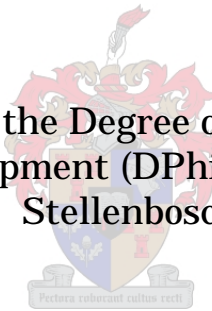


**Local Government Service Provision and Non-payment within
Underdeveloped Communities of the Johannesburg Unicity:
Service Providers' and Consumers' Perspective**

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**Thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy -
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Stellenbosch**



Promoter: Prof. Simon B. Bekker

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own, original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

Abstract

South African local government literature suggests a historical problem of municipal non-consultation in services identification and provision that goes hand-in-hand with community non-participation in municipal activities, coupled by a 'culture of non-payment' for these services. This research, which was conducted between 2002 and 2005 in the city of Johannesburg municipality, had the central purpose of ascertaining the manner and ways in which the city of Johannesburg provides its basic services to the Soweto communities and, in turn, of understanding if communities participate in municipal activities and hold possible attitudes of non-payment for municipal services. In order to attain the research purpose, six research questions were identified through local government theories and literature and advanced.

The first set of four questions was aimed at the Soweto communities: *How affordable are the basic municipal services to the Soweto communities? What are community's perceptions of the importance of the various municipal services? Are the communities participating in the services identification and provision? How satisfied are the communities with the service delivery?* The second set of two questions was aimed at service providers or the municipal services managers and councillors: *What methods does the municipality use in identifying and delivering service? What does the municipality perceive to be their application and enforcement of service quality management standards?*

The original methodological intent was to interview the Soweto communities and the city of Johannesburg municipal services managers and councillors. 200 Soweto households were indeed interviewed from the eight townships of Chiawelo, Diepkloof, Dobsonville, Dube, Jabulani, Meadowlands, Naledi and Orlando, which were randomly selected. The survey amongst the heads of these 200 households was followed by four focus group meetings at Chiawelo,

Dobsonville, Dube and Meadowlands and between five and eleven households participated in the discussions in clarifying survey outcomes. It was only possible, however, to interview three service managers from the city of Johannesburg services utilities Pikitup, Johannesburg Water and the Contract Management Unit.

Frustrated attempts to interview municipal councillors in the city of Johannesburg led to obtaining permission for proxy interviews from the MEC of Local Government and Traffic Safety in Mpumalanga municipalities of Govan Mbeki and Emalahleni and the inclusion of the KwaZulu-Natal municipality of Emnambithi. The usage of proxy interviews is thought to be relevant since the perceptions on service provision relate to the application and implementation of the uniform countrywide local government structures and systems. A total of 24 interviews were conducted with the Mpumalanga MEC, the city of Johannesburg service managers (3), councillors (9) and senior municipal administrators (11). In order to confirm or repudiate service provider findings from the Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal municipalities, supplementary interviews were held with persons knowledgeable about service delivery in Soweto between 2002 and 2005. A total of four additional interviews were thus conducted.

In the analysis of the community survey data, townships were classified as well-off and worse-off on the basis of household incomes and thus participation in municipal activities, payment of services and other attitudes were compared between the two strata. The findings of the research reveal low levels of ability to pay for municipal services by communities in terms of household incomes. However, the household possessions of the living standard measurement (LSM) utilities indicated otherwise. The use of income as a measure of affordability to pay is suspect in methodological reliability; hence income related findings should be interpreted with caution. The worse-off townships preferred state provision of the basic municipal

services. There was less inclination to participate in municipal structures such as ward committees and Integrated Development Plans (IDP) processes by the well-off townships, although they were the least satisfied with service provision and municipal performance.

The city of Johannesburg municipality was found to be addressing service backlogs as a method for service identification and prioritisation. The municipality has semi-privatised basic municipal services such as water, electricity and garbage collection through section 21 companies in order to overcome service provision inefficiencies and ineffectiveness. This has devastating effects in terms of the community's inability to pay, leading to services disconnection. Communities in general, however, believed that service provision has improved through these utilities even though the municipality has not finalised its performance management contracts with the utilities.

Whereas the service provider interviews were conducted in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal, additional telephone interviews with service provision experts for Soweto agreed that municipal challenges throughout the country are generally the same since they operate within relatively new policy frameworks. It is acknowledged, however, that metropolitan municipalities and specifically the city of Johannesburg face some unique challenges too. It is concluded that the central role of the local government as the custodian of basic municipal services cannot be disputed; however, the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of the market forces require private-public partnerships. It can also be concluded that non-participation is an outcome of, among other things, poor participative capacity within communities, apathy, feelings of distrust of both the municipal institutions and municipal councillors and the lack of information regarding community obligations to municipal institutions.

The research recommends the use of similar service utilities in both townships and former white suburban areas in order to overcome the perceptions of the municipal services level disparities that are formed on the basis of townships versus white suburban areas; an overhaul of the municipality's billing system to overcome its debt and service charges collection problems; ward committee participation capacity improvement for both the municipal councillors and communities and the development and communication of clear guidelines on the roles of regional services management centres.

Further research is recommended on, among other things, whether privatisation of municipal services results in better access by all and improves efficiency and payments, and on the functionality and effectiveness of ward committees as vehicles for community participation and in developing new and more reliable socio-economic modelling for assessing community ability to pay for government services.

Opsomming

Uit 'n literatuuroorsig van plaaslike regering in Suid-Afrika het dit geblyk dat daar 'n historiese probleem van nie-oorlegpleging by die identifisering en lewering van dienste deur munisipaliteite bestaan. Hierdie probleem gaan hand aan hand met niedeelname aan munisipale aktiwiteite deur gemeenskappe en 'n kultuur van “geenbetaling” vir dienste gelewer. Die hoofdoel van hierdie navorsing, wat tussen 2002 en 2005 in die stad Johannesburg gedoen is, was om vas te stel hoe die stad se munisipaliteit basiese dienste aan Soweto lewer en of daar enige gemeenskapsdeelname aan aktiwiteite is en of gemeenskappe 'n geenbetaling-houding inneem. Om die navorsingsdoel te bereik is ses vrae deur middel van literatuur en teorieë oor plaaslike regering geïdentifiseer.

Die eerste vier vrae is gemik op gemeenskappe in Soweto: *Hoe bekostigbaar is die basiese munisipale dienste aan die gemeenskappe in Soweto? Wat is die gemeenskap se mening oor die belangrikheid van die onderskeie munisipale dienste? Het gemeenskappe deel aan die identifisering en lewering van dienste? Hoe tevrede is die gemeenskappe met dienslewering?* Die laaste twee vrae is gemik op die diensleweraars of munisipaledienste-bestuurders en raadslede: *Watter metodes gebruik die munisipaliteit om dienste te identifiseer en te lewer? Wat beskou die munisipaliteit as op hulle van toepassing sover dit die afdwingbaarheid van kwaliteitstandaarde in die lewering van dienste en bestuur betref?*

Oorspronklik was die doel om onderhoude te voer met gemeenskappe in Soweto sowel as munisipaledienste-bestuurders en raadslede van Johannesburg. Onderhoude met hoofde van 200 huishoudings in Soweto is wel gevoer. Hierdie huishoudings is ewekansig uit Chiawelo, Diepkloof, Dobsonville, Dube, Jabulani, Meadowlands, Naledi en Orlando gekies. Die onderhoude is gevolg deur vier fokusgroepvergaderings te Chiawelo,

Dobsonville, Dube en Meadowlands, en tussen vyf en elf huishoudings het aan besprekings deelgeneem ten einde duidelikheid te verkry oor bevindinge van die ondersoek. Dit was egter net moontlik om onderhoude met drie dienstebestuurders van die stad Johannesburg te voer, naamlik Pikitup, Johannesburg Water en die Kontrak Bestuursgroep.

Verskeie vrugtelose pogings om onderhoude met raadslede te bekom het uiteindelik gelei tot die verkryging van toestemming vir plaasvervangende onderhoude met die LUR vir die Plaaslike Regering sowel as Verkeersveiligheid in die volgende munisipaliteite: Govan Mbeki en Emalaheni in Mpumalanga en Emnambithi in KwaZulu-Natal. Hierdie plaasvervangende onderhoude is as toepaslik beskou, aangesien die menings oor dienslewering te doen het met die toepassing en implementering van die uniforme landswye plaaslikeregering-strukture en -stelsels wat dus op Soweto ook van toepassing is. 'n Totaal van 24 onderhoude is gevoer met die Mpumalanga-LUR (1), die dienstebestuurders van die stad Johannesburg (3), raadslede (9) en senior munisipale administrateurs (11). Om die bevindinge van die Mpumalanga- en KwaZulu-Natal-munisipaliteite te bevestig of te weerlê, is aanvullende onderhoude met persone wat kennis van dienslewering in Soweto het tussen 2002 en 2005 gevoer. Altesaam vier addisionele onderhoude is dus gevoer.

Tydens die ontleding van die gemeenskapsdata is gemeenskappe as gegoed of minder gegoed geklassifiseer op grond van huishoudelike inkomste en dus is deelname aan munisipale aktiwiteite, betaling vir dienste en ander gesindhede tussen die twee strata vergelyk. Daar is bevind dat min mense munisipale dienste kan bekostig in terme van huishoudelike inkomste, maar dat huishoudelike besittings wat lewenstandaard bepaal op die teenoorgestelde dui. Die gebruik van huishoudelike inkomste as 'n maatstaf van die vermoë om te betaal is 'n aanvaarbare metode, maar moet tog met omsigtigheid benader word. Die gemeenskap wat die slegste daaraan toe was,

ver kies dat die staat basiese munisipale dienste voorsien. 'n Laer geneigdheid tot deelname aan munisipale strukture soos wykskomitees en geïntegreerde ontwikkelingsplanne is by die meer gegoede gemeenskappe aangetref, hoewel hulle die grootste ontevredenheid toon met dienslewering en munisipale werkverrigting.

Daar is gevind dat die munisipaliteit van die stad Johannesburg die agterstand in dienste aangespreek het as metode om dienste te identifiseer en te prioritiseer. Om die probleem van oneffektiewe en ondoeltreffende dienste te oorkom, maak die munisipaliteit gebruik van artikel 21-maatskappye vir dienste soos water, elektrisiteit en vullisverwydering. Dit lei tot die beëindiging van die dienste van gemeenskappe wat nie kan betaal nie. Oor die algemeen is inwoners egter van mening dat dienste deur hierdie maatskappye verbeter is, hoewel die munisipaliteit nog nie sy prestasiebestuurkontrakte met hierdie maatskappye gefinaliseer het nie.

Terwyl die onderhoude met diensverskaffers in Mpumalanga en KwaZulu-Natal gevoer is, is verdere telefoniese onderhoude met kundiges op die gebied van dienslewering in Soweto gevoer. Laasgenoemde het saamgestem dat munisipaliteite regoor die land oor die algemeen voor dieselfde uitdagings te staan kom, omdat hulle binne relatief nuwe beleidsraamwerke funksioneer. Daar word egter toegegee dat stedelike (metropolitaanse) munisipaliteite, en spesifiek die stad Johannesburg, ook met sekere unieke uitdagings te kampe het. Die gevolgtrekking waartoe gekom is, is dat die rol van plaaslike regering as die toesighouer oor basiese munisipale dienste nie betwis kan word nie, hoewel oneffektiwiteit en ondoeltreffendheid privaat vennootskappe vereis. 'n Verdere gevolgtrekking is dat nedeelname onder andere 'n gevolg is van 'n gebrek aan deelnemende kapasiteit binne gemeenskappe, apatie, wantroue in munisipale instellings en raadslede, en 'n gebrek aan inligting rakende gemeenskappe se verpligtinge jeens munisipale instellings.

Die navorsing beveel aan dat gelyke dienste gelewer word in swart gemeenskappe en in tradisioneel wit gemeenskappe ten einde die siening dat daar onderskeid getref word, te verander. Daar behoort ook 'n hersiening van die munisipaliteit se rekeningstelsel te wees ten einde die skuldinvorderingsprobleme uit die weg te ruim. Deelnemende kapasiteit vir raadslede en gemeenskappe binne wyke moet verbeter word. Duidelike riglyne oor die rol van streeksdiensbestuursentrums moet ontwikkel en aan gemeenskappe oorgedra word.

Verdere navorsing word aanbeveel om te bepaal of die privatisering van dienste tot beter toegang vir almal sal lei en of dit doeltreffendheid en betaling sal verbeter. Die funksionaliteit en effektiwiteit van wykskomitees as meganisme vir gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid sowel as die ontwikkeling van nuwe en meer betroubare sosio-ekonomiese modelle vir die bepaling van gemeenskapsvermoë om vir dienste te betaal, behoort ook ondersoek te word.

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Abbreviations

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
AMPS	All Media Product Survey
ANC	African National Congress
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
APF	Anti Privatisation Forum
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BLAs	Black local authorities
CASE	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
CDP	Christian Democratic Party
CMU	Contract Management Unit
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
ETDB	Eastern Transvaal Development Board
FRELOGA	Free State Local Government Association
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GJTMC	Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JCC	Johannesburg City Council
JW	Johannesburg Water
KPI	Key performance indicator

LGC	Local government centre
LGNF	Local Government Negotiating Forum
LGTA	Local Government Transition Act
LSM	Living standard measurement
MEC	Member of Executive Council
MIG	Municipal infrastructural grant
MPNC	Multi-Party Negotiating Council
NAC	Native Affairs Commission
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration
NIC	Newly industrialised countries
NP	National Party
PAC	Pan African Congress
RA	Ratepayers' Association
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAARF	South African Advertising Research Foundation
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SASAS	South African Social Attitude Survey
SCA	Soweto Civic Association
Soweto	South Western Townships
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei
TLC/TMC	Transitional local council/Transitional metropolitan council
TMLC	Transitional metropolitan local council
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WRSC	Witwatersrand Regional Services Council

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory background

For South Africa most of the 20th century was riddled with segregation and discriminatory legislated practices of the apartheid policies introduced in 1948 by the Nationalist Party (NP) government. These policies and practices created huge uncertainties, conflicts and mistrust among citizens of different racial groups. Parliament represented only the white constituencies and mainly the Afrikaners through political parties like the NP, Federal and Democratic Party, while non-whites, which includes blacks, Coloureds and Indians, had no representation. Later in the 1980s, however, Coloureds and Indians were afforded separate representation through the Tricameral Parliament. Blacks had their 'independent governments' in their homelands, namely the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) and self-governing territories of Gazankulu, Kangwane, Kwandebele, Kwazulu, Lebowa and Qwaqwa as defined in the Self-Governing Territories Constitution Act (Act 21 of 1971). Without getting into the details of this political dispensation, it is sufficient to indicate that the above-mentioned government structures created unevenness in the distribution of the country's resources and turned blacks into 'foreigners' within the country of their birth. However, in order to have continuous labour supply, black townships were established to surround the 'white cities'. The legislations that governed these townships, their municipalities, community representation and service delivery received enormous criticism until their abolishment in the early 1990s.

