EVALUATING THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL: A REVIEW, WITH CASE STUDIES

DEVELOPMENTAL, CAPABLE & ETHICAL STATE RESEARCH DIVISION

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i

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South African
ATVET	Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education Training
BEE	Black economic empowerment
BEPPs	Built Environment Performance Plans
COGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDOs	Community Development Officers
Cllr	Councillor
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DCES	Developmental, Capable, and Ethical State
DDM	District Development Model
DG	Director General
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DRDA	District Rural Development Agency
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOSAD	Forum of South African Directors-General
DTPC	District Technical Planning Committee
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTAC	Government Technical Advisory Centre
GWME	Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICESCR	International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDPs	Integrated Development Plans
IGR	Intergovernmental relations
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NSG	National School of Government
NPC	National Planning Commission
LGA	Local Government Act
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIAS	Project Implementation Agencies
PMFA	Public Municipal Finance Act
POCC	Potential, Opportunity, Constraints and Challenges
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
PSA	Public Servants Association
PSLSD	Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SAPS	South African Police Service
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SASAS	South African Social Attitudes Survey
SDFs	Spatial Development Frameworks
SDIPs	Service Delivery Improvement Plans
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SMMEs	Small, Medium & Micro-Enterprises
SSI	Semi-structured interview
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WDT	Watershed Development Team
WA	Watershed Association
WC	Watershed Committee
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study emanated from President Cyril Ramaphosa's 2019 State of the Nation Address wherein he expressed concern about the government working in silos. The District Development Model (DDM)[1] is an operational model for improving cooperative governance aimed at building a capable, ethical and developmental state. It embodies an approach in which the three spheres of government and state entities work in unison in an impact-oriented way, and where there is higher performance and accountability for coherent service delivery and developmental outcomes. The DDM operates through vertical and horizontal intergovernmental relations (IGR) lenses since all spheres of government, national, provincial and local, assist in the operationalisation of the DDM. The vertical IGR lens focuses on authority and power while the horizontal IGR lens relates to relations between governmental authorities in the same sphere of government and at the same level – for instance relations between the nine provincial authorities and among the categories A, B, and C municipalities.

From our observations, incoherence in planning and implementation makes monitoring and oversight of the government's programme difficult. Communities are affected by service delivery challenges, leading to service delivery protests across the local government landscape. This is the context for President Cyril Ramaphosa's call for the introduction of the DDM. The DDM calls for an integrated and a single strategically focused "One Plan" and "One Budget" for fifty-two geographical areas to respond to service delivery challenges more coherently, effectively and efficiently.

This study was conducted with the primary objective of assessing the implementation of the DDM in South Africa in three chosen municipalities in the Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. three pilot sites were identified based on their socio-economic profiles and rural-urban mix. The methodology utilised in the study involved (1) Drawing on regional and international experiences as case studies to inform the implementation of the DDM; (2) Conducting desktop and empirical studies on the practical workings of the DDM to determine how it responds to service delivery and development challenges within the three piloted municipalities under investigation; and (3) Proposing policy options and recommendations to inform the implementation of the DDM in response to the developmental local government mandate.

Below are some of the key highlights from the study:

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[1] Also outlined in "Concept note: New district coordination model to improve the coherence and impact of government service delivery and development" (EDSE 2019). Also referred to as the Khawuleza District Coordination Service Delivery Model (DPME 2019).

- Stakeholders highlighted the positive impact made by the model in bringing together stakeholders, including business and labour; under this initiative, there has been a stronger appetite for private sector involvement in assisting emerging entrepreneurs in the three pilot districts, the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, the Waterberg District Municipality in Limpopo and the OR Tambo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape.

- Because of the district development model, there seems to be far more effective and cohesive stakeholder engagement, primarily driven by the model. Although most of the stakeholders acknowledge that the model is not new, it has brought a renewed sense of urgency in ensuring that districts can work with local municipalities to improve service delivery.

- The model has also been hailed for creating a platform for skills transfer among municipalities in the province. This includes voluntary mentoring offered by senior officials from the district municipality and an increase in the uptake of young municipal staff accessing training and skills development towards improving capacity development in local government.

- However, it is worth noting that participants indicated that IGR is not seamless yet. The three spheres of government are still working in silos.

- For LGSETA, the model has enabled the authority to invest in and uplift emerging businesses in the three pilot districts, eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, Waterberg, and O.R Tambo Districts, through a discretionary grant which has been awarded to several businesses. This grant intends to uplift emerging SMMEs and assist in providing cash flow for start-up companies.

- As a district municipality, the Waterberg council has played a facilitatory role in bringing together stakeholders from the local municipalities and providing valuable insights into the aims and objectives of the DDM.

- There is a possibility that the DDM will remain an idea for the current administration and not move beyond the pilot phase unless it is legislated.

- DDM implementation is led by officials without a conceptual understanding of the model.

- There is limited community involvement in the planning and implementation process.

Based on these findings, the review emerged with thirty recommendations to inform the implementation of the DDM.

Key Words: Local government, developmental local government, governance, service delivery

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 2019 State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Cyril Ramaphosa identified the "pattern of operating in silos" as a challenge that had led to a ''lack of coherence in planning and implementation [that] ha[d] made monitoring and oversight of government's programme difficult". In his 2020 SONA, the President called for the rolling out of a new integrated district-based approach to address service delivery challenges in the country. The District Development Model (DDM) is a practical intergovernmental relations (IGR) mechanism that aims to ensure an integrated and single strategically focused "One Plan" and "One Budget" for each of the 44 districts and eight metropolitan geographical areas (referred to as "fifty-two spaces") in response to service delivery challenges.

The DDM outlines roles for various government actors in all spheres of government, as well as scheduled activities and indicators. It raises broad socio-economic and governance questions. For instance, how are the interests of residents and communities reflected in long-term infrastructure planning, whether via Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Built Environment Performance Plans (BEPPs), Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIPs), or similar local and district government participatory processes? How could community involvement in monitoring be supported and sustained in implementing long-term projects?

Over the years, the Developmental, Capable, and Ethical State (DCES) research division of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) has built expertise in local governance research, which places it in a prime position to make informed contributions to this area and to offer evidence-based recommendations on the rollout of the DDM to advance the developmental mandate of the local sphere of government. The project reported on here was supported by funds provided by the Office of the CEO of the HSRC and the Divisional Executive of DCES in 2020 and 2021. The purpose of the project was to study the successes and challenges of the rollout of the DDM and, accordingly, to provide advice to policymakers based on the project findings.

1.1. An outline of the District Development Model

The DDM, adopted by the cabinet on 21 August 2019, is an operational model for improving cooperative governance to build a capable, ethical and developmental state (Priority 1 of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019-2024; see DPME 2020). It embodies an approach in which the three spheres of government and state entities work in unison in an impact-oriented way and where there is higher performance and accountability for coherent service delivery and developmental outcomes.

3

The DDM provides a means for the government to operate in unison, focusing on the municipal district and metropolitan spaces as the impact areas of joint planning, budgeting and implementation. DDM concentrates on long-term infrastructure management activity at a district level; the focus is on strengthening technical capacity and inter-governmental coordination to facilitate associated planning, implementation and monitoring.

While the current governance system relies on each sphere of government to align its plans with the other spheres, especially in strategic infrastructure investment, a more efficient approach would be to have all three spheres of government working together on a joint strategic alignment platform. A manifestation of the current situation is the highly inefficient utilisation of funds and resources, and even wastage. The DDM provides a platform for the situation on the ground to be scientifically tested, to ensure that the model is integrated and facilitates the realisation of all local government activities.

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) anticipates that the DDM will lead to the following outcomes:

- Communities experience seamless and consistent service delivery
- Communities experience living in functional and vibrant places
- All plans and budgets across the state are based on a shared understanding of district/metro challenges, dynamics and opportunities using IDPs and Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) as the base
- All plans and budgets follow agreed projections, targets and sustainable spatial growth patterns of districts and metros; and
- Priorities in the National Development Plan (NDP) and Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) are "localised" (COGTA 2020).

The DDM intervention raises broad governance, economic and social questions:

- How are the interests of residents and communities reflected in long-term infrastructure planning, whether via IDPs, Built Environment Performance Plans (BEPPs), SDIPs, or similar local and district government participatory processes?
- How could community involvement in monitoring be supported and sustained in implementing long-term projects?

- How could the support of the private sector, overseas aid agencies and non-state actors (including local government networks and associations) be enabled and facilitated appropriately and transparently?
- What data and indicators were used for planning and monitoring (in the district, provincial and national spheres of government)?
- How are the NDP, Provincial Development Strategy and the DDM integrated?

With these and other questions in mind, the DDM itself requires further review and interrogation to ascertain its anticipated benefits and capacity for minimising potential risks. Against this backdrop, the study includes an exploration of what other countries have done in terms of governance at the district level.

1.2. Objective of the study

The study's primary objective was to assess the implementation of the recently introduced DDM in South Africa in the three piloted municipalities in the Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. To achieve this objective, the research team sought to:

- Draw on regional and international experiences as case studies to inform the successful implementation of the DDM
- Conduct a desktop and an empirical study of the practical workings of the DDM to determine how it responds to service delivery and developmental issues in a concerted and coherent manner within the three piloted municipalities under investigation; and
- Propose policy options and recommendations to inform the implementation of the DDM in response to the developmental local government mandate.

The research was designed to be of strategic value to the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency, COGTA, and the South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA).

1.3. Scope of the study

The primary research conducted for the study covers three piloted municipalities in the Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces – Waterberg, O.R. Tambo and eThekwini municipalities, respectively – to ascertain whether and how the DDM facilitates the response to service delivery and

other local government challenges. While the study is limited to these three provinces, it has the potential to be scaled up to the other six provinces once the DDM is applied nationally.

The locations of the three pilot municipalities are illustrated in the map in Figure 1.

Source: https://municipalities.co.za
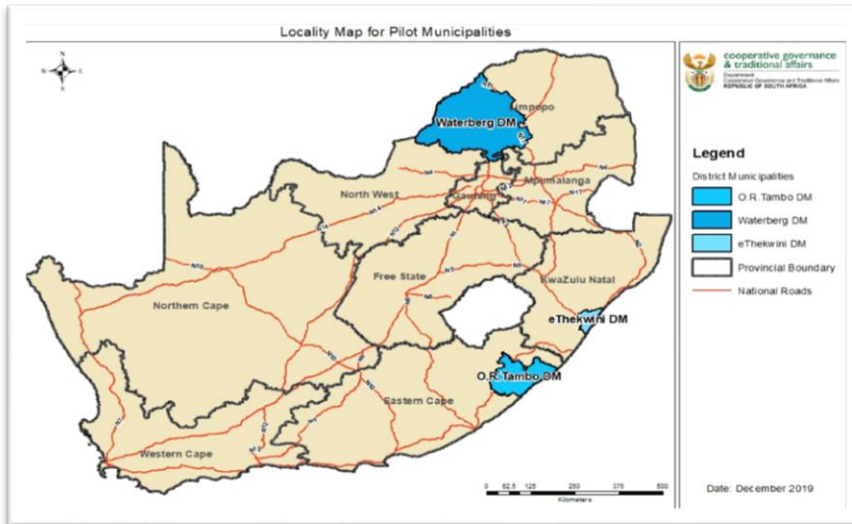
Figure 1: Municipalities in which the DDM was piloted

Figures 2, 3 and 4 show the geographical compositions of the selected municipalities in greater detail.

Source: https://municipalities.co.za
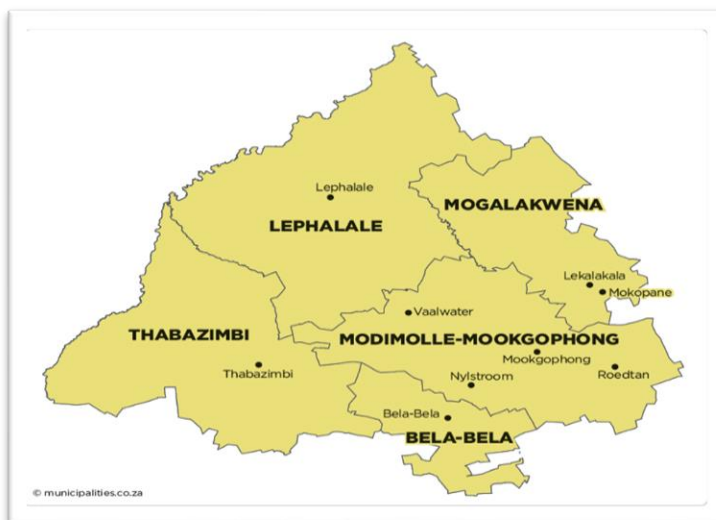
Figure 2: Waterberg District Municipality

Source: https://municipalities.co.za

Figure 3: O.R. Tambo District Municipality

Source: *https://municipalities.co.za*

Figure 4: eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality

1.4 Structure of the review

The review is structured as follows. Section 2 sets out the methodology used for the research. Section 3 reviews the South African development policy framework. Section 4 considers the IGR context within which the DDM is located, providing important contextual information for a study of the DDM model. Section 5 describes the status quo of local government in South Africa. Section 6 outlines municipal service delivery challenges in the country. Section 7 locates the argument for a DDM in South Africa

7

against the backdrop of a comparative analysis of similar models elsewhere in the world. Section 8 reviews the literature that might provide a basis for developing a framework for monitoring and evaluating the DDM in South Africa. Section 9 presents the findings of the primary research, while Section 10 discusses emerging issues from the empirical and desk-top analyses. Section 11, which presents conclusions and recommendations, concludes the review.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the methodological approach adopted for the study and the reasons behind its selection.

2.1 Research design

The research design chosen for this study comprised three methods:

1. A review of the context within which the DDM is situated: the South African development policy framework; the current local government landscape in South Africa; the IGR framework in South Africa; and service delivery challenges besetting the country
2. An investigation into why South Africa needs a DDM in the context of a review of the literature on district development models in other countries; and
3. Case studies of three municipalities in which the DDM has been implemented.

The findings from these methods were triangulated to provide for a balanced approach to the study.

The primary research component of the study, as outlined earlier, was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research enables researchers to question pre-existing variables and establish and formulate concepts that contribute to the understanding of a research phenomenon (Aspers and Corte 2019: 155). The selection of the qualitative research method for this study was based on the strengths of this type of methodology – in this instance, an inquiry-based approach that allows researchers to take an open-ended view whilst enabling participants to raise matters that are most important to them (see Choy 2014).

2.1.1. Case study method

The primary research component of the study was conducted across three different provinces – KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Limpopo – the selected municipalities within these provinces constituting the three cases under investigation. A purposive sampling approach was used to select key informants, targeting officials and key stakeholders who had played a role in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the DDM. Participants were recruited based on their insight and knowledge of the model.

For this study, a total of fourteen qualitative interviews were conducted across the three study sites. Interviews were conducted with district municipal officials, representatives from key stakeholder groupings such as SALGA, LGSETA and COGTA, and municipal councillors who had been involved with the implementation of the DDM. The interviews were conducted over six months. The multiple case study method allowed for a comparative analysis of the success of DDM implementation.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing for a diversity of opinions to be expressed without restricting a respondent to a particular set of questions. A team of three researchers conducted interviews across the three provinces, each researcher being responsible for contacting key informants and for setting up and conducting interviews within their assigned provinces. Figure 5 illustrates the methodological approach adopted.
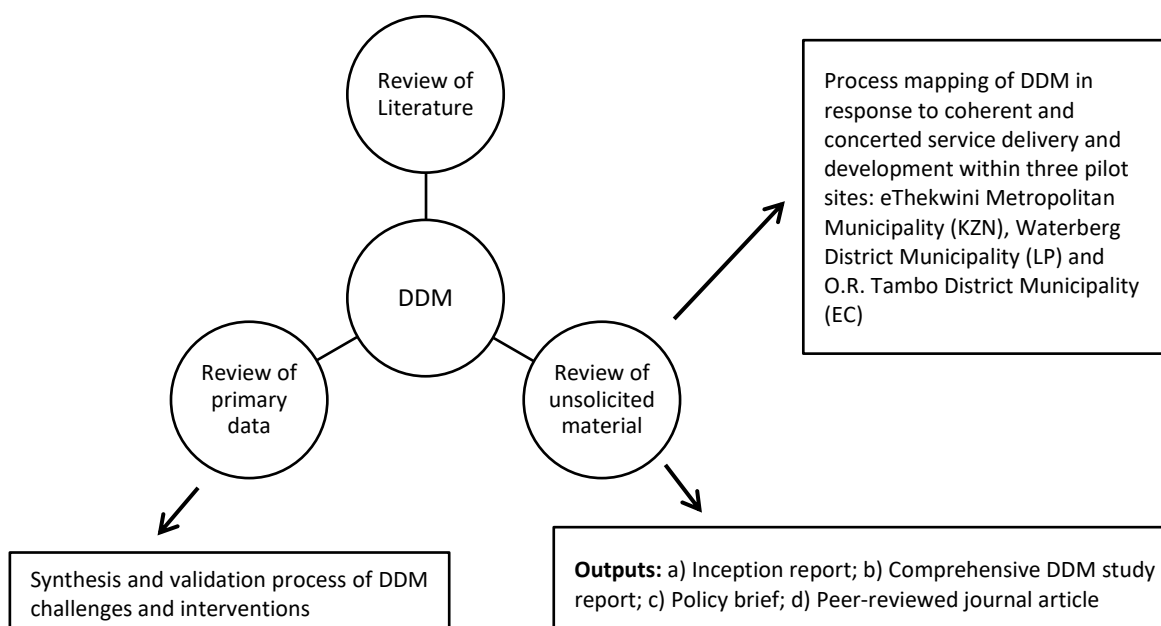
Figure 5: Methodological approach

Interviews were conducted with officials from the following departments and agencies:

1. SALGA
2. COGTA
3. District municipality officials
4. LGSETA
5. DPME
6. Community members and civil society organisations; and
7. Councillors.

Table 1 shows the stakeholders interviewed in the three provinces and the researchers assigned to them.

Table 1: Stakeholders interviewed for the DDM study, by province

Interviewer	Stakeholder
Limpopo	
Researcher One	SALGA Limpopo
	Councillor: Waterberg Municipality
	LGSETA Limpopo
	Member of the traditional community
Researcher Two	Waterberg Municipality officials
KwaZulu- Natal	
Researcher Two	DBSA
	eThekwini Municipality
	Councillor
Researcher Three	eThekwini Head of Strategy
Eastern Cape	
Researcher Three	COGTA (national)
	Presidency (GTAC)
	Academic (Thinc Foundation)
	SALGA (national)
	Eastern Cape Water Caucus

2.1.2. Ethics of research

When conducting research, especially research that involves human interaction, observing ethical protocols is critical. Ethics in research involves preventing harm (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden 2001: 93). To accommodate this concern, an ethics application was submitted to the HSRC Research Ethics Committee outlining the various steps to be taken by the research team to ensure that all ethical protocols would be observed. This included the submission of research instruments; a detailed plan

of how the privacy and confidentiality of participants would be protected – including the legislative prescripts contained in the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA); and an outline of any potential risks that study participants would need to be informed of.

2.2. Limitations and challenges encountered in conducting the research

Accessing stakeholders proved to be an arduous task as many of them were unable to honour scheduled appointments for interviews. In addition, given that most councillors had been recently appointed in the wake of the 2021 local government elections, a substantial number of them were not aware of the DDM as they had either just joined the district municipality without any prior experience or had left their roles as municipal councillors and expressed no interest in participating in the study.

To secure interviews, the research team travelled to the three sites and had in-person engagements with the relevant officials. Thereafter, appointments were scheduled to explain the purpose of the study and its relevance to the municipality, and interviews were conducted. Although this was a lengthy process, establishing a relationship with officials and presenting the study to them before the site visits for interviews enabled the research team to successfully conduct interviews.

O.R. Tambo was the most challenging district in which to access officials. Working with the COGTA and DSI-DDM committee, the research team managed to secure interviews with O.R. Tambo officials and councillors in Port St Johns; but because this meeting was cancelled on the day (apparently because officials working on the DDM were not comfortable speaking to the research team without the permission of the DDM Coordinator), the research team consulted with a senior official in COGTA to provide it with O.R. Tambo DDM documentation. Analysis of the O.R. Tambo DDM implementation plan and initiatives was based on these documents.

The limitation of our data is that we did not manage to speak to all stakeholders in the municipality. We directed our focus primarily to officials who were central to the implementation of the DDM in their respective districts. The team did not have successful engagements with officials in OR Tambo as all confirmed meetings were either cancelled on the day of the meeting or officials did not honour appointments. The other challenge in OR Tambo was that meetings were disrupted while in progress as officials had too many other commitments.

The research team had meetings with senior officials in both Waterberg and eThekwini. However, the biggest challenge the team faced was that officials such as councillors and other officials who were not directly involved in DDM implementation had limited knowledge of the model. This limited knowledge became evident when researchers interacted with both community members and traditional leaders as well. Limited knowledge about the DDM is also evident in the empirical data researchers collected from the interviews.

The success of DDM implementation hinges on changes in the attitude of the municipal officials who are closest to the community or frontrunners. Based on the difficulties experienced in accessing officials, the research team amended the methodology and focused on a secondary analysis of DDM-related documents from the three pilot districts.

3.   REVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

A review of prior research on development planning shows that several key initiatives and projects have informed the South African government's approach to the eradication of poverty and inequality. Magasela's (2005: 5) review of the African National Congress (ANC) government-led initiatives and poverty research is one of the most extensive and comprehensive efforts to reflect the poverty situation in South Africa. According to Magasela (2006: 52; 2005: 15), the ANC's efforts to address poverty started well before 1994 through three key initiatives: a document entitled "Preparing to govern"; the "Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development" (PSLSD); and the "Reconstruction and Development Programme" (RDP). The main purpose of "Preparing to govern" was to provide data for policymakers to develop key social and economic policies to consolidate the newfound democracy and enhance the fight against poverty and inequality.

The PSLSD was implemented by the World Bank and South African researchers in 1993 with the main objective of providing information on the living conditions of all South Africans (Moller and Dickow 2002: 268; May and Norton 1997: 96). The PSLSD study is "generally considered as the benchmark for comprehensive poverty-related data in the country" (Magasela 2006: 52), has given rise to the very first official study on poverty in post-1994 South Africa – "Key indicators of poverty in South Africa" (Magasela 2005: 15). This study was published in 1998 by the Ministry in the Office of the President: Reconstruction and Development (Magasela 2006: 53).

The RDP had five key programmes: meeting basic needs; developing human resources; building the economy; democratising the state and society; and reorganising the state and public sector (Lodge 1999: 27; Magasela 2006: 52; The Presidency 2003: 2). The RDP was eventually replaced by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy (Everatt 2003: 83). While the RDP is seen as the general framework within which specific policies and strategies were developed, the GEAR strategy was developed to create a framework to promote an enabling macroeconomic environment for poverty eradication programmes (Bhorat 2000: 791). GEAR was decisively different from the RDP and was criticised from within the tripartite alliance and civil society as a domestic version of the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programme, where economic growth took preference over other considerations (Everatt 2003: 83).

