality; high integrity because of the level of trust that is placed in the numbers.

'Being the Statistician General, having to deal with complex social measurements in particular and having to break down numbers so that they are digestible for the sake of policy are difficult and very challenging. It is a privileged position to serve in.'

One of the jobs that awaits the Head of Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) is the national census that will be undertaken in October 2011.

'Each census produces different surprises; each is unique, although the intentions are to make up the same phenomenon,' says Lehohla of the upcoming third census since the advent of democracy.

Dealing with the undercount associated with undertaking a census is an important aspect as Stats SA prepares for the census.

'What is different about this one is that we have really thought about how to deal with the undercount (which was 10 per cent in 1996 and 17 per cent in 2001). Over the last two censuses we've had an increase. Obviously we are at a margin that is unacceptable and to deal with this we are recruiting and training enumerators early,' explains Lehohla.

Enumerators will also be out in the field for a longer period,

counting all the people in the country irrespective of their nationality or their legal status. Even the homeless will be counted. The questions in next year's census have not been changed and will be available in all 11 official languages.

The quantitative evidence that is provided by a census is crucial in a democratic country where accountability is demanded at all levels, emphasizes Lehohla.

'Census 2011 will provide crucial information concerning the Millennium Development Goals at both a national and local level. A census provides information particularly for goals on education, as well as on poverty and gender equality. It also provides information on health-related goals,' says Lehohla.

He adds that countries should avoid a situation where a census is not carried out.

'In extreme cases the absence of censuses leads to endemic conflicts and wars because decisions are driven by the might of the sword rather than reasoning. And where censuses are not regular, they tend to shock the system when they are undertaken, as was the case in Nigeria during the Biafran war. The census pointed to a balance of power that differed from the one that was put forward as the truth,' says Lehohla of the July 1967 to January 1970 civil war. The war was the result of not only economic, but also ethnic and religious tension between the people of that country.

Much has happened on the African continent in terms of statistics. 'We've actually advanced the African agenda on statistics. The intention is to make sure that Africa counts.'

The continent's biggest country, Sudan, which has been marred by instability, is among the countries helped by South Africa when it conducted its census in 2008. Another African state, Angola, is to hold its population census in 2013, the first since 1970.

'The 2008 census in Sudan has been key in the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement,' he points out, referring to the agreement that ended years of violence.

South Africa has also helped with census preparations in Iraq, which has been experiencing instability and a loss of lives in recent years. The country is due to conduct a census in December.

*Statistician General,
Pali Lehohla*



‘In Iraq this was made possible based on the key learning points from Sudan. We have managed to contribute to the shaping of how world bodies, particularly the United Nations, actually take on the statistics of countries,’ he explains.

South Africa hosted the 57th International Statistical Institute (ISI) session in Durban last year. Lehohla says that South Africa is pushing for the continent to address matters of statistics and to focus on statistical studies.

‘Census at schools breaks down the barriers created by a fear of statistics at an early age by asking children things about themselves and processing data and presenting it to them so that they can immediately see application and the beauty of statistics,’ he says.

There is a dire need for statisticians he says: ‘What needs to be

done is to strengthen the mathematical foundation as it goes hand in hand with statistics. Pupils drop mathematics because of a lack of competency to teach it.’

Lehohla says an institute of statistics will open soon.

‘The future of statistics looks bright because of the support from the political system. I think the coherence and consistency in the organization have created conditions of stability for going forward,’ he adds.

‘Other than statistics, I enjoy watching soccer. I read quite extensively, classics mostly,’ he says, adding that deep-voiced, *mbaqanga* singer, Mahlatini, is among some of his favourite musicians. – *BuaNews* ■





Emmanuel Kgomo

Building a knowledge-conscious Public Service

Emmanuel Kgomo, Department of Public Service and Administration, stresses the urgent need for a national Knowledge Management Framework that can steer learning and the management of knowledge across all three spheres of government so that policy and implementation can come together to make South Africa a better place for all.

I would like to state from the onset that learning and knowledge management (KM) are imperative for the Public Service to deliver services to citizens. Having said this, I also want to state that it has become increasingly evident over the years that it is not necessarily straightforward for an organization to become a true learning organization. In fact, understanding learning and KM in the context of the Public Service has proven to be extremely complex. In practice, it is an ongoing and dynamic process. In much the same way, the Public Service vision and mission in our modern, democratic society have proven to be very complex. Their realization requires experienced civil servants that possess the ability to interact with the most advanced, state-of-the-art technologies to understand KM.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) must take the initiative and provide leadership and coordination to implement the most effective KM approaches and to ensure that the entire Public Service is appropriately engaged in the process. The availability and institutionalization of appropriate KM mechanisms and measures to ensure an enabling environment cannot be over-emphasized. As a result, an integrated National Knowledge Management Framework that seeks to provide the necessary leadership and direction has been long over-due. The Framework, as one of the enablers in this context, would lay the foundation for the setting of common norms, standards and approaches for KM implementation in the Public Service. It would also provide parameters and scope for more tailor-made frameworks that would be responsive to localized integrated KM imperatives.

It is evident that Government and its machinery are under pressure to work faster and smarter to deliver quality services to all. In order to deliver on its mandate, Government requires reliable information/data and knowledge to make informed decisions while developing knowledge-based innovation to work smarter. Such information or data can be in place if proper learning and KM are in place. In addition, and you would agree with me, KM would facilitate the transformation of the mindset of civil servants and, finally, promote a culture of doing things differently.

Government has adopted a new, outcomes

‘... learning and knowledge management (KM) are imperative for the Public Service to deliver services to citizens ...’

approach to its work. This involves choosing a few outcomes that will be measurable, setting targets and identifying key activities that will contribute towards achieving the set targets. This new approach urges KM practitioners within and outside the Public Service to live up to the challenge of ensuring common norms and standards in information and knowledge sharing, learning and benchmarking without restricting and stifling innovation. An integrated National Knowledge Management Framework would, therefore, seek to ensure common standards to allow interoperability, uniform access, collaboration and knowledge sharing.

To this end, such a Framework should be finalized, implemented and institutionalized as a matter of urgency. The Framework itself should be viewed as a non-static and dynamic instrument informed by dynamic national, regional and global research. The advantage of our process at this stage is that it is mostly informed by real work that has been taking place across the Public Service at both the national and provincial levels. In this regard, the huge contribution of some public servants towards coming up with instruments and mechanisms that seek to set parameters for uniformity within the Public Service must be commended. However, leadership and direction in terms of the overarching mechanisms should be provided from the centre. As such, a National Knowledge Management Framework would assist in revolutionizing the manner in which Government operates by supporting us strategically to:

- create capacity that could fill the persistent gap between policy and implementation by exploiting various technologies that could facilitate effective information dissemination across the Public Service; and
- link up with and realize the core programmes of Government to foster integration at the levels of implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

‘... KM would facilitate the transformation of the mindset of civil servants and, finally, promote a culture of doing things differently ...’

Our main challenge remains the effective dissemination and utilization of information and knowledge generated, and lessons learned. Thus, the creation of KM capacity throughout the Public Service, accompanied by the requisite resource allocation, is no longer negotiable. While the DPSA has to strengthen its leadership and collaborative mechanisms to this end, it remains the ultimate responsibility

of all within and outside the Public Service to create the centre space for effective KM.

Conclusion

The value of KM in the Public Service cannot be overestimated. It is the critical tool that would enable us to provide mechanisms to prevent the loss of valuable knowledge at all levels of government. It would facilitate joint ventures and provide a legal framework to govern the import and export of knowledge content, products and services. It would also promote an integrative management culture that would nurture knowledge sharing and utilization.

There is a need to put in place KM systems and processes that would create a culture within which workers would think and work like real knowledge practitioners towards information and knowledge sharing. Therefore, the National Knowledge Management Framework should provide us with the tools to maintain the broad vision of comprehensive KM and adoption across departments and all entities in society. ■

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Colette Clark

Putting People First, improving Service Delivery – *Lessons from the UK*



Vincent Mabunda

Colette Clark and Vincent Mabunda of the Department of Public Service and Administration share lessons learned from the British Public Service.

In June 2010, we took part in the prestigious programme organized under the auspices of the Public Administration International (PAI) Institution in London in the United Kingdom (UK). PIA offers a series of programmes on public administration and public service delivery in general. One such programme, which we were part of, is called *Putting People First: the key to improving public services*. The overseas visit was particularly special to one of the authors, Mabunda, since it was his first official international visit after years in the Public Service. Various public servants from other parts of the world, notably from the African continent, also participated in the programme.

Service delivery points

A South African reader may relate very well to some British

initiatives, because they are, in some instances, similar to those in South Africa. However, they differ in terms of the delivery approach adopted and from this we can draw useful ideas. At the heart of the programme we participated in was an exploration of a number of approaches to putting citizens as beneficiaries of public services at the centre of all that we do as public servants to improve service delivery continuously and enhance the government-citizen relationship through:

- Examining citizen's rights to and responsibilities concerning public services.
- Looking at the process involved in creating an understanding of the process of culture change required to see citizens as partners in a government's service delivery programmes.
- Looking at the role of different spheres of government in



improving services through citizen involvement.

- Considering and discussing lessons learned by the public sector from private and non-governmental bodies.
- Comparing techniques for organizational assessment and review (the use of citizen satisfaction surveys as a feedback mechanism, benchmarking, a business excellence model and other improvement programmes).
- Exchanging experiences and lessons at international level to identify areas for development and improvement in the home country and organizations.

Programme content and methodology

We were extremely impressed by the programme delivery methodology, which included inviting a team of experts from the field to deliver interactive classroom-like presentations and facilitate discussions that were punctuated by site visits to service delivery points.

It was with a bit of restrained glee that we made observations during the interactive sessions that in some areas South African public bodies were more advanced in the implementation of *Batho Pele* than their British counterparts – so much so that some representatives from countries like Mozambique expressed interest in visiting South Africa to learn more about initiatives around ‘putting people first’.

London Home Office ‘mystery shoppers’

What was perhaps most striking about the service delivery points we visited was their approach to **how** services were delivered. The first out-of-classroom visit was to the identity and passport services point in London run by an Executive Agency of the Home Office, which is the equivalent of the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa.

We were immensely impressed by the level of professionalism with which the office handled its work and the site visit was instructive. It appeared as though the officials at the service delivery point had spent a year planning for our reception. Questions were handled with a high level of professionalism, depth and insightfulness. Perhaps the secret of their efficiency lies in how they have introduced, entrenched, embraced and institutionalized the ‘mystery-shoppers’ concept as an integral operational monitoring mechanism geared towards ensuring continuous improvement of their services.

This particular mechanism is the equivalent of unannounced site visits in South Africa and provides independent monitoring of the provision of services through regular visits to the service delivery points and assisting in identifying areas that need improvement. In the case of the identity and passport office, the findings of the ‘mystery shoppers’ are systematically routed to management and appropriately fed into operational plans.

Delegates were also impressed by the office’s electronic monitoring of performance against set targets to ensure quality service that is based on what is called the *Cabinet Office Customer Service Excellence Standards*. Coupled with this, the office makes use of an electronic queue management system with a recorded voice informing clients of the next service attendant available to assist. Walls are covered with displays of their *daily performance targets* against *customer service standards*.

6 ... It was with a bit of restrained glee that we made observations during the interactive sessions that in some areas South African public bodies were more advanced in the implementation of *Batho Pele* than their British counterparts ... 9

We also visited the Citizen Advice Bureau at Rickmansworth. The Bureau is a civil society initiative run by the registered National Charity. This non-governmental organization assists more than two million citizens with a wide range of services. It offers free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on the rights and responsibilities relating to specific services such as benefits, taxation, employment, education, financial products, housing, immigration, and so on.

Television for the blind

The next visit was to the Royal National Institute for Blind People, which advocates on matters pertaining to the visually impaired. Most striking about what the organization does is its work with regard to the UK Broadcasting Act of 1996, which compels the public broadcaster to dedicate a portion of programming to descriptive audio format for the blind. The Act also covers cinemas and requires that 40 per cent of cinemas produce films with audio visual descriptions.

Croydon’s customer service

The London Borough of Croydon’s approach to customer service provided a case study on a well-managed borough offering many services, including safe-guarding vulnerable adults from abuse. The Borough uses different types of media to communicate its social services to the public, such as the family justice centre, which is a place of safety in cases of domestic violence, abuse of the elderly, and so on.

Some of the initiatives contributing to the efficiency of this Borough and its excellent service delivery are:

- *On-the-spot, manual citizen feedback* through a very short, user-friendly questionnaire with only three questions:
 - What did we do well?
 - What could we do better?
 - Any other comments?
- *An electronic customer satisfaction survey*, which is another on-the-spot and speedy feedback mechanism that helps them to obtain citizen feedback on services rendered.

- *An electronic file management system* using FileNet, which contributes greatly to their efficiency and effectiveness.
- *Microsoft Shared*, an electronic device that helps them to collaborate across the Borough without the need for daily meetings.
- *A public photocopier* that the public can use to make copies of their documents at an affordable cost (not free of charge).

The delegation’s longest field trip was to the Great Yarmouth Borough Council by train. To Mabunda, the train ride itself was an exhilarating experience, since his previous longest train trip was in 1985. Our finding during that visit was that the Council has a long-term vision that is well communicated and understood by most of the staff members.

Highlights of the service delivery study tour

Similarities between service delivery initiatives in South Africa and the UK were quite interesting. However, approaches and implementation methodologies differ to varying degrees.

The UK Citizen Charter

Former British Prime Minister, John Major, introduced the idea of a UK Citizen Charter in 1991. It was one of many initiatives aimed at service delivery challenges in that country. It provided a blueprint for public service delivery in the period 1991 to 1999 and became part of the wider government agenda of modernizing the public service. Its main elements include higher service standards; greater transparency and accountability; published performance targets; proper redress mechanisms; and value for money. As is the case with any service delivery initiative, the UK Citizen Charter also has its weaknesses. For example, it exposes junior staff to public discontent and some of the publicized service delivery targets were exaggerated and unrealistic, thus making them difficult to achieve. As a result, it has become apparent that the Charter cannot be the universal remedy for service delivery challenges.

Complaints are great!