Some of the systematic and most effective legislation used in fostering separation and racial imbalances included the Blacks (Urban Areas) Act (Act

21 of 1923), the Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act (Act 25 of 1945), the Urban Black Councils Act (Act 79 of 1961), the Black Affairs Administration Act (Act 45 of 1971), the Black Communities Development Act (Act 4 of 1984), the Community Councils Act (Act 125 of 1977) and the Blacks Local Authorities Act (Act 102 of 1982). The aftermath of the introduction of the various phases of this legislation was extreme underdevelopment of the black, Coloured and Indian townships. The black communities were severely affected by this legislation more so than any other, leading to, among other things, high unemployment, under-education and lack of local government services. For all of South Africa, this legislation had a devastating impact on the sense of nationalism with the effect of enticed non-patriotism, violence and vandalism of government properties. The development of local government in its entirety, the formulation of its policies and putting in place of its structures were, according to Cloete (1995:2C), largely influenced by and followed on from apartheid policies. This history of separation, defiance and non-provision of local government service in the black townships is discussed in the third chapter.

Literature suggests that even in its infancy stages, local government in South Africa and in Johannesburg in particular, starting with the Sanitary Board in 1887, was undemocratic and excluded the participation of blacks (Mashabela, 1988:55-58). Even during its earliest days in 1905, the South Western Townships (Soweto), when it was still known as Klipspruit, was run by whites who were not elected by the communities and the state of service delivery was highly erratic, even absent in some sections (Moss and Obery, 1987:51-55).

Coming back to the history of the problem, in 1986 more than 27 000 residents of Soweto owed rent for two to three months totalling R2.5 million. In June 1987, residents owed about R27 964 293 in rent and services arrears to the Soweto Local Authorities, mainly as a result of unabating boycotts

(Mashabela, 1988:58). In some townships services were terminated, people evicted and their houses reallocated to people who had been on the waiting list. During 1987, after the Rand Supreme Court evicted rent defaulters, President Botha met with Soweto residents to negotiate rent cuts (Howe, Quin and Bennett, 1988). A critical review given by Kane-Berman (1993) reveals that, during the days of 'resistance', payment for government services was perceived to imply support for apartheid. Rent boycotts were formally organised and informed township politics, which in turn also shaped them, although it is difficult to distinguish the political impact of the boycotts themselves from related or even coincidental events (Moss and Obery, 1987:68). Apart from the political uncertainty that led to boycotts and non-payment of services, most services were decided upon and rendered without consultation with communities.

A commission of inquiry by the people of Soweto into the effect of and reasons for the service payment boycott in 1989 revealed Soweto to be faced with a combined debt of R701 million, which included arrears totalling R200 million that accumulated during the boycotts. The report revealed that between 1979 and 1989 approximately R400 million was spent on the upgrade of roads, electricity, storm water drainage and sewerage systems, although no comparative figures for the same period in the white suburbs were given. Also reported was that in Soweto, service quality was perceived to be very poor and that most residents were also too poor to afford the payments. Some of the report's recommendations included a need for an upgrade of water and sewerage supplies. However, it also noted that a single tax base system for the whole of Johannesburg and Soweto was necessary in order to foster development in the townships (PLANACT, 1989). Government could not take the above recommendation seriously since it was a direct confrontation of the existence of segregated residential practices.

Real changes in local government can only be traced to the 1990s with the ushering in of the multi-party democratic framework. These changes came about through the passing of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 200 of 1993 (the interim Constitution). This Act repealed the existence of, among other things, the Tricameral Parliament and the homeland system whose creation was enabled through the Representation between the Republic of South Africa and Self-Governing Territories Act (Act 46 of 1959). The interim Constitution preceded the tabling of the Local Government Transition Act (LGTA) (Act 209 of 1993), which is the first democratic local government legislation. The LGTA purported to “provide for the recognition and establishment of forums for negotiating restructuring of local government; for the exemption of certain local government bodies from certain provisions of the Act; establishment of appointment transitional councils in the pre-interim phase; delimitation of areas of jurisdiction and the election of transitional councils in the interim phase; issuing of proclamations by the administrators of the various provinces; establishment of Local Government Demarcation Boards in respect of the various provinces; and repeal of certain laws”. The passing of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998), and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000), referred to hereafter as the Structures and Systems Acts, respectively, heralded significant changes in the local government sphere.

The success or failure of current and future local government, as noted by Hoosen (1999:10), will largely depend on the achievement of the central focus of the Structures and Systems Acts. This success or failure will depend on whether or not communities are participating in municipal activities and whether or not municipalities are self-sufficient, which is effected through communities’ payment for the services. In turn, whether or not communities pay for their services may come to depend on whether or not they are receiving value for their money and whether or not they can afford to pay.

The laws of supply and demand may already be operational in that community satisfaction with rendered services and service standards, including the price of such services, determines their willingness to pay. There is just one shortcoming to this analogue though, and that is that service provision remains monopolistic by the local government and without competition from the provider, prices and performance standards could be compromised. It is for this reason that participation by all stakeholders is propagated through the democratic means in order to overcome all these possible shortcomings regarding performance standards, satisfaction and non-payment.

The argument against privatisation of basic municipal services like water, electricity and garbage removal is often used as a reason for non-payment and price hikes in Johannesburg. For this reason the Igoli 2002 vision, whose outcome was the establishment of corporatised service utilities like Johannesburg Water (JW), Pikitup and City Power, received criticism. It is worth noting that service concessions in the 1890s during the days of the Sanitary Board failed when prices steadily rose and delivery became erratic (Musiker and Musiker, 1999:170).

Over the past few years of democratic local government, there is already some indication that popular participation is not easily attainable given the historical culture of non-participation and boycotts. The African National Congress (ANC) government, which introduced and encouraged non-participating and boycotts during its banned days, has to play a leading role in this culture transformation. The ANC government has as such introduced numerous campaigns to encourage people's participation, payments of services and customer-centredness through the Masakhane and Batho Pele campaigns. The result of these campaigns and of the new municipal legislation in attaining a culture of participation and payment for services is a mixture of success and failure stories in various municipalities throughout

the country. In the city of Johannesburg, these campaigns are deemed to have little success considering huge protests against privatisation and municipal debts.

1.2 Problem statement

The above background has provided the gist of the research problem, which is historical non-participation in municipal activities and non-payment of municipal services by the historically black township communities. Even within the current system, there is still, on the one hand, finger-pointing to the past exclusionist problems posed by the apartheid system. The argument presented by various authors such as Hoosen (1999), Johnson (2000) and McDonald (2002) on municipal and community behaviour is that there is a culture of rent boycotts and non-payment of municipal services that was cultivated during apartheid. On the other hand, what remains unknown is the communities' reason for non-participation in municipal activities and non-payment for the provided services. Current arguments are that it is only fitting that everybody pays for their municipal services since municipalities subsidise poor households with a certain amount of water and electricity monthly, while extremely poor households may receive free services through the municipal indigent policies (Van Ryneveld, Muller and Parnell, 2003, and Participatory budgeting, 2001). According to the City of Johannesburg (2003), poor households are receiving 'free basic services', which includes 6 000 litres of water per month and total exemption in the informal settlements. Thus non-payment in the current scenario will only prevail among those that can afford to pay.

Debates on non-payment often evoke a political response since the current livelihoods of the black communities were also largely determined by the politics of the apartheid government. It is for the same reason that the ANC was the one to take a political stand by introducing the Masakhane

Campaign to stimulate participation and payment for municipal services. Members of Parliament in 1997 took a stand as well to pay their arrears at the Parliamentary villages in order to set examples of good citizen behaviour. The Government Communications Services and the Department of Public Works publicised these actions, hoping that they would be assimilated throughout the country (Communications Services Department, 1997).

In view of the democratisation processes of the 1990s, many South Africans hoped that a transition to majority rule would deliver the country from its political limbo and that the establishment of new representative local government authorities would lead to an improvement in services delivery (Cloete, 1995:2). There seemed to be a light at the end of the tunnel when provision was made in the LGTA to democratise the local government institutions. The transformation process has been a tedious one that primarily required structural corrections in order for the new local government to reflect the democratic values imbedded in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), referred to hereafter as the Constitution, and at whose core is local participation and representivity. Following the abolishment of the old structures, the city of Johannesburg merged four transitional metropolitan local councils (TMLCs) and some portion of Gatsrand Transitional Local Council (TLC), Kempton Park/Thembisa TMLCs, Midrand/Rabie and a portion of Ridge/Ivory Park. The city of Johannesburg became one of the six metropolitan municipalities countrywide and now has 11 wards, which have desegregated the black townships of Soweto and Alexandra. It has been about 9 years now since the new local government system came into being, but the city of Johannesburg still reports enormous figures in services arrears and debt.

Table 1: City of Johannesburg services payment arrears

	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001
Budget deficit	R183 million	R134 million	Nil	Nil
Overdraft	R405 million	R241 million	Nil (Jan 2000)	Nil
Service arrears	R2.6 billion	R2.9 billion	R2.8 billion	R2.8 billion

Source: Igoli 2002

One can assume that if the stipulations of municipal indigent policies that exempt the households that cannot afford to pay for municipal services are followed to the letter, these figures therefore points to the refusal to pay rather than inability to pay. Other possibilities are that even the households that cannot afford to pay may be included in the figures if such households lack knowledge of the existence of the indigent policies and have thus not applied for exemptions. In the analysis of this problem, it is accepted that non-payment and non-participation behaviour was carried over from the apartheid era and now 'it might just be too good not to pay'.

Some of the city of Johannesburg problems range from cost recovery to wrong billing systems that have received criticism over the years (Tabane, 2004). These problems have sparked debates around the need for privatisation and services outsourcing on the realisation of the inefficiencies of the municipal administration. This neo-liberal approach, which is being seriously considered in other municipalities and is already implemented in Johannesburg, carries a high price tag of disconnections of services, and even evictions, for non-payers. The problem with privatisation is that the 'public good' element of the government fades away when the focus becomes profits and efficiency – leading to massive outages and price hikes, etc. (Gqulu, 2002).

Another major problem is that the apparent inability of the government to provide public service to its citizens at acceptable levels and standards is

often overlooked (Cloete, 2000:2). When non-payment for local government services is cited, there is often short-sightedness about consumers' preferences and satisfaction with the rendered services. This is often the case because the government services provision is not comparable to services provision by the corporate sector. It is for this reason that Chapter 7 of the Constitution emphasises the importance of performance and community participation in order to provide a democratic and accountable government for the local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, prioritising the basic needs of communities (section 153) through the municipal councils' employment of personnel that are necessary for the effective performance of its functions (section 160) and encouragement of community involvement and their organisations in the matters of local government.

Local communities like consumers in any other sector would expect optimal and efficient service delivery, especially where payments are due. The argument is that this has not been the case in the municipal structures that existed prior to 1995/6. Thus Chapter 4 of the Systems Act is dedicated to community participation and Chapter 10 to the monitoring and setting of standards.

1.3 Definition of terminology

Terminology that is used consistently in this research and that informs the basic understanding as recommended by research methodologists such as Cresswell (1994) and Leedy (1993) is defined in this section. These definitions are pertinent to the subject of the report.

Local government is also known as municipality and is defined as “a decentralized representative institution of government with general and specific powers devolved on it in respect of an identified restricted

geographical area within a state” (Heymans and Totemeyer, 1988:2). Van Niekerk, Van der Waldt and Jonker (2001) define local government as an administrative level of government that is closest to the local communities it serves. The common factor in all definitions of local government is that it is another governmental level, closer to the people, and aimed at rendering some basic common services. In his exploration of the agenda of local governments, Clarke (1996:3) distinguishes local governments from local governance. He sees local government realities as depicted in their traditional framework and in the institutions of the local authorities, whereas local governance is the process which shapes and directs localities, the public choice and the setting of priorities for the provision of services. When local government is defined, other new elements such as democratic processes are lately also included. Ismail, Bayat and Meyer (1997:3) think local government refers to the system of managing the affairs of a locally established authority comprising elected and appointed officials, who operate within a specific geographical area to provide services to the local community.

The representatives of the local communities in a municipality are known as municipal councillors as defined in the Structures Act. Municipal councillors are elected into public office in terms of the Electoral Act (Act 73 of 1998). They are political representatives of community wards within the municipal council and are at the same time chairperson of their ward committees.

The municipal wards are geographic demarcations in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act (Act 27 of 1998). Ward committees, formed from organised community interest groups and chaired by a ward councillor, may be established only in the local and metropolitan municipalities and not within district municipalities. The objective of the ward committees is to enhance participatory democracy within the municipality by the local communities. The municipal council, which is made up of the ward committee councillors, appoints its chairperson, who is

referred to as the municipal mayor. In the case of a metropolitan municipality, an executive mayor is appointed.

Included in the purpose of the municipality and its councillors are the identification and prioritisation of municipal services to be rendered to the local communities. In terms of the Systems Act:

...the municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance and must encourage and create conditions for the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality¹

This Act identifies the basic needs of the community as the priority focus of the municipality, that is, ensuring community access to at least the minimum level of basic municipal services such as water, electricity, sewerage and garbage removal. Emphasis is also placed on the democratic principles of equitable provision and access with the application of economic principles of efficiency and effectiveness in the use of these resources.

South Africa has a history of the township boycott of municipal rent and service charges. Rent boycott involves refusal to pay for either or both the municipal house rentals and municipal service charges. Rent and service charges are in practice indistinguishable to the township residents as they are billed and paid together. The state, however, attaches great importance to the theoretical distinction and only recently, municipalities have been issuing title deeds for the houses to residents, bringing to an end the payment of rent. Rent in principle is made up of site tax or house rent and service charges cover the cost of township development capital and basic services

¹ Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act speaks of community participation and the mechanisms that should be in place to enable such participation.

provision (Moss and Obery, 1987:51).