GEAR was followed by AsgiSA (Accelerated and shared growth initiative for South Africa) in February 2006. The main objective of AsgiSA was to accelerate economic growth through joint partnerships between the government, businesses, and other major stakeholders. The Government "identified six binding constraints on growth" that severely hampered its target of halving unemployment and poverty between 2004 and 2014. These binding constraints were: 1) Deficiencies in the government's capacity; 2) The volatility of the currency; 3) Low levels of investment infrastructure and infrastructure services; 4) Shortages of suitably skilled graduates, technicians and artisans; 5) Insufficiently competitive industrial and services sectors and weak sector strategies; and 6) Inequality and marginalisation, resulting in many economically marginalised people being unable to contribute to and share in the benefits of growth and development (the Second Economy) (The Presidency 2007: 2). According to the AsgiSA 2007 Annual Report, the South African government had experienced major successes in economic growth and investment with a growth rate of more than 4.5% for four consecutive years. The report acknowledged, however, that much more needed to be done if the government wanted to achieve its ambitious objectives.

3.1. The Reconstruction and Development Programme

The RDP is "an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework. It seeks to mobilise all our people and our country's resources toward the final eradication of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial, and non-sexist future" (O'Malley 1994).

According to O'Malley (1994), six basic principles are linked together to make up the political and economic philosophy that underlies the RDP:

1.3.2 An integrated and sustainable programme: The legacy of apartheid cannot be overcome with piecemeal and uncoordinated policies. The RDP brings together strategies to harness all our resources in a coherent and purposeful effort that can be sustained into the future. These strategies will be implemented at national, provincial, and local levels by government, parastatals and organisations within civil society working within the framework of the RDP….

1.3.3 A people-driven process. The RDP is focused on our people's most immediate needs, and it relies, in turn, on their energies to drive the process of meeting these needs. Regardless of race or sex, or whether they are rural or urban, rich, or poor, the people of South Africa must together shape their future. Development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about active involvement and growing empowerment. In taking this approach we are building on the many forums, peace structures and negotiations that our people are involved in throughout the land.

1.3.4 Peace and security for all. Promoting peace and security must involve all people and must build on and expand the National Peace Initiative. Apartheid placed the security forces, police, and judicial system at the service of its racist ideology. The security forces have been unable to stem the tide of violence that has engulfed our people. To begin the process of reconstruction and development we must now establish security forces that reflect the national and gender character of our country. Such forces must be non-partisan, and professional, uphold the Constitution and respect human rights. The judicial system must reflect society's racial and gender composition and provide fairness and equality for all before the law.

1.3.5 Nation-building. … Nation-building is the basis on which to build a South Africa that can support the development of our Southern African region. Nation-building is also the basis on which to ensure that our country takes up an effective role within the world community. Only a programme that develops economic, political, and social viability can ensure our national sovereignty.

1.3.6 Link reconstruction and development. The RDP integrates growth, development, reconstruction, and redistribution into a unified programme. The key to this link is an infrastructural programme that will provide access to modern and effective services like electricity, water, telecommunications, transport, health, education, and training for all our people. This programme will both meet basic needs and open previously suppressed economic and human potential in urban and rural areas. In turn, this will lead to increased output in all sectors of the economy, and by modernising our infrastructure and human resource development, we will also enhance export capacity. Success in linking reconstruction and development is essential if we are to achieve peace and security for all.

1.3.7 Democratisation of South Africa. Minority control and privilege in every aspect of our society are the main obstructions to developing an integrated programme that unleashes all the resources of our country. Thoroughgoing democratisation of our society is, in other words, integral to the whole RDP. The RDP requires fundamental changes in the way that policy is made, and programmes are implemented. Above all, the people affected must participate in decision-making. Democratisation must begin to transform both the state and civil society. Democracy is not confined to periodic elections. It is, rather, an active process enabling everyone to contribute to reconstruction and development.

3.2. Growth, Employment and Redistribution

Mahedea (1998: 448) explains that "GEAR was essentially an economic reform programme directed towards a competitive and fast-growing economy that would create sufficient jobs for all jobseekers, a redistribution of income and opportunities in favour of the poor, a society capable of ensuring that sound health, education and other services were available to all, and an environment in which homes were safe and places of work productive."

GEAR rests on the following policy foundations:

- The fiscal discipline to prevent the resurgence of inflation and to reduce the budget deficit before borrowing as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), that is, to reduce government dissaving
- Monetary discipline and relaxation of exchange controls
- Trade and industrial policy reforms, that is, lowering import tariffs, tax, and supply-side incentives to promote competitiveness, exports and investment, and the development of, small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs)
- Public sector asset restructuring, that is, privatisation
- Public infrastructure and human capital investment; and
- Greater flexibility in collective bargaining to support competitive production and a bigger role for economic factors in wage determination.

Streak (2004: 279) contends that the GEAR raised development prospects (and was, therefore, a success) for the following reasons:

- Fiscal restraint and debt reduction in the GEAR period released resources for public investment in goods and services, particularly for the poor, both at present and in the future

- Macroeconomic adjustment and liberalisation in foreign trade and investment markets improved the environment for private sector investment in the Global South by lowering interest rates, reducing inflation, making it more predictable, lowering unit labour costs and creating a more credible macroeconomic policy; and

- Budget reform and legal reform, including the implementation of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) systems of budgeting, helped to build the capacity of the government to spend effectively on development projects.

What the DDM seeks to do differently is to stop the systematic marginalisation of black businesses and create a platform for black professionals who have always wanted to go back home and improve their villages to do just that and be part of the transformation in the development of new towns, which have higher potential for growth and job creation. This approach is reaffirmed by Baloyi (2020), who claims that the focus on small-town development must be welcomed as it does away with the habit of investment being centred in large cities, which are already developed.

3.3. The National Development Plan

The NDP is a strategic framework for addressing the socio-economic and developmental challenges confronting South Africa. The overarching goal of this plan is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality in the country by 2030. It was compiled by the National Planning Commission (NPC), which was established by President Jacob Zuma in 2010, with the mandate to:

> Take a broad, cross-cutting, independent and critical view of South Africa, to help define the South Africa we seek to achieve in 20 years and to map out a path to achieve those objectives. The commission is expected to put forward solid six research, sound evidence and clear recommendations for the government (NPC 2010: 1).

To fulfil this mandate, the NPC released a diagnostic analysis in June 2011 that highlighted the main challenges facing the country. Following extensive consultative processes, the NDP was finalised and formally adopted by the government in 2012. Matlou (2019) contends that one of the problems afflicting the NDP, as with most government-led initiatives, is the lack of implementation. For the NDP to achieve its objectives, a degree of policy consistency, resolute leadership and greater coordination between government, business and labour is required. Also, policy proposals over the past seven years have been drafted in silos and have lacked the necessary long-sightedness because the NDP has been

16

bundled up with short-sighted policy proposals. Furthermore, the country has been crippled by a critical shortage of skills, high levels of corruption, lack of accountability, inadequate legislative oversight, and a long history of blurring the lines between party and state.

However, the DDM is supposed to provide the "how to do". Conceptually it makes a lot of sense to have the DDM. The DDM fosters a practical IGR mechanism to plan, budget and implements jointly to provide a coherent government for the people in the Republic; solve the problems created by silos, duplication, and fragmentation; and maximise impact and align plans and resources at the country's disposal through the development of "One District, One Plan and One Budget".

4. IGR AS THE PLATFORM FOR THE DDM IN SOUTH AFRICA

The DDM model as an implementation tool is located within the IGR system. An account of the origins and evolution of the IGR system in South Africa provides important contextual information for a study of the DDM model.

4.1 Origins of IGR

To understand the current system of IGR in South Africa, it is necessary to trace the colonial institutional politico-administrative systems of Dutch and British colonial rule in South Africa. The Dutch ruled and controlled the Cape settlement in its initial stages of establishment; but by 1806 the British had taken control (Wilson and Thompson 1969; in Kahn et al. 2011: 48). The Dutch administrative system was based on the system in the Netherlands. British anglicisation policy resulted in Dutch migration further inland, where Boer Republics were established in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal (Parsons 1982; Wilson and Thompson 1969, cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 48).

British conquest expanded to include the Natal colony after the defeat and collapse of the Zulu empire. The British colonies copied the Westminster system, which comprised a central government (appointed by the British government) and locally elected municipalities (Ismail *et al.* 1997; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 48). In the Boer Republics, there was no structured system of local government. For both the Dutch and British imperial settlers IGR were centralised and local authorities became mere agents of the central government (Tapscott 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 48). Municipalities only exercised powers that were delegated to them by the central government. To some extent, the British and Dutch settler administrations influenced local government. However, IGR were shaped

administratively in 1910 when the British colonies and the Boer Republics were united to form the Union of South Africa (Welsh 1999).

4.2 IGR in the Union of South Africa

The current system of IGR in South Africa was influenced by the Act that led to the establishment of the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1910, the Union of South Africa Act of 1910. Thereafter, the British colonies and Boer Republics were amalgamated after the defeat of the Boers in the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) (Selby 1973; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 49). Four provinces were established by the Act within the former British colonies and Boer Republics. Section 70 of the Act created provincial councils in these provinces. The Act brought municipalities under the authority of the provincial councils and, thus, provinces had to undertake the supervision, development, and extension of municipalities (Hill 1964; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 49). Municipalities were placed under provinces, provinces under the union national government, and the union government was under the control of the British monarch. The Act emphasised national legislation, which took precedence over provincial legislation in the event of any form of conflict.

4.2.1 Managing the three spheres of government under the Union of South Africa

The current system of IGR in South Africa has much in common with the Union of South Africa government. The Act of 1910 established three spheres of government – central, provincial and local spheres – with limited powers for lower tiers of government. After the merger of the colonies and two Boer Republics South Africa established a unitary system with some federal characteristics (Worrall 1971; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 51). Provincial governments were established in a bid to accommodate the former British colonies and the Boer Republic in terms of their political interests. The Act introduced a form of decentralisation of power by giving some delegated powers to the provinces to decrease intra-provincial rivalry and foster unity. Even though provinces were placed under the central government, they had the power to pass some ordinances (Omar-Cooper 1994; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 51).

4.2.2 Central control over lower levels of government

The central government had absolute control over the provinces (Kahn et al. 2011: 52). Control was attained through the appointment of an administrative representative of the Union government at both lower tiers of government. The appointee represented the central authority in IGR during the

settler apartheid epoch (Kahn et al. 2011). The appointee was a member of the provincial executive committee; but unlike other committee members, who were elected, the administrator was appointed and delegated by the central government (Kahn et al. 2011). The centrally elected administrator had vast powers, which included being the chief executive officer of the province and the representative of the Union government at the provincial level (Kahn et al. 2011).

The central government appointee could also be mandated by the Union government to act on matters not delegated to the provincial council (Kahn et al. 2011). The appointed representative chaired the executive committee of the province, and no key issues could be discussed in his absence. Provinces reduced the concentration of tasks by the central government (Pampallis 1991; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 52), dealing with service delivery issues including education (but excluding higher education), roads, bridges, local government, and charitable institutions.

Provincial councils had no control over the centrally appointed administrator, who could be removed only by the Union president. Provinces had no authority but rubber-stamped decisions or legislation of the central government (Tapscott 1998). According to Selby (1973) and Tapscott (1998) (cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 52), this situation made IGR a technocratic enterprise focused on the coordination of actions rather than balancing power between the three spheres of government. As such, provinces were viewed as puppets of the central government since they had no proper decision-making powers.

The appointed provincial administrator was a form of control by the Union government over provinces and played a quite different role from the current provincial Head. Intergovernmental fiscal relations were skewed, as provinces depended on the Union government financially. In the first three years of the Union government, provinces were fully financed by the Union government (Walker 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 53). In the 1970s the settler colonial government was responsible for 88% of provincial budgets and in the 1977/1978 financial year, the central government's contribution to provincial government was almost a quarter of its budget (Walker 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 53).

In the Union of South Africa, local municipalities constituted the third tier of government. Municipalities were an extension of the provincial and central governments. Local municipalities depended on a proclamation by the provincial administrator. All municipal by-laws had to be approved by the Union government appointee, who could amend or repeal them (Davenport 1991). Local municipalities were under the strict control of the central and provincial governments.

IGR in the British colonies and Boer Republics was a centralised system where lower levels were "agents" of the central government (Tapscott 1998). The dominance of the central government in IGR continued under the apartheid government. The Bantu Authorities Act, of 1951 was enacted to establish self-governing homelands for black South Africans (Horrell 1970; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 57). Homeland authorities were not completely independent of the central government: they also functioned as agents of the central government (Horrell 1970; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 57).

In the 1960s, the apartheid government made efforts to restructure the system of IGR, owing to pressure from liberal cities like Durban and Cape Town (Boulle 1994; cited in Khan 2011: 59). A tri-cameral parliament that included Indians and Coloureds was established; but resistance to this system was intensified locally and internationally, which resulted in negotiations over a new trajectory (Worden 1994; cited in Kahn 2011: 61).

4.3 IGR in the post-apartheid period

After 1994 the promotion of IGR and the cooperative government was seen as important to the new democratically elected government of South Africa (Malan 2005). Section 41 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) stipulates that:

An Act of Parliament must –

(a) establish or provide for processes, structures and institutions to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations; and
(b) provide for appropriate mechanisms and procedures to facilitate the settlement of intergovernmental disputes.

The principle of cooperative government mandates the three spheres of government to work cooperatively and yet independently. The IGR Framework Act 13 of 2005 provided specific guidelines to the three spheres of government in terms of implementing policy and legislation; establishing structures; managing conflict; monitoring and evaluation; and managing the general conduct of IGR (Edwards 2008). After colonialism and apartheid, structures and forums were established to enable IGR in South Africa. These are: the President's Coordination Council, which assists in improving relations and coordination among the national and provincial governments; a committee of Ministers and Members of the Executive Councils (MINMEC) to discuss matters of national interest with provinces and with the organised local government within a specific functional area (Mubangizi 2005);

and the Forum for South African Directors-General (FOSAD), which enables interaction and engagements between departments on best practice. These forums include provincial and district forums. All these forums play a significant part in the IGR system of the country and influence district development in the local sphere of government. As opposed to the apartheid centralised system, the current local government system is decentralised. The DDM reinforces the devolution of local affairs but with the provincial and national governments also in play.

4.4 The concept and definition of IGR in South Africa

In the 1960s, Anderson (1960; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 4) defined IGR as an important body of activities or interactions occurring between governmental units of all types and levels within a political system. The IGR concept featured in public administration vocabulary in the United States of America (US) in the 1930s. To prevent socio-economic problems precipitated by the Great Depression, which was propelled by the First World War, the US adopted the New Deal policy, which insisted on greater IGR for socio-economic development at the local level of the federal government (Maud and Wood 1974; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 4).

Public servants and academics use the concept of IGR; but the definition is an arena of various contrasting views (Wright 1982; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 4). The general view is that IGR depicts how the different spheres of government relate to and engage with one another in issues of governance at various levels (Botha 1996; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 4).

Maud and Wood (1974; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 5) propound that "the concept of IGR has a broader perspective which includes interventions, directions and control by higher levels of government, and consultation among all levels of government both horizontally and vertically." These elements do not always improve or advance cooperation and coordination; instead, they are often exploited to either reinforce the subjugation of one level of government to another or promote dependence of lower levels of government on higher levels (Kahn et al. 2011).

IGR is classified into constitutional, political, and financial relations as postulated by Boraine (1995; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 5). These references to the constitutional dimension of IGR are crucial because "the constitution in most instances is a product of the government legislature and by this fact all levels of government are subject to central governments" (Kahn et al. 2011: 5). While these constitutional and legal provisions are significant, they are almost always supplemented and supported by semi-formal or informal interactions, which often play a decisive role in shaping IGR

(Boraine 1995; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 5). IGR promotes and enables cooperative government and decision-making by ensuring that policies and activities in all spheres of government encourage efficient and effective service delivery for citizens (Edwards 2008). IGR relates to political, financial and institutional arrangements for interactions among the three spheres of government and organs of state within each sphere (Edwards 2008).

In sum, the purpose of IGR is (i) to promote and facilitate cooperative decision-making, (ii) to coordinate and align priorities, budgets, policies and activities across interrelated functions, and (iii) to ensure a smooth flow of information within and between government and communities to enhance the implementation of policies and programmes (Baatjies 2010). The South African government holds hope in IGR albeit with contemporary obstacles experienced in all spheres of government (Jones & Thomas 2007). As IGR is meant to engender cooperative governance to ensure productive and competent service delivery (Edwards, 2008), effective and efficient service delivery in South Africa depends on a stable and effective system of IGR (Baatjies, 2010).

4.5 Classifications and approaches to IGR

There are various classifications and approaches to IGR, which can be divided into four distinct categories:

1. IGR (relations between government institutions).
2. Intra-governmental relations (relations within governmental institutions).
3. Extra-governmental relations (relations between the government and the community); and
4. Interstate / international relations (relations between states) (Hattingh 1998).

It is important to look at the different forms of IGR to understand what each form entails (Hattingh 1998). National, provincial and local governments and government institutions are based on *vertical IGR* in South Africa. Under vertical IGR, authority and power are key, and the national government possesses more authority and power than the provincial and local governments. Provincial and local governments are subservient to the national interests and powers, hence the dependence of the provincial and local spheres on national government financially, politically and administratively. Hattingh (1998: 23) notes that "while it is true that local authorities depend on higher authorities, this takes the form of interdependence between authorities (which means there is a reciprocal relationship) and this gives negotiating power to lower authorities." Levy and Tapscott (2001) demystified the presumption that the national government will always dominate lower levels of

government since the relations between different spheres of government are shaped by different regimes and by the Constitution.

Horizontal IGR refers to relations between governmental authorities in the same sphere of government and at the same level – for instance, relations between the nine provincial authorities and between the district and local municipalities and Metro municipalities. In the same vein, relations between government departments or agencies that operate at the same level are considered to constitute horizontal IGR, which helps with the coordination of governmental programmes of development and service delivery. The DDM is an example of a government programme that is intricately linked to horizontal IGR in South Africa.

There are some key differences between vertical IGR and horizontal IGR: (i) there is no formal concept of power in horizontal IGR, while in vertical relations power is a central concept; (ii) in horizontal IGR there is no – or there should be no – the difference in the negotiating abilities of parties in IGR, while in vertical relations the central government is in a stronger negotiating position because of its vast resources compared to provincial and local government; and (iii) horizontal IGR is generally based on interdependence while in vertical IGR the national level tends to dominate (Kahn et al. 2011). Levy and Tapscott (2001: 17) maintain that "vertical IGR is dominated by resources such as policy and finance while horizontal IGR focuses on information and physical assistance". The next section depicts the various approaches to IGR in South Africa.

4.6 Approaches to IGR in South Africa

Hattingh (1998) postulated four categories of approach to the study of IGR, namely constitutional/legal, democratic, financial, and normative. Each of these is elaborated upon below.

4.6.1   The financial approach

In 1910, the Union of South Africa took a financial approach to IGR because of the perpetual use of commissions and committees in investigating financial engagements between the central, provincial and local governments. Section 214(1) of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa stipulates that an Act of Parliament be initiated for the equal distribution of revenue among the three spheres. This section of the Constitution resulted in the enactment of the Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations Act (97 of 1997) (IFRA), with the aim of coordination "between national, provincial, and local spheres of government on fiscal, budgetary and financial matters" and the prescription of "a process

for the determination of an equitable sharing of revenue raised nationally" (IFRA, 1997; Preamble). This Act also provides for the establishment of the Budget Council and the Budget Forum. Intergovernmental fiscal relations (IGFR) regulate the financial resources among the three spheres in South Africa. In IGFR it would be misleading to exclude other forms of relations as they are equally critical in IGR (Hattingh 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 7).

4.6.2   The democratic approach

Autonomy and autonomous operations of lower spheres of government are debatable issues in a democracy. Most regional governments in democracies pride themselves on the extent of the autonomy they have constitutionally. Thus, the democratic approach focuses on provincial and local government autonomy. The democratic approach encourages self-determination and greater autonomy from national or central government as well as greater decentralisation for purposes of greater autonomy (Kahn et al. 2011). Autonomy depends on the type of regime, constitution, or government. Federal governments differ from unitary states in their approach to autonomy. The autonomy they grant regions and local governments varies with their extent of democracy. As Hattingh (1998) puts it, "In the real world, the notion of autonomy should be understood as the measure of autonomy given to provincial and local institutions by the central government" (Hattingh 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 6). The democratic approach has been criticised, as "the emphasis placed by the democratic approach on autonomy is too restrictive to create an adequately holistic view of IGR" (Hattingh 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 6). The idea of increased autonomy may in some cases lead to separatism in countries with weak security and administrative apparatuses. The DDM model functions across the three spheres of government and the One Plan approach implies that the plan will cut across other autonomous spheres of government including districts and metro municipalities.

According to Roux (1997: 171), "in the 18th and 19th centuries, the federalist movement in the United States advocated the constitutional approach and accepted the existing hierarchy of governments as a constitutional fact". The Constitution determines the scope and extent of IGR in South Africa. The constitutional/legal approach enables structural and hierarchic analysis of the Constitution and legislation concerning the three spheres of government. "The result of such analysis would be a lengthy list of governmental bodies and structures with a comprehensive description of the duties and powers of every political office-bearer within each institution" (Hattingh 1998; cited in Kahn et al. 2011: 6).

IGR must adhere to the constitutional provisions and human rights concerned with service delivery, such as water, sanitation, housing, education and health. The 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is the supreme law. Section 41 (2) of the Constitution requires that an Act of Parliament be enacted to provide for structures and institutions to promote and facilitate IGR. In the case of *Executive Council of the Western Cape Legislature and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others* (1995 (4) SA 877 (22 September 1995)) the dispute was about some sections of the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998. The Western Cape provincial administration as the applicant in the case argued that certain sections of the Act violated Chapter 7 of the Constitution, which deals with local municipalities.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE STATUS QUO

5.1 The current local government landscape

The DDM is a response to challenges in local development planning and implementation. COGTA has identified the following challenges the DDM is expected to resolve:

1. The lack of coherence in planning, budgeting and implementation remains a challenge.
2. Sector departments' involvement in integrated development planning processes is very weak.
3. Constant changes in priorities and programmes are not driven by development logic and long-term outcomes.
4. There is a need to shift from alignment to a joint plan approach.
5. IGR mechanisms have been poorly utilised to enable joint work and integration.
6. Government plans lack a strategic and long-term approach and there is limited localisation of the NDP and MTSF.
7. Growth and development strategies and spatial development frameworks do not always have buy-in from all spheres; and
8. Integration needs a performance management structure that is expressed in an intergovernmental plan (COGTA 2020).