A prominent feature of the complaints management system of the UK government is its ability to influence the creation of healthy partnerships between the government and the people it serves. Complaints strengthen the relationship between citizens, government institutions and public servants – something we are aspiring to in South Africa. A constant reminder of the significance of complaints is the slogan, ‘complaints are great’. The emphasis here is that citizen services should not be relegated to the operational level only, but to the entire organization – which is another strong intention of the *Batho Pele* Change Management Engagement programme in the South African Public Service.

A prominent technique in UK government service delivery is *citizen segmentation* – a process of classifying and grouping or categorizing service recipients per specific factor for better management purposes. The advantages of this initiative are that it allows for optimal utilization of resources and better management to ensure quicker turn-around time.

Services exceed tax payers’ expectations

The UK government’s relationship with its people has its roots in the *Tax Compliance Strategy*, the vision of which, namely to render *services that match or exceed tax payers’ expectations*, says all about a commitment to providing a tax system that functions optimally. It was enthralling to note that the UK tax services boasts a high level of community support. The reason for this is that people understand the tax system fully as a result of being introduced to its functions at an early stage through civic education, which is part of the curriculum. This is one of the gaps that exists in South Africa and has to be looked into. Civic education creates a society that has a deep understanding of the functions of the state. This entrenches a highly ethical society with a strong culture of moral values and obligations. Furthermore, the relationship between tax payers and the

government in the UK is constantly enhanced in various ways, *inter alia* by merely thanking those who comply and punishing those who do not comply by way of penalties; an approach that encourages desirable behaviour and discourages undesirable behaviour.

While the concept of consultation is a common mechanism for public participation in the South African context, it may come as a surprise to many of us to learn that, in the UK, *consultation* stands alone as a policy called *The UK Consultation Policy*. The need to move away from a professional dominance approach to a broader managerial one informed this Policy that places the consumer’s decisions and choices at the centre of government activities.

Shared challenges

It was interesting to note that the challenges being experienced in the South African Public Service are not unique to our country. Even in the UK, many grievances leveled at the government concern corruption, nepotism, the quality of service, staff attitudes, and so on. These all contribute to citizen dissatisfaction.

Lessons learned and the future

Based on comparative observations, experiences and lessons learned during the programme, there are a number of existing policy vacuums and regulatory gaps that hamper effective service delivery in South Africa. Hence, in an effort to initiate steps towards dealing with these shortcomings, the Minister for the Public Service and Administration has given approval for the SDOT Branch to explore the feasibility of revising the Public Service Regulations to include the following:

- A compulsory **Queue Management System** based on a policy for service-orientated departments that will be contained in a directive.
- A compulsory **Citizen Complaints Management System** linked to decentralized call centres in each demarcated district based on a policy for service-orientated departments.
- A compulsory **Citizen Segmentation Policy** based on a policy for service-orientated departments.
- A compulsory **Employee Awards System** linked to employee performance standards for all service-orientated departments.

It is imperative that the proposed suggestions be introduced and implemented in the South African Public Service. Experience has shown that quite often, study tours are undertaken but not enough efforts are made to ensure that the lessons learned are actually implemented. While some of the recommendations are of a long-term in nature, it is important for national and provincial departments, municipalities and other organs of state to support the recommendations and prioritize some that could be implemented quickly to have immediate effect. ■



Collette Clark (third from left) and Vincent Mabunda (fifth from left) with other delegates attending the Programme

Self-regulated Learning



Dr Sazi Kunene

In giving an overview of the interventions launched in his Department to provide assistance to learners during the industrial action in 2010, Dr Sazi Kunene of the Gauteng Department of Education shares his personal thoughts on the need to create thinking learners.

Last year's industrial action by public servants, particularly teachers, was a cause of great concern for all those involved in the business of education and training. The country witnessed frantic efforts by policy and decision makers in Government to come up with a range of contingency interventions designed to minimize the impact of the strike action. The frustrations of parents, especially those with children in Grade 12, found expression in all manner of criticism being levelled at both Government and teachers in whose hands the success or otherwise of these learners lies. Alleged teacher militancy, intimidation and violence received serious attention from members of Government who described the behaviour as deplorable, unbecoming and counter to the noble and ethical foundations underpinning the teaching profession. Teachers were not willing to take no for an answer or to accept blame for the near collapse of the schooling system and retaliated by placing the blame wholly at the feet of Government. For many parents and other stakeholders, the most pertinent question, which they have not been able to find a satisfactory answer to, was: if, as Government declares, education is national priority number one, why is it that no firm action was taken to deal with the desperate situation concerning wage negotiations?

Intervention by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE)

When confronted by a desperate situation, organizations, including Government, would normally rein in and put into full use their risk management strategies, followed by the conceptualization and implementation of a range of contingency interventions. While the strike raged on, the GDE took decisive action to try to resolve a desperate situation, not with regard to wage negotiations, which was a national issue, but concerning on-the-ground and at-the-coalface delivery to sustain some degree of learning activity, especially for Grade 12 learners. Some of the interventions were visible and others not. But what should be of key importance to education stakeholders is the extent to which these interventions helped to alleviate the plight of learners and improved their chances of success at the end of the year.

The most pressing difficulty was with Grade 12 learners who

faced an almost simultaneous challenge as they had to sit for preparatory exams and a final exam within the timeframe of one month. This focus on Grade 12 did not mean learners in lower grades were overlooked. However, as in many other countries, matric performance is viewed as extremely important in South Africa and, as is common practice, the mass media devotes a great deal of time reporting on it.

The unintended consequences of the strike action may have long-term implications for the quality of the Class of 2010. The gaps in their knowledge and skills may, in certain instances, take years to address and correct. The objective of the GDE was to minimize, as far as possible, the negative impact of the strike action on the quality of their teaching and learning. The MEC for Education in Gauteng, Ms Barbara Creecy, took the lead and was actively involved in the implementation of some of the strike interventions initiated by her Department, for example, the distribution of study guides to various schools.

She also visited a number of schools to encourage learners to take charge of their own learning by studying on their own or forming themselves into study groups so as to continue engaging in active learning in the absence of educators. Talking to David O'Sullivan of 702 Talk Radio on his afternoon-drive programme on 1 September 2010, among other things, she emphasized the need to make self-regulated learning (independent individual work or collective work by learners) an integral part of the school instructional programme. She asserted that learners should not only be encouraged to study on their own as a contingency measure during industrial action but that a serious effort must be made to teach learners self-education skills in preparation of post-matric learning, as well as for general application in out-of-class or school situations.

Self-education in the schooling system

The new knowledge-based economy imposes new demands on education and training, requiring learners who can demonstrate capacity for thinking. An information-driven economy needs workers who think. The new phenomenon of 'self-initiative', of doing things oneself, necessitated by the information age, has seen responsibility for one's education, for one's career and for one's improvement being

“... We need to upscale self-education in our school programme. This can be done by ensuring ... that ... didactic material and textbooks promote independent work and self-education skills ...”

shifted away from other people to oneself. There is now common talk of self-capacitation, self-management of one's career development, self-improvement strategies, and so on. After all, the teacher-dependency syndrome that has until now characterized the schooling sector is replaced by self-dependency at tertiary level. The proposal by the MEC has come at the right time if, indeed, it is not overdue. We, therefore, need to teach our learners self-education skills in preparation of their future learning endeavours as life-long learners, as well as to ensure a productive citizenry.

This, however, does not suggest that the role of educators is not important. Teaching self-regulated learning skills should form an integral part of a teacher's responsibilities, regardless of the type of his or her learning field. Self-education skills need to be instilled and cultivated in our learners throughout their school careers. Teachers 'need to promote systematic and goal-directed help over a longer period of time'.

A self-regulated learning survey

In preparation of this article, an informal snap survey was conducted involving three local universities, namely the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Pretoria, and one university of technology, the Tshwane University of Technology. All these universities showed a willingness to participate in a project designed to find appropriate ways of entrenching a culture of self-regulated learning in our schools. They also confirmed that for many students making a smooth and successful transition from teacher dependency to self-dependency was a challenge. The testimonies of some first-year students at university reinforce the idea that this is a real and practical challenge for them. 'All professors do is read out from chapters and finish bulk amounts of work in one go. It does not matter to them whether we understand concepts or not.'

Those of us with a university education will confirm these findings, when remembering our own experiences as undergraduates. When I related to Ms Elanie de la Rey from the Academic Development Support Unit at the Tshwane University of Technology how I was dazed with shock and disbelief when my English lecturer finished a whole novel of more than 100 pages in just one lecture period of 45 minutes, she laughed in affirmation.

'Don't tell me about it,' was her short response, confirming that she had once experienced a similar shock.

Another student laments that students struggle to keep pace with the speed at which lectures are delivered: 'Professors zip in and out of classrooms with floppy disks and pen drives. They project notes on screens hoping students can read as fast as they change slides. They are busy changing slides; whether we can process information that fast is secondary.' This is the kind of reality that awaits our matriculants as they embark on further learning at tertiary institutions. The key question to ask is: do we actually prepare them adequately to deal with the challenges of university education?

Teach learners how to fish

Mohammed, an international student in America, wrote an article focusing on the subject of self-regulated learning with a very appropriate title: 'Don't give me a fish: teach me *how* to fish'. The need to balance these two complementary requirements in lesson presentation is of crucial importance. The second element, teaching learners how to fish, is vitally important and speaks directly to the MEC's proposal to teach learners self-education skills on an on-going basis. This has long-term implications for post-matric studies and the need to satisfy the requirements for life-long learning and a productive citizenry that underpin the knowledge-based economy. We, therefore, need to heed the MEC's call to upscale self-education in our school programme. This can be done by ensuring, among other things, that didactic material and textbooks are developed in such a manner as to promote independent work and self-education skills, teachers work out pedagogical recommendations to support independent or team work and teachers use extra-curricular lessons to help learners acquire general methods and techniques of self-education and self-improvement.

Conclusion

Without the support of educators in the area of self-education skills, learners leave school ill-prepared to face the challenges of post-matric education and life in general. Although this sounds noble and desirable, one needs to ask whether it is implementable and if so, how? ■



Towards an *Integrated Judicial System*

Advocate George Bizos SC reflects on the transformation and integration of the judicial system since the first democratically elected government in South Africa.



Advocate George Bizos SC

I am informed that one of the objectives of the Judicial Officers Association of South Africa (JOASA) is the establishment of a single or an all-embracing judicial system, an idea mooted by the late Dullah Omar, the first Minister of Justice in the first democratically elected government in 1994.

Looking at the history and current status of the judicial system in South Africa, the following is worth mentioning on this issue.

The distinction between magistrates and judges is a legacy primarily derived from England and exported to its colonies. As such, differentiation between a judge and a landdroos was practice in the independent republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Magistrates had restricted judicial jurisdiction and numerous administrative functions. There were also native commissioners who exercised powers similar to those of magistrates, but only in respect of the natives of the land, later referred to as 'Bantu'. In addition, judges were almost invariably appointed from the senior ranks of the advocate profession before 1994.

Today, Section 174 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides that 'any appropriately qualified woman or

man who is a fit and proper person may be appointed as a judicial officer'. In addition, section 174 (2) provides that 'the need for the judiciary to reflect broadly the racial and gender composition of South Africa must be considered when judicial officers are appointed'.

... the need for the judiciary to reflect broadly the racial and gender composition of South Africa must be considered when judicial officers are appointed ...

Sections 165 and 166 provide for the different categories of courts either in existence or that may be established or recognized in terms of an Act of Parliament, and include the *proviso* for some courts to be presided over by judges and others by magistrates. Section 165 (2) provides that 'the courts are independent and subject only to the Constitution and the law, which they must apply impartially and without fear, favour or prejudice'.

The Judicial Service Commission (JSC) was established in terms of section 178 of the Constitution. Its primary function is to appoint suitably qualified persons as judges to the superior courts. Such appointments are to be made in terms of other statutory provisions. The JSC maintains that the words 'appropriately qualified person' include

attorneys, academic lawyers and magistrates who may, as such, be appointed as judges to the various courts. Appointments as judges are, therefore, not to be confined to senior members of the Bar.

Looking further afield, there are undivided judicial systems in a number of European and other countries that work well. However, to emulate them, fundamental changes have to come about in South Africa relating to the teaching of law at university. In Europe and elsewhere you may choose, even at an undergraduate level and certainly during your post-graduate studies, whether you want to be a practicing lawyer, a lawyer employed by government departments, whether you want to work in the private sector or whether you want to follow the judicial route. If you choose the judicial route you may, firstly, be appointed as a clerk of the court and then promoted to junior judge in which capacity you can sit alone in uncomplicated cases. That may be followed by gradual promotion to handle more complicated cases either alone or as part of the quorum required for different types of cases. This route could be regarded as in-house service training to become a judge right from the beginning of your career, with promotion to the highest court of the land as the culminating point.

However, noting the snail pace at which judicial reform has come about in South Africa, it is unlikely that the distinction between judges and magistrates will come to an end in the near future.

In his book, *Anatomy of Britain in the late 1950s*, Anthony Sampson wrote that correspondence between the Inns of the Court and the Law Chancellor's office relating to the amendment of certain rules of court continued over a period of more than fifty years. He drew the attention to the innate conservatism of the legal profession as a whole. When the doyen of the Johannesburg bar, Harold Handson, heard this he said the delay was not proof of the conservative nature of the profession but merely that the rules did not require amendment!

I, on the other hand, wish to maintain that fundamental changes to the Constitution and the various acts dealing with the administration of justice, the curricula of the law faculties at universities and the habits of the various branches of the profession are necessary.

However, the difficulties involved in bringing about such fundamental changes in the near future are captured in the 97-page printed judgment of Chaskalson CJ with which nine other judges concurred. In the case of *VAN ROOYEN AND OTHER v THE STATE AND OTHER (GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE BAR OF SOUTH AFRICA)* SA 246, Chaskalson CJ, after referring to a number of sections of the Constitution in paragraphs 16 and 17 of the judgment, states that:

The Constitution thus not only recognizes that courts are independent and impartial, but also provides important institutional protection for courts. The provision of section 165, forming part of the Constitution that is the supreme law, applies to all courts and judicial officers, including magistrate's courts and magistrates. These provisions bind the judiciary and the Government and are enforceable by the Superior Courts, including this court. It is within this context that the issues raised in the present matter must be decided.