1.4 Research questions

The main aims of this thesis are, firstly, to ascertain the manner and ways in which the city of Johannesburg renders its basic municipal services to the Soweto communities and secondly, to understand if communities hold attitudes that may be classified as 'the culture of non-payment' for municipal services and their participation in municipal processes. In order to achieve these aims, four research questions were posed to services consumers and two to the service providers. These questions were identified from theory and literature.

Questions to the municipal services consumers

- a) How affordable are the basic municipal services to the Soweto communities?
- b) What are community's perceptions of the importance of the various municipal services?
- c) Are the communities participating in the services identification and provision?
- d) How satisfied are the communities with the service delivery?

Questions to the municipal service providers

- a) What methods does the municipality use in identifying and delivering service?
- b) What does the municipality perceive to be their application and enforcement of service quality management standards?

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis structure enables provision of answers to the research questions raised. Here is a brief description of each chapter of the thesis:

Chapter one is the *introduction*, which provides a brief background to the local government in South Africa and the research problem and outlines the research questions. Some of the central terminology to the thesis is also defined here.

Chapter two is called *Contemporary and theoretical background* and provides an argument for the state or local government as a bearer of basic municipal services. The central aim of the discussions in the chapter is to identify questions for investigation among municipal services consumers, which are the Soweto communities, and among the municipal services providers, which are service managers and councillors. Two important sources of literature were used in the search for these questions, namely local government theories and general local government literature. Theories provide an argument for the municipal provision of basic services and for the general behaviour relating to the payment of the municipal services (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Among the theories discussed is the *public choice theory* defined by Cullis and Jones (1998:45) as the study of non-market decision-making or simply the application of economics to politics. The *basic needs theory* argues that the government should meet the basic needs of communities for welfare and humanitarian purposes (Streeten, 1984:9). The *dependency theory* argues that the welfare approach leaves communities dependent on government and unwilling to pay (Dorfman, 1997; Downs, 1998; Myles, 1995, and Graaff and Coetzee, 1996). The *theory of change in local government* assumes that for local government to stay abreast of local issues, it should constantly change with the ever-changing needs and requirements of its constituencies (Conyers and Hills, 1984:114).

Chapter three is entitled *Context of the local government in South Africa*. The aim of the chapter is to provide a general understanding of the evolution of local government in South Africa. The focus throughout the various stages of evolution is on basic service delivery, community participation and services payment. The chapter identifies three main phases of local government in Johannesburg. The first is the introductory phase of local government in the 1880s, which was called the Sanitary Board and was characterised by the basic services concessions. The interim phase is between 1922 and 1994, characterised by the establishment of black urban authorities that presided over basic services delivery in the townships without being elected. The final phase started with the first democratic local government elections in 1995, which saw new legislation that defines the new municipal structures and systems. This phase is again characterised by services concessions in the city of Johannesburg.

Chapter four is an outline of the *research methods*. The chapter is divided into two sections: the first section outlines the selected research participants from both the municipal services consumer side and from the municipal services provider side. These are the number of Soweto townships and households that were sampled, the number of community focus groups and participating townships. From the services providers' side, the initial plan was to interview both services managers and municipal councillors in the city of Johannesburg. Interviews with municipal councillors in the city of Johannesburg could not be secured. In the light of related work that the researcher was doing in Mpumalanga, proxy interviews were requested from the Mpumalanga Member of Executive Committee (MEC) for Local Government and Traffic Safety and the justification for this is also provided in chapter four. Later, however, supplementary interviews were conducted with persons knowledgeable about service provision in Soweto during the period 2002-2005. The reason for these interviews was to confirm if the

findings from the proxy municipalities were applicable to the Soweto situation. The second section of the chapter outlines technical methodological aspects, such as sampling, developing survey questionnaires and conducting focus groups.

Chapter five presents the *consumers' perceptions of municipal service delivery in Soweto*. The presentation of the findings is made systematically in line with the four research questions raised for the municipal services consumers. These questions, which were identified through theories and literature indicated in chapter two, include the community's ability to pay for municipal services, perception of the importance of the various municipal services provided, participation in municipal activities such as voting and ward committees and lastly, satisfaction with municipal provision of basic services. Both the empirical data and focus group information are used in support of each other, to provide answers to these questions.

Chapter six provides the *service providers' perceptions of service delivery in Soweto*. Findings emanate from interviews with the service providers, that is, both the municipal services managers and councillors. The aim of the chapter is to provide a discussion that reflects on methods that the municipality uses in service identification and the municipality's perception of the application and enforcement of service quality management standards. Findings from interviews with persons knowledgeable about service provision in Soweto during the period 2002-2004 are also used here to confirm or repudiate the applicability of the proxy findings to Soweto.

Chapter seven, which is the *Conclusion*, provides concluding remarks firstly on the specific research questions and secondly on the general state of local government in Johannesburg. The chapter achieves this by drawing on the two data sources from the empirical research data of chapters five and six. The second section of the chapter makes recommendations. Three types of

recommendations are made, firstly, on possible intervention in the local government systems for the improvement of services delivery and participation, secondly on policy requirements and thirdly on further research.

Chapter Two

THEORY AND INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss theories on local government and contemporary local government literature. There is a vast amount of literature and many theories covering the importance and relevance of municipal government in present-day democracies, and South Africa in particular as a bearer of basic municipal services. It is necessary to foster this understanding because general local government inefficiencies throughout the world, including South Africa, have been noted, which leads to a belief that the state delivery of basic services is either irrelevant or unnecessary and that privatisation of basic services is the best alternative. In some cities and in Johannesburg partially, through the Igoli 2002 Plan, some of the basic services have been privatised.

Various theories, international literature and human rights treaties are used to illustrate the importance of the central role of government delivery of the basic services. Discussions identify reasons for municipal delivery of basic services to include the state's ability to provide stabilisation and distributive roles, which are not guaranteed through market forces due to speculation and pricing. The state as the custodian of social good/public goods and individuals as judges of what constitutes an equitable share of these goods through the political processes collectively allocate public goods. Pure state delivery, however, leads to dependency since individuals are unwilling to reveal their preferences and hence ability to pay. Due to the problems of non-exclusion and free-riding, the best solution is that public goods purchasing should be a joint responsibility between the state and individuals. Other humanitarian arguments that include United Nation (UN) treaties ask all governments to

provide these basic necessities to the impoverished through alternative models to direct payments. The changing local government focus due to changing operational landscape requirements such as the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Strategy requires prudence and efficiency in revenue collection and services delivery. Municipalities should now have visions and objectives to attain, and they should identify and provide high quality services to the satisfaction of their customer base, that is, be accountable. Methods to institute efficiency and accountability in delivery caution against profit maximisation as an agenda of local government, but recognise the strengthening of local government's redistributive and participative efforts as central to its roles.

Box 1: Central purpose of the second chapter

Over and above discussing theories and contemporary local government literature, this chapter seeks to identify the right possible questions which should be posed to the service consumers and service providers.

2.2 Reasons for municipal governments

Since local government is defined to be a sphere of government closest to the people, this state department is in the best position to identify, communicate and provide basic public services. The existence of local government, according to Leach and Davis (1996:27-28), can be justified in three ways:

- a. Political or legal justification – local government is perceived to be a political institution that enables the diffusion of power. The state allows for political participation without which any form of representative and democratic politics may wither.

- b. Economic justification - the economic role of local government is to stabilise and distribute. The allocative role stems from the ideology that local government services are public goods and that private provision for these types of goods leads to market failure and insufficiency. This ideology also states that government involvement in the resource allocation process is necessary because the market can only produce the socially optimal amounts of goods and services at prevailing prices when it is possible to exclude from the benefits of consumption those who are unable and unwilling to pay. On the contrary, the purpose of local governments is to optimally allocate without exclusions (Petersen and Strachota, 1997:10).

- c. Socio-geographical justification - the defining characteristic of this philosophy is the localness of local authorities to their constituents expressed in participation by local communities and their articulation of the public services of their choices through the democratisation process.

Numerous authors perceive the function of local government to have traditionally been classified as line functioning (Bekker and Humphries, 1985, and Craythorne, 1990). The line function of local government is essentially service supply, also referred to as the utilitarian (Ismail *et al.*, 1997:3). Local government exists to supply inhabitants with those services that private enterprises are either unwilling or unable to provide because the services may have to be delivered at a non-profit or breakeven basis point. The distribution function relates to the influence of government on the distribution of income and wealth among individuals. Local government has played a role in ensuring that the poor have a place to sleep and food to eat since the early days of the Industrial Revolution. As a practical matter, it is generally agreed that only the national government is in a position to design

its monetary and fiscal policies with explicit attention to the general health of economy and security. Other forms of stabilisation such as the policing services are, however, decentralised to local governments.

There is consensus on what public goods and services constitute (Stoker, 1999:146). The provision of services, however, varies by country and municipalities but generally includes *water services, electricity supply, sewerage, garbage collection and maintenance of streets*. These goods and services, called *public goods*, are defined by the economic legends Samuelson and Nordhaus (1995:387) as goods that in common, all people enjoy, in the sense that each individual's consumption of such goods leads to no subtraction from any other individual's consumption of the same goods.

Box 2: First research question

Given the various municipal services defined above, what does the Soweto community perceive to be the important basic services that the municipality should render to them?

The study of public goods and their provision emanated from Aristotle, who observed the Greeks in the fourth century BC. He thought that man's natural proclivities were towards discourse and political activities. Adam Smith, observing the Scots in the 18th century, saw instead a propensity to engage in economic exchange (Mueller, 1989:1). From these two different observations two separate fields developed, namely political and economic fields. The two have been separated by the assumptions they make about individual motivation and about their employed methodologies. The political field assumes that people pursue the public interest, whereas the economic field assumes that people pursue their private interest. The common ground of the two fields is found in *public choice*, often referred to as collective choice

or social choice, where the agreement is that both the political and economic man could be the same. Mueller (1989:5) defines public choice as the economic study of non-market decision-making or simply the application of economics to politics. Public choice shares the same subject matter with politics, namely the theory of state, bureaucracy, government, voting rules and party politics to name a few. The point of departure in the public choice theory is that *individuals are the best judges of their own welfare and have their own views as to what constitutes the best or most equitable distribution of utilities*. Rules of collective decision-making are needed to provide a mechanism for aggregating the social welfare functions of individuals. Collective decision-making rules are used at some stage to decide which goods are to be provided. While the sustenance of all goods and services provision is *partially based on the pricing mechanism*, taxes, often referred to as rates, are levied. Government is considered contrivance of human wisdom to the provision for human wants.

When a country or a government provides public goods to its community, the principle of pareto optimality is applied. This principle assumes that individuals, the sum of which makes a community, are judges of their own welfare. It is therefore possible to increase the provision of these resources, the utility of one individual, without decreasing the utility of any other individual, which in allocative terms raises the welfare of societies (Cullis and Jones, 1998:1). Public goods are characterised by non-rival consumption, which means that one individual's consumption does not reduce the benefits derived by all other individuals. The second characteristic is that of non-excludability, that is, consumers cannot be excluded from the consumption benefits. If a good is provided, one individual cannot deny another's consumption. The absence of excludability almost inevitably appears to cause a problem of pricing and preference revelation. How, then, does the local government get to reveal community preferences? Why would people want to

pay if they cannot be excluded from this good's consumption and how will local government enforce payment?

Box 3: Second research question

Since individuals are the best judges of their welfare, how do the Soweto communities participate in the identification and prioritisation of the basic municipal services? Considering that historically these communities were excluded from participation and the relatively new municipal systems and structures, one can only wonder how participation happens.

2.2.1 The provision and consumption problems

The main problem with public services is that individuals may consume without paying in the hope that others will bear the provision costs. For example, how a household benefits from a streetlight cannot easily be linked to an individual consumer. These goods therefore cannot easily be charged to personal consumption, posing a problem of *'free-riding'*. Whereas these goods are provided at a certain cost, free-riding makes it difficult to sustain the provision. It is therefore arguable that payment of government taxes by all is in the interest of all individuals who make use of these goods and services (Cullis and Jones, 1998:47).

The 'ability to pay' is explained in terms of the derived utility by individual consumers. Whereas some public goods are referred to as 'pure public goods', the likes of parks and roads, some, which include water and electricity, derive private consumption and provisioning. The ability to pay for the pure public goods is expressed through the tax mechanism; be it proportional, regressive or progressive to the income that an individual earns irrespective of the derived utility. It is with the pure public goods that consumption cannot be prohibited. Private provision for public goods bears a direct relationship

between payments and derived utility (Cullis and Jones, 1998:59). For goods such as electricity and water, non-payment can result in termination of consumption by the provider, namely the municipality.

2.2.2 Preference revelation

Cullis and Jones (1998:66) believe that preference revelation in group dynamics for public goods is a research function. The difference between private (private provision for public goods) and public goods lies in preferences.

Table 2: Public goods preference revelation

Number of people	Private goods	Preference revelation	Public goods	Preference revelation
Small	Demand revelation affects prices	Less likely	Failure to reveal demand reduces supply drastically	Very likely
Large	Demand revelation doesn't affect equilibrium price greatly	Very likely	Failure to reveal has little impact: therefore 'free-ride'	Less likely

Source: Cullis and Jones (1998:66)

The above table shows that small group demand for private goods has a direct effect on the prices, in other words, the higher the demand for private goods, the higher the prices. With a small group, people shy away from revealing their demand because consumption can be charged at a personalised level. Non-revelation of individual demand leads to little or no supply. However, in large populations, the opposite is the case and supply often leads to free-riding. Densely populated areas such as Soweto and Alexandra are good examples of where free-riding can easily take place. There is, however, an argument against blanket termination since some members of the community cannot pay for these services, such as the unemployed and the aged, hence the need for the welfare side of the state.

Box 4: Third research question

What methods of service identification and prioritisation does the city of Johannesburg municipality use?