5.2 Local government post-1994

The White Paper on Local Government 1998 (RSA 1998) identified a plethora of challenges faced by local government which continue to characterise local government. These challenges are:

1. Skewed settlement patterns

2. Extreme concentration of taxable economic resources

3. Huge backlogs in service infrastructure

4. Creating viable municipal institutions for dense rural settlements

5. Great spatial separations and disparities between towns/townships /urban areas

6. Entrenched modes of decision making

7. Inability to attract private investment and lack of capacity; and

8. Poor relations with communities.

In a report entitled "Towards a 25-year review 1994-2019" (RSA 2019), the government stated that for 25 years there had been a focus on providing water and sanitation, housing, electricity, social support, education and health care to all South Africans as part of restoring human dignity and in compliance with the mandate of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The government had sought to build an economy that provided work and opportunity for all in pursuit of the dream of a new and equal society. At the dawn of democracy, the focus was on social infrastructure, which saw a "service delivery" orientation as the state invested heavily in building houses, connecting residents to the national power grid, expanding sanitation systems, and providing other social infrastructures such as schools, clinics and hospitals. The local government as the closest structure to the people carried the most responsibility for meeting the needs of all who live in South Africa (RSA 2019).

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) mandates the local government to:

1. Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities

2. Ensure the provision of services to the communities in a sustainable manner

3. Promote social and economic development

4. Promote a safe and healthy environment; and

5. Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government.

According to the 1998 White Paper on Local Government, the local government must promote the Bill of Rights, which reflects the national values of human dignity, equality and freedom, and must uphold the principles enshrined in the Constitution. Globally, the term "service delivery" is a popular phrase used to denote the distribution of basic needs and services, notably housing, water and sanitation,

land, electricity and infrastructure (Madumo 2015: 154). However, in the South African context, the delivery and ongoing upkeep of these basic services have proved to be unreliable at times, inconveniencing and endangering local communities. Municipalities across the globe are critical to enhancing development and facilitating growth, and at the same time making sure that there is ongoing progress towards the attainment of socio-economic rights as per the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 (ICESCR) and the sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Ndevu and Muller 2017: 14).

The global vision is to develop a public governance system that can transform international consensus into local deeds and concrete results for local communities (United Nations 2013: 1). The local sphere of government within a defined legal framework provides a formal base for coordinating local initiatives and activities. It also develops a linkage between local, national, continental and international goals, and in doing so is pivotal to advancing local development (UNDP; cited in Reddy 2016: 339). The concept of developmental local government was first alluded to in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 as provided for in Section 153 (a), which states that municipalities must structure and manage their administration, budgeting and planning processes in such a way that priority is given to basic needs and the promotion of the social and economic development of the community (RSA 1996).

The slow pace and lack of quality services have fueled protests all over the country and have brought local government under the spotlight. These protests have been characterised by high levels of violence, xenophobic attacks, looting and police brutality. The dissatisfaction with service delivery is particularly visible in informal settlements and metropolitan areas in the Western Cape, Kwazulu-Natal and Gauteng. There is also a large service delivery gap between rural and urban areas, specifically in the former homeland areas of Limpopo, the Eastern Cape, North West and KwaZulu-Natal (Bohler-Muller, Davids, Roberts, Kanyane, Struwig, Masiya and Nomdo 2016: 4). It is stated by SALGA (2015) that "local government is the key site of service delivery and development and is central to the entire transformative project of the new South Africa." This means that local government is the sphere that engages with communities and tends to their needs. In an endeavour to resolve service delivery challenges, the government has prioritised local government reforms to promote decentralisation (Bohler-Muller et al. 2016: 4). Since 1993 various phases have marked the transition to a sophisticated sphere of governance. The first phase of the local government transition process was heralded by the implementation of the Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993 (Reddy (2019: 243). This was followed by elections in 1995/96, which constituted the second phase. Three core pieces of legislation – Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998; Local

Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998; and Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 – brought a degree of closure to the process in the form of the December 2000 elections, thereby ending the transitional period and the final, third, phase. This legislation, along with the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 and the Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004, was promulgated to determine the boundaries of the new municipalities and provide the structural, political and functional institutions for metropolitan, district and local municipalities, with the latter two tiers sharing jurisdiction over rural areas (Bohler-Muller et al. 2016: 4).

In 1994, the national department responsible for local government was known as the Department of Constitutional Development. In 1996, the name was changed to the Department of Provincial and Local Government, with an emphasis on the enactment of the provisions of key service delivery clauses of the Constitution, and later (on 1 December 2009) changed to COGTA. The enacted provisions culminated in the 1998 White Paper on Local Government. The signing of the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, in 1996, positioned local government as the main sphere of the government delivery system and the heart of poverty eradication initiatives (Mogale 2003: 227), affirming that local government is the sphere of government that interacts most closely with communities.

Local government institutions are responsible for the delivery of services and infrastructure, which are critical for the well-being of citizens, and are tasked with ensuring growth and development to enhance community participation and accountability (Masiya, Davids & Mangai 2019: 22). The Municipal Systems Act (RSA 2000) provides that "municipal services must be equitable and accessible and should be provided in a manner that is conducive to the prudent, economic, efficient and effective use of available resources and the improvement of standards of quality over time; be financially sustainable; be environmentally sustainable; and be regularly reviewed with a view to upgrading, extension and improvement."

Atkinson (2002: 5) states that municipalities are amongst the foremost developmental agencies within the South African system of government; and according to Koma (2010: 112), the South African government has devoted much attention and resources to the local sphere of government to ensure its efficacy in line with constitutional imperatives. The mandate for local government is also succinctly contained in the preamble to the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998:

> A vision of democratic and developmental local government in which municipalities fulfil their constitutional obligations to ensure sustainable, effective and efficient municipal services, promote social and economic development, and encourage a safe and healthy environment

by working with communities in creating environments and human settlements in which all our people can lead uplifted and dignified lives.

The 1998 White Paper on Local Government states that "Developmental local government is a local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives." South African municipalities must adhere to the principles of good developmental local governance and comply with an inclusive statutory and regulatory framework that governs service delivery. The White Paper also asserts that "basic services enhance the quality of life of citizens and increase their social and economic opportunities by promoting health and safety, facilitating access to work, to education, to recreation and stimulating new productive activities" (RSA 1998: 92).

Developmental local government is intended to have a major impact on the daily lives of citizens (White Paper, 1998). The White Paper envisages a future in which developmental local government plays a significant role in representing communities, protecting human rights and meeting basic needs (RSA 1998). Developmental local government has four critical characteristics:

1. Maximising social development and economic growth
2. Integration and development
3. Democratising development; and
4. Leading and learning (RSA 1998).

Developmental local government, moreover, is uniquely positioned to combine empowerment and redistribution in several concrete programmes – for instance:

1. Service subsidies
2. Support to community organisations in the form of finances, etc.
3. Linkage policies; and
4. Socio-economic development and community empowerment (RSA 1998).

In a media briefing following the national assessment of local government, COGTA identified the following as some of the factors contributing to the state of distress that municipalities find themselves in:

1. Tensions between the political and administrative interface

2. Poor ability of many councillors to deal with the demands of local government in terms of the provision of services

3. Insufficient separation of powers between political parties and the municipality; and

4. Inadequate accountability measures and support systems and resources for local democracy; and

5. Poor compliance with the legislative and regulatory frameworks for municipalities (COGTA 2009).

6. **MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES**

Over the past fifteen years, South Africa has transformed its local government system from an illegitimate, racist institution into a democratic institution with a developmental mandate. Since 2000, a new generation of municipalities, led by democratically elected councils, has constituted the local government system. Local government has made tremendous contributions to the impressive record of extending service delivery to marginalised groups in South Africa (Visser 2010: 87). Paradoxically, the challenges remain daunting. Public perceptions of local government are negative. Muller et al. (2016) used empirical data derived from the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) to illustrate this point, finding that dissatisfaction with basic services tends to be higher in low-income areas. Many communities and residents see their municipalities as a locus of under-performance, corruption and inaccessibility (COGTA 2009: 11). In most developing countries, including South Africa, service delivery is a key area of concern for municipal governance (Islam and Mahmud 2015). This emanates from citizens' quest to derive satisfactory services from their municipalities and the calls for municipal governments to respond to expanding and more complex concerns such as economic development and climate change while continuing to face serious challenges in delivering basic public services.

According to van der Waldt (2014: 2): "There is a need to improve cooperative governance and developmental impact across the country. This should be done in alignment with municipalities' integrated development plans and service delivery outcomes, as well as operational plans for implementing the budget. Since all spheres of government are under continual pressure to improve performance and the quality-of-service delivery," there is a need to consider how inter-governmental cooperation and performance relate to municipal action. Local governments in many parts of the world have failed to deliver services to the community because of inefficiencies caused by a lack of capacity among local government officials (Grindle 2007). The Presidency (2015) has highlighted that more than 78% of municipalities in South Africa have failed to perform all twelve of their mandated

functions. The Presidency report also found that approximately 50% of municipalities performed fewer than half of their constitutional functions. All these factors reinforce the notion that municipalities struggle to deliver on their mandate.

It has also been observed that: "The reality in South African cities, towns and rural areas is far from ideal. Many communities remain divided. Millions of people live in dire poverty, isolated from services and opportunities. The previous local government system did extraordinarily little to help those with the greatest needs. The current transitional system has not yet been able to do much to reverse these long-standing patterns of inequity and unmet human needs" (RSA 1998: 11).

For example, in 2009, a considerable number of municipalities were still in distress and municipal service delivery was in a crisis. Nationally 46% of households (5.7 million people) did not have universal access to water, sanitation, refuse removal and electricity (that is, access to basic and higher levels of service in respect of all four services combined) (RSA 2019). Service delivery in the context of local government comprises the provision of municipal goods, benefits and activities that are deemed public to enhance the quality of life in local jurisdictions. The 25-year review (RSA 2019) states that there are serious systemic issues underlying service delivery, which include: duplication of structures and functions between spheres and districts and local municipalities; misaligned or inappropriate devolution of functions; municipalities performing functions that are not their core competencies; unfunded or under-funded mandates (for example, library and primary health services); and the impact of amalgamations. One lesson from the last 20 years of consolidating local government is that combining two dysfunctional or distressed municipalities does not necessarily yield a viable municipality.

The 25-year review (RSA 2019) observes that while considerable progress has been made with the level of investment and the stock of new infrastructure, several challenges with infrastructure rollouts have been encountered. These include, among others: weak planning and limited integration of projects; slow rollouts due to capacity or financing constraints; poor technical specifications and inadequate system engineering processes; underspending of budgets coupled with poor maintenance of infrastructure; inadequate local community benefits from infrastructure development in a specific area; uneven cooperation between spheres of government; corruption in state procurement; and collusion among construction firms, which has increased the cost of infrastructure delivery.

Municipalities face immense challenges in developing sustainable settlements which meet the needs and improve the quality of life of local communities. To meet these challenges, municipalities will need to understand the various dynamics operating within their communities, develop a concrete vision for

the area, and implement strategies for realising and financing that vision in partnership with other stakeholders. The local sphere of government is currently faced with critical challenges regarding the effective and sustainable provision of basic services, particularly concerning administrative capacity to drive service delivery and effective implementation of government policies and programmes. The efficacy of local government will be achieved only through the implementation of appropriate and sound strategies.

6.1 Structure and finance

Reddy (2010: 82) outlines several structural and financial challenges that have impacted negatively on service delivery since the ushering in of the post-1994 local government dispensation. One of these is unfunded mandates, where municipalities are not funded or receive extraordinarily little funding for services such as housing, library services, tourism, and welfare services.

Financial viability is a challenge in a much broader sense. The demarcation of municipal boundaries has resulted in some municipalities not having an economic base to be financially viable (Reddy 2010: 82). As a result, many municipalities are heavily dependent on grants from other spheres of government. Moreover, there tends to be a legal compliance-driven governmental approach as opposed to a service delivery one. Quite often, first-world standards and expectations face third-world competencies, resources and needs. It has been difficult for municipalities to comply with prescripts. Sound fiscal discipline is not compatible with deficient political leadership. If "cadre deployment" is practised and municipalities are forced to practise financial discipline, the financial future of municipalities will remain bleak. Finally, because of high levels of unemployment and poverty, municipalities are increasingly expected to stimulate local economic development (LED). However, there is typically no money for LED projects, meaning that government procurement is central to how local enterprises sustain themselves. Additional work would need to be made available to emerging service providers through the supply chain management system if true transformation were to be achieved (Reddy and Wallis 2015).

Nonetheless, municipalities can contribute to establishing an investment-friendly environment, such as through cheap land, concessionary tariffs, and rate or tax holidays (Zybrands 2012). All these expectations and challenges have been high on the municipal agenda for over a decade; the government has attempted to respond to these issues, but with limited success. It requires firm commitment, a certain level of seriousness, and passion by the key role players for an investment-friendly environment to be achieved.

According to Reddy (2016: 8) policies that impact budgets that are poorly formulated and implemented, more specifically on debt collection and credit control, and the non-adjustment of tariffs, charges and rates to meet increasing expenditure lead inevitably to an exponentially growing gap between expenditure and revenue. Zybrands (2012: 82) believes that this trend has been a popular course of action in manipulating the local electorate and adds that the larger the gap, the more unlikely it can be closed without major public protest and financial bailing out by the national or provincial spheres of government.

Govender and Reddy (2012: 71), highlighting aspects of the 2008 local government budget and expenditure review, argue that local government investment has not yielded the anticipated returns expected from the national economy. They add that, collectively, poor governance, inappropriate spatial planning, inadequate social infrastructure and massive service backlogs have emerged as constraints to poverty reduction and economic growth. These constraining factors could undermine the future sustainability of other key sectors as well (Govender and Reddy 2012: 71).

The "status of service delivery" among municipalities, according to Roelofse (2017: 9-10), is generally poor, with most underdeveloped areas at the local government level facing "the inability to raise income, be it through taxes, delivery of services and other modes, such as business levies and access to amenities." And since "poor municipalities" translates to a poorer populace within those municipalities, the tendency to rely on the national government for funding needs becomes almost unavoidable (Roelofse 2017: 9). The pace of improvement in services and the quality of services provided do not in many cases match the expectations of many citizens.

6.1   Politics and professionalisation of the public service

A substantial number of municipalities bear ample testimony to the failures of local government and the inability of the ruling party to deliver on improvements despite a series of interventions and strategies. In this regard, Booysen (2012b: 352) points out that "faltering local government, graphically exposed to policy deficits and multiple cases of overt corruption, mismanagement and inappropriate appointments – often elicits popular disdain." She adds that political reward, patronage, and nepotism are some of the key characteristics of local government politics and that demonstrable evidence of this locally quite often triggers protests among local communities. Zybrands (2012: 87) proposes a solution: "the appointment of competent and qualified staff and compliance with the laws, rules and regulations could help solve this conundrum."

The politicisation of local government or political involvement is not in itself an issue, but the nature of that involvement is. Politicians can play a role in influencing local government processes positively

if they are committed to providing solutions and promoting the institutionalization of constitutional values and principles. The Mayor of Umtshezi Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, Cllr. B Dlamini, in an interview on 27 March 2015 identified the challenges experienced in local government relative to the politico-administrative interface. Sometimes, it is a question of politics versus the needy: lack of accountability and poor communication with communities as the "big man syndrome" kicks in because local leaders think that they have political protection and become untouchable. Problems with the political-administrative interface result in stasis and the failure of bureaucrats to implement the mandate of the political leadership or government of the day.

The ruling party must, finally, bear the costs of these choices as there has been a decline in its voter base in the major metropolitan areas of South Africa (Tshishonga 2015: 131). The urban voter is sophisticated, educated and demanding, and such citizens have choices that they can exercise because of their economic status. They are not dependent on the ruling party for income, be it a state grant or even jobs. The introduction of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Amendment Act 2011 (Act 7 of 2011) prohibited political office-bearers from occupying senior management positions in local government (Tshishonga 2015: 131).

Corruption and fraud, with political "mandates" that are illegal and have obscure origins, lead to, *inter alia*, negative audit opinions due to poor financial management. Violent service delivery protests are increasing, especially within local government. When elections draw near, individual politicians jostle for councillor positions. Weak civil society formations become embedded in the political lives of local leaders instead of holding local government to account; they fight personal battles as a proxy for unfair access to power. The scarcity of skills leads to limited municipal capacity in the political and administrative components of the council. Political issues both within the municipality and in IGR impact negatively governance and service delivery (Booysen 2012a; Reddy 2010; RSA 2009).

Traditional leaders play a vital role in local government and are recognized by both the Constitution and other policy documents such as the 2003 White Paper on Traditional Leadership. However, both the Constitution and other policy documents are silent about the specific role traditional rulers ought to play in their capacity as an integral part of local and provincial government structures. Traditional leaders are more social leaders than a government structure (Koenane, 2018: 59). Dlungwana (2002: 6) states, "Traditional leaders have played important developmental, administrative, and political roles. The underlying premise for these roles is that they represent the ethnic units and are the closest authorities to the people."

A draft implementation framework to "professionalise the public service" (NSG 2020: 8) builds on the same call in the NDP (2012: 55). There have been numerous reports detailing the problems facing local government. Although the problems are vast, three main systemic issues have been identified. These key problem areas are political appointments, lack of capacity, and lack of accountability (NPC 2012). In many cases the three key problems in local government overlap.

The NDP, in its chapter on local government, stipulates that party-political intervention in decision-making and political appointments has caused turbulence that has undermined the morale of public servants and citizens' confidence in the public institution and municipalities have not been spared in this situation. In part, the lack of true performance management originates with governing bodies that lack the political will to make the kinds of difficult decisions that are required to achieve substantial performance improvements in fields such as service delivery and instead redefine the issues as problems of mismanagement and inefficiency and then vow to hold the respective bureaucracies responsible (Frederickson 2005; Koma 2016: 128).

The lack of capacity or skills in local government affects the way local municipalities are run and therefore their ability to deliver on their mandate. The AG noted, about the 2014/5 period, that "vacancies in key positions and key officials without the minimum competencies and skills continued to make it difficult to produce credible financial statements and performance reports" (Auditor-General 2016: 5). The inability to manage and maintain infrastructure has led to a decline in the condition of infrastructure and an increase in service delivery protests. Corruption, cadre deployment, skills shortages, and poor administration have all been blamed for poor local government performance (MDB 2012).

A report published by SALGA in 2007 identified critical issues regarding council capacity, notably that there was inadequate legal support and advice for councils' decision-making. Kanyane and Koma (2014) reveal that weak leadership in strategic management, including corporate governance, shortage of skills to implement financial management legislation, misplacement of skills within municipalities, and political considerations in the appointment of senior managers without the required qualifications had had a serious impact on the performance of municipalities. It is, therefore, crucial to look at the influence of political favours on the provision of services in South African municipalities (Masuku and Jili 2019: 4).

Mafunisa (2003) writes that since political interference in the administration erodes opportunities for efficient administration, policymaking activities ought to be separated from administrative functions, and that administrators need to have explicit objectives before they can begin developing an efficient

administrative function. The South African government's tardiness in delivering basic services and thereby failing to fulfil its promises has led to service delivery protests and frustrations in various communities. The slow process of providing services to the people is usually caused by the interference of politicians in the duties of public administrators. Political interference in the functioning of municipalities is revealed as a problem that hinders the effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of services (Zarenda 2013). This includes instances where municipal officials have used political processes to subvert council procedures. Party political factionalism also impacts the stability and effectiveness of local government.

6.2   Participation and protest

As Kanyane, Mutema and Zikhali (2020) have shown, municipalities countrywide are facing challenges in service delivery, reflected in the high volume of community protests. Kanyane, Adonis and Rule (2020) state that debates about popular unrest in post-apartheid South Africa have focused on service delivery protests –what Alexander et al. (2013) refer to as community protest. They define this as a protest in which collective demands are raised by a geographically defined and identified community that frames its demands in support and or defense of that community. Stakeholders such as the South African Police Service (SAPS), COGTA, as well as SALGA are now using the term "community protest" rather than service delivery protest; they argue that "service delivery protest" tends to conceal the complexity of the issues that communities raise.

Despite the existence of a progressive Constitution, laws and electoral democracy, violent discontent has been rising to the extent that some analysts have labelled South Africa the "protest capital of the world" (Alexander 2013). Service delivery protests, Alexander (2013) argues, continue unabated, and government attempts to improve service delivery have not been sufficient to address the frustration and anger of poor people in South Africa. Service delivery protests tend to include a range of other concerns, such as lack of jobs, poverty, and high levels of inequality.

The escalation of public protests concerning service delivery is an indictment of municipalities' ability to provide services that meet citizens' expectations. This occurs despite the government's clear intention about quality service delivery (Dzansi and Dzansi 2010: 995). Several scholars have argued that these protests can be attributed to the failure to provide satisfactory basic services (Peyper 2016; Akinboade 2013 Nkomo 2017), while others hold that citizen satisfaction and trust are also elements of the government's performance, which are linked to service delivery but also to government's ability to communicate and engage meaningfully with residents (Mangai 2016). The slow pace and lack of quality service delivery have fueled protests all over the country and have brought local government

under the spotlight. These protests have been triggered by high levels of violence, xenophobic attacks, looting, and police brutality. The dissatisfaction with service delivery is particularly visible in informal settlements and metropolitan areas of the Western Cape and Gauteng Provinces (Alexander 2013). There is also a large service delivery gap between rural and urban areas, specifically in the former homeland areas of Limpopo, the Eastern Cape, North West and KwaZulu-Natal (Bohler-Muller et al. 2016: 4).

It is important in developing municipal strategies and processes to consider the uniqueness and importance of the operational contextual setting (Ndevu and Muller 2017: 17). The municipality should be able to identify viable opportunities that would further its vision and mission; threats within and outside the municipality that may hamper service delivery must also be identified.

6.3 *Quo vadis* for local government?

Local government is key to basic service delivery and can be viewed as the engine of local development. However, as Gumede (cited in Reddy 2010: 81) points out, significant percentages of local communities are yet to receive rudimentary services and for most township residents that do not have access to the most basic services, "getting a pavement fixed or the rubbish cleared that is piled up on the streets is a distant dream." This has contributed to the sense of the dysfunctionality of local government over the past decade.

According to Booysen (2012a: 5), one of the major areas of concern for local communities in South Africa is that local government is, in most cases, continuously dysfunctional and is often the unstable coalface of interaction with the people. She points out that it is the (already weak) local sphere that often bears the brunt of the dissatisfaction with the national and provincial government as the local government is nearest to local communities. Municipal functionaries and the physical facilities of municipalities are more visible and accessible to the local citizenry. There seems to be a need for greater public accountability in local government than at either the provincial or national government level.