In conclusion, Chaskalson CJ says in paragraph 262 on page 332 and paragraph 332 on page 333:

I agree that there is no basis for granting Van Rooyen and Tshabalala the relief that they seek. It is clearly in the interests of justice that magistrate's courts and the regional courts should continue to function. There is no reason to believe that the magistrates presiding in those courts will not administer justice, as they have done in the past,

independently and in accordance with the law. Their oath of office and the Constitution, by which they are bound, require no less.

If there is any attempt to interfere improperly with the way a magistrate hearing a particular case conducts or decides the case, an accused person affected adversely has a remedy that can be exercised in that case; there is, however, no reason to believe that there will be any occasion for this to be done.

During my 56 years of practice, I have appeared before good and bad judges and good and bad magistrates. During apartheid, the conditions of employment of magistrates made it much more difficult for them to assert their independence. One of them made public a confidential directive by the Secretary for Justice that magistrates ought not to criticize police witnesses. He paid the price. He was confined to presiding at insolvency inquiries for the rest of his professional career. There were others who knew that their appointment to handle political cases was a directive from the security police. There were those who failed to exonerate tortures and murders at inquests. That there were judges who were classified 'securocrats' has been well documented. But there were some magistrates and judges who refused to submit to the will of the government. They interpreted apartheid legislation restrictively. They relied on the fairness of common law. The courage of many of them is to be found in text books, in law reports, legal journals and the archives of newspaper cuttings. The little room left to those involved in the administration of justice was exploited to avoid the oligarchic regime from completely destroying the rule of law.

To a large extent, judicial independence depends on the traditions of our magistrates and judges; the competence of the legal professions; and loyalty by all of us to the Constitution,

which should serve as protection against uninformed and unfair criticism from whatever source.

Our Constitution, our Bill of Rights, our Common Law and our legislation make it easier for judicial officers to apply the law and do justice at the same time, something that was difficult to do during the apartheid years as indicated by Didcott J in the Dube case 1979(3)SA 820(N) AT 821F.

Our judicial officers do not live in a vacuum. Their ethnic origins, their cultural background, the colour of their skin, their life experiences, their education and their philosophical tendencies are all different. Yet, the independence of the judiciary depends on it being accepted by all the people of South Africa.

Litigants want to look up to the bench and see men and women who appear to understand where the men and women before them come from and what their problems are.

If there are inequalities between magistrates and judges, let us try to rectify the situation. Equality is a fundamental right of all of us, but it cannot be achieved all that readily.

Our judiciary has been transformed to a substantial degree in all our courts. The appointment of the Chief Justice as head of all courts is a good omen, as are other improvements that have been achieved since 1994. But more has to be done. Let all of us cooperate to defend our constitutional democracy. Let all of us involved in the administration of justice work together to enhance the reputation of the judiciary and the rule of law.

**This article is based on a presentation to JOASA in August 2010. ■*

6 ... noting the snail pace at which judicial reform has come about in South Africa, it is unlikely that the distinction between judges and magistrates will come to an end in the near future ...

From *Retribution* to *Restoration*

Judge Richard Goldstone takes a personal look at the work of what is South Africa's oldest Non-Governmental Organization in the area of restorative justice.



Judge Richard Goldstone

NICRO was founded 100 years ago. I do not know any other non-governmental organization (NGO) that has existed for a century, and not only existed, but has gone from strength to strength. How is this distinction to be explained? I have no doubt that the answer can be found to the abiding relevance of the philosophy and mission of NICRO.

In 1910, that philosophy was novel and not too popular. In those days, it was believed that the appropriate fate of all criminals was their incarceration. What was even more novel in 1910, was that NICRO set its face against racism. The founder of the organization, De Villiers Roos, said in the year of NICRO's founding: 'Involving oneself in crime prevention and rehabilitation was a great and glorious work, not limited by limitations of race or creed.'

That early policy is obviously a crucial factor in explaining the endurance of NICRO and its continuing relevance and success today. I am not suggesting that there were no problems of a racial nature during the pre-democracy era. In those days, the attitudes of the majority of white South Africans reflected racist tendencies that I need not spell out in this article.

When I was national chairman in 1980, there was a paternalistic attitude with regard to the establishment of an independent branch in Soweto – it was [at the time] under the control of the Johannesburg branch. It was not difficult for Isaac Maletseto to convince me that it

was high time for Soweto to be independent. I remember clearly driving near the Regina Mundi Church when Isaac pointed to an open field and said that is where he wanted to build NICRO offices. I must confess to having been skeptical, but kept that to myself. Within very

few years the Soweto branch was full-fledged and the multi-use Soweto building a jewel in the NICRO crown. Those Soweto offices were built by the people of Soweto and were regarded as their property. When, in the 1980s, government buildings were being attacked, the 'comrades' protected the NICRO building and those who worked for it, black and white.

From the earliest apartheid days, NICRO faced difficult challenges. An organization that was non-racial and that sought entry into prisons was regarded with suspicion, especially by government officials such as the police and prison authorities. It was primarily for this reason that the leaders of NICRO decided that it would be a good idea to have judges serve as nation chairmen and national presidents. It would make it more difficult for authorities to block its activities.

Some of those involved in those positions included judges Vieira, Jan Steyn, Wessels, Trengrove and Kumleben. I was privileged to become one of them. To its great credit, NICRO succeeded in maintaining its policies and principles during the worst of the apartheid years.

... When, in the 1980s, government buildings were being attacked, the comrades protected the NICRO building and those who worked for it, black and white ...



This acceptance was well-illustrated by the role NICRO played during the states of emergency in the late 1980s. I was then visiting the thousands of young people, almost all black, who were being held without trial in and at South African prisons and police stations. The police authorities did not make it easy for parents of detainees to visit their family members. One of the problems in some areas arose from the police requirement that all visitors had to have a permit issued at the local police station. In the violent and volatile atmosphere of those days, many parents feared being seen anywhere near a police station, let alone entering one. They feared being regarded as police informers by the 'comrades'. Yet, those visits were of great importance to those in detention and family contact crucial for their peace of mind.

The problem was solved by NICRO social workers meeting family members in local church halls and acting as couriers between them and the police stations. This process facilitated many hundreds of visits. That could not have happened if NICRO were not trusted by the communities in which it operated, on the one hand, and by the government authorities on the other. There were many other important interventions by NICRO during those terrible days.

It is a happy fact that since 1994, NICRO no longer needs the protection of the judiciary. It is now protected, together with all South Africans, by the Constitution. However, I do hope that judges will remain closely involved with the organization for their own benefit and that of the wider community in which they live and work.

It is attributable to the leadership of NICRO that, over the years, it remained at the forefront of South Africa's search for solutions to the problems in our society and its poor image, which are the consequence of high levels of crime and especially violent crime. NICRO introduced many innovative solutions to these problems. For example, concerning less serious and non-violent crime it played a key role in convincing the authorities of the benefits of restorative rather than punitive justice.

In this respect, NICRO anticipated a trend that has become widely accepted around the world. Victims of crime were as a matter of course left out of the legal process. When they were considered, it was only in the consideration of aggravating circumstances at sentencing stage. Today, greater recognition is given to restoring those who have been injured. It recognizes, too, that those most directly injured by crime should be given the opportunity to participate in the process.

It has been interesting to note the rapid recognition of victim participation in international criminal justice systems. When I became the first Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations (UN) International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia and later also Rwanda, victims were certainly recognized as being the intended beneficiaries of the new international system of justice.

However, there was no thought of them participating in the investigation or trial processes. One result was a lack of direct contact with the victims who lived many hundreds of miles from where the prosecutors and judges did their work. The criminal tribunals existed remote from the people who had suffered horrible crimes.

Lessons were learned and the UN tribunals began to build outreach programmes. Then, in 1998, the diplomatic conference in Rome was set up to consider a statute for a new International Criminal Court. Hundreds of NGOs participated in the negotiations that were attended by some 160 national delegations. The NGOs played a crucial role in many areas, none more important than the definition of gender crimes and the participation of victims. The result is that, for the first time in the history of humanitarian law, gender crimes are appropriately and widely defined and the rights of

victims fully recognized in the Rome Statute. Thus, victims are allowed separate representation, not only at trial stage, but also during investigations by the Office of the Prosecutor. In some cases, large numbers of victims have been granted leave to be represented.

This participation by victims is not without its own problems, the most important being the effect it is calculated to have on the fair-trial rights of an accused. It is difficult enough for the legal representatives of an accused to measure up to a very well-resourced Office of the Prosecutor. Now, the defence team of an accused also has to cope with the additional demands and challenges posed by the presence of representatives of victims. However, it remains recognized practice that an accused must be given sufficient resources to ensure a fair trial.

In a system of restorative justice, offenders are encouraged to acknowledge and assume responsibility for their actions. It requires that victims be given the opportunity of expressing themselves on the manner in which they were affected by a crime and the manner in which the offender/s should be held responsible for the consequences. On the other side, offenders are given the opportunity of explaining the crime and their involvement in it and have a say in what steps they can take to make amends to the victim. This might take the form of monetary compensation, community service, or a genuine expression of remorse. On this note, one has to acknowledge though that no system of justice is perfect and oftentimes it will yield unhappiness or worse. One cannot generalize and what might bring satisfaction to some victims will anger others; what will help to rehabilitate some offenders will have no beneficial effect at all on others.

Perhaps the most ambitious attempt at restorative justice on a grand scale was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). In the case of victims, the accent fell on acknowledgement and in cases where amnesty was requested, offenders were required to make full confessions. While not conventional justice, the TRC did have a healing and calming effect on our society in those important post-apartheid days. Today, few in our country can deny the terrible crimes and immoral acts committed during those dark days.

Restorative justice is also aimed at keeping less serious offenders out of prison. One generalization that can be made with safety is that prison is the worst environment where rehabilitation can hope to take place. First offenders who are incarcerated with hardened criminals are more often than not condemned to a life of crime and it makes sense from many perspectives to ensure that such offenders are kept out of prison and allowed the opportunity of making amends, both to the victim, if that is possible, and society.

It is in this area that organizations such as NICRO provide crucial services that include a diversion programme aimed at keeping young offenders away from the criminal justice system by offering them skills training in pro-social behaviour in order to prevent re-offending, integration programmes aimed at the successful reintegration of offenders into society in order to prevent recidivism and non-custodial sentencing for offenders who have committed less serious crimes.

I need hardly stress that successful restorative justice procedures require expert and well-trained facilitators and programmes such as those offered by NICRO have systems and expertise that enable assessment of their benefits to both victims and society in general.

I am sure that many problems still have to be sorted out in all countries that are embracing restorative justice as an alternative to penal justice. Yet, the philosophy at the heart of this approach has ensured NICRO's existence for 100 years and may still be the key to solving many ills in societies the world over. ■

'Til Lions speak, Hunting Tales are weak

Phille Ntuli of the Department of Public Service and Administration reflects on how the African Peer Review Mechanism offers South Africa and the continent an opportunity to tell their stories.

It is true beauty to live in South Africa in these times. Not only is our democracy one of the most vibrant in the world, but in its teenage years it is demonstrating a maturity way beyond its age.

Despite our many challenges, South Africa has a lot to celebrate. And it is in learning to celebrate ourselves that we are able to accustom our minds to success, and thus be driven and motivated to produce even more results worthy of celebration.

Our African customs and beliefs have laid, in the foundations of our hearts, the knowledge that our success as a people is interrelated to and dependent on the success of those around us. My well-being is meaningless without your well-being because together, we are able to do more!

These customary ideologies are best evidenced in the laws and policies that the country makes. While the policies of our infant democracy sought to repair the social, political and economical imbalances of an unjust government, current policies and actions seek to ensure that all citizens, regardless of background, have fair and opportune means to acceptable livelihoods.

Globalization, however, makes it increasingly hard to maintain these beliefs, because each day we are influenced by more and more ideas on how to accumulate personal gains. The unique and humble foundations of the hearts of the people in this country and on this continent are subjected to a great culture shock on being exposed to such individualistic ideologies.

To maintain the traditional spirit of *ubuntu*, African countries initiated and voluntarily bound themselves to a process of peer review, which sees each state 'revealing' its strengths and weaknesses through annual progress reporting that allows other member states to review its efforts, thus enabling the sharing of best practices on the continent. Our history is filled with peer-review stories of men sitting around fires, retelling hunting and war stories in an attempt to share best practices, or of women sharing domestic trials and triumphs on their way to and from riversides.

South Africa acceded to the modern-day, governance-centred peer-review process known as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in March 2003. In so doing, the country voluntarily consented to a review by peers on the African continent in the areas of democracy and political governance; economic governance and management; corporate governance; and socio-economic development.

The APRM not only impresses upon African

leaders the importance of serving the well-being of their people, but also challenges other stakeholders such as business, civil society and citizens to act responsibly.

South Africa commenced the process in 2005 with a self-assessment report that was consulted on and developed with the aid of civil society stakeholders including women, youth, faith-based organizations, labour, non-governmental organizations and business. The self-assessment report was finalized and submitted to the Panel of Eminent Persons, a structure responsible for the overall management of the process, in 2006.

Phille Ntuli



Subsequently, South Africa was peer reviewed in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007. The *Country Review Report* noted the country's good progress and the development of good governance practices to democratize the country and reverse the apartheid legacy of underdevelopment and inequality. It also noted challenges that still persist, including poverty, service delivery and unemployment.

In January 2009, South Africa submitted its first implementation report on the Programme of Action that covers the period November 2007 to December 2008. This report focuses on issues identified in the *Country Review Report*, as well as other relevant developments reflecting South Africa's activities in the various thematic areas.

South Africa's second report was submitted at the Summit of Heads of State in January 2011. The second report covers the period January 2009 to October 2010 and includes cross-cutting issues such as service delivery; land reform; xenophobia; HIV and Aids; corruption; inequality and poverty; violence against women and children; racism; diversity; affirmative action; and migration patterns and management.