2.3 Consumerism and the state provision of basic services

The hierarchy of needs presented by the humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow to the world in the late 1960s suggests that basic needs should be satisfied first before all other less essential needs. Maslow categorised human needs in a hierarchical order, with humans' pursuit being self-actualisation (Institute for Management Excellence, 2001). Without getting into a full discussion of the hierarchy of needs, suffice it to say that it refers to the biological and physiological requirements, including access to water, shelter, food and health. Consumers can interpret the terminology 'basic needs' and 'satisfaction' subjectively to mean different things. This argument leads to a conclusion that individuals should be afforded an opportunity to purchase their own 'basic needs'. Does this imply therefore that the purchasing of basic needs should be left to individuals themselves? The characteristics of public goods tell us that provision can at best be a joint government and individual purchase. It is for this reason that most nations of the world, including international organisations like the UN, have made meeting basic human needs by all nations a primary developmental objective embedded in their developmental plans (Streeten, Burki, ul Haq, Hicks and Stewart, 1981:8).

The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992 adopted a global sustenance plan called Agenda 21, whose principle was modified into Local Agenda 21 and implemented in 20 cities worldwide, including Johannesburg. The principle states that "...the struggle against poverty is a shared responsibility of all nations" and calls for policies that promote development, sustainable resource management and poverty eradication" (DEA & T, 1998:17). The

poor, whose basic needs should be met, are identified as those whose income and asset base is insufficient to meet the costs of basic needs. Governments are expected to play a central role in the initialisation and facilitation of the Agenda 21, thereby availing their power and resources towards meeting nations' basic needs. The socio-political approach to the provision of these goods and services is that satisfaction of basic needs is a human right.

Is the government approach to provision the best method or should provision be left to the market forces? The neo-classical assumptions are that the market forces through labour demand would increase productivity and wages, and therefore lower prices of basic goods, thereby enabling every individual to purchase according to their requirements. Theoretically, the market is the best method, but practice has taught us that because of market imperfections, not enough jobs will be created and as such a certain quota of the population will remain impoverished. It is for this reason that nations all over the world have adopted certain political models, which are also shaped around meeting people's needs and eradicating poverty. Socialist countries like Cuba are good models for meeting basic needs. Without entering a socio-political debate of the best governance models, the achievement of high economic growth is also necessary in sustaining service provision.

2.3.1 Shortcomings in state provision of basic services

Pure government provision alone is criticised for resulting in dependency syndromes. On the one hand, allocation by government alone is justified in situations where communities are too poor to pay for the services. It is for this reason that the physiological interpretation to provisioning has a strong moral appeal (Streeten *et al.*, 1981:25). It somehow reminds us that the objective of development is to provide humans with the opportunity for a fulfilling life. Where government is the sole provider, however, there is unwillingness to pay even by those who can afford to, always leading to a problem of free-riding. The political interpretation to the provision is

perceived to be revolutionary in that it calls for radical redistribution of basic goods, power, income and the mobilisation for participation by the poor. At its worst, the approach is considered a welfare sop whose intent is to keep the poor quiet. Firstly, the modern-day approach calls for the mobilisation of full participation by the poor in designing, executing and monitoring the provision of these 'anti-poverty' projects (DEA & T, 1998). Secondly, there is a requirement for institutions such as the municipality to mediate between the supply (government) requirements and the demand (community).

2.3.2 Dependency theory

The *dependency theory* is portrayed as an inter-state relational system whose assumption is that development cannot be a sustainable activity if nations of the world operate on an unequal footing. The inter-state relational theoretical stance of development theory makes development a tug of war between the rich and poor nations where the developed nations (imperialists) would like to keep the status quo as they benefit from the impoverishment of the less developed nations, that is, the third world. One of the dependency theory's strengths, as noted by Oakland (1998), is its recognition that from the beginning, capitalism developed as a multinational system. The development of manufacturing in England and impoverishment of Ghana or South Africa in the process are linked and in fact form part of the same phenomenon. The theory recognises that there are disadvantages of relationship evident in both political and economic realms between the core, that is, the developed nations and the periphery, that is, the less developed or underdeveloped.

In actual fact, the theory assumes that, if it were not for the exploitative nature of this relationship, the core would not have developed to their current status and the underdeveloped would also not have suffered the impoverishment they currently experience. This exploitation started with labour pouncing, that is, slave trading, and continued with the extraction of raw materials and extortion through structural adjustment reform

programmes that were advanced through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Structural adjustment programmes and aid by the western world did not aid economies to develop but deformed their economies to suit their imperialistic dominated world market. As noted by Green (1997), imperialism did not vanish with the liberation of the colonies as the Marxist-Leninist party thought. This extends further to economic and political emancipation, which is a little difficult to attain given the new 'global village' and new world trade patterns. When defined, dependency theory falls short of new focus by perceiving capitalism and imperialism as a world system and not taking 'modern capitalism' as the new defining force in world systems.

There are very few instances where dependency theory has been operationalised at a lower level, for example its effect on the bourgeois status of different classes within a country. Perceived as alternative explanations in the shift of the wealth of nations, dependency theory in the newly industrialised economies (NICs) is seen to have effected private individual enrichment through development programmes and state wealth transfer to the bourgeois. In Africa, the move away from aid and the cancellation of debt is at the height of these discussions. The argument that is fostered through the dependency theory is that the dependency attitude develops a 'dependency syndrome'. In South Africa, such dependencies have worked on the minds of the indigenous people to such an extent that, according to Steve Biko, the people could no longer think that they could do anything by themselves. It promoted inferiority complexes, joblessness, hopelessness manifesting in thuggery and vandalism of public properties in the townships (Stubbs, Tutu, Mpumlwana and Mpumlwana, 1996:28).

The relevance of this theory to the non-payment of services is clouded by the 'inability to pay', joblessness and total withdrawal from the system. While genuine inability to pay and joblessness exists, some of the tendencies are the

manifest of the dependency syndrome. There has always been continued service rendering, although the service standards were always in question. For this reason, it is likely that communities would like to continue receiving such services, even at lower quality levels if they continue not to pay. Alternatively, giving them a blanket amnesty from payment promotes the dependency and limits sustainability of provision.

Box 5: Fourth research question

What is the affordability level to pay for municipal services by the Soweto communities? With a national unemployment rate of between 35 and 40%, one only wonders what the socio-economic status and income levels of the Soweto households would be, which in turn determines if they can afford services payments.

2.4 Sustenance of municipal service delivery

In South Africa, Acts of Parliament or the provincial ordinances often prescribe sources of income of local authorities, as reflected in Cloete (1986:76). In some cases the levels of income derived from specific sources can be raised only with the approval of a Minister of Provincial and Local Government or a Provincial Administrator. The LGTA (1993) sets out a framework for the financing of local government. However, a more equitable basis for inter-governmental finance in the form of municipal infrastructural grants (MIG) is being formulated which should assist local authorities in financing the delivery of services. The principal sources of income of local authorities include the following:

- a. Rates and taxes
- b. Tariff services: Water, sewerage, electricity, refuse removals and bus service

- c. Subsidies: Motor vehicle licences, health services, ambulance services and fire services
- d. Miscellaneous: Traffic fines, halls charges, swimming bath charges, the introduction of a fuel levy for the maintenance of roads by municipalities, which should have a further favourable impact on local government finance

Local authorities spend money that they generate from the above sources mainly on the employment of personnel, purchase of machinery, materials and the maintenance of streets, electricity and water reticulation systems.

2.4.1 Divisions in society

Any form of changes, especially political, takes time to effect, which is why Reddy (1994:39) believes that even at present, the apartheid structures are still in place, with local government subjected to the same divisions that once characterised all aspects of South African life. This will indeed take long for South Africa to overcome since population groups are still divided, although not through legislation. The divisions, which were formerly racial, seem to manifest in class as the bourgeois blacks move to the affluent suburbs, which were earlier reserved for whites. Municipalities in these affluent areas have always been self-sufficient and this movement therefore dashes the hope that black townships could develop to the status of the 'white suburbs', rendering townships less self-sufficient. Where local government systems are not well developed, as in the rural areas of mainly the former homelands, the state assumes a greater role in financing local government expenditure through mainly grant systems - needless to say local autonomy is in turn sacrificed. This is likely to be the case the more financially dependent local authorities are on central government, a feature of decentralisation throughout the third world (Smith, 1993:64).

According to Norton (1996:23), the director of the Free State Municipal Association (FRELOGA), all municipalities should be able to:

- a. Conduct their affairs in an effective, economical and efficient manner with a view to optimising the use of resources in addressing community needs
- b. Conduct their financial affairs in an accountable and transparent manner
- c. Prepare a financial plan in accordance with the integrated development plan in respect of all their powers, duties and objectives
- d. Structure and manage their administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic community needs, and promote social, economic and provincial development within their jurisdiction
- e. Manage their financial resources to meet and sustain their objectives
- f. Regularly monitor and assess their performance against their integrated development plan, and
- g. Report annually to and receive comments from their community regarding the objectives set in their integrated development plan

The above is difficult to achieve in poor local authorities. This therefore indicates that these authorities will depend largely on grants from the

central government as their only financial budget and hence, the controls that come with them.

2.4.2 Revenue in former black local authorities

In his analysis of black townships Hoosen (1999:20) realised that the root of the income problems was the lack of revenue-generating mechanisms, that is, the lack of industries and viable commercial areas or the tax base. The locality of major businesses was historically within the boundaries of white municipalities and the resultant lack of these facilities in the townships gave rise to the virtual absence of a tax base. Thus township municipalities depended largely on the rent and service charges levied on residents and resource transfer from the central government, which were intended for investment in infrastructure. Due to this dependency on rent to finance township development, councillors more and more frequently resorted to rent hikes and coercive measures against squatters. In short, they attempted to resolve the financial problems at the expense of their and their government's political credibility, which led to major rent boycotts in the black South African townships. To worsen the problem, in 1963, a government circular required local authorities to limit a black person to own only one business and the formation of black companies in white areas was also banned. Black businesses in the townships were confined to selling only essential domestic necessities. Fundamentally, black local authorities (BLAs) were politically unacceptable to the majority of people they were meant to serve. This rejection rested on the unacceptability of apartheid-created structures in which the participation of these blacks could be secured (Hoosen, 1999:21). The new local government demarcations are, however, totally transformed and the tax base argument may no longer be applicable.

2.5 Contemporary local government

It is important to understand the changes that impact local government; the change in its definition, obligations and responsibilities through time (Clarke, 1996:32). The range and variety of these changes are given below to effect clarity that the environment within which the local authority operates is constantly changing. Through time, all the changes in the way of doing things, the basic nature and function of local government remained the same. Local government has always been the government of the community; it has remained the social, economic and political ordering of people's activities (Banovetz, 1990:9). The external environment has driven policy changes and new patterns of service delivery. Services, above all, always respond to the ever-changing demands and the introduction of new problems in this setup. The impact of the Children's Act on social services and, indeed, the political decision on 'free basic services', free education, the needs of the unemployed and the physical planning framework, for example, GEAR, are all examples of this (Clarke, 1996:35).

Whereas constitutional and policy changes have affected the governance and structures of local government administration, changes within the communities have also affected the manner in which local governments conduct their businesses. The political changes have reshaped the minds of many South Africans in the way that they perceive representation in government and services delivery. In order for local governments to be acceptable and enjoy support, Corrigan, Hayes and Joyce (1999:7) suggest five most basic considerations for change which local government should apply:

- a. Local government influences local issues: councillors and top managers should bear in mind that they think in mostly all cases on behalf of the communities they represent. This should influence how they resolve

local problems and meet public needs by developing council policies. This view of the power of council to solve problems and meet needs, and the view of the role of council service, has a profound effect upon which managers are expected to carry out their duties. The counterargument to the expected effectiveness of councillors is that when they are elected through political parties, they tend to effect party policies than determine ongoing local expectations.

- b. Democracy for local government: being a new phenomenon itself in most countries including South Africa, democracy is a defining issue for local government. One of the main reasons people work in local government is the importance to them of 'public service'. Corrigan *et al.* (1999:11) believe that the 'old local government' had a very simple idea, that democracy was the equivalent of elections and that once every few years the electorate will turn out to vote. The elected, nearly always part of a national political party, will form the administration and will 'run' the council over their duration without any consideration of whether or not services are well provided or constituents are satisfied. This has changed with the introduction of accountability measures embedded in the Systems Act.
- c. The delivery of services by the government: in the past, there was a view that local government services should be rendered through one method of service delivery. In most local authorities the direct service delivery approach was seen to be not only best, but the only way in which services could be delivered (Leach and Davis, 1996:72). Methods of service rendering are now being reconsidered and in Johannesburg some services are semi-privatised, the basic objective being efficiency and effectiveness.

- d. The way in which local government views the public: contained within the change between old and new practices is the way in which the public is viewed by local government and vice versa. Old local governments worldwide were proud to see the public as citizens, although this can be argued to the contrary here in South Africa. Local government developed its relationship with local people through their citizenship with the state. It saw local people as 'governing' the local authority through their right to vote and through their citizenship rights. This formed one of the proud bedrocks of the British local government relationship (Corrigan *et al.*, 1999:15). The new local government sees the public as its partners, as deeply and continuously involved in its activities, according to both the Systems and Structures Acts.

- e. Honesty and provision of information to the people: this change in local government is the way in which it has become more open in recent years. Honesty and information provision has been a constructive response to a real crisis in the relationship between the public and the government and much of the crisis stemmed from a lack of trust. Consequently, the public need a much clearer understanding of how government works and uses information.

There are many theories which claim that it is difficult to speak about democracy in the absence of civil society. Yet, the autonomous needs of civil society were considered by some regimes as impediments which needed to be broken down [UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948, the International Covenants of Human Rights, Wide Declaration Convention of Human Rights (1953), the World-Wide Declaration of Local self-government of IULA, (1958)], (Reddy, 1994:106). The existence and at least relative independence of civil society from the state is an essential component of

democracy. In addition, local autonomy must be very carefully protected against intervention and biased influence by the state (Reddy, 1994:107). Democratic concepts of local government therefore require that local governments see their power not as end in itself, but as a resource to be shared and used in conjunction with groups and social movements in civil society. To this end, Todaro's definition of development, "a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institution as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty" becomes relevant (Todaro, 1992:36).