To this end, the local government system has been undergoing a process of continuous institutional restructuring for over 21 years (Reddy 2016). The system must be stabilised and the structures already in place need to develop politically and institutionally. The government has attempted to address poor municipal leadership through technical interventions, which have not addressed the basic challenges of local government relative to service delivery (Reddy 2016). A major priority following the ushering in of a democratic state was addressing the developmental backlogs particularly in the local sphere

of government. However, two decades on, the issue of service delivery is a very contentious topic that is high on the municipal agenda nationally (Reddy 2016).

There have been several government initiatives to address service delivery challenges and the dysfunctionality of municipalities to date, and none of them has borne any fruit in terms of responding to the local governance crisis (Reddy 2016). At the same time, residents in local communities have become very agitated and, in some cases, have even resorted to violence in expressing their frustration at poor service delivery. The South African local governance system, if judged according to the legislative and policy framework, can be described as "world-class;" however, to complement that framework, the requisite human and financial resources need to be committed to the municipal structures to ensure that the system works (Reddy 2016). Those responsible for the political deployment of municipal functionaries must consider the passion, commitment, competence, qualifications and ethical leadership of those in line to be appointed or elected.

7. THE DDM – AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

7.1 A common vision tailored to the needs of each district

COGTA posits that the new DDM will give rise to a common vision for the development of the country that is broken down according to the needs and opportunities of each district and metro geographic space (COGTA 2020). It is envisaged that all spheres of government would coordinate and integrate their development plans – an all-of-government approach – that gives rise to a common vision for development (the "One plan") (Fosi 2021). The DDM envisages a process by which joint planning is undertaken collaboratively at the local, district and metropolitan levels by relevant structures from all three spheres of governance, resulting in a single plan for each of the 44 districts and eight metropolitan geographical areas in the country. As one commentator put it: "The One Plan will produce a Spatially Integrated Single Government Plan as an Intergovernmental Compact for each of these spaces that guides and directs all strategic investment spending and project delivery across government and forms the basis for accountability" (Levin 2019).

The District One Plan is expected to present a long-term view, and the DDM introduces a new way of development planning that brings together all the different sectors of society, including civil society. It is thus also envisaged that development planning should be people-centred, and that development should respond to the needs of communities. The programmes and budgets of all spheres of

government should therefore be based on the needs of specific spaces. Plans and budgets should be integrated around the needs of the 52 areas that South Africa is divided into. It is necessary, therefore, to co-ordinate all the government development planning of the 52 "spaces" (Fosi 2021). Such coordination would solve the problem of departmental silos at horizontal and vertical levels that have characterised current development planning (Mabidilala 2019).

This sub-section of the literature review focuses on relevant international literature on the district development planning of countries that have sought to develop a common vision for the development of the country through a collaborative process across all spheres and levels of government. In the first place, this literature illustrates that the district approach to development follows a *whole of government*: approach to planning. In this sense, the district approach seeks to cultivate a common vision of development for the country through a process of *joint and collaborative planning*. This sub-section thus begins with an examination of the literature that focuses on collaboration between the different spheres of government in development planning and implementation. Various country case studies are reviewed to illustrate this approach to development planning. The starting point for this review is the countries in the developed world where this approach appears to have taken root first.

Coordination and integration strategies gained prominence during the 1990s in the United Kingdom (UK) after the country had experienced significant fragmentation arising from the implementation of New Public Management (NPM) reforms. In 1997, the government introduced a more integrated approach to pursuing a "joined-up" government as the opposite of "departmentalism," tunnel vision, and "vertical silos". As Christensen and Lægreid (2007) put it:

> [The new approach] denotes the aspiration to achieve horizontal and vertical coordination to eliminate situations in which different policies undermine each other to make better use of scarce resources, to create synergies by bringing together different stakeholders in a particular policy area, and to offer citizens seamless rather than fragmented access to services (Christensen and Lægreid 2007: 1060).

Christensen and Lægreid (2006: 7) identify several reasons for the emergence of the whole-of-government approach:

- It is a reaction to "silorisation" or "pillarisation"

- It is an attempt to overcome the central government's loss of control and influence that arose from devolution

- It is a reaction to crises, disasters and threats, such as natural disasters like floods, tsunamis, or pandemics such as COVID-19; and

- It is an efficiency measure and an answer to budgetary pressure.

According to Halligan, Buick and O'Flynn (2012), in its simplest form the whole-of-government approach involves collaboration between officials in a variety of portfolios and across jurisdictions to integrate policy and programmes to achieve more efficient and effective implementation and service delivery. Emphasis is placed on "increased coherence across government, objectives shared across organisational boundaries, encompassing design and delivery of policies, programmes, and services … and can span all levels of government" (Halligan et al. 2012: 76). This approach soon spread to other Anglophone countries such as New Zealand, Australia and Canada, and has taken on more complex forms involving both cross-government and multi-sector forms of collaboration – often under the umbrella of networked (Stoker 2006) and new public governance (Osborne, Radnor and Nasi 2013). Below we examine the literature on the application of this approach to development planning in various countries.

7.1.1   India

In a study of district development planning in India, Gadjil (1966) noted that the division of the main functions of government in the country in the 1950s and 1960s was between three levels – the union, the state, and the district. Focusing on one state, Maharashtra, Gadjil (1966) added that after the adoption of the Zilla Parishad scheme, which had been proposed in 1957, the Zilla district authority had been established as the local development planning authority. He saw district development planning as an integral part of national development planning, particularly in countries where a constitutional division of functions existed (as is the case in South Africa). The planning effort in each area was seen to be part of national planning. Gadjil (1966) stated that the tasks of development planning were twofold:

- Firstly, there is the work of marshalling all available information, qualitative and quantitative, and judging of requirements, feasibilities, logical priorities and chronological orders from a technical point of view and, subsequently, given the final judgment regarding programmes and priorities, the work of formulation of an integrated plan taking into consideration all the limitations and constraints.

- Secondly, there is work on considering of differing levels of local competence and knowledge, local attitudes and preferences and possible local reactions and responses (Gadjil 1966: 30).

Gadjil added that all aspects of the national objectives and the total scope of the national plan of development would necessarily be reflected in district planning. He proposed that there were several planning benefits locally or planning "from the bottom"', that is, at the district level. The requirements for this included basing the district plan on technical and economic knowledge regarding local conditions and the association of local people with the formulation and implementation of the plan. According to Gadjil (1966: 16): "Planning in its technical and economic aspect, is closely related to relevant knowledge and information. Unless there is a minimum base of such knowledge and information, a plan of development for an area like the district cannot be built up."

This study of district development planning in India provides three important lessons for South Africa: that development planning at all levels contributes to national planning; that planning requires the collection and use of all relevant information drawn from every part of the planning area; and that planning must include local needs, views, and potentials.

Wanmali and Islam's (1995) study on planning for the provision of agricultural service infrastructure in India provides insights into the significance of determining the socio-economic needs of a district in development planning. Service level planning became a characteristic feature of development planning in India after it was established that there was a "lack of empirical studies to weave the spatial aspect of planning with the budgetary and time horizon aspects at the district level" (Wanmali and Islam 1995: 150). They argued that planning for the provision of rural service infrastructure sought primarily to create an environment in which "agricultural and agriculture-related operations" could become efficient in the rural parts of India. To achieve this, it became necessary to determine the "demographic, functional and spatial characteristics" of each area of settlement in the region. Consequently, a series of pilot research projects were implemented in the 1960s to identify growth centres and to conduct a scientific study of overall development needs that could impact growth and "how these centres could be woven into the framework of the district plans and thus help in the process of planning from below" (Wanmali and Islam 1995: 150).

According to Wanmali and Islam (1995: 150), level district-level planning efforts were the norm in the early 1970s in India. District-level planning was made a component of state development plans supported by resources provided by the state government to different heads of district development for a specified period. The Zilla Parishad (district council) was responsible for development planning

and implementation at the district level. Service centre planning was based on the socio-economic needs of a district, which were derived from information from the households, villages or towns of that district or region. Service centres were focal points around which rural life revolved and which provided "socio-economic services such as trade, transport, communications, agricultural inputs, finance, administration, education and health." A district could have a variety of different service centres that played a significant role in the economic development of the district (Wanmali and Islam 1995: 151).

In their study of the impact of this approach to planning in three districts in India, they concluded that:

> an improvement in the availability of services, particularly in the case of low-order services, has been observed across all sizes of settlements over time. Notably, there has been a tremendous improvement in the capacity of larger villages and small towns to provide these services. In addition, more sophisticated services are increasingly available within the study areas, though only in a few settlements, obviating the need to go "outside" the region for these services (Wanmali and Islam 1995: 164).

The lessons drawn here are the importance of identifying growth centres in the district planning process and of basing development planning on the needs of the district as obtained from the households, villages, or towns of that district.

From a South African perspective, according to COGTA Deputy Minister Parks Tau, COGTA intended to establish district hubs as growth centres. As it is impossible to have a uniform design for hubs, this model would make it possible to build these hubs to capacitate struggling municipalities in needed areas of expertise such as accounting and project management (Tau 2019).

7.1.2 Uganda

A clearly defined process for monitoring and reporting is evident in the Ugandan Jinja District Local Government Five-Year District Development Plan (2015/16-2019/20). The plan set out the reporting framework, which required all District Development Plan implementing agencies to follow two processes: physical progress reporting; and budget performance reporting (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 270). Physical progress reporting required implementing agencies to submit activity progress reports quarterly as well as annually. In addition, field spot visits were conducted to assess whether there was value for the funds provided. Budget performance reports included

quarterly and annual financial performance (revenue and expenditure) of both the government and non-government actors (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 270). The reports were submitted to the National Planning Authority (NPA), Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), and line ministries to enable these institutions to report national progress. The responsibility for performance reporting was shared between the Chief Administrative Officer's office, the District Planning Unit, the departments, and the Lower Local Governments (LLGs), while their reports were based on monthly management information (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 270).

All district departments were required to submit performance reports (outputs-outcomes) quarterly to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) on key expenditures, actions, outputs, and progress towards outcomes. These reports were consolidated at the end of each six-month period into a District Local Government Performance Report. This report was quality assured by the District Planning Unit (DPU), the District Planning Task Team (DTPC) and the District Executive Committee. The report was expected to be produced in February / March and the annual report in October / November of each year (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 270).

All departments and LLGs were required to submit budget performance reports (outputs and expenditures) quarterly to the CAO against approved work plans. These reports were also consolidated into a six-monthly budget performance report that was presented jointly with the Jinja District Local Government Performance report to the Standing Committees and the District Local Council, which were responsible for political oversight and monitoring. The reports were then communicated to the public through community-based information forums or *barazas* (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 270)*.

Departments were required to submit an annual cumulative progress report that outlined their performance, the challenges they faced, and proposed mitigation measures by August of the following financial year. Departments that did not submit their reports were reprimanded. However, it was noted that most departments did not submit the cumulative reports (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 271), thus indicating that many did not take reprimands seriously. At the district level, the DPU, CAO and District Chairperson were required to submit annual performance reports that included:

- Annual progress reports
- Bi-annual Lower Government budget performance reports
- Quarterly performance reports; and

- The State of the District Report (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 271).

This is evidence of a clearly defined accountability framework and reporting guide that is a requirement for development planning.

The Ugandan Jinja District Five-Year District Development Plan (2015/16-2019/20) serves as another example of how district development plans based on the needs and opportunities of districts can be derived from a common national vision (Jinja District Local Government 2015). The process of developing the plan is outlined in the plan itself (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 2-5). The process was coordinated by the District Council, which was designated the District Planning Authority (DPA). The DPA had to operate within the framework of guidelines for preparing plans established by the National Planning Authority. The District Council was required to base its development plan on the plans of the local government structures (sub-counties and municipalities) and to submit the plan to the National Planning Authority. Likewise, these local government structures had to incorporate the plans of lower councils (villages and parishes) into their respective areas of authority.

The District Development Plan put together by the District Planning Unit thus emerged from a bottom-up participatory process and included the views of political, civic and development stakeholders. The process took place at five levels of planning and allowed for the inclusion of the priorities of the distinct levels. These were the village, the parish, the lower local government, the municipal council, and the district (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 2). The planning process began after the district had received the planning guidelines that contained the national development vision / strategic objectives and goals. The first step, taken in August 2014, was the creation of a District Planning Task Team made up of Sector Heads responsible for supporting the District Technical Planning Committee (DTPC) in the formulation process. The collection of basic data to inform the plan formulation was undertaken between September and November 2014. The district communicated planning information to sectors and local government structures in September 2014 (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 2).

Village Councils completed their village planning meetings by October 2014, after which they forwarded the list of priorities to their respective parish levels (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 3). The Parish Councils developed a parish action plan for the priorities, forwarded the priorities to the Sub-county; and provided feedback to the villages on the prioritised/approved activities by the Parish Council and Sub-county Councils (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 3).

The Lower Local Government Technical Planning Committees, Investment Committees, Executive Committees and Local Councils held planning meetings of all stakeholders, prioritised all problems identified by the Sub-county, compiled municipality, town council and Sub-county development plans and submitted these to the district (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 3).

At the district level, the process of putting together the development plan included collecting data on various district variables like poverty indicators, gender issues, climate, and so forth, reviewing Sub-counties' development plans, holding planning meetings to identify the district's needs, and holding a budget conference on 17-18 December 2014 (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 3). Subsequently, funds were allocated to the various departments, sectoral plans were compiled by the budget desk, and all priorities of the district were integrated into the District Development Plan. The final plan was submitted to the council for consideration and approval (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 4).

A three-day retreat was held in February 2015 to draft the District Development Plan 2015/16-2019/20. The district reviewed and customised the broad national development strategic direction in February 2015 and set out "sector-specific strategies, priorities, and standards; and relevant cross-cutting issues", and analysed "development constraints issues/constraints, potentials, opportunities including those received from LLGs" (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 4).

In March 2015, the District Executive Committee approved the development outcomes, goals and strategic objectives and agreed to draft LLG plans, which were submitted to the planning unit by 24 March. The district planning unit finalised the Draft District Development Plan, which was presented to relevant council standing committees for review and discussion in early March 2015. Council approved the plan by 30 March 2015. It included a situational analysis, a review of sector development situations, including opportunities and constraints, an analysis of district opportunities, constraints, potentials and challenges, and a review of the performance of district plans (Jinja District Local Government 2015: 4-5).

The literature on this model of district development planning is important for the South African case because Uganda, like South Africa, frames development plans at lower levels around its national development plan. Nevertheless, it has been illustrated here that there is still a place for a bottom-up approach to development planning that ensures that local needs are prioritised in the district plans. Another example of a bottom-up approach to development planning is found in Ghana.

7.1.3 Ghana

As in the case of India, the district development approach adopted in Ghana is characterised by decentralisation. According to Owusu (2009: 61), decentralised administration and development planning was introduced in the country in 1988 to promote local autonomy and participation, with the added objective of improving efficiency. Under Local Government Act 462 of 1993, District Assemblies (local governments, henceforth DAs) were given responsibility for the development of districts and to this end were provided with executive, legislative, administrative and technical support. Most importantly, the objective was to draw into local planning the views and aspirations of the people within their areas of jurisdiction to ensure effective development at the local level (Owusu 2004: 167). This decentralised development process required that the DAs assume the overall territorial authority of districts. The DA was made up of a District Chief Executive, the head of the Assembly, Assembly members representing all the communities within the district (two-thirds were elected and one-third appointed by the central government), and a civil service support team consisting of administrators and planning officers (Owusu 2009: 61).

Owusu notes that districts were subdivided into Area / Urban Councils and Unit Committees primarily to draw the local population into the development and implementation of policies at the local level. In those parts of the district with a population of between 5,000 and 15,000 people, Area Councils were established, while communities with populations of between 500 and 1,000 in rural areas and 1,500 in urban areas had Unit Committees (Owusu 2004: 167-8; Owusu 2009: 52-3). The sub-district structures played an especially significant role in educating, organising and mobilising people for development projects because they were close to the people. It was at this level that problems were identified, and projects were initiated and implemented at the local level. The basic role of these structures was to draw local people into all decision-making processes (Owusu 2004: 167-8).

Despite these efforts, Akudugu (2013: 1408) argues that district governments in Ghana have not been able to deliver effective services to their citizens. Consequently, the government attempted to remove those obstacles that impeded the effective performance of the District Assemblies. This it did by formulating a new decentralisation policy in 2010 that sought to:

- Clearly define the status, roles, and relationships between the various levels of government as well as those of other actors in the planning process, and increase their involvement in and input towards local governance
- Provide local and district structures with sufficient administrative and human resources to improve their capacity for quality service delivery

- Strengthen the local level structures' capacity to coordinate and implement spatial, physical and development planning, as well as to integrate local development plans with budgeting and the national developmental agenda

- Promote economic growth, employment and income generation to ensure household welfare and promote the alleviation of poverty

- Increase funding and ensure effective financial management by local and district assemblies

- Promote democracy, participation and accountability at the local level by increasing the involvement of local stakeholders in governance

- Promote equal access to state resources and inclusion in decision-making

- Clarify, as well as strengthen, the roles of and relationships between stakeholders such as traditional authorities and civil society organisations in local governance; and

- Streamline, harmonise and coordinate the interventions of foreign donors to promote the optimal use of the resources donated for development at the local level (Akudugu 2013: 1408).

The Ghanaian experience of district development planning thus points to a process through which the needs of local communities can be translated into national development plans, while indicating some of the requirements for effective district development planning, including clearly defined roles for key role players, adequate administrative and human resource capacity, a strong capacity for development planning, adequate funding and financial controls, the involvement of communities in local governance, equitable access to resources and inclusive decision-making, and clearly defined relationships between key stakeholders.

7.1.4 Sri Lanka

Another example of bottom-up development planning based on local needs is found in the literature on Sri Lanka's approach to development planning. According to Yusoff, Sarjoon and Hassan (2016: 164), a decade after achieving independence from British rule in 1948, Sri Lanka began a process of decentralisation to make local administrative structures more effective in the process of planning and implementing development programmes to boost the economic and regional development of the country. Five new districts, namely Moneragala (established in 1959), Amparai (1961), Gampaha (1978), Mullaitivu (1978), and Kilinochchi (1984), were established in the post-independent era (Yusoff et al. 2016: 165). However, Uduporuwa (2007: 24) points out that it was only after 1970 that regional development planning as a form of formalised planning came into effect, when the government introduced a new system to accelerate the implementation of development planning at the lower

levels. This gave rise to a Regional Development Division in 1971, a District Political Authority System in 1973, to a District Ministry System in 1978, to District Development Councils in 1980, and Provincial Councils in 1987 – all of which were responsible for planning at these levels. Development planning was, however, driven by the central government.

Matthews (1982) describes the nature and role of the District Development Councils (DDCs) that were introduced in Sri Lanka in 1981. A DDC was established in each of the 24 administrative districts, comprising a district minister, an elected chairperson, and an elected Council (Matthews 1982: 1121). The DDCs prepared annual development plans that covered a specific range of subjects, including "agrarian services, agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperative development, cultural affairs, education, employment, fisheries, food, health services, housing, irrigation, land use and settlement, rural development, and small and medium-scale industries" (Matthews 1982: 1130). The DDCs were responsible for regional development as part of a wider national endeavour. Organisations known as the Gramodaya Mandalaya were established to provide representation to organisations and voluntary units catering to rural and village needs, thereby ensuring democratic participation at the grassroots level. The secretaries of the Gramodaya Mandalaya were responsible for community and rural development in each area (Matthews 1982: 1120-1121).

Yusoff et al.'s (2016) research for a proposed new district that several sectors of society were demanding in Sri Lanka draws attention to some of the benefits of district development administration, particularly to boost regional and national economic development. This occurred in the context of decades of civil war and ethnic conflict, which saw the marginalisation by the Sinhalese administrative elites of the Tamil-speaking Muslims and Tamils who lived in the coastal parts of the Amparai district. The first benefit of introducing a new district, therefore, would have been to include marginalised sectors of society in development planning and outcomes. The second would have been to introduce new methods to increase the financial and human resources required to improve the state institutions, infrastructure and socio-economic conditions of the people living in the region. Included here would be budgetary allocation to the region, the development of institutional and administrative structures, and the introduction of new projects that would contribute to national economic development (Yusoff et al. 2016).

The two studies described here illustrate the potential for grassroots participation in development planning provided by the district development planning model while creating opportunities for the

needs and interests of marginalised sectors of societies to be included in development planning as well.

7.2 A vision supported by well researched long-term implementation plans

Another benefit of the new DDM identified by COGTA is that it will give rise to a vision and priorities supported by well researched, credible and technically sound long-term, implementation plans (COGTA 2020). In this regard, according to COGTA Deputy-Director Themba Fosi (2021), the One Plan, One Budget strategy on which the DDM rests would give rise to a set of objectives that were shared by all involved and that, in terms of budget, there would be clear commitments towards what is needed to be done for the plan of the respective districts.

Wanmali and Islam's (1995) study of Indian development planning described earlier illustrates the importance of basing such plans on well-researched information, in this case, information on socio-economic needs derived from the households, villages or towns of that district or region. The other bottom-up approaches to development planning described earlier similarly point to the need for technical information on local communities. The literature on district development planning in Ethiopia similarly draws attention to the need for well researched, credible and technically sound long-term implementation plans to develop the vision and priorities required in development planning.

7.2.1   Ethiopia

The DDM concept introduced in South Africa emanates from the strategy of Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI) in Ethiopia. In examining this process of development in the country, a good starting point is Welteji's (2018) study of Ethiopian rural development planning. Welteji starts from the premise that development policies during the Imperial era (1950-1974) favoured industrial development while neglecting agriculture. Whatever development was directed towards agriculture was focused on the better-off and commercial farmers based in and around the major project or implementation areas. In the aftermath of the imperial era, between 1974 and 1991, development policies favoured state and collective farms rather than individual farmers. During the post-1991 period, however, development policies gave rise to "the most prominent and enduring economy-wide strategies", which included ADLI (Welteji 2018: 2). ADLI consists, in essence, of improvements in the productivity of food agriculture on small and medium-sized farms (Adelman and Vogel 1991: 5). In the ADLI strategy, agriculture is viewed as a leading sector whose expansion gives rise to growth in

agricultural input industries as well as consumer goods. Investments are made in institutional and physical agricultural infrastructure, the provision of appropriate agricultural technology to farmers, and investment in research that is focused on small-scale food production (see also Hailu 1994 for more details about ADLI). Physical infrastructure such as irrigation and electrification are seen as important in addressing various impediments to the development of the agricultural sector, such as access to markets and commercialisation as well as the impact of climate conditions (Mitik 2010: 5). Industrialisation flows from the increased demand for industrial outputs among farmers (Adelman and Vogel 1991: 5-6).

The relevance of the Ethiopian model for South Africa is found in its focus on increasing agricultural productivity through, among other things, research-generated information and technologies and relevant infrastructure projects (Welteji 2018: 4; Adelman and Vogel 1991: 5).