The APRM process is one of the best tools to bring governments, civil society, business and citizens together through self-monitoring, evaluation, review and assessment. Although institutionally independent, these entities are driven by the same goal, namely to enhance the quality of life in their countries and on the continent. The APRM forms a good platform for the integration and review of this goal. At a local level, the

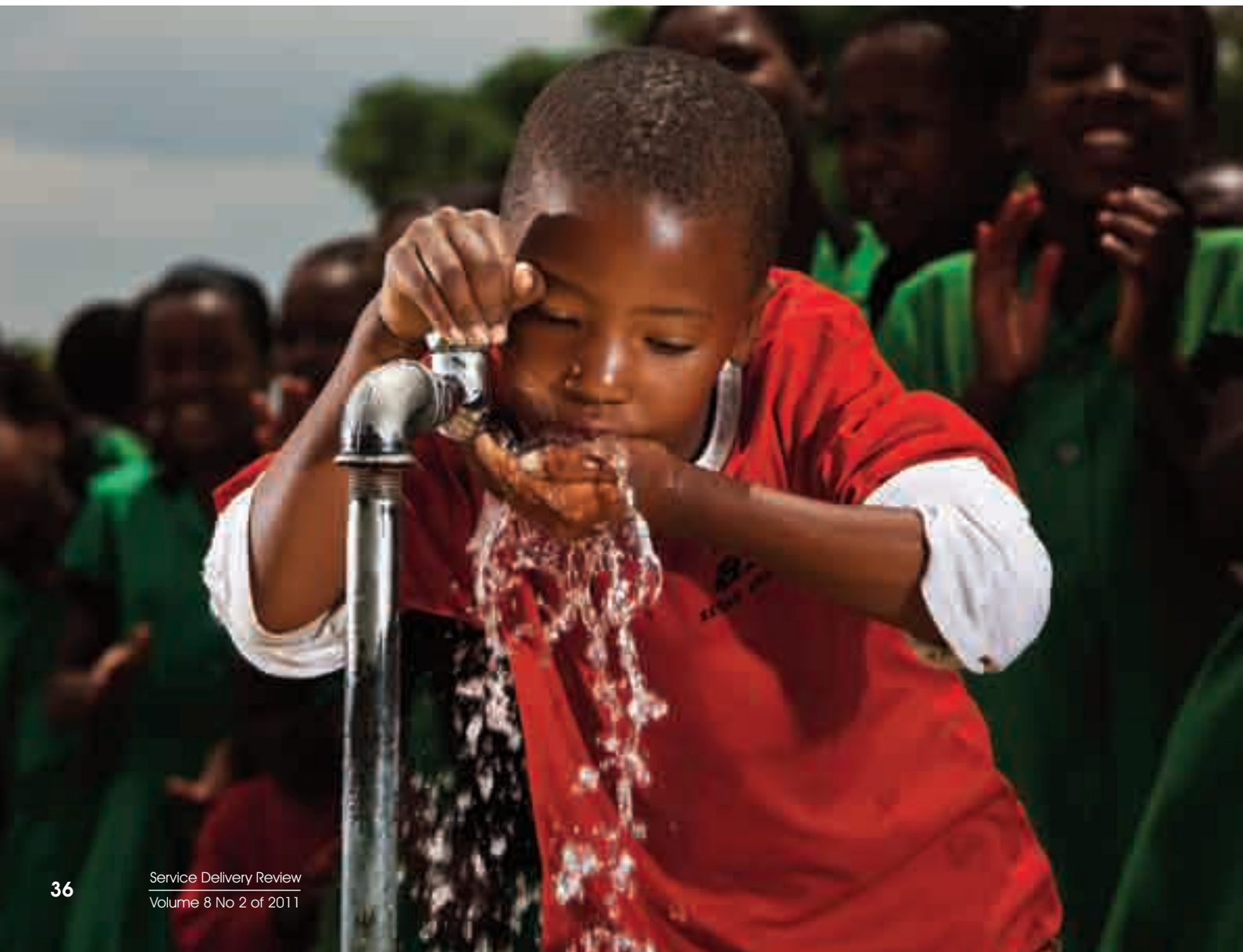
process provides a platform for active community participation in the supervision and monitoring of service delivery.

The APRM also ensures that those entrusted with state resources are accountable to citizens. This contributes to the fight against corruption, which is a huge plague and hindrance to the advancement of the African continent. The formation of an anti-corruption unit within the Department of Public Service and Administration will also form part of the process of self-development and growth, not just for South Africa, but for the continent as a whole through the process of peer-learning and assessment introduced by way of the APRM.

Self-learning and peer review can and will allow us as African people to learn more about one another, to grow through the process of review and to write a future for generations to come that centres around the principles that together we can do more and that learning from one another allows us to determine bright futures and proud histories.

There is an old African proverb that calls for lions to have their own historians if they want the story of the hunt to be told, not from the perspective of the hunter, but from their own perspectives. The APRM is a tool for history making and history writing, and through it, we can add another success to the untold stories of Africa's continued efforts to make the continent a better place to live in.

With that said, let the lion tell the story of the hunt. ■



Promising Signs in Municipal Audits

Last year, South Africa's Auditor-General, Terence Nombembe, publicly outlined the successes and challenges of the Office of the Auditor-General in its efforts to ensure a high-level relationship with all South African municipalities and assist them in achieving clean audits by 2014 in accordance with Government's target. Based on internal documentation, the Auditor-General expands on this ambitious objective.



Terence Nombembe

A critical success factor in more and more municipalities and provinces achieving clean audits as indicated by the 2008/09 audit outcomes was definitely the fact that not only municipal managers participated in the audit process. Their participation was significantly aided by the high-level participation and support of the political leadership, with premiers, mayors, MECs and councillors pledging their commitment. That escalated the level of commitment from individual municipalities to entire provinces.

Although the improvements shown by the results of the 2008/9 audit can be regarded as marginal, they are nevertheless indicative of a step in the right direction when compared with the outcomes of the 2004/5 audit. They, once again, underscored the need for all spheres of government to intensify their efforts for the 2014 target to be achieved and further highlighted areas that need our focused attention.

For example, in municipalities that displayed marked progress there were clear correlations between political buy-in and success. In instances where political leadership had shown keen interest, got involved in the key operations of their municipalities and implemented and monitored remedial action plans, results were encouragingly positive. This observation was further corroborated by first-hand feedback following successful, countrywide road-shows during which we shared the 2008/09 audit outcomes with premiers, MECs, mayors, councillors and municipal managers. The level of commitment from the leadership to improve future audit outcomes by ensuring improved internal controls was overwhelming.

Tracking system

The nationwide road-shows also served as rare platforms for dialogue between the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) and municipalities, resulting in frank deliberations and explorations of ways of enhancing efforts to improve the working processes between the OAG and municipalities.

Possible solutions included such measures as the further development of a tracking system that could alert mayors and their administrations on matters of leadership, governance and financial management that could greatly contribute towards securing

favourable audit results on the part of municipalities. It is hoped that the strengthened tracking system would flag areas of concern in time, which could then be discussed routinely with the municipal leadership throughout the year before the finalization of audits. Such a systematic and supportive working relationship would go a long way towards enabling municipalities to develop remedial action plans that would steer them towards clean audits in a timely manner.

We will, as part of the tracking system, guide mayors on what kind of information they should obtain from their officials to improve oversight; what kind of financial disciplines should be in place daily, weekly or monthly; confirm whether daily (municipal) transactions are in line with what has been promised to communities for service delivery; and provide information to mayors on how to confirm that transactions have been approved in accordance with legal and proper governance frameworks.

The essence and objective of the tracking system lie in the strengthening of key internal controls and ensuring that these are operating effectively. Throughout such a collaborative process, auditing teams from my office will provide insight into the effectiveness of the ongoing support initiatives during a financial year with the aim of ensuring that the eventual audit outcome does not come as a surprise to those charged with governance and oversight.

As part of the drive towards clean municipal audits, the OAG team has already started visiting and meeting both legislative and executive municipal leaders. The aim is to visit all of South Africa's 283 municipalities before the end of 2011. We have embarked on this initiative with the knowledge and full confidence that all municipalities are capable of achieving clean audits. The challenges facing local government are not insurmountable and having experienced the enthusiasm and commitment of those local government leaders we have already met, we are convinced that the drive towards clean audits is gaining momentum.

What the recent audit outcomes tell us

The 2008/9 audit covered South Africa's 283 municipalities, with particular focus on six metros; 44 high-capacity municipalities; 105

‘... a systematic and supportive working relationship would go a long way towards enabling municipalities to develop remedial action plans that would steer them towards clean audits in a timely manner ...’

medium-capacity municipalities and 128 low-capacity municipalities. 247 (87 per cent) of these were subjected to analysis. Of the 56 municipal entities, 48 (86 per cent) were included in the analysis of the OAG.

The audits of 36 (13 per cent) municipalities and eight (14 per cent) entities were outstanding at 8 March 2010 due to financial statements not having been submitted, submitted after the legislated deadline, or as a result of the internal quality assurance and monitoring processes of the OAG.

Financially unqualified (with other matters) audit outcomes improved by 15 per cent from 131 in 2007–08 to 151 in the 2008–09 financial year. The most notable improvements were in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. This indicates that improved audit results are achievable, especially where leadership honoured the commitments made during the 2007–08 road-shows and because of OGA leadership during door-to-door municipal visits.

Of the audits completed by 8 March 2010, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and the Northern Cape were the only provinces that registered a net gain in the number of improved municipal audit results over the previous year.

Notwithstanding the 15 per cent increase over the previous year in the number of financially unqualified (with or without other matters) audits, the level of disclaimers of opinion and adverse audit opinions within local government is still high – currently 32 per cent of completed audits. Provinces with the largest number of worst-case municipal audit opinions (disclaimed and adverse) were the Northern Cape (19), Free State (18) and Eastern Cape (17).

Clean audit opinions accounted for only 2 per cent of the completed audits. These are audits where no findings were raised on, *inter alia*, compliance with laws and regulations or incorrect disclosure in financial statements of irregular, unauthorized or fruitless and wasteful expenditure. Gauteng and the Northern Cape received two clean audit opinions each, while the Eastern and Western Cape received one each.

The OAG cites, among other things, lack of basic controls such as document management, lack of management supervision of finance units, lack of discipline in preparing monthly financial statements with disclosure notes, lack of technical skills within finance departments and audit committees not taking responsibility for reviewing the financial statements submitted for audit as some of the areas that need special attention.

Generally, as previously noted, improvements observed were the result of the administrative and political leadership's interest in

accounting and audit matters; monthly monitoring and supervision of finance functions; and the implementation of action plans to address the previous year's audit issues. KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng are good examples of this.

Auditing performance against objectives

Since 2005–06, the OAG, in partnership with National Treasury, has gradually been phasing in and explaining the essence of auditing performance information, namely the audit of reported performance against predetermined objectives. In the near future, the OAG will issue an audit opinion on the performance information published by municipalities. The OAG's analysis of current trends emerging from audits has highlighted the following:

- On average, 92 per cent of the municipalities and municipal entities did not comply fully with regulatory requirements;
- in the case of approximately 37 per cent, the performance information reported was not meaningful or useful;
- in the case of approximately 34 per cent, the reported performance information was not supported by reliable evidence; and
- in the case of approximately 35 per cent, performance information was not received in time for audit purposes.

Linking money to service delivery

The importance of municipalities reporting meaningfully and accurately on service delivery cannot be over-emphasized. The weaknesses identified concerning reported information against predetermined objectives indicate that the information presented in annual reports is not sufficiently reliable. The presentation of reliable information on service delivery is absolutely critical, especially for municipalities, which are the closest sphere of government to communities. It is also important that those charged with governance and oversight should note the link that exists between reporting on financial matters and reporting on service delivery.

While there has been a noticeable, overall movement towards positive results over the past five years, it is clear that we need to increase the momentum and work even harder to achieve and maintain clean audits by 2014 and beyond. From the audit side, we are committed to making our contribution towards ensuring that this happens. However, ultimately the municipal and provincial leadership has to act on the insights that have been provided and it too, needs to see through the commitments that have been given. ■



To be or not to be: The Viability of an SADC Public Administration Sector revisited

Dr Mataywa Busieka, Department of Public Service and Administration, ponders the question whether Africa can rise and walk the talk on the potentially dividing issue of establishing a partnership through an SADC Public Administration Sector to assist in guiding Africa's development.

Overview of the subject matter

With overall growth on the continent averaging 5 per cent, democratic governance becoming more firmly rooted and African leaders progressively appreciating the need for positioning their countries to benefit from, rather than be victims of globalization, Africa could indeed be regarded as facing the dawn of her renaissance. There is, however, growing consensus and even restlessness about the fact that that this growth is not reflected in either improved service delivery or poverty reduction. Furthermore, considering current trends, it is unlikely that most of Africa will be able to attain the much hyped Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Several leaders, including President Jacob Zuma, expressed reservations about the latter at the 3rd European Union–African Summit held in Tripoli, Libya on 29 and 30 November 2010.

African leaders, subsequently, accepted responsibility for guiding Africa's development. They echo the paramount importance of establishing a vibrant global partnership and relationship to drive Africa's sustainable development. Therefore, recognizing the centrality of governance and public administration in achieving the African Union (AU) developmental goals, the AU Summit in Kampala, Uganda (July 2010), welcomed the efforts deployed by the Conference of African Ministers of Public Service to promote and implement the AU's vision for public service on the continent. This endeavour is referred to as the Ministers' Programme further on in this article.

As the plans to establish an SADC Public Administration Sector gather momentum, it is apt to reflect on the viability and sustainability of the uniquely regional, integrative Ministers' Programme. Whereas anecdotal evidence suggests unequivocally that SADC member states are amenable to the idea and that there is clear buy-in and an intention to own the process of establishing an SADC Public Administration Sector, questions still linger on whether, in reality, there is compelling evidence that this regional



Dr Mataywa Busieka

outfit will find fertile ground to sprout green shoots.

When all is said and done, however, the usefulness of an overarching regional programme on governance and public administration that is premised on consensus and a common understanding that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts cannot be denied. Reciprocity between the benefits to the collective and those to the individual unquestionably constitutes added value and this commentary favours the existence of a central public administration sector in the integration architecture of the SADC region.