2.5.1 What are the new ways of service delivery?

Any local government must have a clear vision, a purpose and objectives that it should strive to attain. The general goal of modern local governments can be none other than to create circumstances within their municipality and their legal jurisdiction for the attainment of a satisfactory quality of life for their citizens. Local governments cannot by themselves create a satisfactory quality of life, but they can create favourable circumstances to allow such personal development (Corrigan *et al.*, 1999:8). Liberal political theory proposes that, for local government to be efficient in providing services, it should be answerable to the local interests (Leach and Davis, 1996:72). As articulated in the Constitution, a municipal council is responsible for the improvement and maintenance of the well being of the people in its area of jurisdiction. The Systems and Structures Acts require accountability of the municipal councils both to the constituents and to the other spheres of government. To be accountable means to answer on a conferred responsibility, this includes spending and services delivery standards. In order to subject municipal councils to account for their performance Corrigan *et al.* (1999:117) suggest objective services delivery guidelines:

- a. Services should be delivered with sensitivity and courtesy. This involves *the identification and understanding of the needs of clients*, review of clients' needs over time, an in-group dynamic activity, which Cullis and Jones (1998:66) believe requires rigorous research. The basis of all these activities is what is often practised by private enterprises and referred to as good customer care or customer relations. It keeps not only the customer but the supplier happy to know that there is mutual happiness.

- b. *Services should be delivered at high and improving quality levels.* This suggests that service standards should be identified and defined and levels of delivery according to these standards should be assessed. To continuously improve on a given set of levels, assessment should be carried out from time to time.

- c. The first two considerations precede service efficiency and provision effectiveness. *Where customers' needs are identified, good customer care fostered, with services standards in place, efficiency and effectiveness prevail.*

As a basic principle, local governments should provide sufficient and indispensable municipal infrastructure, services and amenities of optimum quality. These new ways of service delivery require that customers be the determinants of what is provided, the quantity and quality thereof. Services delivery should therefore be customer focused.

2.5.2 Service user focus and performance accountability

Service user focus means that questions have been asked, and taken seriously about who the service users need. The answers to these questions can best be found by consulting the public and involving them in evaluating

the services they are receiving (Stoker, 1991:5). Local government is a local democracy in the sense of participatory democracy, the best possible system for encouraging popular participation. Although local government by its very nature provides the opportunity for local people to be directly involved, it remains difficult to generate popular participation (Conyers and Hills, 1984:114). Moreover, local authorities do not tend to be very effective planning institutions because many of them do little more than provide basic services and act as a forum for the discussion of local political issues.

The democratisation of the local government processes, the election of representatives and participation by the public in services delivery cannot be equated to efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. These are the main cornerstones through which local government performance can be measured. In recent years, as concern for accountability took centre stage, *dozens of local governments responded by bolstering their ability to assess the services they provide*. However, Ammons (1995:1) sees greater accountability as just one of the rewards that come with systematic performance monitoring. In the United States of America, it was an agreed performance monitoring and accountability system, a resolution adopted by public organisations - National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) on 8 November 1991. The NAPA strongly recommends that units of municipalities make a concerted effort to:

...monitor quality and outcomes as part of their overall system in order to improve performance and credibility of public programs while legislators, chief executives, and relevant professional groups are encouraged to obtain agreement between policy-making and operating levels, and where appropriate, between levels of government, on appropriate indicators of program costs, quantity and quality of services, and important program outcomes. When feasible, involve citizens or their representatives in setting goals for progress, outcomes and in

monitoring results. Regularly collect information on program performance in terms of the agreed-on performance indicators. Develop procedures for establishing realistic performance expectations that take into account the influence of client characteristics, local conditions, and other factors beyond the control of program staff. Use information on program performance, changes in program performance, and differences between actual and expected performance to improve program performance; and regularly report to elected officials and the public on program performance, results achieved in different geographic areas, and differences between actual and expected performance...

NAPA resolution, Nov 1991 (in Ammons, 1995:2-3)

It is acknowledged that the initial groundwork of establishing performance indicators and monitoring systems can often be superficial. However, as the experience is gained with performance monitoring and reporting and as performance trends become clear, realistic performance targets in terms of programme goals and agreed programme quality and outcome indicators should be put in place, followed by monitoring and reporting targets (Ammons, 1995:3). When one starts asking questions such as, *how am I doing*, which is cited to have become the trademark question of Ed Koch, mayor of New York City from 1978 to 1989, one clearly understands his purpose (Ammons, 1996:1). This is not only a reassurance seeking statement regarding the depth of one's political base, but gathers the much-needed feedback on one's stewardship and obligation to one's constituencies.

Surveys of local government officials in the US indicate a broad awareness of the importance of performance measurement and monitoring. More than half of the US cities collect performance measures of some type. In most cases, the vast majority of the measures collected by a given municipality merely reflect workload, for example the number of applications processed, arrests made, recreation class participants, or inspections completed (Ammons, 1996:2). In

essence, workload measures are a form of ‘bean counting’, but it is important to know the ‘quality’ of the beans and the ‘efficiency’ with which they are grown and harvested. Measures of efficiency, effectiveness and productivity have been developed for local government services that reveal much more about municipal operations than simple workload. Efficiency measures are often expressed as unit costs or units of production per employee-hour, which depicts the relationship between services or products and the resources required in production. The relationship between these concepts is discussed in Cockayen, Rassol and Van Donk (1999).

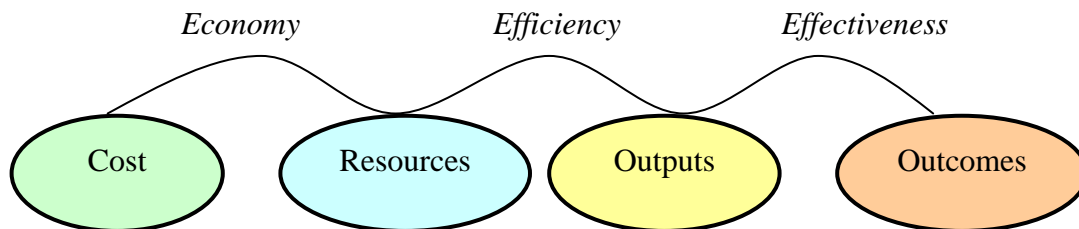


Figure 1: Effectiveness assessment in municipal services delivery

Source: Adapted from Cockayen *et al.* (1999)

Whereas the economy is concerned with the internal and external costs to the production process, for example staffing and raw materials, efficiency regards the quantity and quality of the products or outputs. Effectiveness looks at the final outcome and not just the output. Outputs are tangibles but with outcomes; the concern is more on the ultimate value or benefit of such a service. Effectiveness measures depict the quality of municipal performance or indicate the extent to which a department’s objectives are achieved. *Measures of timeliness and citizen satisfaction are among the common forms of effectiveness measures.* Productivity measures, although extremely rare in municipal performance monitoring systems, combine efficiency and effectiveness components in a single indicator. In South African black

townships, the need to monitor performance was never there since local authorities were not democratic and the outcomes of such assessments would have been marred by political agendas. The new system encourages performance monitoring and accountability embedded in the Constitution, the Systems Act and Batho Pele Principles (MPS & A, 1997).

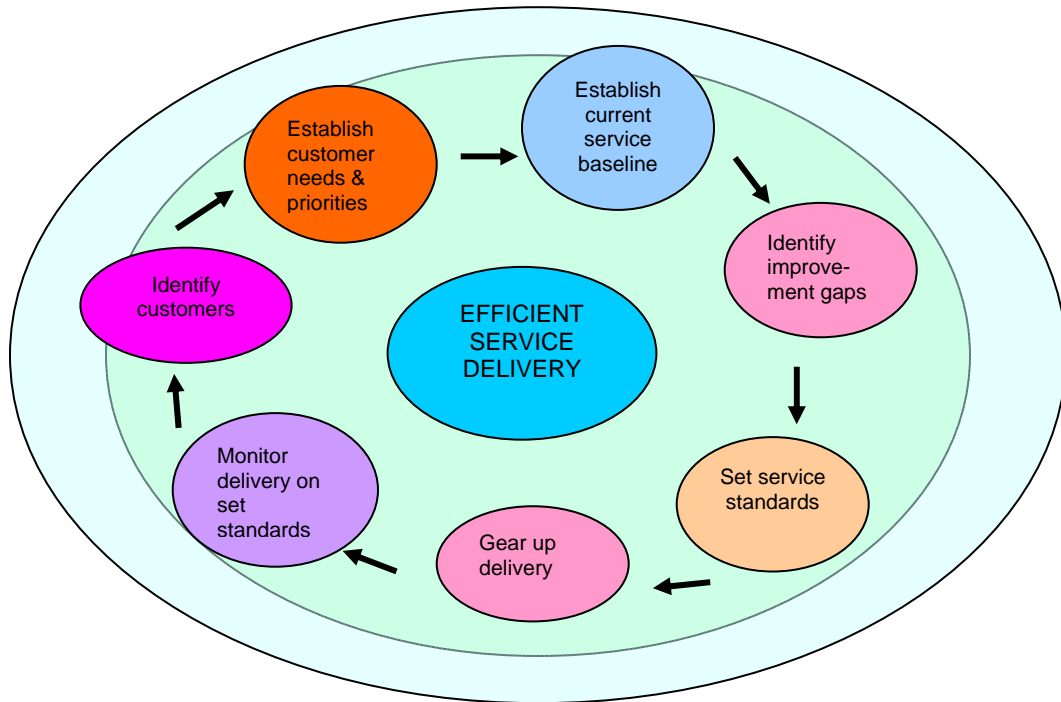


Figure 2: Municipal service delivery and improvement cycle

Source: Adapted from Cockayen *et al.* (1999)

The cycle reflected in the figure not only culminates in the monitoring of services against the set standards, but also encompasses reports on the effectiveness of the standards and regular assessment reports of the outcomes. The argument throughout is that a performance measure is virtually valueless if it appears in isolation, as an abstract number. Performance values should therefore be seen against relevant pegs, for example a benchmark target. The benchmarking process enables current performance marks to be compared with established targets or existing

standards, thereby gauging a single municipal performance against its own previous standards or other jurisdictions on a quarterly or annually basis (Ammons, 1996:3).

Box 6: Fifth research question

What does the city of Johannesburg municipality perceive as its application and enforcement of services quality management standards? Local government legislation (cf. chapter three) also requires municipalities to develop performance management systems.

There are numerous reasons for measuring performance. When properly developed and administered, performance measurements and monitoring systems can offer important support to a host of management functions, which has important ramifications for cities that aspire to excellence. The measurement of municipal performance informs:

- a. *Accountability*: performance measures document what each unit or department has achieved, how well it was done and the difference that it has made.
- b. *Planning and budgeting*: provides a clear sense of service preferences among citizens and knowledge of the cost of providing a unit of service at a given level, which in turn allows for planning and budgeting.
- c. *Operational improvements*: without the continuous assessment of performance, performance anomalies cannot be identified and consequently performance cannot be improved.
- d. *Reallocation of resources*: failure and problems in most operations are brought about by inefficiency of resource allocation, as depicted in figure 1. Often, resources are too little or too much to enable the

success of projects. Continuous performance management will in these cases identify the overutilised and less utilised resources to enable resource reallocation (Ammons, 1996:11).

New thinking is that service users are the final arbiters of the quality of the service. The main requirement for managers is therefore to ensure that the service users are saying that the services are very good and, in fact, just what they need. Whereas service providers may worry about how they are going to set service standards that match the public's expectations, Corrigan *et al.* (1999:122) think that the immediate target should be to make improvements in services by planning a series of paced improvements, which over a period of time could end up creating a radical improvement in services. Secondly, it will be more difficult to think about how standards might live up to public expectations if the services are viewed in a purely traditional way. What is then needed is a service or customer focus.

It is often much easier for municipalities to introduce customer care slogans and encourage staff to demonstrate customer care, but how can the efforts be weighted if what the customers really want is unknown? There are numerous attempts aimed at both measuring and managing customer care (Linton, 1994:5). Customer care ensures that the institution guarantees future income and profitability. Although profit making is not necessarily the primary objective of a municipality, efficiency is its concern. The qualitative and quantitative methods for ascertaining customer needs include firstly focus or panel groups. Here customers are met and interviewed about their requirements and attitudes towards the services that are provided. Secondly, questionnaires are useful where customer databases are kept. Customers are sent questionnaires regarding the effectiveness of the services they are receiving.

These two methods are well founded, but used in attaining different objectives. The first method is used in establishing needs and requirements and mostly in cases where little or nothing is known. In businesses that have numerous customers, like municipalities, this method can be used as preparatory for the second method. Before you can improve customer service, you have to know what your customers need, why they use your services and the benefits they derive from dealing with you. This helps in improving service in accordance with the requirements of the customers (Linton, 1995:7). The second method is used where needs and requirements are already identified, to ascertain the level of satisfaction at given intervals. A customer satisfaction index, which often stems from this method, is the most efficient method of measuring achievement and improvement. This index takes the results from a number of satisfaction surveys and allocates a numerical value to key customer satisfaction indicators. A municipality is then given an overall index of performance, which can be compared with competitors usually on a yearly basis.

Box 7: Sixth research question

How satisfied or dissatisfied are the Soweto communities with the various basic municipal services rendered? This question seems not to have received any attention, judging by recent local government literature.

There is only one justification for employing all these methodologies or any other alternative ones, and that is that customer focus and satisfaction are central to payments and therefore sustainability of delivery. These methodologies ensure that the municipality is offering customers the products and services that reflect their real needs. As suggested by Linton (1995:45), performance and customer focused standards should:

- a. Reflect the services of the municipality that customers feel are important

- b. Cover routine activities such as answering the telephone or replying to letters, as well as specific customer requirements
- c. Be measurable
- d. Be known to every member of staff
- e. Encourage staff to exceed the standards, instead of just meeting them

Identifying consumer needs and establishing measures requires a self-sustaining budget, especially where local governments are expected to raise their own income. In order for the democratic local government to function fully and identify and meet residents' needs and expectations at efficient and effective levels, large sums of funds are allocated for performance management systems.

2.6 Conclusion

The theories and contemporary literature discussed have identified six important questions that were posed to the municipal services consumers and service providers. The questions are reordered in table three to give a systematic flow in their investigation and later, in their presentation in the research findings chapters. The perceptions and attitudes between the households are divided according to the social class of the participants because literature suggests that perceptions towards the identified questions may vary according to affordability or class differentials. That is, affordability may be a factor that determines a person's participation in municipal activities and a person's payment of the municipal services.

Table 3: Research questions

<i>To the service consumers/communities</i>	<i>Control factors</i>
q i. How affordable are the basic municipal services to the Soweto communities? q ii. What are community's perceptions of the importance of the various municipal services? q iii. Are the communities participating in services identification and provision? q iv. How satisfied are the communities with the service delivery?	<i>It was important that these questions were posed to the whole sample, and to the split groups according to the well-off and worse-off townships</i>
<i>To the service providers/municipalities</i>	These questions were posed to the <i>councillors</i> and <i>administrators/service managers</i>
qi. What methods does the municipality use in identifying and delivering service? qii. What does the municipality perceive to be its application and enforcement of service quality management standards?	