Another study of Ethiopian development planning involving sustainable agricultural technologies is that conducted by Cafer and Rikoon (2017) – the study itself serves as an example of how research can be applied to determine the impact of development policy itself. Cafer and Rikoon (2017) found that Ethiopia had embarked on a programme to expand agricultural technical and vocational education and training (ATVET) colleges to provide each village in the country with three trained extension agents. It implemented an Extension Management and Training Plots model supported by input packages. Extension agents supported small-scale farmers to manage demonstration plots as education tools for villages. The extension agents provided the farmers with input packages that included information on a specific agricultural technology or practices and related inputs, as well as credit to support the adoption of these technologies or practices (Cafer and Rikoon 2017: 81). This long-term implementation plan envisaged the expansion of agricultural production using technically skilled extension agents and the necessary agricultural technologies and practices, supported by other inputs such as credit.

Cafer and Rikoon's (2017) research illustrates how research can be applied to determine the *impact* of development policy. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, they found that the top-down approach to information and technology dissemination to farmers in South Wollo had hindered the realisation of potential agricultural innovations in Ethiopia (Cafer and Rikoon 2017: 4). Use was made of in-depth interviews and focus groups to determine whether farmers were adopting modern technologies. A structured questionnaire was utilised to collect key demographic and

agricultural data and information on the relationship between the farmers and extension agents in each village (Cafer and Rikoon 2017: 7-8).

Gebreselassie (2006) shows how research influenced Ethiopian policymakers' assumption that productivity could be significantly improved by giving farmers increased access to technologies that would narrow the gap between "farmers' yield" and "exploitable yield potential" (Gebreselassie 2006: 3-4). Gebrekidan, Debela and Mohamed (2004) reported on the existence of technologies that could significantly increase farmers' yield in grain production. Using average data collected over six years, Gebrekidan et al. (2004) demonstrated that the maize yield could be increased from the then farmers' yield level of 1.6 ton/ha to 4.7 ton/ha, wheat from 1.1 ton/ ha to 2.8 ton/ha, and tef from 0.7 ton/ha to 1.5 ton/ha if peasant farmers had access to improved seed varieties and fertilisers and made use of other recommended agricultural practices (cited in Gebreselassie et al. 2006: 4). Such technologies subsequently formed the basis of the programmes introduced to improve agricultural productivity, thereby resulting in agricultural-led industrialisation. Gebreselassie (2006) also demonstrates how the policy led to the increased use of modern technologies.

These studies illustrate how important research is to development planning, highlighting the necessity of developing long-term implementation plans. Ethiopian agricultural development planning, for instance, included developing "economy-wide strategies" and implementation plans that gave rise to increased investment in agricultural infrastructure, the dissemination of appropriate agricultural technology and agricultural research, and implementation of relevant infrastructure projects, as well as a programme to expand ATVET colleges and provide villages with extension agents.

7.3 Multi-year, long-term objectives, targets, and resource commitments extending beyond electoral cycles

Another third of the new DDM, according to COGTA, is that it will issue multi-year, long-term and predictable objectives, targets and resource commitments to agreed programmes and projects extending beyond electoral cycles (COGTA 2020). Levin (2019) maintains that the DDM will give rise to "Single Joined-Up plans or the One Plan," which "will take the form of prioritised spatial expressions over the long term and will be divided into five- and 10-year implementation plans supported by annual operation plans which will be based on commonly agreed diagnostics, strategies, and actions. The content of the Plans will elaborate on the key transformation processes required to achieve long-term strategic goals and the desired future in each of the 44 districts and 8 metro spaces."

7.3.1   Ghana

The Ghanaian Biakoye District Assembly's (2010) District Medium Term Development Plan serves as an example of a multi-year long-term plan, even though it does not extend beyond electoral cycles. The three-year plan, developed by the District Planning Coordinating Committee for the period 2010 to 2013, had predictable objectives, targets and resource commitments to agreed programmes and projects of which COGTA speaks. The District Development Objectives were based on seven thematic areas of the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Plan (S.W.D 2010: 63-66):

- **Ensuring and sustaining macroeconomic stability:-** (i) increasing internal revenue mobilisation by 20% by 2013; and (ii) improving public expenditure management by 2013

- **Enhancing competitiveness in Ghana's private sector:-** (i) promoting and creating employment opportunities for 1,000 youth by 2013; and (ii) improving six major markets in the District by 2013

- **Accelerated Agricultural Modernisation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management:-** (i) increasing crop production in the District by 20% and animal production by 15% by 2013; and (ii) reducing the use of illegal chain saws to the barest minimum by 2013

- **Oil and gas development:-** (i) sensitization on the emergence of the oil and gas industry in Ghana and its prospects; and (ii) support needy students pursuing courses in the oil and gas sector.

- **Infrastructure, energy, and human settlements development:-** (i) providing and extending potable water to cover 65% of the population by 2013; (ii) improving environmental sanitation by 2013; (iii) enhancing the orderly physical development of five towns by 2013; and (iv) increasing electricity coverage to 75% of the district population by 2013

- **Human development, productivity, and employment:-** (i) achieving 85% performance in Basic Education Certificate Examinations by 2013; (ii) increasing physical access to second cycle education by 2013; (iii) improving and providing basic social infrastructure, facilities, and services by 2013; and (iv) training 1,000 youth in self-employable skills by 2013; and

- **Transparent and accountable governance:-** (i) strengthening the functional relationship between the Assembly, its members, and citizens by 2013; (ii) promoting district-level planning and budgeting by improving the participatory process for all stakeholders at all levels by 2013; (iii) empowering women and mainstreaming gender into the socio-economic development of the District by 2013; and (iv) improving the capacity of security agencies to provide security for human safety and protection.

Each of these objectives had a set of activities/projects, while each activity identified under the specific objective was linked to a location (for example, district-wide or selected communities), a timeframe, an indicative budget, a source of budget, indicators, and a set of implementing agencies. For instance, the objective of promoting and creating productive employment opportunities for one thousand youth by 2013 involved ten activities:

1. Assisting local business people to access government loans
2. Producing an investment brochure for the district
3. Assisting financial institutions to open branches in the district
4. Assisting with the establishment of radio stations in the district capital and major towns
5. Attending the regional trade and investment fair
6. Supporting self-help projects
7. Organising skills and entrepreneurial development training for 500 youth
8. Organising self-employed business people to form co-operatives
9. Organising a management workshop for 20 cooperative societies; and
10. Assisting private investors to access land (S.W.D 2010: 69).

The organisation of self-employed business people to form co-operative societies was to be carried out district-wide, with a budget of 1,000 GH¢, implemented by the Department of Cooperatives through the National Board for Small Scale Industries between 2012 and 2013, and the indicators of progress were the number of cooperative societies formed (S.W.D 2010: 69).

This example illustrates that a development plan arising from a district development planning process can lead to "clearly defined predictable objectives, targets, and resource commitments to agreed programmes and projects" (COGTA 2020).

7.4 Monitoring and evaluation through accountability framework implementation tracking

The final benefit of the new DDM, according to COGTA, is that it ensures an accountability framework and responsibilities for tracking and reporting on implementation and actions within the government to stakeholders and the broader public (COGTA, 2020). The Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Parks Tau, informed parliament in 2019 that the model "would

provide clear accountabilities and responsibilities for each government 'vertically or horizontally speaking'" (PMG 2019). For its part, South Africa's Public Servants Association (PSA) has noted that:

> The success or failure of the DDM is also dependent on monitoring systems. South Africa's post-apartheid government has formulated and designed many local development policy plans. … All these local development plans have been implemented with minimal in-house monitoring and evaluation measures. There is minimal coordination of socio-impact assessments and stakeholders disagree on the extent to which these plans are suitable for meeting local development needs. It is, therefore, important to create coordinated and inclusive systems of monitoring DDM plans. This process must include non-state actors who can objectively assess the progress and shortcomings of these local economic development strategies (PSA 2020: 2).

In the following sub-section, we consider how district-based models of coordination support have enhanced accountability and communication with residents on actions and outcomes, including drawing on appropriate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices. The literature on M&E processes in district development planning that focuses on one case study, India, to illustrate the impact of this model on such processes is dealt with in greater detail later in this review.

8.   MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL

There is a wide body of literature that suggests that local government is the most important sphere of government as it is the closest to the people when it comes to the rendering of public services (Sebola 2015; Reddy 2016; Khambule, Nomdo and Siswana 2019; Masuku and Jili 2019). As a result, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of local government programmes is of critical importance to ensure that these initiatives are achieving what they set out to achieve (Matsiliza, 2017). Berner and Bronson (2005: 310) argue that programme evaluation can be vague; and while there is no consensus on its definition, it can be thought of as a means of providing findings on the successes and failures of a programme by the person tasked with assessing it. According to Kariuki and Reddy (2017: 2), some of the benefits of M&E include the facilitation of the planning, policy development, financial management, and an alignment of local government interventions with the national government's priorities. In its mid-term review of the strategic plan report, the KZN Department of COGTA acknowledged the importance of evaluating and monitoring the progress being made by local government in implementing its interventions, which included four priority programmes:

administration; local governance; development planning; and traditional institutions (KZN COGTA 2018: 8-9).

Several challenges face M&E in South Africa. Masuku and Ijeoma (2015: 14) speak about the contextual challenges, noting that M&E approaches are borrowed from the western world and may not necessarily fit in the African context, which is characterised by different knowledge systems, tribalism, and multiple languages – all of which must be factored in when designing M&E approaches. Furthermore, weak state institutions and the lack of political will make it difficult for developing countries to implement M&E measures (Kusek and Rist, 2004: 17). This stance is supported by Jili and Mthethwa (2016: 109), for whom the biggest challenge facing local municipalities when it comes to M&E is the lack of skills, knowledge and competence required to undertake effective monitoring of municipal programmes. Abrahams (2015) asserts that the service delivery pressures that the South African government has faced have necessitated the need for an effective M&E system, which has not always been forthcoming especially at the local government level. The World Bank report on M&E acknowledges that it is difficult to evaluate the successes and failures of a programme if there is a shortage of information and a lack of transparency (Acevedo et al. 2010: 11).

The OECD defines evaluation as the assessment of a programme as "systemically and objectively as possible considering its relevance concerning the fulfilment of its objectives, effectiveness, impact and sustainability" OECD (2008) cited in IOB Policy and Operations Department, (2009:15). For Reese and Fasenfest (2003: 264), evaluation is the "big question" in planning and management. Evidence of the successes and failures of development programmes is seen in their evaluation (Smith 2002). To assess the failures and successes of any programme, one needs to measure it against the initial targets and objectives which would have been set out at the inception of the programme.

The extent to which government interventions contribute to measured results is central to public sector evaluation. Occasionally, evaluations ought to aspire to even higher ambitions. They should try to answer why outcomes do or do not stem from the measures enacted (Vedung 1997: 209).

The concept of M&E has been widely researched on public sector and international fronts. In their work on M&E, Görgens and Kusek (2009: 1) focus on how M&E deals with stakeholders' goal setting and achievement and adjusting where necessary during project implementation. In both the public and private sectors, M&E systems are used to measure the quantity and quality of services being delivered. The process creates the space for public officials to measure the outcomes and impacts of

their interventions or programmes (Mackay 2006). In the context of the DDM, M&E needs to be used as a tool to review all the previous development policies implemented by the government. The lessons learned should be used to improve the offering of the DDM as compared to previous policies.

National, provincial and local government have several mechanisms to ensure that M&E processes are followed. The Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWME) policy framework was the first government M&E initiative. The policy was centred on a management system with a focus on budgeting, planning and reporting systems (The Presidency 2008: 80). There are several other policies to guide M&E at the local government level: the White Paper on Local Government (1998), the Municipal Systems Act (2000), the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) and the Municipal Structures Act (1998) are some of the documents used at the local government level. However, several studies on local government, such as Koma (2010) on the state of the local government in South Africa and Mashamaite and Lethoko (2018) on the role of South African local government in local economic development, have shown that South Africa has excellent policies but lacks in implementation. Service delivery access is a daily dilemma and has created tensions between and resistance from government departments (Goldman 2012: 3).

9. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

This section shifts the focus to the primary research conducted for this study: the case studies of three municipalities in the three provinces in which the DDM has been implemented. The presentation of the findings below is situated within an analysis of four key themes: 1) the relevance of the DDM; 2) its impact and sustainability; 3) the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the model; and 4) the replicability and value for money of the DDM.

When conducting research, it is integral to be able to conduct relevant research that will help policymakers and make an important contribution to the broader knowledge community. This is a view held by Toffel (2016) when discussing the importance of conducting relevant research. The district development model aims to accelerate service delivery whilst focusing on district development which is inclusive of localised procurement, job creation, and support of local businesses and local communities being the biggest drivers of this development (Manungufala 2020: 1). In terms of relevance and, given the continued battle against the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment in the South African government is battling, there can be little to question regarding

the relevance of the model. As part of the data collection, key informant participants in this research study were asked about how relevant they feel the DDM is in the South African context.

The study sought in the first instance to ascertain from key informants interviewed as part of the case studies the relevance of the model to their situations. A traditional leader in the Waterberg municipality said:

> The DDM is saying that things should be streamlined local level. For example, job adverts should be streamed to the extent that it is not advertised in national papers but rather in local papers to attract people within the district *(Participant, DDM study)*.

In responding to this question, one key informant argued that the DDM was not necessarily new and thus its relevance was to be understood about the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment the government was facing. The DDM was (yet) another measure that the government was looking to lean on to address these challenges. The participant from SALGA said:

> The district-based model is very critical in that it brings to light and that is to support what as a government we are all supposed to be doing, which is to rally behind the objectives of local government. Which are the objects of government essentially of creating safe and economically viable lively communities. So, it is a very relevant model. And we must remember that the DDM in its nature is at the heart of the DDM is intergovernmental relations between government institutions and stakeholders in their variants *(Participant, DDM study)*.

The excerpt not only highlights how important the DDM is but also the importance of the model in ensuring that local government meets its goals and objectives, particularly regarding service delivery. As Khambule (2021: 508) notes, the failure of the local government to provide adequate service delivery has left a gap that the DDM seeks to fill. As such, the relevance of the DDM rests on its fulfilling local government service delivery objectives and ensuring a smooth relationship between local businesses, labour and government which can address the three interdependent challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment.

Participants were asked to explain how they were involved in the DDM programme. One of the participants in the Waterberg district answered as follows:

I am part of the new council established now in December after the election in November. The DDM is one of the few fortunate district development models in the country. It tries to maneuverer and uses the opportunity to assist particularly with the help of organizations such as PPG where they're able to bring DBSA into the picture to assist with the study, but also to assist with financial muscle that is needed, particularly feasibility studies on other aspects that we may need to endeavour on as a district, but also the USAID has been brought in to assist. This has been brought as part of the Waterberg DDM by the President. USAID is sponsoring some learnerships on skills development in the district and I know some learners are ready to graduate *(Participant, DDM study).*

government is tasked in the One Plan with making the necessary institutional arrangements in consultation with all key role players and providing direction about roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. The councillor from eThekwini said:

So, we are greatly involved in making sure that everybody is on board as we speak now. we are intending to call all the mining houses operating in the district, we have seen a gap in terms of the support that they're giving through to schools, and our results as we analyse them would give a telling story that the schools that are operating within a 50-kilometer radius of the mine tend to get more support from the mining areas and analysis tells us that when you've got a school that has been supported to do winter enrichment classes, able to do some of the school's campus. Those schools tend to do better than others that are not being helped *(Participant, DDM study).*

The information provided earlier shows that the roles and responsibilities of officials are known and are aligned with the One Plan, especially in terms of collaboration with other stakeholders. A participant in Waterberg said:

We endeavoured to go and meet, with the mining houses to try to nudge them into agreeing that is in the spirit of the district development model, maybe then they need to widen their net in terms of assistance. This is done in this way where we can set up an agreement that you, instead of operating in your area of operation, rather, you, you operate in your area of influence. So would be suggesting that maybe when they do winter enrichment classes, they must cluster them and agree that this one is on this side of town that can be located yet for

a camp in winter and summer in preparation for matric and they fund that process *(Participant, DDM study).*

This excerpt emphasises the importance of collaborating and supporting each stakeholder to achieve the intended objectives of the district development plan. The DDM was established to address the culture of local government working in isolation from other critical spheres of government, and the lack of coherence in development planning and implementation to ensure improved coherence and impact in delivering social and economic developmental services (Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019). According to Carey and Crammond (2015) joined-up government has become synonymous with modernisation and future-proofing, and efforts to promote "joining-up" are the mark of governments who are ready to meet the challenges of the future.

The South African Constitution recommends that effective IGR ensure coordinated and aligned government activities for purposes of balanced and equitable service delivery (Ile 2010: 51). Chapter Three of the Constitution postulates the principle of cooperative government in all three spheres of government. Cooperative government is a partnership among the three spheres (national, provincial and local) in pursuance of developmental service delivery: "cooperative government is a fundamental philosophy of government that governs all aspects and activities of government and encompasses the structures of government as well the organisation and exercise of political power" (Malan, 2005: 230). IGR enables the values of cooperative government to be given institutional and statutory expression (Edwards 2008).

Section 40(1) of the Constitution, which stipulates that South Africa is one, sovereign democratic state, provides a broad framework for IGR. The three spheres of government created by the Constitution are distinct, interdependent, and interrelated (Edwards 2008). Section 41 (1) (e) of the Constitution stipulates that there should be respect for the constitutional standing of institutions, their powers and functions. Section 41 (f) stipulates that any one sphere must not assume any power or function except that conferred on them in terms of the Constitution. Section 41 (e) stipulates that each sphere must exercise its powers and functions in a manner that does not encroach on the geographical, functional or institutional integrity of government in another sphere. Lastly, Section 41 (g) states that the three spheres must cooperate in mutual and good faith. Section 41 (h) of the Constitution stipulates that the three spheres work with one another to achieve national developmental goals. Interdependence is important in communications, consultation, coordination and support at the IGR level.

Interviewees were asked how the DDM related to national and local priorities and the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality in livelihoods and disasters. One participant from the Eastern Cape Water Caucus reflected on this question as follows:

> In my opinion, they should relate. It should be a hand fitting into a glove. By the way, in my honest opinion, DDM is not a new thing. It is what the government has been encouraging all along. But particularly our institutions are the ones that we have been ignoring the call of the government. When it is the government institutions that ignore the government-private sector also ignore what is supposed to be done. But now that all these things have been revived and centralised at the level of the Presidency, it gives us now a clear intention of the government of what they need to do and then what they should be done. But as you said, it expedites and resolved issues of unemployment and inequality when disasters do happen. You will find out that if you work together as a team, things get to be resolved within a split second. I will give an example, if you have regular district development model forums, where you are meeting regularly, you will tend to know what to do at a particular period. There should be accountability *(Participant, DDM study).*

There is a sentiment that the private sector and government had been ignoring what needed to be done, that the district development plan approach was not new, and that the DDM was what the government had been encouraging all along. Participants felt that working jointly, and having joint forum meetings, could work towards reaching the DDM objectives and solving the challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. The President noted that the culture of working in silos created a lack of coordination in planning and implementation and made it difficult for the government to monitor, evaluate and perform oversight of critical development (DPME, 2019). These problems made it difficult for the government to address the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality by undermining the coherence and precision of the government's interventions. According to Khambule (2021) the DDM is predicated on addressing some of these fundamental challenges and their impact on the country's development landscape. The effectiveness of this model will depend on the ability of the national government to strategically coordinate the development planning and implementation in a manner that promotes the productive efficiency of local government.

The DDM also seeks to harmonise the various local, district and metro plans, thus providing the potential for interlinked and mutually reinforcing corridors of economic and social development,

enabling South Africa in the medium and short term to operate from a single and spatially referenced long-term plan. Officials commented on the participation, in the DDM project, of different spheres of government and of ordinary citizens, including those who had been marginalised and were vulnerable. The participant in eThekwini said:

> In my view, I would have to give it five out of ten. We still must improve more. I will give you an example of why I am not giving it a ten out of ten. The example that I gave earlier, is that some departments would still, even though they would have declared their intentions. The premier has made sure that we enforce the spirit of the district development model, during his State of the Province address they would be propelling all governments and private institutions interested in the province to declare their intentions in that particular financial year and then submit to the premier so that when the premier delivers his State of the Province address, he can determine the amount needed for relevant projects. This will help him to sum up or quantify what is needed or how the money will be used. So, what the institutions do is that they go to municipalities and not the district which becomes difficult to evaluate and monitor because it is not within the district level *(Participant, DDM study).*

It was clear from the discussions with the participants that the three spheres of government had participated in local development collaboratively. They further suggested that there was a need for an effective intergovernmental relationship that produced people-centred results. It was the participants' opinion that DDM would make monitoring and evaluation easier at the district level. The decentralisation of authority to lower spheres of government is not unique to the delivery of particular social and economic services by municipalities but extends to delivering other vital services, overall, decentralisation is adopted to improve the managerial and operational effectiveness of entities (Khambule, 2021).

A question was asked about how different DDM was from the past development models used to address service delivery challenges. One COGTA participant answered as follows:

> The new part about it is that now is that it forces all our government, the national, provincial, and local governments and agencies that are supporting democracy, international structure and funding structures and any other person who is interested in now come and officially declare what do they intend to do in their locality. It gives you space to declare; it also gives us space to be able to monitor and track progress reports. IDPs and

other programmes nationals would encourage, but there was nothing that propelled them *(Participant, DDM study).*

From the ensuing discussion, the participant shared that the DDM model was different from past approaches in the sense that it provided a mechanism for all the different spheres of government to work together and develop the One Plan for each of the country's 52 spaces. This discussion emphasised the need for all stakeholders to collaborate and work together and to know the role they played in the DDM. The DDM was bringing about a shift in the way various government departments and the three spheres of government operated. It was institutionalising joint planning for the district. All entities had to prepare and re-organise their operations, working towards the DDM approach, which was aimed at impact-oriented planning and budgeting.

When implementing the DDM model, several factors must be considered; these include the potential impact and sustainability of the programme. To this end a key informant addressed the relevance and sustainability of the DDM, noting that the impact and sustainability of the model rested on how effectively resources were managed and that the resources were intended to assist beneficiaries of the programme to sustain themselves beyond its duration. The participant from COGTA went on to say:

> We gave out a stipend during the training, we give out stipend and the stipend in its sole purpose is for the learner to travel to the classroom or the workplace and have meals sharing during the period of training. You would be surprised that this stipend does not only serve that purpose but goes an extra mile where you find that families are being fed through the stipend. Second, the learners are being trained in interventions so that they could be self-employed after the end or when they exceed the program, as a result, some have been able to form cooperatives and they have been able to start on something together as a team as cooperatives and do something for themselves. So, I want to believe that is where it is curbing the challenges of poverty and employment as well as inequality. Food security as well because people can help with the ability to or the skills that they attained during the training *(Participant, DDM study).*

The implementation of the model allows it to access support from different stakeholders, which includes funding and financing of training programmes such as the one undertaken by the LGSETA's Limpopo provincial office. This is a view shared by another key participant, who stated that the success

of the model rested on the buy-in of stakeholders. The SALGA participant further stated that they as SALGA would provide a framework within which stakeholders could operate.