The genesis of the SADC public administration initiative

The Abuja Treaty provides the basis for regional integration and identifies Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as critical stakeholders in economic integration. It is clear that RECs, and, therefore, the SADC, have a pivotal responsibility in mobilizing and overseeing the translation of the AU objectives,

goals and strategies into practical, implementable programmes, projects and activities at subregional and member-state levels. These institutions are the main building blocks of the desired Economic Community of Africa and the vision of a United States of Africa, which has, of late, become a very exciting point of discussion, will remain a pipe dream if capacity needs within RECs in particular and the AU in general are not addressed first.

Hence, to give credence and further impetus to integration processes taking root across Africa, the Ministers' Programme established a continental programme on capacity development for public service effectiveness within the overall structure of the AU and its NEPAD programme. The programme focuses on strengthening the effective public service delivery capacity of African states. A key outcome of a ministerial conference held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in December 2005, was the definition of a complex implementation agenda and roadmap for the Ministers' Programme.

The conference also resulted in the key mandate to member states to support efforts that seek to mainstream the Ministers' Programme into the policy organs of RECs.

The expectation is that the overarching continental mandate, as articulated in the Ministers' Programme, has the possibility of finding genuine expression in and alignment with the concerns and institutional realities of particular regions through the active participation of RECs, which can then cascade to a national context.

The place of public service in the current SADC institutional set-up

Two efforts aimed at strengthening public sector capability stand out in the current SADC institutional set-up.

The first emerged from the SADC Secretariat and was subsequently located in the Human Resources Development Unit of the Secretariat. Yet, despite the existence of the Unit, there seems to be no specific reference to strengthening the public or civil service as an integral element of ensuring that public institutions and their respective regional official cadres have the requisite capabilities to manage the harmonization and integration of processes in regions. As a result, it is difficult to determine the location and depth of this particular area of work within the scope of the SADC institutional construct.

However, notwithstanding the seemingly limited institutional drive, there have been some successes in moving forward some critical regional thematic areas that are central to public service modernization and good governance. This was largely achieved through the SADC political process. Of note is the development and adoption of the SADC Protocol against Corruption, which SADC Heads of State adopted in August 2001. Ratification of this Protocol has been accomplished and it is now in force.

The second effort was the establishment of the Centre of Specialization and Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) through a mandate of the SADC Executive Council. Established in June 2000, CESPAM was designed to serve as the 'SADC centre of learning, training and research in public sector administration and management'. It was conceived as part of a long-term strategy to meet the demand for higher education and training for senior/middle managers and other officials from the SADC region, primarily in the public sector but also in the private sector. Although CESPAM was able to sustain its activities through external funding and contributed to the development of civil service capability in the region, it was never enabled to make a direct contribution towards institutionalizing activities within the public sector and on the governance agenda of the Secretariat, particularly in terms of the political directive as articulated by the SADC Executive Council.

Until 2001, the SADC Secretariat had, perhaps correctly, avoided an overly centralized approach towards the institution's integration agenda. The SADC mandate was operationalized through a sector-based approach in which member states were delegated tasks of co-ordinating regional developments in specific sectors. However, over time, and with the process of integration deepening, this model created difficulties. Some of the challenges included a weak Secretariat with limited powers, authority and the resources required to facilitate regional integration. The performance of Sector Co-

ordinating Units (SCUs) across member countries was uneven and, in short, the SADC Programme of Action lacked regional focus as most of its projects became nationally focused.

In March 2001, the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government took a decision to restructure the SADC institutions to 'make them more effective in delivering the regional programme'. This was significant, since it led to the abolishment of the 21 SCUs and commissions that had been created and were located in member states. This, together with the establishment of four clusters or directorates housed at the Secretariat, was a significant move towards the re-organization of the Secretariat and the approach towards regional efforts. The four clusters are: Trade, Industry Finance and Investment (TFII); Infrastructure and Services; Food Agriculture and National Resources; Social and Human Development; and Special Programmes. Because these are fundamentally capable public institutions and public servants that must drive their implementation at national level, it can be expected that governance and public administration content cuts across these sectors. However, as things stand, it remains unclear from where within the SADC's institutional construct this particular imperative is driven. Therein resides the opportunity for the SADC Public Administration Sector of filling a huge void.

6 ... Efforts to establish an SADC Public Administration Sector are aimed at mobilizing the resources of member states to build capacity for the SADC to deliver effectively on continental obligations ...

The rationale for the SADC Public Administration Sector

SADC member states are responsible for implementing AU mandates. This statement alone suffices to justify the establishment of an SADC Public Administration Sector. Member states take decisions at a continental level and must take steps to implement such decisions at regional level. Locating the continental governance and public administration programme at regional level is, therefore, critical to accelerating the implementation of the continental agenda to transform and modernize the African public service.

The SADC is without a doubt one of the key RECs representing the Southern African region. SADC member states have an obligation to mainstream the Continental Governance and Public Administration Programme within SADC policy organs. The only way to realize this continental imperative is to build capacity within the SADC Secretariat to enable this vital regional body to contribute to the realization of objectives set within the continental governance and public administration framework.

Efforts to establish an SADC Public Administration Sector are aimed at mobilizing the resources of member states to build capacity for the SADC to deliver effectively on continental obligations. This alignment to the continental programme will enable SADC member states to influence the continental public service transformation agenda as a block and to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the AU public-sector-related mandates at SADC level.

Added value from the established SADC Public Administration Sector

What seems to diminish the role of public service is the glaring reality that the public service and administration dimension of REC functioning has been a mere derivative of national government stakeholders rather than an articulated priority on their agendas. The

initiative of establishing an SADC Public Administration Sector should, therefore, be acknowledged as an important step towards building capacity that would enable the SADC to play its part in complementing continental processes.

Once established, the SADC Public Administration Sector would, in a very direct way, contribute significantly towards linking regional to continental processes in the unfolding African Governance Architecture. The African Governance Architecture initiative of the AU Commission is premised on the notion that the AU has established many initiatives in governance and these need a coordination framework to enhance overall impact and collaboration among AU organs. Apart from RECs, other organs that could, potentially, play a coordinating role, include institutions with a formal mandate in governance, democracy and human rights. Concerning governance and public administration, a key, anticipated element of the architecture is dialogue and discussion on continental and regionally established implementation mandates.

Once the SADC Public Administration Sector had been established, the expectation is that it would coordinate and facilitate continental mandates like the African Public Service Charter and Africa Public Service Day; facilitate peer learning and experience exchanges through the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM); and energize the fight against corruption within the SADC anti-corruption framework. Other implementation disciplines centre on sharing and exchanging information within the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) and performing a facilitative function in the implementation of the Ministerial Long-term Strategy on Continental Governance and Public Administration. In this way, the SADC Public Administration Sector would supply the veritable machinery that would fill the gap that exists in the continental programme implementation chain at regional level. It is anticipated that a platform for dialogue would be at the centre of the SADC Public Administration Sector. Such a platform would initially serve as a framework for dialogue and broader effectiveness of the continental Ministers' Programme. As it matures, it would serve to ensure more direct links between SADC integration initiatives and the continental governance and public administration programme.

Conclusion

The central thrust of the argument advanced here is that the roadmap to an Economic Community of Africa should begin with

steps that would strengthen integration among RECs. Such integration could, eventually, fuse into a singular Economic Community of Africa. However, this level of rationalization and integration would not be achievable without first addressing public service capacity needs, both at regional and national level, because public service capacity is at the core of the ability of governments to respond to the needs of citizens.

By positioning public administration firmly at the core of regional integration processes, it would be possible to realize the long-held dream of establishing a working partnership with RECs. The SADC in particular and RECs in general, are undeniably formidable champions in programme coordination and implementation at regional level. A partnership with the SADC and RECs would, therefore, no doubt bring about the much-needed, coordinated and integrated approach to the implementation of the agenda of the continental Ministers' Programme. The AU, more than any other continental body, requires this efficacy in programme coordination and implementation to achieve the level of public service transformation that would catalyze the African developmental agenda towards the realization of poverty eradication and accelerated development.

Only time will tell whether Africa can rise and walk the talk on this potentially dividing issue.

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Fondo Sikod

50 Years of the Sub-Saharan Public Service: Stakes, Challenges and Lessons learned

It has been just over half a century since many sub-Saharan countries broke the shackles of colonialism, forging new paths to nationhood and constructing public services in line with their political sovereignty. In this article, Fondo Sikod of the Faculty of Economics and Management at the University of Yaounde II, Cameroon, concludes that the complex world of the public service of the 21st century requires a new breed of public servant that can serve as a springboard for the future.

Modern public administration is a complex business system that, in many respects, resembles business in the private sector. Public administration includes openness, transparency and user-friendly approaches, because a public service provides services by the government to the citizens, either directly or through public sector financing. To deliver the solutions that the changing times demand, governments need a generation of leaders who are innovators and whose creativity in problem solving stands up to the complexity of 21st century challenges. This is a new world, with different values and a different culture.

Challenges of public administrators today are going beyond the realm of countries, as regional integration and globalization are becoming the order of the day. This means public administration has to be dynamic to absorb such changes.

The year 2010 was particularly important for the continent of Africa. Over a quarter of African countries celebrated 50 years of independence, adding to the few that already had their celebrations. Over the next few years, more countries will join the fold. The past five decades have witnessed a lot of changes in Africa and have provided a lot of challenges to public services and public administrators.

Technology and e-government

An educated and healthy labour force is necessary for rapid economic growth. Africa is making remarkable progress in this direction. Net primary enrolment rates in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) rose from 71 to 74 per cent between 2006 and 2007, and from 91 to 96 per cent in North Africa. At the current rate, Africa could achieve 100 per cent enrolment by 2015. However, the quality of education and completion rates, especially among females, pose a problem. In addition, gross enrolment ratios in secondary and tertiary education are very low compared with those in other regions of the world and graduates are less trained in appropriate skills. Although literacy rates have improved, the challenge is for African education systems to produce graduates with the skill sets that are necessary to develop

African economies (AfDB, Economic Report for Africa, 2010). Education is of great importance, because it empowers a population to learn and adapt to new ideas and processes.

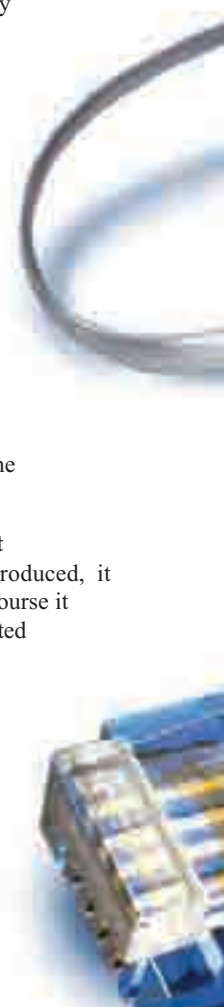
Today, information and communication technologies (ICTs) are playing an increasingly vital role in the daily lives of people, revolutionizing work and leisure and changing the rules of doing business. In the realm of government, ICT applications are promising to enhance the delivery of public goods and services to citizens, not only by improving the process and management of government, but also by redefining the traditional concepts of citizenship and democracy.

The effects of ICTs on societies are both far-reaching and uneven. On the one hand, ICT is fueling the transition from industrial-based economies to knowledge-based societies. Yet, in many countries, it still has little or no impact on the lives of people. This wide disparity in the impact of ICT around the world today underscores the uneven progress of economic development. It also highlights the critical role of government in the information age.

The knowledge gap and the struggle for development

What makes knowledge different is that, once produced, it becomes public property as long as it is published. Of course it is true that the World Trade Organization (WTO) has granted rights to producers of knowledge goods until they are declassified. Nevertheless, the amount of knowledge available is more than enough to serve as a foundation for developing nations to bridge the knowledge gap.

Because technology is forever changing, there will always be information failure. Technical knowledge is also constantly changing, making it



difficult for the gap to be closed completely. The pertinent issue, therefore, is to narrow the gap, not to close it completely. Governments have an important role to play in both generating technological knowledge and managing information failure. Culture, education and knowledge are important aspects in the generation of new technology. While there is little a government can do about the culture of its people, it can do a lot about education and the knowledge base.



The primary sector dominates SSA economies, both in terms of contribution to GDP and employment. The exports of SSA countries are mostly primary agricultural products, an indicator of limited knowledge, even in agriculture. However, as part of the global economy, SSA countries are obliged to make efforts to move forward rapidly from being agricultural economies to becoming knowledge economies, at least in certain sectors or aspects of the economy (Kwankam and Ningo, 1996). The stumbling block is the knowledge gap. Today, the colonial administrative structures that have been left intact with a colonial mentality and mindset among many administrators, have, over time, created an environment where the public as the principal consumer do not have the right to dictate or choose the quality of their goods and services. This environment is characterized by a lack of good governance, corruption, the lack of an impartial judiciary to enforce judgments; a lack of respect for human rights; and inadequate systems to provide quality and challenging education to support new technology and define local technology.

The knowledge gap between developing and developed countries has been the major concern of most policymakers and/or politicians over the last decades. An understanding of how and by what knowledge gaps are created is crucial to determine appropriate development strategies. It is important to understand that, because we live in a global economy, world economic conditions affect many aspects of public management and economic performance.

Because of the knowledge gap, African countries are not benefiting from the information technology revolution that is changing the comparative advantage of nations today. Their economies continue to stay mostly in the primary sector. All is not lost though. There is room for leap-frogging in the acquisition of knowledge. This will provide an opportunity to narrow the knowledge gap and to make rapid African development possible. How this is done will depend on the policies that each country pursues.

Impact on people, organizations and government

The evolution of the knowledge economy has resulted in restructuring and transforming societies. There is a basic change in the mindset of the people in society. They have become more and more aware of their rights to choose from a variety of things. They are free to choose better and better ways of doing things. As more and more people become aware of, and start using these services, they will start to demand more and better options of service.

The impact on organizations will be even bigger. As people become more aware of their rights, the management of organizations and bureaucrats will have to change. With the introduction of information technology in the work place, inefficiencies and corrupt practices that normally thrive on ignorance and the use of discretion will be reduced. As both workers and managers change, the hierarchy in the work place will be replaced by a horizontal organization with decisions being made from the bottom up instead of from the top down. This will open the door for people to improve in their jobs continuously. As a consequence, the quality of their output will also improve.