Literature also suggests that the questions that pertain to the service providers be looked at from both the perspectives of the municipal councillors and services managers. It was important to raise these issues among these two groups since the current local government systems and structures are relatively new and there are reports of tensions between the administration and political offices in municipalities. Some of the tensions that exist regard the management of services provision, while others are seen as political interference in service provision by service professionals or administrators.

Chapter Three

CONTEXT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the chapter is to provide a general understanding of the evolution of local government in South Africa with systematised attention on basic service delivery, community participation and services payment. The chapter achieves this by providing chronological events of local government since its establishment in Johannesburg in the 1880s until the democratic local government dispensation ushered in with the first democratic elections in 1995/6.

The introductory phase of local government, which was then called the Sanitary Board, was characterised by the basic services concessions with the exception of education and the police. The exclusion of blacks from both the political and economic systems saw no participation in local government activities and during the same period, blacks were evicted from city centres into the townships. Basic service delivery was meagre and erratic even in the 'white areas'. However, non-payment of services was a serious violation that was punishable by imprisonment.

In the interim phase, that is, between 1922 and 1994, black urban authorities consisting of unelected officials were created that presided over basic services delivery in the townships. BLA legislation was revised, but not much changed in terms of service delivery, property ownership and participation in the townships. Instead, the services non-payment debt grew until it was unbearable through rate boycotts in the 1980s, although boycotts were also political rather than solely service-orientated. In 1989 Soweto residents

commissioned a study into the effects of boycotts and found huge disparities in service delivery and poor allocation of funds to the townships by the government.

Since 1995, however, legislation has been put in place to enable definition of new municipal structures that require community participation and accountability from both sides. The new demarcations and new systems are in place to enable proper community representation through the ward committee systems, the integrated development plans and through council meetings. There have been two successful elections held since then and the municipality has produced numerous by-laws, including the indigent policies and other tax systems. Non-payment has, however persisted and the municipality in 2000/1 faced a debt of R2.8 billion, unknown participation levels, privatisation of electricity and installation of prepaid water metres that were followed by community uprising.

3.2 Historical overview of South African urban arrangements

It is widely accepted that when the Dutch arrived in the Cape in the mid-17th century, there were no formal government structures. Soon after the expansion of the Cape colony towards Stellenbosch, a local governor was appointed for Stellenbosch in 1682 to oversee matters of farm disputes and demarcations, and could be taken to be an equivalent of the current municipal mayor. The history of the early local government is briefly outlined in Cloete (1986), although the mandate and service delivery by the Dutch system is hardly documented. The little that can be gathered is that the Cape colony fell into British control in 1795 as a matter of requested hand-over by the Prince of Orange-Holland after Holland's invasion by France. The Afrikaners, a new breed of Dutch South Africans, retreated to the Natal areas, running away from British control. However, Natal was later annexed into British control in 1842. The Afrikaners in turn subdued the Transvaal

and Free State from the native blacks in 1852 and 1854, respectively. After the discovery of gold in Johannesburg the British again annexed Transvaal in 1877, leading to the first Anglo-Boer war for Afrikaner independence in 1880. The discovery of gold attracted overseas investors and caused thousands of blacks who were driven from their farms due to a combination of drought, overgrazing and diseases to seek employment in Johannesburg (Du Pre, 1990:17).

When closely observed, history shows that local government in South Africa has undergone a process of transformation that ran parallel to the political changes and power shifts. These shifts in political power struggles influenced firstly the establishment of the earliest forms of local government, from the Dutch (1652 – 1795), the English (1795 - 1910) to the Afrikaner apartheid system (1948 – 1994) and now the democratic non-racial system (1994 – to date).

3.2.1 Earliest form of local government in Johannesburg

Johannesburg is situated at an altitude of 1 763 m above sea level and lies between the Vaal River and the Magaliesberg mountain range. Without a local source of water, its water source is from 70 km away at the Vaal River, and most recently from Lesotho's Highlands Katse Dam. In Musiker and Musiker (1999), Leyds (1964) and Cloete (1986), the earliest foundations of the city are described including where it derived its name.

Some time after the establishment of Cape Town as a refreshment station, long before any traces of local government in South Africa were documented, England, in all of its colonies, employed state departments or other institutions to provide the essential municipal services in urban areas. Due to the unsatisfactory nature of these arrangements, people insisted upon the creation of local authorities, also known as municipal authorities, to govern and administer urban areas (Cloete, 1986:11). In Johannesburg, the earliest

traces of local government date back to 1886 with the appointment of nine local government members (Musiker and Musiker, 1999:170). In 1887 Johannesburg was subdivided into twelve wards and a Sanitary Board, which was the equivalent of the city council, was appointed although highly regulated by the central government in Pretoria. The first municipal elections were held in 1903. Councillors objected to the scrapping of the colour bar in these elections, and colour restrictions were reinstated, taking away the voting rights of the black population. Since most governors of the Vaal Reef came from England and because England had just done away with both slavery and segregation, voting by the blacks was highly contested, but blacks never voted again until 1995/1996.

The Sanitary Board had powers to pass plans for new buildings, which influenced the prevention of fires. Most services were under concession, which brought about uncertainty to most individuals regarding the authority of the Board. The concession for water services was given away in 1887, gas supply in 1888, electricity and the tramway in 1889, although education and the police services were retained. Private enterprises only showed a lack of interest in 1895 and the Board inherited the right to once more supply various services, although water supply remained in the hands of Water Works Company Limited (LTD) until the establishment of the Rand Water Board. Due to the lack of waterborne sewerage, which was made available only in 1904, rubbish, bath and slop water was collected on the Board's prescribed fees. A reason for the absence of the waterborne sewerage was the lack of water in the area. *Non-payment for this service was construed a serious violation of law, punishable by imprisonment without fine.* The first legal action taken against residents by the Board for non-payment was against Mayfair residents in 1897, the year that the Board was replaced by the Johannesburg City Council (JCC) in 1900, for arrears of £2 350. Quite interestingly, during the days of the Sanitary Board, rates and tax increases were subject to discussion and voting in the public meetings (Leyds, 1964:29-

33).

3.2.2 Self-governance

Because of the Anglo-Boer War, in 1900 Johannesburg gained self-governance from Pretoria. In 1917, that is, a few years after the war, the Ratepayers' Association (RA) was established and the JCC assumed control over planning and housing. The municipality attained greater control over health services in 1918 following an influenza outbreak, but inadequate service provision, which was due to the lack of financing, led to serious dissatisfaction (Musiker and Musiker, 1999). Initially, people of all races were housed in the same compounds in what is Braamfontein today. The miners administration's inter-colonial Native Affairs Commission (NAC) of 1902 – 1905 advised against franchise rights for Africans, perceived to have the potential to weaken white supremacy. In 1904, the creation and implementation of a policy to house urban Africans within secluded townships at the outskirts of 'white cities' was started. The first of these black locations were Alexandra (alleged 1904/1905) and Klipspruit (1905).

3.3 The black urban areas authorities

Events that led to the segregation of the black population date back to 1902 – 1905 Stallard Commission that gave birth to separate residential areas for blacks (Welsh, 1979). After the First World War (1914 - 1918), the world was plunged into a recession and as a result gold prices fell drastically. Johannesburg mine managers in turn employed more cheap black labourers, leading to the Afrikaner strikes that General Smuts harshly suppressed. This hostility between the government and Afrikaners made Hertzog together with the English Labour Party win the 1932 elections. Their adopted policy was to alienate both blacks and the Coloured people and intensified the exodus of blacks to already mushrooming townships (Du Pre, 1990:25-26). From that time onwards, blacks never featured nor participated in the

politics of South Africa at any level. Historic discussion will be left here and focus will be given to the origins of the BLAs, their establishment and maintenance. The main argument presented by Cloete (1986) and Mandy (1984) is that the original segregation laws were meant to afford whites jobs and other opportunities during the depression. Segregation was perpetuated although repealed already in Great Britain and other European countries and continued in non-recessionary times.

3.3.1 The black local authorities between 1922 and 1981

In 1922, immediately after Hertzog took over from Smuts, the Blacks (Urban Areas) Act (Act 21 of 1923) was introduced. The Act aimed at creating Black Advisory Boards, which would advise white local authorities about the administration of the black townships. What this means is that white authorities continued to administer the black residential areas from afar, only through the advisory powers of the Boards mentioned here.

In 1945, the Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act (Act 25 of 1945) repealed the Act of 1923, but still maintained the Black Advisory Boards in the capacity and for the same purpose as did the Act of 1923. It is self-evident that much did not change for the period 1922 to 1989, as stated in Du Pre (1990).

In 1961, the Urban Black Councils Act (Act 79 of 1961) put in place Urban Black Councils to which white local authorities could assign powers to perform functions of a local authority. The law here is self-explanatory in that blacks could not perform any functions for themselves and, of course, this means that they did not participate in whatever decisions were made and functions were performed.

In 1971, the Black Affairs Administration Act (Act 45 of 1971), later changed to the Black Communities Development Act (Act 4 of 1984), was introduced.

The Black Affairs Administration Boards were established for regions and there were 14 Boards in Johannesburg in total. During the period prior to 1976, most of Soweto had been without electricity. When the Urban Foundation proposed a plan during 1976 to electrify Soweto, the Administration Board turned it down on the grounds that “*Soweto residents would not be able to afford the costs*” (Du Pre, 1990:67).

In 1977, the Community Councils Act (Act 125 of 1977) was passed to repeal the Black Affairs Administration Act (Act 45 of 1971) and constituted community councils for black urban areas through Administration Boards. This Act represented the first attempt by the Department of Cooperation and Development to institute in urban areas quasi-local authority structures which held the promise of granting substantive rather than advisory powers to urban black residents. The Advisory Boards and Urban Bantu Councils had never had any real powers to influence decisions of the municipalities or the Administration Boards.

3.3.2 The black local authorities between 1982 and 1991

In 1982, the BLA Act (Act 102 of 1982) was passed and established ‘fully-fledged’ local authorities in the urban black residential areas which, the apartheid government propagated, had equal status to the white urban authorities. As they put it, they were intended to “improve the reforms in the local government for the African communities”. BLAs gave rise to intensified defiance campaigns against the apartheid government. There was strong resistance by the black communities to the introduction of the BLAs because BLAs were introduced within the apartheid framework. Most civic organisations, which started as street committees, were initiated as a response to and to oppose the introduction of BLAs (Shubane, 1991:64). The reforms that came with the introduction of BLAs were not sufficient as the townships remained without a tax base to finance themselves.

The BLA councils had only one option left to them in the absence of a tax base, and that was to increase the rates and service charges, which later had serious consequences, namely boycotts and a call for the resignation of the BLA councillors. To some extent, BLAs, which were largely staffed by black councillors according to Shubane, gave townships some political bargaining powers, like they did the Bantustans. For argument's sake, for the first time through BLAs, blacks started owning houses in the townships (Shubane, 1991:66). The alternative argument by Shubane is that property ownership in general gave rise to middle-class urban blacks who were more enlightened and who organised for the total abolishment of BLAs. At national political level, considerable uncertainty surrounded the system of local authorities for blacks (Bekker and Humphries, 1985:116). The BLAs underwent three phases between 1982 and 1990/91:

- a. The introduction (1982 - 1984): coincided with huge resistance from civic associations and other community structures. Communities saw the so-called 'reforms' as falling short of their expectations and thus mobilised for non-participation, especially at the first BLA elections of 1983. To make matters worse, the Tri-Cameral Parliament was introduced in the same period, making blacks more furious. The movement against these reforms led to the formation of numerous street committees and civic organisations that called on people not to participate in BLA elections.
- b. The intermediate phase (1985 - 1989): in 1986 the Administrative Boards of 1971 that became Development Boards in 1984 were abolished. This period saw the withdrawal by most councillors and appointment of white administrators by the government. Rent boycotts intensified and spread to more than 60 townships countrywide and during the same time, a state of emergency was declared. The police and army were deployed in the townships (Shubane, 1991:70). The

rent boycotts were aimed at forcing councillors to lower rent to 'affordable levels'. After the boycotted BLA elections of 1989, which received 25% participation throughout the country, the government stepped in through the provincial authorities to provide finance to boycotted councils that were on the verge of collapse.

- c. The final onslaught (1989 - 1991): the Soweto Civic Association (SCA) at this time formed a People's Delegation to explore possibilities of ending the rent boycotts. A Soweto rent boycott study that was commissioned by the Soweto Delegation in 1989 revealed a high degree of political mass mobilisation that participated in street committees, inadequate housing and service, and excessively high rental and service charges that communities could not afford (PLANACT, 1989:25-26). By the end of 1990, rent boycott campaigns led to a collapse of 40% of the 262 BLAs countrywide. According to the *Business Times* of 4 December 1990 (in Shubane, 1991:72), at the Stellenbosch University graduation ceremony, the President acknowledged that BLA boycotts should be ended as they had achieved their purpose; that the government had conceded to community demands. Shubane saw this as a signal and an acceptance by the apartheid government that their policy of apartheid was wrong as the government indicated that city management was henceforth to be unified irrespective of race.

BLAs did not bring about any significant changes to the way of life and services delivery in the townships, but unified and politicised township residents to boycott rent and service charges and to call for an end to open apartheid.

3.3.3 Rent boycotts within the BLAs - 1980s

When the JCC introduced its economic rental policy during the 1980s, cost of housing provision, municipal service and administration were to be covered by rent. As a consequence, rents rose dramatically. Efforts to raise revenue from rent, however, met with a political statement, the only statement that communities could give, which was refusal to pay. Also, because township developments were dependent on rent for finance, councillors were frequently confronted by rent hikes and even resorted to coercive measures against squatters. Many households found it increasingly difficult to pay rent that continued to rise in real terms while incomes were eroded by inflation. At the same time residents were less motivated to pay rent because of the apparent lack of promised township development, the scale of corruption among councillors and councils' illegitimacy (Moss and Obery, 1987:55).