> The missing element has always been the stakeholders who are supposed to operate it within the framework that has been provided. So, the DDM is then able to bring on board and highlight the need and the role that outside of government stakeholders are supposed to play *(Participant, DDM study).*

According to research conducted by Zwane and Matsiliza (2022) coordination of stakeholders has been a challenge for service delivery in local municipalities across the country. The authors found that the coordination of stakeholders in eDumbe had been overlooked by municipal officials and principles of cooperative government had been neglected. Providing a platform for stakeholder engagement is important as it can ensure smooth coordination for service delivery, including the provision of safe and drinkable water in local municipalities (Hove et al. 2021: 5). The DDM seeks to address coordination gaps that exist.

Another key participant from the Waterberg district municipality pointed out that the DDM was relevant to the key priorities of the government. The participant went on to say:

> One of the key initiatives of DDM is to ensure sustainable development while accelerating initiatives to promote poverty eradication and unemployment and aligning those to the national priorities on the triple challenges. We believe it is relevant to accelerate service delivery and maximise government impact in terms of service delivery *(Participant, DDM study).*

The relevance of the DDM, as noted by the participant, rests on the significance it has for service delivery in local communities, along with its alignment with key government priorities, including attempts to eradicate the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

Participants were asked how the DDM contributes to addressing the issues that South Africa is facing, including the challenges of poverty, unemployment, inequality, food insecurity and the formulation of laws. A former COGTA official said:

> As I said agencies such as DBSA would come and do feasibility to the district, and they will tell us that we as a district are rich in terms of red meat which gives us the leverage to do a

bankable proposition to any financial institution. Like now as a district, we have a free toll that we are running as a district. It allows us to look at how we can expand it and make it to be competitive about the toll that can, you know, not only operate at a particular place but demand that every locality must have it but still under the ownership of the municipality. In a nutshell, it will answer the question of food security, and then decided to expand to other localities it will address the issues of unemployment but diversify the economy as well. It will also say, but let us look at the value chain, we cannot be about slaughtering only and getting the money out of it" *(Participant, DDM study).*

Having a plan will allow officials the freedom of running the district and allow them to look at how they can expand opportunities and make it competitive. Another participant from the Waterberg DDM coordinating team asked:

No, what can we do? We must make sure that the cattle, goats, or sheep that are slaughtered are of the highest grades. And how do you get it to be of the highest grades, then maybe we might have to invest into issues relating to feedlots and feedlot may even create opportunity on the national, provincial, or local level and of course even we can even venture into an international space to provide because we are a gifted region. The proper development plan that got three pillars of the economy such as mining, agriculture, and tourism. All these three are found in our district. You already can go through a Capricorn you may find that they are doing well in tourism and maybe towards your go to Vhembe you will find that they are doing well in agriculture and Sekhukhune in mining *(Participant, DDM study).*

This comment reveals that having the freedom to drive and lead the district from the bottom will bring in more opportunities than the top-down approach.

In response to the question "What difference does the DDM make in improving the local economy and livelihoods, etc.?" the councillor from the Waterberg municipality answered:

The government's role is not to create jobs but to create a conducive environment for business to be able to operate in one business environment that will help to grow, expand, and needs more human capital. I mean human resources for it to be able to operate it needs more jobs to be created that's how jobs create each other and every Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) office manager must go into that office with the full responsibility and knowledge and now the DDM model can bring a whole lot into your basket then because now the things are coordinated to be the company that wishes to do broadband for Wi-Fi proposes in a township, it must be in collaboration

with the office of the municipalities. Now you can close those gaps and then advise accordingly *(Participant, DDM study).*

It appears that what is important is that government must create a conducive environment for businesses to be able to operate in a business environment that will lead to growth and expansion and address the need for more human capital. In response to the question "What in your view is the overall impact of the DDM and how does this compare with what was expected?" A participant in eThekwini said:

> What I like about our province is that the President said I am taking Waterberg, eThekwini, and OR Tambo but our province said no we, as a province is going to, every district will to try copy what Waterberg is doing so that we coordinate the intervention be it in the health industry, education industry, even though education is not the core mandate of the municipality, but it makes the municipality district and the local to be wider beneficial and this is propelled by the spirit of DDM which has direct and indirect benefits *(Participant, DDM study).*

Following this discussion, interviewees were asked: "Who are the direct and indirect / wider beneficiaries of the DDM programme?" The councillor from the Waterberg district said:

> First of all, the people. People are our direct beneficiaries because it involves them. What makes us exists as the government is the people. While the indirect is the private sector. With the support of the government, they can get their interests integrated and coordinated by the government institutions which makes it easier to be protected from manipulation" *(Participant, DDM study).*

Community members are and should be the beneficiaries of what the DDM aims to achieve.

Officials were asked the question, "In your opinion, would the community continue organising themselves in the way the DDM set the tone?" One of the officials from the Waterberg municipality said:

Well, we are dealing with human beings, and as I told you but the DDM contests to minimize all challenges that the community faces. I guess the DDM and communities will later unite against anti-development *(Participant, DDM study)*.

The councillor emphasises that the communities will be satisfied when the government can minimise the challenges that they are currently facing.

A question was asked about what difference there had been in districts where the DDM had been implemented in comparison with others where it had not been implemented. The councillor in the Waterberg municipality responded as follows:

There is a co-ordination of sorts, even international funders are becoming interested and want to go where there is stability and coordination because they have plenty of funding that they can give to our communities and projects that are led by people but before they would not want to do that because there was no coordination. Now that there is DDM they know what to do and they can come in numbers *(Participant, DDM study)*.

What emerges from this response is that the coordinated effort shown in the implementation of the One Plan has resulted in the international funding community acknowledging the stability of the country. South Africa is gaining trust as a stable place to invest. The DDM has brought different funders and projects to districts and has sponsored different learnership programmes.

The question was asked "What is the contribution of the DDM to (1) Poverty reduction, and (2) Local by-laws?" The councillor from the Waterberg municipality responded:

This question will make me speak out of turn. I may not have numbers but in terms of poverty reductions, I am happy with what I see, as I mentioned that there are skills learnership programmes that are in place and are sponsored by USAID. I saw private companies brought in within municipalities under the spirit of DDM *(Participant, DDM study)*.

Because of the persistent challenges of service delivery in local government, the effectiveness of its programmes has been questioned. As research by Nkomo (2017) reveals, there has been dissatisfaction with the functioning of local government from a public opinion standpoint. This finding

is consistent with other studies. For example, Masiya (2019) found that there is a negative public perception regarding how local government is designed and its local delivery track record. Research evidence also shows that this has caused increased protest action and an inclination towards violent protests linked to service delivery dissatisfaction (Bohler-Muller et al. 2016).

As such, a question was posed to representatives working on the DDM about the effectiveness and efficiency of the model concerning its service delivery objectives, particularly within the local sphere of government. In responding to this question, the key informant from LGSETA Limpopo pointed out that the DDM programmes rolled out had been efficient and effective in many ways. The participant went on to say:

> I want to believe so; I want to do so. As I indicated that this is how management has been broken down into smaller pieces so that the district now focuses on these localities and emphasises the work of the district. Where previously, it was just laid back, now, the DDM is putting them on their toes. It's more likely emphasising what they've got to do as a district. I also think, from the organisers, they have really come out to provide more information because we are really having quite a lot of imibizos around this. So, I want to really believe that everybody has their sleeves rolled back and everybody is coming on board. We are not leaving anybody behind let me say. Also, CoGHSTA [Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs] from our provincial departmental forums took it upon themselves that they will ensure that the Human Resources Development from the municipality is fully involved from a skills development perspective (*Participant, DDM study*).

The aforesaid excerpt speaks to the renewed focus brought about by the DDM, which emphasises the roles and responsibilities of all the districts in fulfilling their DDM objectives and ensuring that all service delivery targets are being met.

The councillor was asked about the extent to which project objectives had been achieved through the DDM. He responded:

> The skills development programme that was conducted sometime in February or March, will be handing out certificates of completion to those students and then they can later try to use it because it's an accredited certificate. They can use it to create employment

67

opportunities themselves and others may choose a different path if they need to do certain applications *(Participant, DDM study).*

Another participant from the Waterberg municipality added: "The major challenge to me is the active citizenship that it gave birth to and that our people have confidence in our government*" (Participant, DDM study).* Ironically, as much as South Africans do not trust the government, they still rely heavily on the government.

Value for money is a key component of the Batho Pele principles, which are designed to ensure efficient service delivery (Pietersen 2014: 255). To ascertain the replicability and value for money of the DDM, participants were asked whether the programme could be applied to other districts in the country. A key informant from SALGA Limpopo pointed out that government would be better positioned to improve service delivery programmes by creating a more coordinated model and getting buy-in from all the relevant stakeholders. The participant went on to say:

> Yes. Our government will be better able to provide services to our communities. To serve our communities in the domain based on the five objects of local government. So, us embracing it would usher us into that space because as we have mentioned over and over the intergovernmental relations, they are all on board. Our programmes will be in sync with each other. So, a province and a national department's plan will speak directly to what the needs of the people are. That we identified through the IDP and is value for service. So, we would not be having white elephants anywhere or would not have infrastructure that has not been utilised to the economic challenges, of an area. For me it is a win, it is a win-win situation. In any case, if we both embrace the value of good governance. But at the heart of it, it also talks back to the quality of the expertise we have within the local government itself *(Participant, DDM study).*

An important point to note from the aforesaid excerpt is that the success of the DDM depends on all stakeholders playing their part. The full value of the DDM rests, therefore, on how willing the key stakeholders are to embrace it as a programme of action going forward.

A similar view is shared by the stakeholder representing LGSETA Limpopo, who argued that the value of the model rests on stakeholders like LGSETA buying into the initiative and that it would be replicable

only if stakeholders invested financially and were willing to make it work. The participant went on to say:

> I want to believe so, because now, as an initiative, institutions like LGSETA are responding to that call and we have added it to our key priority areas as programmes that need to be funded. It is unlike before when there was no call and maybe all we would have had is a provincial office coming up with a plan to have a district project, but now because it is an initiative that comes from the President, other institutions are expected to respond positively to that call. I think we are doing well. LGSETA has come on board *(Participant, DDM study).*

The two participants from LGSETA both agreed that the replicability and value for money of the DDM depended mostly on stakeholder involvement, which would enhance the programme going forward and provide an indication as to what it would take for the model to be successful and provide value for money.

The councillor in eThekwini was also asked the question about the replicability of the DDM, whether any changes to it needed to be considered, and which aspects were innovative and replicable. The councillor said:

> If we have a regular ME mechanism at a political level and higher level, that is what is going to make this thing sustainable, and this includes having a permanent item and even a permanent term. It is a permanent role to play in it being featured within the cabinet *(Participant, DDM study).*

In the context of the earlier excerpt the participant reflects on what will make the DDM work. In their opinion regular M&E is critical to the success of the DDM. It is important to note that the participant indicates the need for political leaders to understand what is happening in the districts.

One of the roles of COGTA is to manage the DDM and its outcomes. The councillor added:

> As I said, when it was lodged in our province and other districts these three replicated it already, all four districts copied what we are doing, and then they are trying to follow suit and I think it should be a national programme because it changes how things were done before the small accountability and community involvement throughout *(Participant, DDM study).*

Generally, the implementation of public policy in South Africa is something researchers and academics have expressed concern about (Brauns and Wallis, 2014). Although most participants' views were positive or in favour of DDM, some raised issues that need firm and decisive attention to avoid the implementation failure of the model. For instance, one participant was worried about the fact that DDM implementation was not multi-departmental, multi-agency and multi-sectoral. However, COGTA outsourced the coordination of the DDM to DBSA, whose primary function is infrastructure development and funding. The concern was that this might limit the involvement of other agencies:

> COGTA as a project manager, so I think that also then makes it quite complicated because it is like trying to take a reform programme which is in its infancy and then outsource it to a service provider, and you choose a service provider that has a particular bent which is around infrastructure investment. There is something wrong with that. But if your intention with the DDM was to do infrastructure investment and funding then it is fine. But they have been so many different sets of goals that have been articulated for the DDM, including other sectors of government themselves, at least 20 to 25 different types of goals right up to kind of COVID management and gender-based violence and what not. The expertise of the appointed service provider might not cover all priorities goals *(Participant, DDM study).*

From the discussion with participants, we noted the following as potential challenges in the implementation of the model:

- *Cabinet ministers*

Cabinet ministers have been appointed as district champions; but participants raised concerns about the level of engagement and knowledge the DDM ministers have about their district's DDM coordinators. One participant indicated the following:

> There are simple terms of reference to ensure that DDM is supported and ensure that all cabinet members have some responsibility in the implementation of the model. But then they need to be trained in the process. If they have no brief, and they have no resources that they take up the task the outcome is also going to be very uneven. So even if you are doing a change agenda amongst officials and you want a championship amongst the politicians, they also must be somehow factored into what is this change management programme. If we had to interview cabinets, how many of them are going to say, oh yes, I

70

have been to my DDM or have detailed knowledge of the programme and implementation plan in their allocated district. I doubt many will know *(Participant, DDM study).*

- *Capacity and capabilities of implementation officials*

There is a feeling that the DDM is the result of a municipal lack of capacity to implement anchor projects and meet the needs of the people:

> Also, the other thing that is quite worrying about the DDM is that municipalities cannot do it on their own. It is almost like a punishment to them to say, well, like it or not we're gonna come here, we are going to fix you *(Participant, DDM study).*

This notion might undermine the independence of each of the three spheres of government as the local government might feel voiceless during engagements with national departments.

- *Provincial and municipal planning and collaboration on key projects*

Provincial officials have some level of reservation about the DDM as they see it as a means of doing away with provinces:

> The real question is why we need the DDM; my worries are around the real agenda of the model. This might be a precursor to doing away with provinces. If the model works seamlessly the government might decide to have all the planning and coordinating decisions centralised at the national level and cascade directly to the municipalities for implementation. So, to be honest with you I have some level of scepticism about what the real agenda behind the DDM is. You can imagine that, uh, if the provinces are supposed to be involved in trying to help set these things up and run them and capacitate them these the DDM hubs. It is just gonna undermine the intent by I think some of the provinces also have taken it up in, it is it that that take up is very uneven. *(Participant, DDM study).*

- *Political interface*

The DDM has the potential of driving political interference as the ruling or governing party may drive its political agenda through the implementation of the plan. As one participant reflected on the possibility of political interference:

> So, the thing about the DDM is seen as a sort of entry point for political agenda, quite a lot of people have mentioned that, but you can imagine that if the politics in the DDM are different to the politics in the municipality. Also, some municipalities that I would not want to mention which are under coalition movement government have indicated to me that they will not implement DDM as they view it as the ruling party agenda to dictate what needs to be done in municipalities *(Participant, DDM study).*

- *Attitude of municipal officials*

From non-governmental actors, the great concern was the attitude of government officials implementing the initiative:

> Out of the three districts OR Tambo is the weakest. You know, they had been struggling and have not been able to get things off the ground *(Participant, DDM study).*

- *Community involvement*

The response below reaffirms that a lot of work still needs to be done at the community level for community members to understand this new model.

> Officials must continue to engage communities. When we introduced IDPs to the communities, people did not know anything about IDPs, it became a process. You educate people, you put systems in place, and you provide guideline, instruments and tools for officials and government to understand this thing and for communities to understand it. We need to use a similar process for the DDM *(Participant, DDM study).*

Finally, a participant cautioned COGTA not to run the DDM as a departmental project as there should rather be a mechanism to create better collaboration:

> If COGTA keeps running DDM as a project as a COGTA project, it is not going to gain traction because what they are trying to do, is so fundamental to the way that intergovernmental relations works and they gonna just keep on struggling. So, I do not think it is just a COGTA issue. It is a kind of structural issue around how government organises itself. But you know there is room for improvement and there is room for reflection on how this kind of cross-cutting initiatives are done. The other added complication of the DDM is that we have three spheres of government, which are all independent. Each one would want to carry on with what they are supposed to do. They are not mandated to implement DDM. So why would they complicate an already difficult situation to implement the DDM and how will benefit them *(Participant, DDM study)?*

10. EMERGING ISSUES FROM THE EMPIRICAL AND DESKTOP ANALYSES

Tshabangu (2015) emphasises the need for cooperative governance as a means of improving service delivery. Chapter Three of the Constitution deals with cooperative governance principles, section 41 provides for structures for coordination. Unfortunately, section 41 assumes that the leadership will understand what those principles mean. The reality is exactly the opposite. Every sphere plans in silos without considering the other spheres. As Coetzee (2010: 94) contends, there is clear evidence of overlap between institutions tasked with providing service delivery, and cooperative governance needs to ensure that this does not compromise the overall objective of service delivery improvement. Furthermore, municipalities should be included in planning processes because they are the implementing agents. The national government does its spatial planning, the province does the same independently, and municipalities plan through IDP processes. The engagements with the study participants confirmed that there is a lack of coordination among government departments as well as all three spheres of government.

It is envisaged that the DDM as a system of government will address this lack of cooperative governance. Hence the DDM addresses the question of how the three spheres of government relate to one another on matters of budgeting, planning, and implementation. This is to reinforce the principle of oneness and place the focus on delivering services to the people, although each sphere of government is distinct and different from the other spheres. The three spheres of government must

plan, budget, and implement in more collective ways. DDM reinforces the IGR processes with a focus on outcomes and easy monitoring and evaluation.

Chapter Three of the Constitution reiterates that all spheres of government must work together and provide a coherent government for the Republic. It is questionable whether the spheres of government can work together without a coordinated system such as the DDM. The DDM should therefore not be seen as a programme or a project. It is a system of government, the system whereby government must function. For instance, IDPs and Annual Performance Plans (APPs) should mirror each other. Unfortunately, these plans do not relate to each other. A major challenge is that South Africa currently has 257 municipal plans, and nine provincial development plans, and each national department has a "master plan". Consequently, the country has no coherent plan. The NDP provides a broad framework, but it does not provide the details, that is, Implementation strategies. This is what the DDM aims to achieve.

In the process of implementing the DDM, officials can draw lessons from the implementation of similar models in other countries. Reid, Scott and McNeil (2006) conducted a study of the "whole of government" approach to development planning in New Zealand. This approach to development planning was initiated after the passage of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002), which required all local authorities in New Zealand to prepare a ten-year Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), which articulated the economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes desired by their communities. According to these authors, four national ministries were tasked to lead the process, each leading one of the four categories of well-being specified in the LGA 2002:

1.   The Ministry for Economic Development (MED), for economic well-being
2.   The Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH), for cultural well-being
3.   The Ministry for Social Development (MSD), for social well-being; and
4.   The Ministry for the Environment (MfE), for environmental well-being.

The responsibility for coordinating communication between the departments and the local councils was given to the Department of Internal Affairs, which created a small team in each of its regional offices to facilitate engagement. A Central Government Department Group was established within the bureaucracy that provided a forum where engagement issues of the central and local government structures were discussed, as well as a forum for the four ministries, while the Ministry for Internal

Affairs was charged with looking at engagement issues and a Deputy Secretaries Group with coordinating overall engagement (Reid, Scott and McNeil 2006: 23-24).

The Reid (2008) study provides further insights into this model of collaborative planning. New Zealand has only national and local spheres of government. However, the local government sphere consists of regional councils and district or city councils. The country is highly centralised, with the local government only receiving about 10% of public expenditure. LGA 2002 arose out of "increasing concern about the growth of policy and operational silos in the core public service" (Reid 2008: 114). The Act therefore aimed at improving inter-agency cooperation, which placed emphasis on the potential of local government to promote joint initiatives at the sub-national level. The strengthening of a partnership between the local government and the national government was also seen as a way of encouraging increased citizen participation in local government. The LGA 2002 also encouraged collaboration between councils. It was envisaged that there would be a link between national plans and "locally defined priority with community wishes" (Reid 2008: 148).

Reid (2008) then proceeds to identify some of the challenges with this approach to developmental planning as applied in New Zealand. Among the most important are:

- Concerns among members of some departments and agencies about barriers to collaboration such as geographical distance between institutions, "different approaches to delegation, a need for more time and a clearer understanding of the language used by agencies"
- The challenges that arise from the government having to "respond to the interests of 85 diverse units of local government"
- The preference of some agencies to engage with regional institutions at the possible expense of local institutions
- The need for more information to enable departments and agencies to "meet their statutory obligations to report on the achievement of outcomes"
- The lack of information to enable them "to determine which government agency, and which official, should be approached to assist with the outcomes process"
- The difficulty of collaboration across various jurisdictions – national and local – which requires a complex web of relationships across these boundaries "which makes ongoing agreements difficult"
- The differing cultures found in local community-based organisations, local councils, and governmental institutions such as national departments; and

- The tension between outcomes determined by agreements between government agencies and those agreed upon between agencies and local communities (Reid 2008: 152-153). (See also Bush 2005; Thomas and Memon 2007; Reid 2009; and Blomkamp 2011).

Finally, Reid concluded in another study (2012: 269) that "the LGA 2002 left the constitutional position of local government unchanged and failed to address the fundamental imbalance in the central-local government relationship." In this regard, he found several imbalances in the implementation of the new development planning model found in LGA 2002, including the use of its mechanisms for collaboration with statutory agencies and community-based organisations by a few local councils, while many others did not use them. Another challenge was the fact that some national government departments became involved while others did not, largely because involvement was dependent on the preferences of individual officials and / or ministers. The literature thus indicates that there is potential for success in applying this model, but that it requires commitment from all government institutions.

During fieldwork, the officials participating in the South African study expressed the fear that some districts were reluctant to develop their One Plan strategy as this was not legislated, as mentioned earlier in the findings section. The fear is that such an attitude might delay the implementation of the DDM in all 52 spaces in South Africa.

Despite the limited success of this approach to development planning, the literature on the "whole of government" approach to planning provides some insights into the requirements for integrated planning across all levels (or spheres) of government and the potential and limitations that are relevant for the new model of development planning being introduced in South Africa.

The literature illustrates how models of development planning like the DDM enable the building of a development vision based on the needs of, and opportunities for, each district and municipal area. In a presentation to Parliament on the model, the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, explained the steps required to develop the model:

- Develop a detailed profile of the district such as size, population, poverty and schooling level, infrastructure, who heads the household, crime, economic activity, and potential; and
- Identify professional skills such as ICT and finance skills in the district (Dlamini-Zuma 2019).