Such changes in society will put pressure on governments. As people start claiming their rights, governments will have to improve their performance concerning the delivery of public goods. A more informed society will re-enforce the democratic culture and demand more liberalization and good governance. These interactive communications will also affect jobs by facilitating the 'downsizing' and 'rightsizing' movement (Rondfeldt, 1992). Businesses, government agencies, non-profit and other organizations are attempting to reduce expenses by streamlining their operations.

Interactive communication media enable them to shed middle-management layers, the function of which has, up to now, been to mediate between organizational levels or constituencies.

e-Government

One area in which some African governments are making huge progress is e-government. e-Government involves the automation or computerization of current paper-based procedures. It will prompt new styles of leadership, new ways of debating and deciding on strategies, new ways of transacting business, new ways of listening to citizens and communities and new ways of organizing and delivering information. Ultimately, e-government aims to enhance access to and delivery of government services to the benefit of citizens. More importantly, it aims to assist in strengthening the drive of governments toward effective governance and increased transparency to manage the social and economic resources for development in countries in better ways.

The key to e-government is the establishment of a long-term, organization-wide strategy to improve operations constantly with a view to fulfilling citizen needs by transforming internal operations such as staffing, technology, processes and work-flow management.

Thus, e-government should result in an efficient and swift delivery of goods and services to citizens, businesses, government employees and agencies. To citizens and businesses, e-government would mean the simplification of procedures and streamlining of approval processes. To government employees and agencies, it would mean the facilitation of cross-agency coordination and collaboration to ensure appropriate and timely decision making.

e-Government aims to make interaction with citizens, businesses, government employees, government agencies and other governments more convenient, friendly, transparent, inexpensive and effective. In an e-government system, individuals are able to initiate a request for a particular government service and then receive that service through the Internet or some computerized mechanism. In some cases, the government service is delivered through one government office, instead of many. In other cases, a government transaction is completed without direct, in-person contact with a government employee.

Government-to-citizen services include information dissemination to the public, basic citizen services such as licence renewals, ordering of birth/death/marriage certificates and filing of income taxes, as well as citizen assistance concerning such basic services as education, health care, hospital information, libraries and the like.

Government-to-business transactions include various services exchanged between a government and the business community, including dissemination of policies, memoranda, rules and regulations. Business services offered include obtaining current business information, downloading application forms, renewing licences, registering businesses, obtaining permits and paying taxes. The services offered through government-to-business transactions also assist in business development, specifically the development of small and medium enterprises. Simplifying application procedures that facilitate the approval process for SME requests will encourage business development. At a higher level, government-to-business services include e-procurement, an online government supplier exchange for the purchase of goods and services by government. Typically, e-procurement web sites allow qualified and registered users to look for buyers or sellers of goods and services. Depending on the approach, buyers or sellers may specify prices or invite bids.

e-Procurement makes the bidding process transparent and enables smaller businesses to bid for big government procurement projects. The system also helps governments to generate bigger savings, as costs from middlemen are shaved off and the overheads of purchasing agents are reduced.

Government-to-employee services comprise services to citizens as well as specialized services that cover only government employees, such as the provision of human resources training and development that improve the day-to-day functions and dealings with citizens in a bureaucracy.

Government-to-government services take place at two levels: the local or domestic level and the international level. Government-to-government services are transactions between central/national and local governments and between department-level and attached agencies and bureaus. At the same time, government-to-government services are transactions between governments and can be used as an instrument in international relations and diplomacy.

Goals of e-government

- To create a better business environment.
- Customers on line, and not in line. Effective delivery of public goods and services to citizens accompanied by quick response with minimal direct intervention by a public official.
- To strengthen good governance and broaden public participation.
- To improve the productivity and efficiency of government agencies.
- To improve the quality of life of disadvantaged communities.

Conclusion

The objective of this paper is to show that, as African countries transformed in course of time and space, the public services system has had to do the same. Through this process, public administration in Africa has matured: it has more confidence in itself and is ready to tackle the challenges of development that lie ahead. As the system of governance is improving, the process of building stable and reliable institutions is coming along. Africa's reliance on the dictates of the West is now fiercely challenged, as other players like China have entered the arena and given Africa more opportunities to make choices about its development. Africans are more educated today than in the early days after independence and more able to negotiate better in the interest of Africa.

The use of technology is gradually gaining ground in Africa, making it possible for Africa to close the technology and knowledge gap by leaps and bounds. The introduction of e-government in African countries will further enhance the process of reducing the knowledge and technology gap and will enhance service delivery by African public services.

Challenges for the African Public Service Delivery System

This can be summarized as the need for capacity reinforcement and constant retraining because of the challenges posed by:

- the changing relationships between Africa and other regions – the West, China, India, Brazil, etc.;
- regional integration, globalization, WTO, IMF, the World Bank, etc.;
- ICTs and e-government; and
- growing local populations, a growing middle class and more and more educated African businesses and African business people.

A very competent public administration is needed to handle all of the above if Africa is to find its place among the nations in a rapidly globalizing world. ■

The 2010 Soccer World Cup – *the Beginning, not the End ...*

The World Soccer Cup hosted by South Africa in 2010 created a platform for the people of Africa and the rest of the world to come together, to share one another's hopes and disappointments, to learn from one another. Yet, such events alone are not enough to reflect the essence of Africa to the world. Africa is more than just crime, disease and squalor. Brown Bavusile Maabe takes the reader on an African journey and shares some insight into the richness of the African tapestry and history to support his view that Africa's history needs to be told objectively and properly to ensure that present and future generations get to know Africa as something more than the 'Dark Continent'.



Brown Bavusile Maabe

When the referee blew the final whistle on 22 June 2010 in the world-cup match between South Africa and France in Bloemfontein, the nightmare of failing to advance to the knockout stages that haunted *Bafana Bafana* since its 3-0 defeat by Uruguay on 16 June was confirmed. France lost the match 2-1, but the South African team still could not proceed to the next round and the country became the first hosts in the history of the Soccer World Cup (SWC) not to qualify for the knockout stages. With that the fate of the nation was sealed.

In Yeoville, Johannesburg, where people had assembled in numbers in bars and taverns for the uphill battle against France, the mood turned sour as the nation's hopes were dashed. There was absolutely no sound of the famous *vuvuzelas* as the harsh

‘... the sadness that engulfed Yeoville was a microcosm of the national mood ...’

reality gripped the taverns. In fact, the sadness that engulfed Yeoville was a microcosm of the national mood. The frustration and gloom that befell the nation could be understood, especially since South Africa was the first African country to host the world cup. After all, since the democratic transition in 1994, South Africans tended to be optimistic in most of their endeavours, particularly relating to sport, leaving no room for disappointment.

Johannesburg's Yeoville, Hillbrow and Berea are known as a melting pot of the African Diaspora and beyond and were, as was the case in many an African town, village or country, gripped by the euphoria of South Africa's hosting of the first African world cup. These diverse communities supported *Bafana Bafana* just as they supported all the



other African teams in the tournament and when the South African team bowed out in the first round of the tournament, their sympathies were with the South African team and nation.

After all, many from the Diaspora had lived in Yeoville, Hillbrow and Berea even before the advent of democracy in 1994. They are rooted in these communities. Most of the immigrants identify themselves with post-apartheid South Africa and can, indeed, be classified as naturalized South Africans. Some are married to South Africans and their offspring live and are schooled in South Africa. Many are also employed in the country's different formal and informal sectors, generating much-needed revenue for the country. Thus, the loyalty to the country of the immigrant community can, most of the time, not be called into question.

These vibrant and cosmopolitan communities in Johannesburg were further strengthened when South African exiles returned to South Africa in the early 1990s. Before their return, some of them had lived in countries like Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique and their spouses often originate from these countries. In addition, progressive cultural workers such as musicians, visual artists and writers, mostly South Africans, were also part of the diverse groupings that lived in Yeoville and other areas making up this colourful people mosaic.

Once South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria, Cameroon and the Ivory Coast were elbowed out of the soccer tournament, the Ghanaian national squad, the Black Stars, became the centre of the support. Coincidentally, Ghana was the first African country to free itself from the clutches of colonialism. Our fate as Africans, irrespective of our countries of origin, was thus placed in the hands of Ghana. The team rose to the occasion, but when the Black Stars were dubiously knocked out of the semi-finals on 25 June 2010, the hopes of the continent sank with them. The continent's aspirations to see an African team win the SWC for the first time in the history of the sport came to an abrupt end. However, the unity in the support that Ghana received before it lost to Uruguay during the semi-finals, will be a lasting memory for many Africans.

What begs the question now is whether Africans have anything else, other than the SWC sentiment that united them across the continent at the time, in common by way of identity, history and experience? Six weeks of soccer is arguably not enough to measure this; there ought to be other, more reliable yardsticks.

As, indeed, there are

Africa, the borderless continent

Before the arrival of Europeans in Africa, the continent had little in the way of defined political borders. Although Africa had, and still has, its share of conflict, this situation generally ensured the free movement of people across different parts of the continent. For example, the Bantu-speaking people are said to have originated from near the south-western border of modern Nigeria and Cameroon from where and they migrated to central, east and southern Africa over the centuries. Thus, the partitioning of Africa during the colonial era saw families being separated from their loved ones through alien political borders and sometimes actual fences. These fences in southern Africa, sometimes electrified to ensure that they served the 'divide-and-rule' strategy, have become the definitive borders of Africa. As an example of the legacy of the freedom that used to be, there are

“... (Do) Africans have anything else, other than the SWC sentiment that united them across the continent at the time, in common by way of identity, history and experience?”

many South Africans living in Nelspruit and elsewhere who, today, continue to claim allegiance to the Swazi King.

As African communities moved to different parts of the continent, 'acculturation' took place. For instance, the Lozi people of the Western Province in Zambia show linguistic and cultural similarities to the Sesotho-speaking people in other parts of southern Africa. The Lozi are thought to have originated from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the 17th and 18th centuries. Later on, they moved into Barotseland in western Zambia. In about 1830, an army from the Bafokeng area in present-day North West, known as Makololo and led by Sebetwane, invaded and conquered Barotseland. This explains the Sesotho influence on the Lozi.

Similarly, the Nguni, who lived in different parts of southern Africa, have cultural, historical and linguistic similarities. For instance, the Ndebele of Zimbabwe are originally from KwaZulu-Natal. They were the followers of Mzilikazi who was one of the chiefs during the reign of King Shaka. Generals who did not want to serve under Shaka after the defeat of Chief Zwide of the *Amandwandwe* included Soshangane who, together with his followers, migrated to Mozambique where they established themselves in Gaza Province. Another was Zwangendaba who went further north and whose followers are scattered over Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania. Most of them still adhere to Zulu cultural practices.

The people of Africa and their ancestors

Ancestral worship is prevalent in Africa. In the novel, *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya* (1940), which was translated into English as *The Wrath of the Ancestors*, AC Jordan explores the Eastern Cape Mpondomise society. The title of the book is potent with meaning as it questions a generation that stepped out of line with ancestral practices. The central theme of the novel is the relationship between African tradition and intrusive, western culture. Zwelinzima, the central character, is faced with the daunting challenge of balancing the demands of Mpondomise tradition and Christianity, which arrived with the missionaries. The difficulty for Zwelinzima is that he is unable to unify the worlds of *amaqaba* (the 'uncivilized') and *amagqoboka* (the 'civilized').

Similarly, in *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, which is set in the fictional Umoufia in Nigeria, the central character, Okonkwo, is portrayed as a man with his own strengths and weaknesses. Okonkwo tries to remain resolute in spite of the colonial incursion. He holds the bequest from his forbears in high esteem and would rather die than succumb to colonial denigration.

African academics and leaders

An institution like Fort Hare was, and continues to be a melting pot of African intellectualism. Many from the African Diaspora who later became outstanding politicians in their respective countries studied at Fort Hare. These include Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Oliver Tambo, Robert Sobukwe, Chris Hani and Barney Pitso. All these luminaries later formed part of the political landscape of South Africa. Other well-known politicians include Herbert Chitepo, who became the leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu), Charles Njonjo, the first Attorney-General of Kenya, and Henry Chipembere and Orton Chirwa who were well-known politicians in Malawi. Heads of State who cut their teeth at Fort Hare include Ntsu Mokehle of Lesotho, Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana, Robert

Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Yusuf Lulu who ruled Uganda for a short period after Idi Amin were deposed in 1979, and Nelson Mandela who became the first President of liberated South Africa in 1994.

The interaction at Fort Hare later had spin-offs for many exiles who sought refuge in African countries other than their own, because some of these countries were, by then, ruled by their Fort Hare counterparts. Such countries include Lesotho and Botswana that bore the brunt of cross-border raids by apartheid security agents during which many, including citizens of those countries, were killed. Many risked their lives sheltering exiles from African countries under the thumb of oppressors. For instance, on the night of 31 July 1981 in Harare when Joe Gqabi, the ANC chief representative in Zimbabwe, was killed, a young ANC cadre, Shadrack Ganda who lived with Gqabi at the time, rushed to the home of the Minister of National Security, Emmerson Mnangwagwa, to inform him of what had happened. Without wasting time, Mnangwagwa reached for his automatic rifle and instructed Ganda to lead him to Gqabi's house.

Had Mnangwagwa found the assassins at Gqabi's home, they would have met their match. As Minister of National Security, Mnangwagwa, whose bravery one can only admire, should have ordered his juniors to attend to the issue. However, he chose to handle the matter himself and put his own life at risk. In a similar incident, in March 1975, Herbert Chitepo was killed in a car-bomb explosion in Lusaka. The president of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, immediately ordered a commission of inquiry to look into Chitepo's death. It was later discovered that Chitepo's assassination was the work of the Central Intelligence Organization of the Rhodesian government. The noble deeds of such individuals should not be forgotten in liberated South Africa.

Africa's anthem

It was deeds such as the above that might, in an earlier period, have inspired the likes of Enoch Sontonga to write *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*, calling for cadres of the continent to be blessed and protected by the Almighty.