After 1984, the townships were hit by school, consumer and rent boycotts, which were directed against the BLAs. In June of 1986, civic associations throughout Soweto called for rent boycotts, which then continued for more than two years, leading up to the dissolution of the Soweto Council in 1987. By this time, many rent defaulters had been evicted from their homes. The price of the household rent was in question as residents pleaded for a reduction of service charges to R45 a month. The administrators, however, construed the act to be politically motivated. Moss and Obery (1987:56-67) note that default by some communities during the 1970s and 1980s should be understood in the light of the prevailing context. In some townships, for example Ethandukukhanya, residents were moved to a newly built area after the destruction of their shacks in January 1984. The Eastern Transvaal Development Board (ETDB) did not inform residents of their new rent. Only in June of the same year were residents told that rent was to be higher than it was in the old location and was to be determined according to the Pay as You Earn system. Residents initially did not consider a total boycott of rent. Some continued to pay the old rent, others decided to reduce their payments,

and others paid nothing at all. When the ETDB and the councils insisted on the new rentals, a total rent boycott began. Apart from the above incidents, Moss and Obery (1987:58) believe that the rent boycott was generally a response to a series of incidents in which popular frustration with the administration board had accumulated. After lengthy and unsuccessful negotiations, residents decided that they would boycott rent from 1 April 1985 unless the Board listened to their grievances at a public meeting. The Board, however, cancelled the meeting and the boycott began.

Rent boycotts have informed township politics and have also been shaped by them. The rent boycott started at a time when there was very little organisational presence. In Soweto, the general rent boycott that began in June 1985 was organised through the network of street committees and built up in conjunction with the 13 branches of the SCA. The committees enabled the boycott call to be widely relayed at a time when mass meetings were prohibited, and acquired strong support throughout Soweto (Moss and Obery, 1987:58-59). Though it is difficult to distinguish the political impact of the boycotts themselves from related or even coincidental events, it is worth identifying the direct and indirect effect on township politics.

In February of 1988, Soweto's mayor (Botile) met President PW Botha to discuss a possible reduction in rent for Soweto. At that time, the Council was collecting R3m instead of R7m in monthly charges. By the end of May 1988, 257 community and local authority councillors had resigned nationwide, including mayors. In July of the same year, rent boycotts were reported to have cost the state more than R250m nationwide at R30m per month. A total of 27 000 Soweto residents owed R2.5m, in Diepmeadow 20 840 owed R1.1m; 40% of Dobsonville residents owed R0.3m (Howe *et al.*, 1988:152).

Numerous studies were commissioned on the causes of rent boycotts and their consequences. Researchers from the Development Bank of Southern

Africa (DBSA), Rand Afrikaans University and the University of the Witwatersrand found that although not paying their own service charges directly, Soweto residents, through their labour and spending power, had effectively been subsidising white Johannesburg. The JCC at one stage confirmed that it benefited from rates paid by city businesses at which Sowetans were supposedly spending over R1 billion annually. Because of this, the JCC had to offer 55% rebates to city dwellers, and no rebates for the Sowetans (Fine, 1989).

The people of Soweto commissioned an investigation into rent boycotts in the Greater Soweto in 1989 and found the following three important issues: firstly there was a lack of forward planning and periodic shifts in state policy, with inconsideration for the living conditions of those who worked the wealth of Johannesburg. Secondly, insufficient funds were being spent inappropriately, with the nature of service delivery being responsive to political rather than social dictates and thirdly, the service provision in general, which included water, sewerage reticulation, road networks and storm water drainage systems, was below the expected standards and far below the standards in the white suburban areas.

The survey also found that 64% of residents were threatened with evictions for non-payment of rent and service charges. The government was found to be doing very little that could be considered good for the communities, which Steve Biko considered “worth commenting on” (Stubbs *et al.*, 1996). Detailed research on the rent boycott of the 1980s in Soweto is fully explored in PLANACT (1989).

3.4 Contemporary local government in the city of Johannesburg

3.4.1 TLCs

In line with the LGTA of 1993, TLCs were established, creating a framework for the first non-racial local government elections. The rolling out of transformation was a three-phased approach, briefly outlined below and fully explored by Reddy (1994) and in the *Local Government Review - 2003/2004* (Department of Provincial and Local Government. During the pre-interim phase, which started in 1993 and culminated in 1995, local government went through the abolishment of segregational municipalities, established local government negotiating forums (LGNF) that made recommendations to the multi-party negotiating council (MPNC) for the establishment of TLCs and transitional metropolitan councils (TMC/TMLCs). While TLCs were established in non-metropolitan areas, TMCs were established in metropolitan areas. The formation and duties of these councils were to provide, among other things, water, electricity and sewerage purification services (Reddy, 1996:58-62). The interim phase began in 1995 with the election of the democratic councils during the 1995/6 democratic local government elections and lasted until the local government system had been designed and legislated. The final phase started when a new local government system had been established, after the second democratic local government elections of 2000. At this consolidated phase, the democratic structures and systems were determined to be a full implementation of developmental local government systems and practices while giving full support to ensure sustainability (Local Government Review, 2003/2004:23).

Different forms of municipalities were created through the Structures Act to provide for the division of functions and powers between the different categories of municipalities. Provision was made for the different categories of municipalities in Chapter 10 of the Constitution and Chapter 1 of the Structures Act augmented this by naming three categories. Category A is the

only one municipal council in an area and has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority and is constituted only in metropolitan areas. Category B are municipalities that share municipal executive and legislative authority in their area and are referred to as local municipalities. Category C municipalities have municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality and these are known as district municipalities.

3.4.2 Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council

In August 1995, before the first democratic local government elections, the special electoral court ruled in favour of the demarcation of Johannesburg into four substructures and in August of the same year, the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTMC) was established. This new local government structure consisted of four TMLCs, which are the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western Metropolitan Councils. Chief executive officers ran each of the TMLCs. Strategic executives were appointed to report to the chief executives on urbanisation and environment, public safety and emergency services, transport, electricity, finance and human resources. In 1998 there was a drastic reduction in the number of wards in the GJTMC as a direct result of the White Paper on Local Government that set an upper limit on the number of councillors in large councils. In 1999 the centralisation of power in the GJTMC was signed by the five councils, leading to central co-ordination of functions such as financial budgets, refuse removal, roads, libraries and parks.

Until only recently the Johannesburg metropolitan area covered approximately 1 386 square kilometres and the inclusion of Midrand, Modderfontein and Edenvale into Johannesburg saw an increase in the geographic area. The new city of Johannesburg came into being through the abolishment of the Eastern, Northern and Southern and Western Johannesburg MLC; a portion of the Gatsrand TLC, Kempton Park/Thembisa

MLC, Midrand/Rabie and a portion of Ridge/Ivory Park.

The Constitution, section 155(1), promotes local government category A for large metropolitan areas, and the city of Johannesburg became one among six in the entire country. The previous 843 municipalities were disestablished and 284 new municipal boundaries were created for the whole of South Africa. The city of Johannesburg became a type A municipality after the 2000 local government elections (Structures Act, Chapter 4, Part 56). The city is now characterised by a mayoral executive system combined with a ward participatory system with 11 regions, 109 wards and 145 councillors. After the 2000 local government elections, representation in the council was 129 ANC, 9 Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), 3 Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and 1 each for the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), Christian Democratic Party (CDP) and United Democratic Movement (UDM). Amos Masondo became the first Johannesburg Mayoral elect and was inaugurated on 5 December 2000. In terms of the Structures Act (Part 56), the Executive Mayor is expected to, among other things, identify the needs of the municipality, and review and evaluate those needs in order to prioritise them for the purposes of budgeting and delivery.

Map 1: City of Johannesburg new municipal regions



Source: City of Johannesburg

3.4.3 South Western Townships (Soweto)

The area of this study is what is currently known as the Greater Soweto, which consists of 29 townships and is marked as regions 6 and 10 on the map, that is, Diepmeadow and part of the original Soweto. Diepmeadow, which encompasses Meadowlands and Diepkloof, was built in 1957 and 1959 to accommodate evictees from Sophiatown and Alexandra under the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Mashabela, 1988). In the foreword to the book *Soweto: A history*, Walter Sisulu remarked that, “not much has been written about Soweto, yet it is known the world over as a symbol of apartheid terror and as a symbol of the heroic struggles of its people against terror” (Bonner and Segal, 1998:7).

...it has been said that the path through Africa runs through Soweto; that Soweto is a microcosm, or the soul of South Africa; that Soweto is a shining example of neglect and exploitation: that Soweto means many things to many people...

Louis Rive (1980)

Bonner and Segal (1998:10) have written interesting history about Soweto, answering questions such as: When was it constructed? Why was it built? Where did its residents come from? Why did people flock in vast numbers to such an inhospitable setting? Earlier traces of the origin of Soweto date back to 1905 to Klipspruit, which was renamed Pimville in 1931, and Orlando, named after the chairman of the NAC, Councillor Edwin Orlando Leake. Soweto, which is a composite of a few townships, was given its name only in 1963. All the houses in Diepmeadow had electricity in 1987, running water and some had outside toilets. Only 60% had rubbish bins and the Witwatersrand Regional Services Council (WRSC) had in 1987 just allocated R33 429 000 for upgrades of roads, water and refuse dumps (Mashabela, 1988:55-58). Without getting into a detailed discussion of the history of Soweto, it suffices to mention that the mushrooming of Soweto and other black townships in Johannesburg was largely caused by the discovery of gold.

3.4.4 New legislative guidance to municipal services delivery

Following the LGTA, in 1998 a White Paper on Local Government (MPA & CD, 1998) was released that provided a framework for developmental local government. The local government legislation that followed, which includes the Structures, Systems and Municipal Infrastructural Bills, all revolved around making municipalities sustainable by emphasising consultations on service provision, setting up service standards, incremental access by the poor, openness and transparency and enhanced accountability (Local Government Review, 2003/2004:25). In this section, aspects of service provision and community participation that emanate from the new

framework are reviewed.

3.4.4.1 Municipal services provision and affordability

The primary purpose of the Systems Act is to “...*provide the core principle, mechanisms and processes necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities, and ensure universal access to essential services*” (South Africa, 2000). Central to this Act is the establishment of frameworks for planning, people participation, service delivery agreements and payment, performance management, resource mobilisation and effective use and organisational change which underpin developmental local government. Arising from this, the city of Johannesburg was required to have a strategic plan for effective service delivery by March 2001. Parliament also showed commitment by tabling an incremental Medium-term Budget Policy, which reflected increased public services spending to R7.8 billion in 2001/02 and R13.2 billion in 2002/03 (Local Government, 2002). In the long run, however, municipalities are expected to be self-sustaining. It is for this reason that the current grants are cited to be once off, to be incorporated into the equitable share from 2003/2004 and whose objective is to facilitate smooth transition to new structures.

Two important things should be considered when looking at municipal service identification and provision and these are the backlog carried over from the old dispensation and the cities’ population growth. The backlog in terms of putting in place the service delivery infrastructure such as water taps and sewerage systems, which is also compounded by lack of sound municipal billing systems, has culminated into a huge municipal debt during the late 1990s to early 2000s. To put the backlog into perspective, one has to understand that the demand for houses in the urban areas has increased since 1994 by 1.5 million and the increase has specifically been higher within

the city of Johannesburg (The official gateway, 2002).² The growth of the city to both the north and the south has put enormous strain on its water and sewer systems, which were designed for a much smaller population. The challenge for JW is therefore to upgrade its infrastructure and also to minimise incidents of burst pipes and blocked sewers. Because of leaks, burst pipe blockages and other forms of wastage, the city of Johannesburg is losing about R178 million per year (Dawn, 2003; Sindane, 2004).

In terms of the Structures Act (Part 56) the Executive Mayor is expected to identify and develop criteria in terms of which progress in the implementation of strategies and services can be evaluated, including key performance indicators (KPIs). The establishment of performance management systems requires firstly the development of municipal integrated plans that outline priorities, objectives, indicators and targets. These systems should have key indicators as yardsticks for the measurement to indicate outcomes and impact with set performance targets. KPIs and targets are to be made available to the public and all interested parties. Central and paramount to the establishment of targets is that mechanisms should be established to allow for measure, review and monitoring at least once a year. Performance reports are also expected to be availed to the council, the political parties, municipal officers and the public. In these reports, unmet targets are supposed to be indicated, with an indication of strategies to improve (Systems Act, ss38-49).

The expectation goes further into evaluating progress against key performance indicators with a view to improving economic efficiency and effectiveness of the municipality, credit control and debt collection services. Although the municipality is expected to make sure that the local community has access to at least the minimum level of basic municipal services, it is

² The official gateway - success stories: Living standards – surprise. 17 May 2002. Available at: http://www.safari.info/doing_business/economy/success/livingstandards.htm

expected to be self-sustaining. Self-sustenance has huge implications for service charges collection and the enforcement of payments. It only makes sense that if services are equitable and accessible with improvement of standards over time, service charges should be enforced to enable financial sustenance (Systems Act, Chapter 8). Financial sustenance also requires that a municipality establish a tariff or levy system on its services reflecting the amount that users pay, which should be in proportion to their use of services. The service tariff, in terms of the Systems Act, should treat all users equitably, and is fostered through proportional tariffs based on individual service use.

Although the language is of proportional payments, poor households are expected to pay tariffs that at least cover operating and maintenance costs, special or life line tariffs for low levels of consumption or for their tariffs to be directly or indirectly subsidised. A tariff policy may differentiate between categories of users, service standards and geographic areas as long as it does not amount to unfair discrimination (Mogale, 2001:9). The biggest challenge is the definition and description of the poor. Taking into account the erratic differences in livelihoods and the cost of living, there will never be a generally applicable definition of 'a poor household'. To give effect to the implementation and enforcement of a tariff system, a municipality may adopt by-laws as expected by the Systems Act (Part 1) and some municipalities have thus developed indigent policies.