The principle of collaboration between the different spheres was spelt out in the COGTA (2018) presentation on the rationale of profiling districts and metros in the context of the DDM:

> District profiles are critical because they lay a foundation for collaborative/joint planning that does away with the legacy of silo planning and implementation. The profiles use evidence to introduce an intergovernmental agreement (compact) on the development issues in districts and metro spaces. This means, that the profiles are critical for laying a foundation for intergovernmental problem diagnosis in each district. If done properly, the district profiles will be used as a powerful intergovernmental tool to influence the development of programmes and the (re)allocation of resources through the One Plan.

Case studies on similar development models found in the developing world are the focus here. The literature on Indian development planning reflects this potential for a development vision based on local needs and opportunities.

10.1 The DDM as a provincial implementation programme

Programmes such as Operation Sukhuma need to be reviewed as they are part of the problem (Macwele 2014: 92). Each province has its approach. A close analysis of these approaches shows that they fall short of integrating municipal and provincial plans. They do not address and work towards One Plan. These programmes operate through the province imposing itself on municipalities and telling municipalities what they should do but not about how they can accommodate, understand, or appreciate that space and what needs to be done in that space. What can the province and the municipality do to develop municipal spaces in unison? The DDM is underpinned by the principle of one district, one budget and one plan, which aims at ensuring uniformity and consistent developmental planning that aligns with goals set at the national level.

The One Plan starts with the profile of each district, which outlines the demographics of that area, the levels of poverty, unemployment rate, skills, schooling, health care facilities or status, crime rates, and economic enhancement. This profile is compiled from all the data from the district municipality. That profile is a baseline that must inform what the national government needs to do in that district. One participant from COGTA reflected on the findings during the DDM consultation process as follows:

Let me give you a classical example OR Tambo was one of the pilots; OR Tambo when we started in 2019, it had unemployment of 35% in that 80% is the youth under the age of 34 years and that youth is youth without any schooling, it then explains the high crime rate in that area and the high rate of GBV and so on. You also look at OR Tambo it is a rural area, agriculture contributes 2% to the GDP of the district and there is a huge potential in terms of tourism since there is the sea (the coastal line) and in that coastal line nothing is happening if you go areas like Flagstaff, Coffee Bay, Port St Johns nothing is happening, and it is beautiful. So it is a poor district with huge potential. So that profile has now given us the status of development in that area, we now know the problems of OR Tambo and we know its potential. So, the issue in the one plan is to say, national basic education and provincial basic education what are your plans for OR Tambo. There is a university there and it does not even have a faculty of Agriculture. You have a coast there and there are no Fisheries, there are no studies that offer even tourism and that is what you have as a district. So, if you are not training your youth around coastal studies, tourism and agriculture which are your core or key economic endeavours, how are you going to develop the economy?" *(Participant, DDM study).*

Based on this finding the O.R. Tambo district, province and national government established relationships with Walter Sisulu University and Fort Hare University to develop programmes to train students in the areas of fisheries, tourism, and agriculture, which could address youth unemployment through the creation of industries that could unlock the economic potential of the district. O.R. Tambo district needs to engage small businesses, especially in agriculture, and encourage agro-processing and planting. The national department of agriculture and the provincial government needs to support the district in the implementation of such an initiative. The budget process needs to be informed by spatial mapping. The three spheres of government must have one budget for one space and work coherently and effectively.

10.2   The DDM as an accountability mechanism

The One Plan can also be used as the accountability framework, where departments can be held accountable for the budget and its implementation, which is clearly outlined in the one plan. Currently, departments are held accountable based on APPs, which do not reflect the outcome. APPs have not produced the desired results. National departments need to be measured according to the One Plan implementation outcomes.

Turton and Farrington's (1998) review of a watershed project in India provides some insight into an accountability and reporting framework for projects implemented at the district level. The study concerns the reversal of degradation and reduction of poverty by the Union Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment. The Ministry developed guidelines for micro-watershed rehabilitation in 1994 that envisaged a high degree of participation and local autonomy in the design and implementation of the rehabilitation programme (Turton and Farrington 1998). The guidelines for the project set out an institutional arrangement for channelling funds and managing projects. The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) or Zilla Parishad (district level council) was responsible for programme implementation in the district and appointed a Watershed Development Advisory Committee to advise on the selection of villages for the project as well as on training and monitoring. Project Implementation Agencies (PIAs) were selected by the DRDA, which in turn each appointed a Watershed Development Team (WDT) of four technical experts in agriculture, engineering, life sciences and social work. The WDT was responsible for collaborating with the communities in both planning and implementing the watershed programme (Turton and Farrington 1998).

All members of the community were represented on a Watershed Association (WA), either directly or indirectly, depending on the specific watershed area. This community structure selected a watershed committee (WC) made up of representatives of user groups, self-help groups, the elected village assembly and the WDT. Each committee had a paid secretary who maintained the records and accounts, while funds flowed to the DRDA directly from the union and state governments. These institutional arrangements allowed for clear lines of accountability and reporting (Turton and Farrington 1998).

Participation by the community was central to the watershed programme, and the guidelines set out a detailed process for planning (Turton and Farrington 1998). Each WDT was required to conduct a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in which potential programmes and relevant user groups were identified. The outcome of this process was a Watershed Development Plan, which included the details of various activities, the list of user groups, the funding requirements for each activity and the contributions to be made by users. The WA then approved the plan before it was submitted to the DRDA.

The guidelines included the technical and social criteria by which projects could be assessed, thereby setting out the reporting indicators. However, monitoring by DRDAs or PIAs was restricted in practice to the recording of inputs such as financial flows and physical outputs, and did not cover processes

such as participation or social inclusion. Turton and Farrington (1998) argue that monitoring should allow for judgements on performance at the programme level – for example, whether the programme leads to environmental stabilisation or improvement, the replicability of the programme, and increased economic benefits and access to those benefits by marginalised sectors of the community and by women. However, monitoring did not extend beyond designated financial or physical targets.

Turton and Farrington (1998) suggest that monitoring can become a powerful force for participation and democracy at the local level, providing an opportunity for:

- Increased participation by members of local communities in tracking physical and socio-economic progress and suggesting corrections; and
- Members of local communities to hold PIAs and other agencies involved in the programme to account for ensuring financial transparency.

10.3   The DDM as an IGR framework

Friedman (1999) notes that the 1996 Constitution provides for a broad framework of IGR but does not provide specific directions on how to operationalise it. The drafters of the Constitution intentionally left space to manoeuvre to encourage the flexibility of IGR. The framework of IGR in the Constitution is, nevertheless, complemented by by-laws and regulations which seek to operationalise IGR.

Political issues must be addressed first for the success of DDM implementation. There is a need for cabinet ministers, premiers, mayors, and councillors to understand what this means and to invest in educating themselves and their communities. These processes can only be made possible if the DDM is regulated, as are planning and budgeting. The DDM plan or the One Plan needs to become a requirement for each government department with measurable outcomes to prevent the current pattern of linking planning to individuals. The current trend is that the first order of business of newly appointed political heads of departments always implement their agenda without clear consideration of the plans already in place. With the DDM, the first point of reference needs to be the department's commitment to the One Plan.

Reddy (2018: 717) notes that the government publicly acknowledged in 2009 that local government had failed to discharge its basic functions and that consequently a comprehensive shift was needed to ensure that the system was back on track again. Key aspects highlighted in the 2009 report (RSA

2009: 17-18) were governance failures, including: ineffective leadership; mammoth backlogs in service delivery; corruption; weak financial management; scarce skills, limited capacity and poor training of the workforce; ineffective performance management; and large numbers of vacancies (Picard and Mogale 2015: 171, 174; Venter 2014: 98-100). Broader governance deficiencies included defects in the local government system, legislative and policy concerns, political dynamics, poor accountability, poor oversight, and weak intergovernmental support (RSA 2010: 3).

The DDM One Plan is central to the accountability framework. Existing IGR structures are meant to be the structures that process this One Plan. The President needs to hold ministers accountable based on commitments made in the One Plan, Premiers must be monitored, and the discussion at the Premier Council needs to be centred around commitments made in the One Plan. Mayors' and district mayors' forums are about implementation. These platforms should focus on accountability for the commitments made towards the One Plan.

However, the sentiment shared by pilot districts was that this will never succeed if this approach to planning and budgeting is not institutionalised. Departments must know that when they make commitments they must deliver on them, and that someone must be held accountable. Therefore, the government needs to start planning beyond five-year cycles so that IDP plans are adhered to even with the change of leadership at the local government level.

10.4   The DDM as embracing the IDP

The IDP is the municipal process. It also provides the full profile of the space or district and must link with the DDM One Plan and One Budget. In return, communities will be able to understand the district plan and engage with the commitments made in the One Plan. Therefore, if there is a lack of a particular service, communities will know where to address their concerns directly. All consultations undertaken need to be based on the DDM One Plan. This will solve the problem of national or provincial mandates within the district space as officials cannot 'pass the buck'. Institutionalising the DDM process is central to its success.

It is important to note that in the local government sphere the IDP and the Performance Management Guide for Municipalities 2001 are used to monitor and evaluate municipal programmes and planning (DPLG 2001: 5). The IDP is used to prioritise municipal needs with the participation of the people.

Cloete (2009: 298) argue for the need for a shift in M&E approaches in the public sector to respond to the constant change in developmental goals and objectives.

With all these policies in place, the question remains: why does M&E remain a contentious issue in local government? In trying to find a response to this question, Andrews and Moynihan (2003: 1) looked at the criteria for evaluating local government in developing countries. They noted that local governments in developing countries face special issues such as political pressure, poor management, dependence on central government, and poor administrative structures, and that evaluation criteria need to consider the contexts in which local governments operate. The focus needs to be placed on resource accessibility, fiscal health, and fiscal compliance. Who develops the regulatory and policy framework at the local government level and how this is done contributes to compliance. The DDM model offers a platform for all three spheres of government to focus on planning in one district with the same or similar goal. The implementation of the model should consider programmes that are outlined in the IDP and through intergovernmental collaboration ensure that these translate into service to the community.

10.5   The DDM as part of an institutionalisation process

The DPME needs to introduce spatial planning principles for APPs so that all APPs are based on the One Plan principle. There are forty-four districts and fifty-two spaces, and all departments must account for their respective spaces. The department's APP must speak directly to what it is implementing in a particular space so that there are measurable outcomes for its contribution. The National Treasury needs to come on board to compel everyone to account for their contribution to the One Plan.

In Ghana development planning starts with communities, who identify their needs, which are taken up by their representatives, the Assembly members (Owusu 2009: 170). The District Assembly (DA) harmonised these needs at the district level and then forwarded them to the regional level where they were further harmonised with other district plans. Ghana's national development plan was then put together by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), which was the national structure at the apex of the Ghanaian development planning system. The NDPC drew from the plans of all the regions and districts and combined these with the sectoral plans of government ministries and agencies. Development planning thus started at the community and district levels and ended there during the implementation of projects (Owusu 2004: 170-1).

Community awareness of the IGR system and how they can hold national, provincial, and local governments accountable against the One Plan is critical. But for that to happen they must appreciate what the One Plan is. It was evident from the interaction with community members that they have minimal understanding of the DDM. The focus should therefore be directed to raising awareness so that the DDM is well understood by communities, in the same way that they have become familiar with the IDP process. Here is the view of one participant from COGTA on stakeholder engagement:

> When we were in Waterberg, we met with businesses and some community-based forums. We had a lot of Black miners that we did not even know that they exist. Waterberg has tourism, but they are saying it is hard to access that tourism as a Black person. So, these are issues that the national department of tourism must deal with, how do you unlock them, to ensure that more Black people are coming in but in areas such as O.R. Tambo how do you create a tourism industry that can thrive because the potential is there? You just need to then just support emerging tourists' entrepreneurs *(Participant, DDM study).*

It is also important to note that community engagement has been limited, apart from organised formations in the pilot districts. Ordinary community members have limited knowledge of the DDM, and some have not heard of the government service delivery implementation strategy. In addition, government language is still too complex, technical, and bureaucratic for ordinary citizens to understand. The success of a One Plan community is dependent on investment in empowering communities to understand the One Plan and its processes. To emphasise: Government must invest in institutionalising the DDM.

Each municipality needs to develop structures and processes that will provide a framework for decision-making, participation, policymaking, and implementation of services within its municipal jurisdiction. Increasingly, governments do not have all the authority structures and processes in place to solve the problems that plague citizens, communities, and public officials alike. Innovative ways of providing services to the community need to be devised by local government through active engagement with organised labour, business associations, individual citizens and other significant stakeholders. This could be done by setting up community forums such as public participation sessions, as envisaged in the Municipal Systems Act 2000 (RSA 2000a).

10.6   The DDM in the three pilot sites

10.6 1   The DDM in the O.R. Tambo District

O.R. Tambo District is one of three DDM sites included in the primary research. As indicated previously, officials in O.R. Tambo did not honour interview appointments. In the absence of the views of O.R. Tambo officials, this section below presents a summary of the O.R. Tambo District One Plan document, which is influenced by the DDM's theory of change.

According to this theory, there are six key pillars of transformation that the DDM focuses on: 1) People development and demographics; 2) Economic positioning; 3) Spatial restructuring and environmental sustainability 4) Infrastructure engineering; 5) Integrated service provision; and 6) Governance management. The One Plan strategy is also supported by previously created documents such as IDPs and SDFs, along with the NDP. For the One Plan to be successful, it needs to build on the foundation and strengths of prior documents. Following the One Plan document launch, key stakeholder engagements have taken place with various role players, including the Minister of CoGTA, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, senior municipal management officials such as the municipal manager, and the Eastern Cape economic cluster departments, which include provincial SOEs and development agencies. The purpose of these engagements was to introduce the Plan and get the backing of all key stakeholders across the business, government, and labour sectors, whose support for the Plan is critical to its success.

The One Plan structure has four steps: identification of the root causes of the different challenges facing the district; a vision detailing where the plan wants to go; adoption of a strategy; and an implementation commitment, involving the district clearly outlining what it wishes to implement and how that implementation fits with the O.R. Tambo district's desired future in the medium to long term. Given that the district is home to a total of five local municipalities, there is an array of opportunities emerging from the different economic sectors that each local municipality can tap into. As a result, the catalytic projects that are likely to benefit the entire district become important. Although these projects are tertiary-driven and primarily focus on transport infrastructure, they are likely to have a strong impact on the district's economic position, which may result in an improved road network, creating regional links that Eastern Cape residents can access for business, employment, and government services.

Several opportunities are available for future development in the district. These are unique to each local municipality, although district development within the region also remains a distinct possibility. For example, the King Sabatha Dalindyebo municipality mostly relies on the tertiary economy, with mining playing a limited role in the local economy despite its potential to create employment. On the other hand, the Mhlontlo municipality is mainly driven by primary sector industries, including agriculture, as does the Nyandeni municipality, which relies on agricultural activity such as subsistence farming while holding enormous land for the potential for formal agricultural development. In addition, a few areas of development have been identified in the district which can potentially complement economic development; these include agriculture, the ocean economy, tourism, and the township economy.

The following section focuses on the challenges that have beset the district and how the One Plan approach can mitigate these.

Because of the historically skewed land ownership model in the province, the area is predominantly rural, and the land remains in the hands of a tribal authority or is government owned. Part of the DDM consultative process included key engagements with traditional leaders, who expressed the need for budgetary and agricultural skills development that would enable them to make the most of the arable land that is presently not being utilised for agriculture.

Another challenge cited by the One Plan document relates to responsible governance. Although this is a nationwide crisis, the O.R. Tambo district acknowledges governance shortcomings relating to service delivery and ailing public infrastructure. The third challenge is intricately linked to the second: O.R. Tambo district has the lowest infrastructure quality ranking across the country. Infrastructural support such as electricity supply and road connectivity is failing, along with backlogs in housing, piped water and electricity connections within households, which presents a significant challenge to the district and its economic aspirations.

The O.R Tambo district is one of three corridors identified by the National Government for potential growth and development. The district extends from the Port Shepstone area in KwaZulu-Natal to Nelson Mandela Bay via Mthatha. Because of its youthful population and high levels of poverty and unemployment, the district is considered a critical development region. By its location, there is an enticing opportunity and possibility to build a smart coastal city by 2050 which would include the ocean economy, agriculture, tourism, education, ICT, and the informal economy. Another favourable

factor for such development is that five municipalities within the district share ocean boundaries, which may signal greater development potential for the ocean economy and trade utilising the coastline. The coastal area presents immense potential for economic growth through diversified marine biology, with fishing potential that can provide food security for surrounding areas. Another potential economy that can be tapped into is forestry, which can potentially create employment opportunities and thereby address the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty, and inequality within the district. These possibilities necessitate capacity development through upskilling, using TVET colleges and universities, ensuring that local SMMEs can absorb graduates and attract highly skilled individuals to the area.

The nationwide lockdown that began in early 2020 affected the entire country's economic recovery. To kickstart economic recovery, the O.R. Tambo district outlined key measures that will aid such a recovery in line with key national priorities. Although all economic sectors hold a degree of importance, the wholesale and retail sectors rank as the most important to target given their output and economic contribution. Also important are agriculture, business services and the food sector, which contribute significantly to the province's economic output. Sectors such as mining and construction have experienced negative growth, also therefore requiring attention. The province's five-point economic recovery plan, with the objective of growth and economic stimulation, focuses on infrastructure development, industrialisation, inclusive and equitable transformation, public finances, and digital transformation. These are in line with the key priority areas in the IDP, which include the blue economy, manufacturing, agriculture, and rural development.

From an ocean economy standpoint, the district's harbours are strategic priorities, alongside small-scale fishing and coastal and small-town revitalisation. In terms of enterprise development, the district municipality has a youth incubation programme for young entrepreneurs, along with ongoing support from the district for about fifty agricultural cooperatives. Since the district has a sizable number of indigenous forests in areas such as Mt Thesiger, Mt Sullivan, Ntlopeni, Lotana and Ntsubane, there is significant potential for the growth and development of rural areas.

10.6.2   *The DDM in the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality*

President Cyril Ramaphosa launched the DDM in eThekwini in KwaMashu on 18 October 2019. At the same event, Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma outlined the outcome of the first step in the DDM implementation process – the profiling exercise – which gave rise to a document describing the

existing situation regarding socioeconomic development, service delivery progress, infrastructure, governance, and financial management (COGTA 2021: 5). eThekwini, located on the east coast of South Africa, has the Durban Port, Africa's largest port, as a gateway to global trade. The city thus has a strong industrial and manufacturing base, accounting for 65% of the provincial GDP and making up 8.7% of the national economy. It is also endowed with a favourable climate, beaches, and a strong heritage and culture suitable for tourism and leisure (COGTA 2021: 7-8). However, the profiling exercise showed that the triple structural and systemic challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality run deep in eThekwini compared to the other metros and are a major constraint to economic growth and well-being despite the municipality's potential. The One Plan presented an opportunity for all three spheres of government to collaborate with stakeholders, the private sector and civil society to integrate planning, budgeting and implementation so that service delivery and development impact could be improved (COGTA 2021: 1, 3).

The objective of the eThekwini One Plan is outlined at the outset of the draft document as follows: "Government working together with stakeholders and communities aims to make eThekwini a leading Smart Port City Region that is just, safe, sustainable, socially cohesive and culturally expressive: (COGTA 2021: 1). The eThekwini DDM Political Hub committee, consisting of deputy ministers John Jeffrey and Nocawe Mafu, MEC Kwazikwenkosi Mshengu, and Mayor Mxolisi Kaunda, championed the process of developing the One Plan in the metro. This committee was supported by an intergovernmental technical hub committee and an operational hub. The first stakeholder engagements were held between the municipality's political and administrative leadership, local businesses, and key social and economic development programmes in eThekwini from 19 to 23 November 2021, on a visit to the metro by the Minister of Cooperative Governance. Engagements across the three spheres of government on the catalytic projects that would drive the One Plan based on evidence collated from municipalities, the province and strategic national departments (that is, the profiles, IDPs, SDFs, etc.) also commenced at this stage (COGTA 2021: 5).

The minister's visit was followed by a series of intergovernmental technical working sessions (Design Thinking Workshops), together with the drafting of the Diagnostic Report and the Vision Setting, Strategy Formulation and Implementation Commitments. The working sessions included diagnostic sessions held by all metro departments, which culminated in: a city-wide diagnostic workshop in early December 2020; a two-day Intergovernmental Diagnostic Working session based on the outcome of the city diagnostic workshop held on 8 to 9 December 2020 with officials from all three spheres of government, giving rise to a draft Diagnostic Report; a two-day Intergovernmental Working Session

held on 3 to 4 February 2021 where further feedback from all three spheres of government on the draft diagnostic report was provided and inputs were made on Vision Setting and Strategy Formulation; a third Intergovernmental Working Session held on 3 to 4 March 2021, which considered the draft Vision and Strategy Formulation; and a session with the eThekwini Political Hub on 10 April 2021 where the draft One Plan was approved for the further stakeholder consultation that followed. A draft One Plan was distributed for public comment from 29 May to 11 June 2021, meaning that the process took just over six months to complete from the date of the launch of the pilot (COGTA 2021: 6).

The diagnostic exercise described earlier identified several structural and systemic challenges and threats in the metro – amongst which were: high levels of unemployment; the poor quality of education; infrastructure that is poorly located, inadequate and under-maintained; spatial divides that limit inclusive development; an unsustainable resource-intensive economy;, a public health system that cannot meet demand or sustain quality; public services that are uneven and of poor quality; high levels of corruption; and a divided society (COGTA 2021: 6). Above all else are the high level of poverty in the municipal area and increasing social ills and discontent, which have all been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges and threats give rise to six DDM transformation focal areas: people development; economic positioning; spatial restructuring and environmental sustainability; infrastructure engineering; service provisioning; and governance (COGTA 2021: 8-9).

It is envisaged in the One Plan Diagnostic Findings that the extremely high levels of poverty, social challenges, low skills levels and poor education outcomes, low Human Development Index (HDI) and high level of vulnerability need to be addressed through people development in the form of supporting the upliftment of people and communities as part of realising socio-economic and spatial justice, focusing on skills development for the competitive mainstream and informal economy, and unlocking the heritage, culture and creative talents of people in an inclusive way, including through building social cohesion. eThekwini's uncompetitive economy, low foreign direct investment (FDI) attraction compared to other parts of the country, and people development issues (skills mismatch and inequality that constrain economic growth) can be addressed through economic positioning through the creation of competitive advantage, with the Ports playing a critical role, localising economic master sector plans, and focusing on creating inclusive value chains empowering SMMEs, township and rural enterprises, and harnessing the potential of the cultural and creative industries (COGTA 2021: 9-10).