The original version of *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* was composed in 1897 by Sontonga, a teacher at a Methodist mission school in Johannesburg. In 1927, seven stanzas were added to the hymn by Samuel Mqhayi, a revered Xhosa poet. Moses Mphahlele published a Sesotho version of the anthem in 1942. John Dube, who was the first ANC president in 1912, popularized the song through his Ohlange School Choir. Due to such efforts and many others, the song became popular and was also adopted as the anthem at political meetings. Over the years, it was sung as an act of defiance against the apartheid regime.

The musical connotations of this song reverberate throughout the

African continent in that the Zambian, as well as the Tanzanian national anthems are based on *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*. *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* was also sung in countries like Namibia and Zimbabwe for quite some time. This confirms the level of political consciousness in African countries and reflects support of the oppressed people of South Africa. Though the Tanzanian national anthem, *Mungu ibariki Afrika* is sung in Swahili, it is, in fact, similar to *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* with only few changes adapted for the Tanzanian audience.

The languages of Africa

Swahili itself, which has a long and interesting history, serves as a unifying factor for the people of East Africa and beyond. Of Bantu origin, Swahili borrowed words from other languages such as Portuguese and Arabic. The Arabs for instance, began to trade with East African Bantu-speaking people as far back as 500–100 AD. In fact, the word Swahili is an Arabic word which means 'the coast'.

Initially Swahili was, for a long period of time, limited to the coastal people of East Africa. But with time, the language began to spread to the hinterland of Tanzania. President Julius Nyerere is credited for unifying Tanzanians through Swahili in that he adopted Swahili as an official language of the country. Even South African exiles that lived in Tanzania during apartheid times learned Swahili from the locals. Today Swahili is spoken in Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the north of Mozambique and Zambia.

Teach the world about Africa

Surely, during this world cup, many have learned important lessons about Africa and its peoples through their interaction as soccer lovers from different countries. However, coming together and learning about one another in this way, though necessary, is merely a stop-gap. Events like the SWC must be supported in other concrete ways. Knowledge about Africa is buried in books, journals, archives and oral traditions that tell the story of the diverse people of this continent. It remains the duty of historians, curriculum designers and policy makers to ensure that our history is taught in proper and objective ways for the benefit of present and future generations. If this is not considered, the African continent, which against all odds and in the face of negative publicity prior to the world cup succeeded in hosting a successful and phenomenal SWC, will continue to be viewed as the 'Dark Continent' where nothing but crime, disease and squalor are the order of the day.

* Brown Maaba is co-author of the book: *Education in Exile, SOMAFCO, the ANC School in Tanzania, 1978–1992*. He was educated at the University of Fort Hare. ■





Geoff Doidge

Rallying Municipalities behind the EPWP

Geoff Doidge, former Minister of Public Works, celebrates the achievements of the Extended Economic Works Programme and urges municipalities to accept their critical role in expanding the Programme to achieve its goals as a vital catalyst in the creation of decent work opportunities just as they accepted the challenge of hosting the Soccer World Cup.

Chapter three of our Constitution encourages cooperative governance. It emphasizes cooperation between our national, provincial and local spheres of government. The successful hosting of the Soccer World Cup (SWC) in 2010 provided a much-needed and practical foretaste of the good that can follow from strategic cooperation across all three spheres of government in South Africa. It showed that we can and that the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) can be as successful if all three spheres of government were to tackle it with the same amount of cooperative fervour.

The EPWP is a crucial policy priority of our Government in its effort to reduce poverty and unemployment. It aims to create 4,5 million work opportunities by 2014 and the national Department of Public Works is tasked with the enormous responsibility of coordinating the Programme. However, as in the case of the SWC, the success of this Programme depends largely on an unwavering and concerted effort towards cooperative implementation among the national, provincial and local spheres of our government.

Lessons learned from the first phase of the EPWP convinced Government of the need to continue the Programme on a much larger scale. Consequently the Minister of Finance announced a substantially increased budget of more than R4 billion for the implementation of EPWP phase two (EPWP II). To amplify the impact on joblessness, EPWP II has been scaled up over the next five years with the focus on the local sphere of our government because of its strategic position at the coalface of service delivery. Provinces and municipalities will play a central role in the implementation of EPWP II over the next five years and key adjustments to the programme design include the allocation of more funds to those municipalities and provinces that provide more jobs to communities while delivering much-needed services.

Hence, the need for us to engage closely with the local sphere of our government. We have to ensure that municipalities are able to contribute to EPWP II targets.

Municipal delivery agreements and EPWP

The 2010 FIFA SWC was, for all intents and purposes, hosted by

municipalities. The host cities outdid themselves in hosting the most-watched and most technologically advanced SWC ever and the resounding success of their efforts is one of the critical examples of best practice on the part of our local sphere of government. As national government, we acknowledge this critical role. That formed the basis of the decision to bring municipalities fully on board with the implementation of EPWP II as a catalyst for social change.

Municipalities have signed delivery agreements with the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The agreements, signed by leaders from all three spheres of government, are expected to ensure an accountable and efficient local government system, in particular concerning agreement on outcome 9, viz. 'A responsive, accountable, effective and efficient Local Government System'.

Furthermore, a significant part of the agreements speaks to the successful implementation of the Community Works Programme, which is, in its nature and customized design, directly intertwined with the EPWP. This will further boost efforts of ensuring that we work closely with municipalities to do more for our communities. In addition, municipalities are expected to contribute 27 per cent of the work opportunities to be created through the EPWP.

Significant in this regard is our resolve to engage municipalities in issues that direct the strategic focus of elevating the local sphere of government to a service delivery status that is consistent with expectations arising from the performance agreements signed by ministers in the national departments.

Progress of the EPWP

With the release of improved first quarter results for the 2010/11 financial year, the EPWP continues to prove its viability as a vital catalyst in the creation of decent work opportunities,

The EPWP created 193 001 work opportunities in the first quarter (01 April 2010 to 30 June 2010) of the 2010/11 financial year. This figure reflects an impressive 30 per cent achievement against the set annual target of 642 000 work opportunities in the 2010/11 financial year.

In terms of the above results, municipalities contributed 52 911

... The successful hosting of the Soccer World Cup (SWC) in 2010 provided a much-needed and practical foretaste of the good that can follow from strategic cooperation across all three spheres of government in South Africa ...

work opportunities, which equates to 29 per cent of the first quarter figures. Furthermore, only 30 of the 52 district municipalities, or 57 per cent, and only 43 of the 231 local municipalities, which translates to 18 per cent, submitted reports to the EPWP.

This sample picture is a cause for concern and I believe that the Department of Public Works should engage municipalities fully on the different approaches they can adopt to fast-track the implementation of EPWP in their communities.

The sector breakdown of work opportunities created under the EPWP in the first quarter of the 2010/11 financial year is as follows:

• Infrastructure sector	120 780
• Environment and culture sector	30 919
• Social sector	13 439
• Non-State sector	4 777
• Community Works Programme	23 086

As can be seen, the infrastructure sector continues to achieve the highest percentage of work opportunities created against set targets, whereas the social and environment and culture sectors, respectively, created work opportunities with the longest duration.

KwaZulu-Natal created the highest number of work opportunities, the bulk of which in the infrastructure sector. It is followed by the Eastern Cape and Gauteng that have both exceeded their first-quarter employment creation targets. However, the figures reflect that more work still needs to be done in the Northern Cape, Limpopo, North West and Mpumalanga.

These and other challenges are noted and greater effort must be made to engage all municipalities in placing the EPWP at the centre of job creation efforts to fight poverty and unemployment. However, the achievement of already having created 30 per cent of the full quota for 2010/11 in just the first quarter of the financial year proves yet again that the Programme is making a significant impact concerning Government's concerted efforts to reduce unemployment and poverty significantly by 2014 through the creation of 4.5 million jobs opportunities.

Municipalities must come to the party

While we can celebrate our achievements thus far, every possible shoulder needs to be put to the wheel for us to further succeed, not only as a department but as government as a whole. The need for unwavering commitment on the part of municipalities to help the national government in the fight against poverty and unemployment has reached a level unheard of before.

I am confident that our municipalities are willing to play this significant and critical role. We urge them to employ every sinew of their institutional make-up to implement the EPWP as a viable and constructive way of socio-economic upliftment. Let us position the EPWP as the nerve centre of service delivery in our municipalities to ensure that this noble Programme resonates in tandem with the developmental agenda of our Government and the Millennium Development Goals agreed on in 2000.

Non-state sector

Participating in the EPWP is not only about number crunching. It remains essentially a commitment to promote a human-rights-orientated public service delivery culture, characterized, among others, by caring for the elderly and ill; educating pre-school children; rehabilitating and cleaning up our environment; and upgrading and maintaining crucial infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and sanitation through labour-intensive or labour-absorbing services.

Thus, the accelerated EPWP targets in the electoral mandate period of 2009 to 2014 are part of Government's concerted responses to our structural unemployment situation and aim to provide work opportunities as a safety net to those out of work.

An addition to the Programme was the introduction of the non-state sector with its unique custom design in May 2010.

The non-state sector programme will mobilize non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs) and communities directly involved in employment-creation efforts by way of incentives for their engagement in relevant activities. As such, this leg of the EPWP will mobilize capacity outside Government to contribute to employment creation. It is our view that the private sector can also play a significant role in the implementation of the EPWP through the non-state sector and in return see the beneficiaries rewarded through the incentive grant.

The Independent Development Trust (IDT) has been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of this programme. The IDT is expected to recruit and appoint NGOs, FBOs and CBOs that will initiate support programmes to create employment and provide income for numbers of people through the delivery of public and community goods and services.

I would like to call on other public works entities to engage with the IDT and EPWP about ways in which we can jointly maximize our efforts in employment creation and facing up to our socio-economic challenges.

Conclusion

I want to conclude by giving credit to the beneficiaries of the EPWP that we always manage to outdo ourselves in our efforts to create employment. The hard work of beneficiaries has developed the Programme into an appropriate example of best practice in second economy intervention in a developmental state. The cumulative work opportunities created in the first quarter of the 2010/2011 financial year alluded to earlier, confidently send the unequivocal message that we are succeeding in implementing this important national programme. These figures further epitomize the recognition and reward of people and institutions that implemented the EPWP with excellence.

Even the most fervent of sceptics agree that the future potential for job creation resides largely in the EPWP. Therefore, the expansion of a public works programme remains critical to deliver the much needed welfare gains we wish for. ■



Tackling Unemployment through the EPWP

Ignatius Ariyo of the Department of Public Works says that, although the Expanded Public Works Programme was not designed as a policy instrument to address the structural nature of the current unemployment crisis, it remains the most important vehicle for Government to create immediate employment for the poor and assist in narrowing the social welfare gap in the country.

South Africa is plagued by unacceptably high levels of structural unemployment. This situation has been worsened by the global economic crisis. The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) serves as an opportunity to address the ensuing social welfare gap. The EPWP is a nation-wide programme covering all spheres of government and state-owned enterprises. It aims to draw significant

numbers of unemployed and unskilled people into productive work so that they can increase their capacity to earn an income.

The EPWP provides an important avenue for labour absorption and income transfers to poor households in the short to medium term, but was not designed as a policy instrument to address the structural nature of the unemployment crisis. Unlike social security initiatives





that deal with grants for older people, the disabled, war veterans, those dependent on care, foster children, child support and other grants designed to assist the poor, public works projects cater for able-bodied individuals who are looking for work.

EPWP projects are, therefore, a deliberate attempt by the public sector to use expenditure on goods and services to create work opportunities for the unemployed and workers are usually employed either on a temporary or an ongoing basis. Workers are employed either by Government or contractors, or by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) under a code of good practice for EPWP or learnership employment conditions.

The first phase of the EPWP achieved its target of creating one million work opportunities and is a year ahead of schedule. During the second phase,

The EPWP aims to draw significant numbers of unemployed and unskilled people into productive work so that they can increase their capacity to earn an income.

efforts will be intensified further to contribute significantly to halving unemployment by 2014. Cabinet approved the high-level proposals for EPWP II in June 2008 and the Business Plan at the *Lekgotla* in January 2009. Initially, an amount of R4.1 billion was allocated in the form of an incentive over the 2009 Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) to scale up EPWP outcomes. That allocation was increased to R5.4 billion over the 2010 MTEF. In 2008, the President's Coordinating Council (PCC) agreed that the Department of Public Works (DPW) had to set targets for provinces and municipalities and that the latter had to report to the DPW. The implementation of EPWP II started on 1 April 2009.

EPWP II has four key components:

- The first component is that there are targets and accountability across all spheres of government. Each public body must have annual job creation targets. Political and administrative heads have to commit themselves to this and are held accountable for achieving these targets.
- The second component is the EPWP Incentive Grant. Phase two saw the wage incentive model being introduced. This comprises the provision of financial performance rewards (R50 for every person-day of work created above a set minimum threshold) to public bodies to encourage them to create EPWP job opportunities.
- The third component is the inclusion of the non-state sector in the EPWP. The intention here is to mobilize capacity outside the state (e.g. among NGOs, community-based organizations [CBOs] and non-profit organizations) to create work for EPWP target groups. Work in respect of this component will focus on a wide range of activities as identified by local communities, NGOs and CBOs, and funding is provided on the basis of a wage incentive.
- The last component of EPWP II is the provision of technical support to spheres, sectors and implementing bodies. Implementing bodies requiring capacity can access support through the EPWP Unit of the DPW and other support programmes such as the Technical Assistance Unit located at National Treasury.

Creating 4.5 million jobs by 2014

The goal of EPWP II is to create 4.5 million work opportunities for poor and unemployed people in South Africa by 2014 in an effort to contribute towards halving unemployment through the delivery of public and community services.

EPWP II covers a range of sectors through which it seeks to create more employment. For example, it seeks to:

- increase the labour intensity of government-funded infrastructure projects;
- create work opportunities in public environment and culture programmes; and
- create work opportunities through public social programmes, for example programmes delivered by non-state bodies that have specific focus areas such as health care, child care and community safety; as well as programmes targeted at a specific area and generally involving a large range of different activities identified as necessary and beneficial by a community in consultation with local government.

Infrastructure sector

The sector where most jobs have been created for the EPWP has been the infrastructure sector. This sector seeks to promote the use of labour-intensive methods in the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure to create work opportunities. EPWP infrastructure sector projects are implemented at all levels of government and state-owned enterprises. Such projects are funded mainly through conditional infrastructure grants to provinces and municipalities and through the equitable share received by provinces and municipalities.