Spatial restructuring and environmental sustainability need to be promoted through the adoption of an integrated urban-rural development approach and improving adherence to spatial transformation, compact city and integrated development objectives to deal with urbanisation pressures, the growing number of informal settlements, the slow pace of spatial transformation, the inadequate public transportation system, and the unresolved issue of the Ingonyama Trust land, which is impacting on rural development. Infrastructure engineering through the coordination of infrastructure investment and innovation to follow spatial restructuring is required to deal with ageing infrastructure and the high backlog in infrastructure investment, high population growth, scarce water sources, and the lack of an adequate and secure supply of energy. Innovative service delivery models are needed to deal with the insufficient allocation of budgets for operations, the lack of quality and affordable housing and basic services for the poor, the increasing demand for services, and poor and inconsistent government service delivery levels. The lack of accountability and transparency concerning the use of public resources, lack of investor confidence, inadequate customer relations management, and disempowered communities and civil society structures need to be addressed by improving governance by unifying the city and building a common vision with a capable and professional administration (COGTA 2021: 10-11).

The eThekwini draft One Plan sets out the re-imagined eThekwini of the future. In terms of people development, it is envisaged that the estimated five million people who will be residing in eThekwini by 2050 will be safe, healthy, fully empowered and prosperous, 4IR- and multi-functionally skilled, the drivers of a competitive and inclusive regional economy, will earn sufficient and sustainable incomes, spend responsibly and save and invest, be engaged and active citizens with civic responsibility, be proud residents of eThekwini housed in well designed and well managed integrated neighbourhoods, and be well served by government. The desired future in terms of economic positioning is to make eThekwini a premier destination for global trade and tourism, an inclusive and transformed export hub for South Africa hosting well-functioning commercial / industrial ports, and an attractive, smart, competitive, green, circular and inclusive regional economy driven by smart policy and empowered and innovative enterprises, including SMMEs, township and rural enterprises (COGTA 2021: 16-17).

In terms of spatial restructuring and environmental sustainability, the vision in the draft One Plan is an eThekwini that: is a spatially just and resilient smart port city region that integrates diverse urban and rural spaces; is compact with a low carbon footprint and a protected natural resource base, including efficient utilisation and development of land; is an inclusive platform for a competitive and diverse sustainable economy and has integrated and harmonised human settlements with a low fossil

fuel, integrated and affordable public transport system. The desired future in terms of economic engineering includes an eThekwini that has a prioritised, coordinated and cost-effective infrastructure investment and management system that activates and sustains the transformed Smart Port City Region network, utilising innovative solutions and green technology, high performance infrastructure networks that support a competitive economy, including smart manufacturing industries, and an infrastructure network that enables regional spatial integration and reliable provision of services (COGTA 2021: 17-18).

The vision for integrated service provisioning is a municipality in which all residents live in decent housing with access to reliable, affordable and sustainable services and experience healthy living in well designed, safe, functional and well managed integrated neighbourhoods that are well served by the government. Governance in 2050 would be characterised by innovative policies, systems and delivery models, effective spatial governance and financial management, active and involved citizens and stakeholders, strong local institutions, a highly conducive business environment, and a well-supported economy that would contribute to and be a key successful part of an ethical, capable developmental state (COGTA 2021: 18).

The six desired futures to be achieved by 2050 were identified as strategic goals in the strategic formulation section of the One Plan, with several strategies developed for each strategic goal. These strategies included the targets, for instance, of reducing poverty levels by half by 2030, eliminating poverty and reducing vulnerability by 2040, and ensuring that all residents are prosperous, engaged in quality work, and have rising and sustainable incomes by 2050. A total of 32 strategies are outlined to achieve the six transformative goals.

The eThekwini Vision 2050 can only be realised "through a concerted programme of action specifying contributions by each National and Provincial department and entity, and the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality as they may be relevant to each particular strategy" (COGTA 2021: 30). The One Plan includes the identification of key role players in all spheres of government, as well as the private sector and civil society, for each of the 32 strategies devised for the six strategic goals, as well as their roles and responsibilities and short-, medium- and long-term commitments. In addition, several priority programmes are identified in the eThekwini One Plan, each linked to implementation commitments by the different spheres of government, the private sector and civil society. The implementation commitments are seen as a programme of action to be managed by the various role-players (Department of Cooperative Governance 2021: 55).

As this case study and the ones that follow illustrate, a collaboration between the various spheres of government and key sectors of civil society is possible in development planning at the level of metropolitan municipalities and districts.

10.6.3   The DDM in the Waterberg District

The Waterberg District Municipality DDM One Plan process was officially launched on 26 November 2019. However, the launch was preceded by the development of the profile of the district. The launch was followed by a skills gap analysis conducted in December 2019; the development of a One Plan Concept document in January 2020; a Waterberg foresight exercise conducted as part of Limpopo Outlook in January 2020; a profile gap analysis in February 2020; the establishment of district hubs and the project management unit in March 2020; and stakeholder engagements (Waterberg District Municipality 2020: 19). The draft Waterberg One Plan was released in March 2021.

The draft Waterberg One Plan includes a detailed analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the district. These are divided into the six transformative goals that are characteristic of the One Plan discussed, with each goal having a series of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats that are described in detail. The focus, however, is on issues that impact on each of the transformative goals. Here the analysis describes, for instance: how the relatively large youth population will increase demand for service delivery in the future; how the high dependence on specialised economic activity poses a difficult challenge for marginalised group support, and ultimately absorption into the economy; how the increased capital intensive nature of mining and agriculture leads to a growth in unemployment; how the growth in tourism leads to a rise in tensions between the impact of mining activities on tourism; how the lack of functional linkages and integration across the administrative boundaries at the local level impacts spatial-managerial, financial and developmental efficiency; and so forth. Nevertheless, several opportunities and strengths are identified, including the dominance of "formal housing and rural villages, posing an exciting opportunity for alternative standards for human settlements" (COGTA 2021a: 11); excellent access to social facilities; low learner-to-teacher ratios; widely distributed health facilities; and excellent telecommunications and internet connectivity, which provides a strong basis for future 4IR-based initiatives.

The Waterberg Vision outlined in the One Plan reads:

> The Waterberg of the future is a societal-, economic-, digital-, developmental and natural landscape, capably and ethically governed and managed on sound principles of policy consistency, and regulatory and legislative compliance with a people-centred approach, which imbues investor confidence that attracts both foreign and domestic direct investment leading to accelerated and sustained economic sectoral growth (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 17).

The desired demographic change and people development to be achieved by 2050 is a Waterberg with a desirable quality of life derived from: good access to facilities and utilities; the ability to reach places of education, employment and entertainment and the prospect of skills that will be utilised in the localised economy; a sense of community that is tangible as citizens take an active interest and play an active role in their development and economic prosperity; and the way in which the vulnerable are incorporated into daily activities that together attract a further influx of inhabitants to the district, with a reduced outflow of permanent residents (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 18). The vision for economic positioning is to achieve: a continuous and stable investment rate by both the private and public sector that is attributed to investor confidence, policy certainty, exceptional standards of governance and financial management; and a skilled work force and reduced barriers to entry for both employer and employee, giving rise to a diverse economy driven by key primary and secondary economic sectors characterised by economic security through the firm targeting and management of the fundamental drivers for development and growth such as people improvement, expenditure optimisation, and reduction in the risk / cost of doing business (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 19). Similar expansive visions are developed from the diagnosis in the One Plan for spatial restructuring and environmental management, infrastructure engineering, integrated service provisioning, and governance and financial management.

The Waterberg One Plan includes two demographic change and people development strategies, namely the COVID-19 response strategy and the skills-redevelopment strategy to increase "access to training and skills development opportunities to achieve the fundamental transformation of inequities linked to class, race, gender, age and disability within the district" (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 19). Two economic positioning strategies were also devised, namely the beneficiation facilitation strategy to unlock the potential and ability to encourage growth and create

jobs, and the tourism development strategy to expand and intensify the district tourism sector. The three spatial restructuring and environmental strategies are the ecological infrastructure preservation and climate mainstreaming strategy to manage natural resources and mitigate or adapt to climate change, the online spatial management strategy to create an inclusive and representative online spatial management strategy that is based on a rule-set and process adopted by the key role players in the Waterberg District, and the waste-based circular economy stimulation strategy to ensure efficient delivery of waste collection and disposal services (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 19-20).

The One Plan includes infrastructure engineering strategies, namely a bulk-energy management strategy, a mining sector growth strategy, a rollout of telecommunication infrastructure strategy, a transport and logistics management strategy, and a water-bulk resource management strategy. Also included are integrated service provisioning strategies, namely a centralised district financial governance and management strategy and human settlement and housing delivery strategy, and governance and financial management strategies, namely a centralised budget prioritisation and spatial targeting strategy, a centralised district financial management towards sustainability strategy, a data and data management strategy, district internal controls and centralised internal assurance framework strategy, an institutional and governance improvements strategy, a land tenure and restitution strategy, and a vertical and horizontal inter-governmental collaboration strategy.

The Waterberg One Plan outlines the various roles and responsibilities of key institutions such as the DDM District / Metro Hubs and the Department of Cooperative Governance, as well as mechanisms such as inter-governmental forums as decision-making bodies and special purpose vehicles as implementation bodies in the implementation of the strategies and programmes in the One Plan. Programmes are linked to the various strategies described earlier. For instance, the programmes to implement a municipal spatial data and planning support platform and system, compile and maintain fixed asset registers that are required for annual auditing, and develop a customer database and maintenance system fall under the data management strategy (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 30). The transport and logistics management strategy includes programmes for rail infrastructure development, transport network development, and road maintenance, while the programmes identified for the water-bulk resource management strategy include source, storage, distribution and reticulation, groundwater development, mining water savings, undisrupted water supply, and wastewater treatment and reuse programmes (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2021a: 30).

Included in the One Plan is a list of commitments and planned initiatives of the different spheres of government and the private sector, as well as the total value or project cost and financial commitments associated with the projects planned for the Waterberg district. It is indicated that the private sector has 53 planned and committed projects at a total value of R359,829,021,196, and the public sector 1,183 projects at a total value of R36,984,322,809 (Department of Cooperative Governance 2021a: 33). However, it is noted that: "The existing investment commitments and planned initiatives are not sufficient to stimulate the required growth nor to create the conducive investment environment that is required to attract and sustain foreign- and domestic direct investment to catalyse the self-reinforcing upliftment cycle as envisioned by the Waterberg One Plan vision and strategy" (Department of Cooperative Governance 2021a: 33). An additional 259 projects at a total value of R53,369,980,000 are needed to reach the outcomes expected in the vision for Waterberg 2050. However, funding was secured for only a few of the additional projects, the majority being provincial government projects, while funding was secured for only three of the additional projects from the national government, one from state-owned enterprises and one from local municipalities.

10.7   Government plans to update and assess the One Plan

In August 2022, the DG of the Department of Cooperative Governance distributed a circular to all Municipal Managers, HoDs responsible for local government, and all DGs of local government, as well as all DGs of national government outlining the process to update the One Plan of all districts and metros. All districts and metros were expected to develop their One Plan after a circular was distributed in May 2021 outlining the process to develop a fully-fledged One Plan. The DG's circular also indicated that after the One Plan had been developed, a process would be undertaken to assess the quality of the One Plan. The quality assurance process involved a review of the process to develop the One Plan and to identify challenges and gaps that needed to be addressed in the review and updating of the One Plan. The assessments conducted in this process were consolidated into provincial reports (COGTA 2022). The provincial administrations were given responsibility for overall oversight and management of the One Plan review and updating process, which was expected to be completed by December 2022.

The Presidency distributed a circular in September 2022 outlining a process that would lead to an assessment of the One Plan. This was a three-day programme during early September 2022 (7 to 9 September in the Public Service Month) to allow for senior public servants to "assess the quality of the District Development Model (DDM) One Plan and address specific sectoral challenges on the

ground, thereby strengthening the implementation of the DDM" (The Presidency 2022: 1-2). DGs and HoDs were to be deployed to the districts corresponding with their Ministers and Deputy Ministers "to review progress to deliver services and deepen social and economic transformation" – that is, the state of the implementation of the One Plan – and to identify the burning issues as well as efforts to address specific sectoral issues. The reports arising from these exercises countrywide were subsequently to be consolidated into a single report (The Presidency 2022).

11. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Conclusions

From the desktop review to the findings from the empirical study, DDM is presented as a key strategic development policy to address the triple burden of poverty, unemployment, and inequality in South Africa. The focus on the district creates a decentralised approach and allows planning at national, provincial, and local levels to address similar issues through the One Plan and One Budget planning process. The distinctive contribution of this DDM is its collaborative approach to the planning framework. The extensive literature review conducted for this study shows the success of the model regionally and across Asia, Europe, and Canada. The desktop review also confirmed that the success of the DDM is dependent on the implementation approach used by key stakeholders. South Africa has implemented several development strategies over the years; the primary research component of this study gauges the perspectives of different stakeholders in the district where the model is being piloted. The current discourse is around whether the DDM will succeed where various previously implemented development models have either failed or only partially succeeded.

From the review of the literature, the model has shown success elsewhere despite some shortcomings. With the NDP as the overarching national planning policy, the DDM in its current format seems like a top-down approach imposed on districts. It might be a disruptor of the existing service delivery framework in the sense that we may see a local government that is more responsive to the needs of the people. Or it might create conformity and resistance, as indicated by Goldman (2012) regarding the GWME. However, the South African government is still in the initial stages of implementation of the DDM, and it is difficult to tell if the model will perform positively in the fifty-two spaces.

Even though the DDM might yield a positive result overall, its implementation requires carefully crafted strategies by the unique nature of the current fifty-two spaces in the current local government setup. The sentiment from primary research participants is that the model is replicable, but that this will depend on the inclusive nature of the anchor project in each district. The sign from the pilot projects is that provinces and local government are still struggling to find seamless collaborative platforms because municipalities feel that provinces want to impose their plan without clear consideration of municipal planning. This has the potential to hamper collaborative efforts because municipalities can plan independently without a provincial or national government. At this stage DDM could be reduced to a guide without legislative safeguards rather than a legislative requirement with which districts should comply.

The key objective of the study was to assess the initial rollout of the DDM in the pilot districts within the context of a broader investigation into South Africa's governance system and a review of case studies of comparable district development programmes in other countries in Africa and abroad. But since key informant understanding of the DDM is patchy and its implementation implications are unknown, the primary research has had limited usefulness in providing definitive evidence of the DDM's efficacy.

Findings from this primary research show that the plan to implement DDM in eThekwini District is at an advanced stage. However, we noted the limited contribution of communities in the process of developing the anchor projects. The limited community involvement in the DDM process was also noted in the way COGTA (2020) defines DDM as a "new integrated model that government is using to institutionalise an integrated district-based development approach aimed at fast-tracking service delivery and ensuring that municipalities work together and are adequately supported and resourced to carry their mandate." In the absence of coordination and planning among the three spheres of government, the DDM idea and vision risks may not be fully realised. The concern from municipalities that provinces tend to impose their plans through provincial implementation strategies or Operation Sukhuma Sake remains a potential obstacle to the success of the DDM.

Much more work needs to be done in terms of training and capacitating officials and all DDM stakeholders for planning and implementation. Critically, the three spheres of government need to create a mechanism for seamless coordination to anchor DDM initiatives. There is also a need for a new budget model to facilitate the One Plan One Budget process.

Another challenge that is particularly worrisome, especially from a DDM standpoint, is institutional performance. A common criticism levelled against public institutions is that government structures function in silos with little or no coordination among them. The private sector, moreover, is not part of decision-making despite the key role it plays within districts. Their exclusion from decision-making is likely to affect the broader performance of the district and its institutions, with wide-ranging implications for human resources, economic development and ultimately service delivery.

In terms of skills and training, there is a greater need for tertiary education institutions within districts and for the LGSETA to address the skills gaps that are currently experienced. An economic development boom depends fundamentally on skills and capacity availability, which would enable citizens to take full advantage of emerging opportunities.

Finally, we conclude that poor communication, challenges of coordination among the three spheres of government, and the non-institutionalisation of the DDM may render the model a grandiose idea – like other past development policies that the country has abandoned. The DDM runs the risk of not progressing beyond the current administration as it remains an approach or an idea instead of a legislative requirement needing compliance by all three spheres of government to address the development and service delivery challenges in each of the fifty-two spaces. This study provides an early assessment of DDM implementation in pilot districts. At the time of fieldwork, pilot districts were finalizing the implementation of their DDM plan. The way forward will be to assess the progress of the implementation of anchor projects. Further work still needs to be undertaken to monitor the implementation of the One Plan beyond the pilot. This should include mechanisms for continuous monitoring of the DDM implementation plan in each district.

11.2   Recommendations

Based on the ensuing discussion, it is recommended overall that a complete evaluation is needed once the DDM is fully implemented in any of the municipalities. The DDM model is a solid form of new IGR in South Africa, cementing and building on what already exists. The Presidency aims to operationalise One Plan, to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity, and to encourage greater competitiveness in service delivery for all who live in South Africa. There is a need for a harmonised IGR approach across 44 districts and eight metro spaces across South Africa in dealing with acute problems of poor service delivery. The pilot projects have highlighted various challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed if the objectives of the DDM model are to be realised.

Table 2 presents, in tabular format, a set of thirty specific recommendations emanating from the three case studies presented earlier. Each recommendation is accompanied by a brief explanation amplifying and contextualising the recommendation.

Table 2: Recommendations

Recommendation	Brief explanation
1. Legislate the DDM	Now that the pilot projects have been completed, the government should legislate the DDM so that it can be institutionalised nationally as an official programme of the government. The DDM needs legislative buy-in to establish legitimacy amongst citizens.
2. Involve relevant agencies and stakeholders in decision making	Government should involve relevant agencies and stakeholders in DDM planning and implementation from the onset. Agencies and stakeholders should be allowed to contribute what they know and what they have, in terms of their specialisations. Council members should be directly involved as local officials with specific knowledge of the various local areas covered by the DDM.
3. Get the basics right: get everybody on board	The DDM model should be championed by everybody and not exclude anyone. Since Councillors know everybody in the locality, including economic role players and their needs, their input is invaluable among other stakeholders to be involved.
4. Practice greater transparency and promote access to information	DDM information should be made accessible, transparent, and available to citizens in line with POPIA. Businesses in the local area should have ready access to DDM information and data.
5. Foster teamwork and team spirit during the implementation	The Presidency should foster teamwork among all stakeholders (including stakeholder forums) and participants in the implementation process.
6. Improve cooperative governance, involving all three spheres of government	The DDM calls for greater and improved cooperation amongst the three spheres of government to have the seamless interplay of governance affairs.
7. Formulate an implementation plan that adopts an all-of-government approach	An implementation task team or DDM Agency should be legislated and operate in the Presidency within the DPME to create and monitor an Implementation Plan blueprint. An all-

		of-government approach should be used in the formulation of the implementation plan for operationalising the One Plan.
8.	Draft and implement a Training and Development Plan for officials and political office bearers	To entrench an understanding of the DDM, massive training must be undertaken at all levels of government and among the relevant stakeholders and local beneficiaries of the DDM
9.	Foster democratic participation in district development by civil society and community stakeholders	It is recommended that the Presidency foster democratic participation of civil society groupings. Each of the fifty-two spaces includes civil society groups that drive development at the grassroots level already and that wealth of knowledge and experience should not be lost but harnessed.
10.	Focus on sustainable development and the eradication of poverty, inequality, and unemployment	Greater emphasis should be placed on inclusive and sustainable development through projects that include capital and green infrastructure projects in the fifty-two spaces. Key priorities of the government should be realised through these projects.
11.	Institutionalise the role of development finance institutions in development projects	Across the globe development finance institutions play a crucial role in decentralised development projects because of their proximity to localities and citizens.
12.	Focus on local economic development and business investment opportunities	DDM implementation should not negate local methods of economic development and business growth and investment by locals. The potential for local agribusiness and agri-exports is there at smaller scales, and the DDM should provide opportunities for locals to tap into these. Local mining opportunities should be availed to small-scale miners and regularised. Local tourism opportunities should be created and funded.
13.	Create an enabling environment legislatively	At all levels of government legislation should now be passed to enable the DDM and its processes.
14.	Replicate the pilot projects in all districts in the country	The Presidency should sanction the rollout of the DDM to all the districts. However, oversight mechanisms must be implemented to ensure DDM achieve its objectives when the rollout takes place.
15.	Ensure that the direct beneficiaries of the DDM are the people, not	The country has experienced an avalanche of corrupt activities in recent years involving government projects

government officials, in these fifty-two spaces	because of poor M&E and control. The Presidency should prevent any chance of corruption in its various forms. *Batho Pele* ("People first") should remain the motto.
16. Prevent underdevelopment in the fifty-two spaces	When the wealth of a community is not used for its development and its resources are taken and used somewhere else, it precipitates community underdevelopment, as happened during colonial and apartheid times. The DDM should propel improved living standards locally with no disparity of development across the fifty-two spaces.
17. Pass municipal by-laws & implement them.	Governments in the fifty-two spaces should consider passing municipal by-laws to enable DDM processes at the local level.
18. Increase the number of Learnerships	The involvement of agencies other than the government can increase the number of learnerships – hence skills development – for the local people.
19. Reduce bureaucracy	The DDM has shown that the management of projects can be broken down into manageable tasks which can be achieved efficiently at the district level.
20. Harmonise all programmes across the three spheres of government and across all departments to create One Plan	IDPs, provincial growth plans and department plans should be harmonised into one coherent Plan implementable at the grassroots level in the fifty-two spaces.
21. (The Presidency should) assume overall control of the DDM and institutionalise the oneness of the Plan	Since this is One Plan, it needs one central command that is accountable to the National Assembly for the overall performance of the implementation plan.
22. Establish a mechanism for regular M&E	It is important to have an M&E mechanism in place to ensure that performance is not compromised by inefficiencies, whether political or institutional.
23. Treat the DDM as a national programme of action	The DDM should be officially treated as a national programme of action against poor service delivery and the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment.
24. Formulate implementation strategies	There are so many plans in all spheres of government and all departments, including SOEs; hence the country has no one

	coherent plan. The nation needs one coherent Plan and accompanying strategies to realise the Plan.
25. Depoliticise the DDM	The DDM is a national programme and should be owned not by any political party or grouping but by the government for the citizens of South Africa. It should maintain its flavour as a programme of the people of South Africa.
26. Exercise meritocracy, not politics, in the appointment of officials	Officials who work with the DDM should have the requisite expertise to do so. Merit should be the basis of the appointment.
27. Develop an accountability mechanism	Since the DDM enshrines one Budget and one Plan, there must be a clear official plan for accountability.
28. Promote women's empowerment	The DDM should operate in line with the national goals and priorities of women's empowerment in the adjudication of development project procurement.
29. Departmentalise and depersonalise DDM implementation	The DDM should be institutionally linked rather than connected to individual leaders because leaders come and go, leaving institutions with no intuitional memory.
30. Ensure that the DDM has measurable outcomes, deliverables, and performance contracts for officials	The DDM should create performance contracts based on measurable outcomes for officials. Checking performance is critical for government projects.

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