Infrastructure job creation is implemented through five key programmes. The first is the Municipal Technical Support Programme in which technical support is provided to municipalities to implement EPWP infrastructure programmes. The second programme is the Provincial Roads Programme in which technical support is provided to provincial roads departments to implement labour-intensive projects for the construction and maintenance of provincial access roads. The third programme is the Large Projects Programme in which technical support is provided to public bodies to implement significant portions of projects with a budget over R30 million labour-intensively. The fourth programme is the *Vuk'uphile* Learnership programme that seeks to provide contractors and supervisors trained in labour-based construction methods. Last but not least is the National Youth Service Programme, which seeks to train youth in artisan trades suitable for the built environment. In this Programme, training is both practical and theoretical.

In terms of funding for the infrastructure sector, R50 billion is estimated as the total budget for EPWP II, with R31 billion, mainly from infrastructure conditional grants, estimated over the 2010/2011 MTEF. An additional R4.9 billion has been allocated as an incentive over the 2010/2011 MTEF for public bodies that report on EPWP work opportunities before set thresholds. The total estimated incentive allocation for the infrastructure sector during phase two is R7.3 billion. To be eligible for the incentive, a public body must have reported on EPWP in a prior financial year. Eligible public bodies have their indicative allocations published in the Division of Revenue Act as a Schedule 8 Grant. The incentive is paid on a quarterly basis to public bodies after their EPWP reports have been assessed. The EPWP infrastructure incentive is there to be used to expand or continue job creation projects once received by an eligible public body.

Social sector

The second sector in EPWP II is the social sector.

The Department of Social Development (DSD) was mandated to lead the Social Sector EPWP. The social sector in phase one of the EPWP comprised the DSD, Department of Education (DoE) and the Department of Health (DoH). This has been expanded in EPWP II to include the Department of Sport and Recreation (SRSA) and Provincial Community Safety.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Home Community-based Care (HCBC) were identified as pilot programmes in phase one and continue in phase two. Mass Participation in Sports; the Mass Literacy Programme; the National School Nutrition Programme and Provincial Community Safety programmes in Limpopo, the Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape have been added.

The social sector also adopted the EPWP incentive grant model. The introduction of this model was driven by the need to create additional work opportunities and expand service delivery through EPWP. In this sector, incentives are aimed at motivating the sector departments to create additional jobs through the identified and agreed-on programmes. A draft model was presented to National Treasury as part of an MTEF funding proposal. About R56.6 million has already been allocated to the sector in the 2010/2011 financial year to serve as incentive for the creation of additional jobs through the HCBC programme. The sector is still in the process of finalizing a comprehensive funding model.

Environment and culture sector

Environment and culture sector programmes seek to create short-term employment while addressing the environmental and cultural needs of the country relevant to sector departments. Most environmental programmes are aimed at mitigating the depletion of natural resources such as water, soil, trees and the ozone layer by encouraging proper waste management and conservation measures. Cultural programmes, on the other hand, seek to preserve the diversity of the cultures within South Africa's boundaries and encourage the use of artistic work in the process.



The major programmes here include social responsibility programmes, e.g. Working on Waste and social responsibility implementation, e.g. Working for Tourism; Working for Water and Working for Fire; the Land Care and Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme; investing in culture; waste management; the maintenance of cemeteries; and rural development.

Key departments in the sector are Environmental Affairs; Tourism; Water Affairs; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Arts and Culture; provinces and municipalities. The total allocation for this sector is R1 802 595.00, with a total incentive of R200 000.00 for all departments.

Non-state sector

The non-state sector seeks to ensure that non-state actors deliver certain programmes. It focuses on programmes that create work opportunities for unemployed people, that are labour-intensive and that cannot be implemented by profit-making organizations. In this sector, therefore, outputs and outcomes of activities should benefit society and/or the communities where they are being implemented and should have a focus on the poor.

For the 2011/2012 financial year, the budget allocation for the non-state sector is R18 million with an incentive allocation of R309 million.

The Independent Development Trust (IDT) was appointed as the intermediary for the non-state sector. The decision was based on its knowledge of the sector, its programme and project management capacity, its good financial management systems, its geographical spread, its monitoring capacity and its reporting systems.

In terms of the selection of non-profit organizations (NPOs) to participate in the non-state sector, NPOs were invited to apply to participate in the programme. Some criteria for participation were the size and capacity of an organization; the period of the existence of an organization and its track record; and an organization's governance structures, financial, auditing and administration systems. Only organizations that met these criteria were selected.

NPOs that qualified had to submit proposals in terms of a specified deadline indicating work to be undertaken; work opportunities to be provided; duration of work; full-time equivalents to be provided; cost of work opportunities; and development outputs. They also had to demonstrate that they had matching funding to deliver the services.

In terms of administration, NPOs receive the wage costs of two months upfront on signing of contract. Thereafter payments are made monthly. Reporting is done by way of a web-based system where ID numbers are used to record workers. NPOs then submit monthly progress reports to the intermediary, the IDT. Thereafter, progress reports are validated and funds are paid monthly on the basis of the monthly reports submitted. Quarterly reports are submitted to the Project Management Team (PMT) Committee and the DPW.

In terms of programme management, the non-state sector is managed by the DPW with oversight from other key departments. As stated above, the sector is implemented with the assistance of an intermediary, namely the IDT. Moreover, a programme management structure is in place nationally and provincially. Terms of reference have been set for this structure.

The last sector of EPWP II is the Community Work Programme (CWP).

Community Work Programme

The Presidency initiated a strategy process to address the 'Second Economy'. Cabinet approved a framework in January 2009. This framework focuses on the need to address inequality and economic marginalization and argues that employment should be placed at the heart of all economic policy. It also highlights that strategies aimed at changing the structure of the economy and patterns of distribution will take time and will reach the most marginalized last. South Africa, therefore, needs to fast-track complementary strategies that target the most marginalized first. The most important of these strategies is the Public Works: EPWP-plus.

Within the EPWP-plus, the CWP was proposed as the 'anchor strategy' for approaches intended to target the most marginalized first. The CWP is part of the EPWP and complements the other components. The pilot phase ran under a Steering Committee of the DSD and the Presidency. It was mandated by the Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS) and funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). From 1 April 2010, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) has been managing the CWP with dedicated funding.

What is the function of the CWP within EPWP II?

The CWP provides access to a minimum level of regular work, namely two days a week, which equals 100 days a year. It is an area-based programme that is intended to be ongoing, which allows it to target the poorest areas where market-based jobs are unlikely to come any time soon. Implementing agencies appointed in terms of the Programme handle site management. It is multi-sectoral and contributes to public or community goods and services. The start-up scale is 1 000 workers per site, with sites having a labour intensity of 65 per cent.

The CWP uses community participation to identify 'useful work' and priorities. 'Work' is decided on in Ward Committees or at local development forums. This ensures alignment with local government and the integrated development plans (IDPs). In practice, there is evidence that the CWP is strengthening the IDPs. This is because IDP programmes have an annual cycle, which makes it hard to sustain community involvement. However, in the CWP, the cycle from identification of work to implementation is often only a fortnight. This energizes development structures, which results in the CWP addressing some of the 'unfunded mandates' at a local level and unblocking partially funded initiatives. The CWP, therefore, has benefits beyond the provision of labour. It institutionalizes the link to local development and ensures alignment with IDPs. It also facilitates the link to other spheres of government.

What types of projects is the CWP engaged in?

In practice, a common menu of typical priorities has emerged and these have become the 'anchor' programmes. There has been a strong focus on food security. There are also projects focusing on home-based care, mainly for HIV-affected and TB-affected households and auxiliary care. There are projects focusing on caring for orphans and vulnerable children and child-headed households.

There are also social programmes to tackle alcohol abuse, violence and crime. There is development of recreation spaces and sporting facilities targeting the youth. There is also environmental rehabilitation and maintenance, and upgrading of informal settlements. Moreover, there are also *Zibambele*-type road maintenance programmes.



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Conclusion

There are key critical success factors that will ensure the success of EPWP II. The first is that the creation of paid work should be the primary objective of the programme. Secondly, there has to be clear political and administrative accountability for EPWP for job creation targets across all spheres of government. The third critical factor is the alignment of EPWP outputs with the core mandates and programmes of implementing public bodies. The fourth factor is that fiscal incentives have to be provided to accelerate scaling up of EPWP outputs across all spheres of government. The last critical factor is that non-state capacity to deliver additional EPWP work opportunities have to be mobilized.

As a way of concluding, I want to state that employment creation remains the key priority of Government and the EPWP remains the most important vehicle for Government to directly create employment for the poor. Strong political leadership on the EPWP has proven to be critical in phase one of the programme and will be equally important in phase two. ■

Beyond Duty

– By Dudley Moloi

No amount of publishing snobbishness can dampen the enthusiasm of Dumisani Mphalela, whose 'just-do-it' approach motivates him to tackle the writing of a book with the same commitment that makes it possible for him to complete a long race

Dumisani Mphalala of the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) is a man of many interests and hobbies – indeed, a man much more than the long list of academic achievements and previous jobs reflected in his *curriculum vitae* and other addenda. *Service Delivery Review* met up with him to learn more about the person behind the man whose hobbling gait into the reception area of the CPSI was already shedding some light on the subject as it emerged that the gingerly steps were the result of a recent injury inflicted while he was running a grueling 21-km-long marathon!

The amount of punishment that Mphalala's body can take is not what triggers one's interest, although one has to admit that his well-built physique appears to be more than able to withstand quite an onslaught! What is of particular interest is how an apparently 'run-of-the-mill', or 08:00-to-16:00 public servant manages not only to author a biography, but to self-publish his book as well!

'Writing is one of my hobbies and I am also interested in reading,' says the author of *Ruth Machobane: Exceptional Service to South Africa*.

The slim-sized biography on the 77-year-old Machobane chronicles the life of the recipient of a Presidential Order of Baobab (Silver) Award, given to her in 2008 in recognition of her extraordinary leadership attributes and contribution to South Africa, both in the political and societal development spheres.

Ruth Machobane: Exceptional Service to South Africa reads at once like a genealogical and oral, historical monograph. It traces her steps from her birthplace in Matukaneng on the outskirts of Thaba'Nchu in the pre-1994 Orange Free State to her long stay in Alexandra Township on the outskirts of Johannesburg and tells about

her losing her sight at the age of eight.

The book is littered with many personalities associated with South Africa's liberation struggle, including close associates of former president Nelson Mandela during his stay in Dark City and the Kotanes, whose most famed member is Moses Kotane, the late African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party veteran.

The book also gives a glimpse of life in the bad old days of apartheid, the draconian racial laws of which extended their tentacles even to the most vulnerable in society, as he relates of her experiences at the Athlone School for the Blind in Cape Town where she was involved in a boycott subsequent to being fed rotten fish.

'The principal and teachers cruelly beat us for refusing to eat that smelly fish,' Machobane recalls in the biography. 'There is a verse in the hymn, *Our Father*, that says "forgive us as we forgive our trespassers". We resolved that we would not forgive the principal and teachers [who] beat us [and] when we sang the hymn, we kept quitting when the "forgive us" part started.'

From these early days of fighting the injustices meted out to people with disabilities, Machobane went on to establish the Transvaal Association for Black Blind Adults in the 1980s as part of her life-long activism. The organization later became the National Association of the Blind in South Africa and she was at once director and

deputy chairperson of the Association at the time the biography was written.

'In me ... there is a historian,' says the author. 'Machobane made history and her contribution is not known. It must be recorded for future generations.'

The book has been criticized by some who have read (or



skimmed) through it, arguing that the author could have done better – what with typos and spelling mistakes here and there. While such criticisms are made deservedly, the author feels that they are outweighed by his ‘can do’ and ‘just do it’ attitude.

It takes lots of effort and determination to write anything and that Mphalala slogged in his private time to document the life of one of South Africa’s phenomenal women is no small undertaking. Such determination deserves credit. In any case, the historiographical value of the book far out-weighs any literary snobbishness.

The book is self-published, which means every cent in terms of time spent writing, traveling and publishing came from the author’s pocket. This constitutes a daring display of commitment and determination, especially in a publishing industry that thrives on

profit-driven *clichés* rather than substance.

‘The publishing industry is highly competitive and has its own standards in terms of product releases, which is not [necessarily] about recording the history of our country,’ Mphalala observes. ‘The trend in the book business is to focus on the elite, both economical and political, and people with disabilities fall outside their radar,’ he concludes.

According to the author/publisher, the book, of which 300 copies were published initially, is doing well and there is a possibility of further reprints as demand rises. The fact that some of the major book chain stores have indicated interest in stocking up on the biography in outlets nation-wide, augurs well in this regard! ■

Letters to the Editor

Reactions to David Malaza’s Case Study in *SDR Vol. 8 No. 1*



Dear Editor

Mr David Malaza is well known to the Directorate Service Delivery Improvement of the Department of Correctional Services and has maintained an excellent working relationship throughout the years. The latest *SDR Vol. 8 No. 1* features an article by Malaza on probation as a possible solution to overcrowding in correctional centres. Most officials that read the article were all asking the same question – did Malaza interact with anybody in the relevant component to get an understanding of the real South African issues? This question was asked because there was no reference made to indicate that in the case study.

We sincerely think that in a case study such as Malaza’s the relevant department should have been interviewed to contextualize the material and to strengthen the content and, ultimately, partnerships. At the end of the day it is about service delivery improvement.

Johanna Prozesky, Department of Correctional Services

Dear Editor

I have noted Johanna’s comments and I value such comments. However, it would be of great advantage to let you know that the study was based on ‘lessons learned’ and not a comparison study between SA and Germany. Furthermore, the article calls for acceptance and aggressive use of parole to reduce overcrowding in South African prisons based on the lessons learned from Germany, where large numbers of prisoners are on parole and/or probation. As a result, their prison centres are not overcrowded, even though Germany has double the size of the South African population. I hope this will clarify the issue.

David Malaza, Department of Public Service and Administration



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a learning champion in this knowledge economy.
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our experiences, successes, mistakes and
methodologies and for growing our
own intellectual capital.**