There are numerous ways of establishing who the poor are, although there is no international consensus on the establishment of the poverty line. According to the South African Human Development Report of 2003 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), US\$2 a day constitutes a poverty line and, according to their estimates, 14.5% of South Africans live below the poverty line. Other studies suggest that official annual poverty lines for 2001 were at US\$9 039 for an individual, US\$11 569 for a married

couple, US\$14 128 for a family of three and US\$18 104 for a family of four (World Fact Book, 2003, and UNDP, 2003). Living standard measures (LSMs) or indices have been used successfully as an alternative to growth domestic product (GDP) per capita, to give a different view of the economic gap between the richer and poor households (Summers and Heston, 1995). The LSM studies were first established by the World Bank in 1980 to explore ways of improving the types and quality of household data collected by government statistical offices in developing countries to monitor levels of living (Grosh and Glewwe, 1996). The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) LSM has been modified four times, although the universal SAARF LSM collects 29 variables that range from hot running water to the presence of a television set in a household (SAARF, 2001)³. The LSM ranks households in terms of incomes and other possessions from LSM1 (the poorest) to LSM8 (the wealthy). Since 1994, according to the All Media Product Survey (AMPS), the LSM1 class in South Africa dropped significantly from 20% in 1994 to 5% in 2001. In 1994, 74% of all households had a monthly income of less than R2 499 compared with 62% in 2001, higher-income earnings of between R2 500 and R5 999 were up from 16% to 20% and a monthly income of over R6 000 was at 18% from 10% (AMPS, 2002).

According to Mawson (2004), there are still nearly 10.6 million people in South Africa who do not have access to water to the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) standards, that is, within 200 m away from the dwelling. At the current rate of government spending, it is estimated that a further 7 million will have access by 2011/12. Lack of access to electricity on the other hand is up to 3.65 million households nationally.

³ The SAARF introduced the LSMs in South Africa in the late 1980s. The description of the South African LSMs by SAARF is available on the Internet at:
<http://www.saarf.co.za/1sms.htm>

Table 4: Access to services in the city of Johannesburg

Basic household services	Percentage
Running tap water in dwelling/on site (as % of total formal dwellings: 1995)	95.9%
Refuse removed by Local Authority (as % of total formal dwellings: 1995)	86.8%
Refuse disposal (as % of total formal dwellings: 1995)	2.8%
Telephone in dwelling (as % of total formal dwellings: 1995)	45.8%
Access to telephone (as % of total formal dwellings: 1995)	15.6%

Source: City of Johannesburg (2003)

The given statistics refer only to formal dwellings where local government activities are better managed and co-ordinated. The situation is believed to be even worse in the informal settlements. The Systems Act, section 74(c)(iii), calls for direct or indirect methods of subsidisation of tariffs for poor households. The subsidisation methods or by-laws, in terms of section 71(i), should be fully disclosed to the public. The Systems Act also provides for the adoption of a credit control policy by which municipalities can terminate services in the event of non-payment. At the same time, it is stressed that all citizens should, as part of their basic rights, have access to local government services. The two expectations have conflicting articulation and are not necessarily complementary, unless termination of services is executed in cases where non-payment is determined not to be a factor of inability to pay.

The current financial crisis is characterised by fragmented revenue and expenditure arrangements, consistent overspending, low payment levels and growing arrears and negligible capital expenditure. The new Council cites the improvement of city infrastructure as its priority and had invested R829 million in the year 2000 in the sewerage system, new electricity connections, water connections and road improvements to help ensure a better life for all communities. In 1997 the JCC was plunged into a financial crisis, partly due to non-payment of rates for services such as water and electricity in most

areas. The city also has a dysfunctional billing system, which has received enormous criticism even from the ANC. Over time, the billing system has cost the city billions of rands in revenue as residents, including those who reside in rich areas, continue to receive incorrectly estimated service costs, either overbilled or underbilled for essential services such as water and electricity (Gumbo, Juizo and Van der Zaag, 2002). As a result, some residents from rich suburban areas like Sandton receive free water and electricity because their details are incorrectly reflected on the City Power database. The huge municipal debt of the late 1990s is one of the reasons for the privatisation of municipal services.

When the Igoli 2002 vision was first introduced in the late 1990s, Johannesburg had accumulated a huge debt amounting to nearly R2.8 billion in service arrears. The city outlined the overall objectives of Igoli 2002 as to transform the Johannesburg region by “*enhancing service delivery, promoting accessibility, encouraging and facilitating community participation and promoting political involvement and policy making*” (Kongwa, undated). The Igoli Plan was seen as a vehicle through which service delivery could be improved and debt, including rental collection, enhanced. The Plan, however, received popular contestation from the public, labour unions and some political parties who believed that the absence of the welfare state could jeopardise the welfare of the unemployed and those poor citizens who cannot afford to pay (Haffajee, 2000, and Khan 2000). A mixture of both the private sector and welfare state supply of services was, however, envisaged and the establishment of corporatised agencies or utilities followed this. The utilities are registered under the Companies Act and their responsibility includes service delivery and customer care improvement. Igoli was premised on section 152 of the Constitution, which mandates local government to, among other things, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner and to promote social and economic development. Moosa (1998:17), the former South African Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional

Development, indicated that *“...it is not for local government to run businesses and to buy and sell goods. Local government should look at outsourcing non-core functions to concentrate on its core functions of governing, regulating and setting frameworks”*.

All the South African municipalities were reported in September of 2002 as owing R24.3 billion in outstanding tariffs. One-third of the country's municipalities' service debt was at the time growing at a rate of 20% and a further 37% at 10% per year. The highest level of service debt was among the Gauteng municipalities at R12.2 billion, which is about half of the national debt⁴. The outstanding water and sanitation debt by March 2003 for Soweto, Alexandra and Ivory Park alone was at R878 million. The city of Johannesburg thus introduced 'innovative measures' in tackling the water service debt by installing prepaid meters in these three townships. The prepaid services system has, however, received criticism from the Anti Privatisation Forum (APF) and its affiliate, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee. Community resistance against installations of prepaid meters led to the JW lodging an interdict and the arrest of some community members. The APF argued that the government's and ANC's adoption of its neo-liberal policies shows that it does not care for the majority of the poor communities, specifically considering the high unemployment rate (APF, 2003; Sindane, undated).

The disconnection of poor people's electricity, also referred to as 'brownouts', incorrect and inflated billing and privatisation seem to be all intertwined and responsible for the misery of thousands of black working and unemployed families in Soweto. Electricity in the city of Johannesburg is provided by two

⁴ The outline of the city of Johannesburg services debt is discussed in an article called 'SA municipal debt R24bn', which is available on the Internet at: http://www.news24.com/news24/South_Africa/news/0,,2-71442_1328319,00.html; also 'SA municipal debt R24bn', 04/03/2003, South African Press Association (SAPA), available at: http://www.news24.com/news24/South_Africa/news/0,,2-71442_1328319,00.html

different entities, Eskom for Soweto and City Power for all other suburban areas. According to Sindane (undated), thus far City Power supplies 278 000 customers, 45 000 of whom are using prepaids, and Eskom supplies 600 000 customers, 300 000 of whom are using prepaids. "Cut-offs, enforced by cable removals and the deactivation of meter under armed guards, are a daily occurrence in the township"⁵. The current cut-off strategy, according to Eskom, dictates that the whole street, payers and defaulters must be punished. In order to overcome the problems associated with estimations, City Power announced the dates on which electricity meters around Johannesburg would be read for 2004, including the names of the four contractors hired for the task, which were ADD X, African Meter Reading Tech, Rubby Tad, and Global Meter Reading. "We have grouped the suburbs and each contractor is responsible for specific suburbs," said City Power's meter-reading supervisor. A code of conduct was also issued for the meter readers. The code says meter readers should be clearly identifiable, dress in a uniform that has their company's logo on the front, City Power's logo on the back and should produce identity cards displaying the company's contact number. Customers need to call the contractor responsible for their areas and make another arrangement if they will not be in their households on specified dates. This suggests a move towards overcoming the estimation problems, although there are no visible plans for Soweto as yet.⁶

Although privatisation plans or concessions for services are not new to Johannesburg, as they started with the Sanitary Board in the 1890s, experience teaches that privatisation of services was not favourable to the communities.

⁵ The Anti Privatisation Forum calls for halting of electric cut-offs. SAPA 30 March 2001. Available at: http://www.queensu.ca/misp/pages/in_The_News/2001/March/eskom.htm

⁶ The discussion by Van der Walt points to the rejection of the ANC's privatisation plan by township communities. Available at: <http://www.greenfct.org.au>

3.4.4.2 Community participation and satisfaction

A new culture of participatory municipal governance is expected to be the norm for the first time. There are numerous ways of participating in a democratic system of governance, chief among these being the regular voting system through which communities elect their ward councillors every five years. Voting alone, however, does not facilitate communication between the political structures and the communities. To bridge a possible communication gap, ward committee structures are established, which the elected ward councillors chair. In terms of sections 72-78 of the Structures Act, ward committees are non-political structures whose focus is service delivery and through which communities can make recommendations to the municipal council via the ward councillor. The question that this raises is whether or not communities have the required professional capacity to participate and to add value to the municipal processes. According to Smith and Vawda (2003), the historical exclusion of the majority of residents from decision-making and from participation in municipalities demands a different institutional framework. The developmental local government therefore has to invest in the historically disenfranchised communities in a strategy that builds citizenship first before treating communities as customers in order to instil the sense of ownership and belonging. The community's capacity to participate has to be built because this in turn influences effective and efficient municipal service delivery.

The ward committee system enables communities to best articulate their interests to the municipality, bringing together not the majority interests, but the diversity of community interests. The purpose of the ward committee is to enable people to be part of the decision-making processes. According to Bhabha, the Eastern Cape MEC for local government, the functionality of the ward committee system is, however, still a key area of contention between the political and administrative functions. The biggest contention is the lack of role and function clarity of some of these structures, which are relatively

new.⁷ What compounds the problem is that in some municipalities, ward committees are not yet established or their establishment remains unknown to communities, leaving political parties to be more active and visible during elections. Haffajee (2000) cites the interaction with communities by political parties to be on the basis of promises, some of which are impossible to attain.

Since perception rather than reality determines public reaction, one crucial aspect of delivery is good communication. Surveys have persistently found a strong correlation between familiarity with an institution and favourability towards it. The frequency of contact with communities therefore enhances the municipal image (Gosschalk, undated). There are numerous factors that researchers cite as reasons for community participation or disengagement in municipalities (Daniel and De Vos, 2002; Rautenbach and Malherbe, 1998; Smith and Vawda, 2003, and Szeftel, 1994). Among these is the accessibility of the municipality and the trust that communities have in the municipal system. According to Sekhonyane and Louw (2002), people's participation in structural arrangements is influenced by vested trust in such structures. The Social Attitudinal Survey (SASAS) of the Human Science Research Council (HSRC), which compares trust in numerous public and civil society institutions found that on average, one in two South Africans (51.5%) had strong trust in the national government and trust in local government was lower, at 37.5% (Daniel and De Vos, 2002:21).

A factor influencing participation is accessibility of the municipality. Accessibility can be measured through factors like distance of institution from communities and the language of communication used by the institution. When municipalities were created, the argument was that they were the most accessible level of government to the communities (Rautenbach and Malherbe, 1998). The language of communication that the

⁷ This is an extract from the speech that the MEC gave at the National Conference on Ward Committees: A review, which was held on 24 June 2003.

municipality uses is of importance, taking into account that the apartheid system divided residents geographically according to their ethnic groupings. Although the new Constitution has tried to bridge the gap by pronouncing 11 languages as official, the remnants of ethnic divisions still exist (Szeftel, 1994). Amongst some of these residents, such divisions are seen to be perpetually fostered through the new political systems, thereby providing unlegislated privileges to particular ethnic groups and making municipalities less accessible to others.

The achievements of a developmental local government seem not to be thoroughly and systematically evaluated. Most of the government assessment programmes such as the 10 Year of Democracy Review only quantify the number of electricity connections and number of households now receiving water (The Presidency, 2003). Other important aspects of a viable developmental local government such as participation in ward committees and people's perceptions of the delivered services seem not to take centre stage in government evaluations.

It is important for South Africans to transcend a community's perceptions of community exclusion or 'victims of the state' to effective citizen participatory governance within the municipalities (Smith and Vawda, 2003: part 2: 2.1). Building citizenship means going beyond political elections to designing instruments of service delivery that meet the agenda for redistribution, capacity building for purposive community participation, decision-making and responsible citizenship. Myers and Lacey (1996:3) see the commercialisation and cost recovery of core services at the expense of greater public participation to have side effects, creating passive customers who relate to the municipality only in terms of their problems. The municipality's narrow definition of efficiency as a cost-recovery principle therefore commodifies the relationship.

Harvey (2002) presents an argument about the possible incapacity of citizens to fully engage in monitoring their elected representatives or the general municipal performance due to, among other things, possible disinterest, ineffectiveness or absence of rules to monitor or ensure accountability of politicians and civil servants and possible inadequacies in getting effective participation by highly qualified community members. To what extent do people associate in order to influence government? How independent are the civil society associations from the government? Communities are reported to be more engaging when they have compelling interests, and specifically when they have service delivery problems.

3.5 Conclusion

It is evident from the discussion in this chapter that local government in South Africa and particularly in Johannesburg is relatively young compared to other countries, in that it was established during the 1880s. Local government and participation in municipal governance is even younger within the black communities, that is, not older than 11 years. Although black communities did participate during the earlier stages of municipal establishment in Johannesburg when it was called the Sanitary Board, participation was limited to voting, which was scrapped a few years thereafter.

Municipal services were largely privatised during the days of the Sanitary Board with the exception of education and policing, although during apartheid, they were once more brought back under the municipal umbrella. With the introduction of apartheid, the establishment of separate residential areas for black communities was intensified, through the establishment of townships, homelands and self-governing territories. The South African government continued to take responsibility for municipal service provision in the townships although there was no attempt to involve communities in

aspects of municipal activities other than voting for mayors. The voting processes were also marred by boycotts and conflicts. During this period, township residents developed a system of rebellion against the municipalities and the central government by boycotting services payment.

The municipal reforms that came with the new democratic dispensation have introduced new ways of municipal governance. Starting with the Constitution, Structures, Systems and Finance Management Acts, municipalities are encouraged to involve communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. The Structures Act sets up ward committees to represent and consult with various sectors of the community, the Systems Act created conditions for community participation in IDPs and performance management, amongst other things, while the Finance Management Act encourages communities to be involved in the finances of municipalities including the preparation of budgets. Although it is too early to tell the progress made in terms of implementing these systems by municipalities in general, evidence suggests looming problems and confrontation with communities. In the city of Johannesburg specifically, there are numerous reports of community disenchantment with the privatisation of services and problems relating to the municipal services billing systems. There is currently very little empirical research that evaluates the current systems. This research will in part fulfil this void, although to a lesser extent due to its limited scope and area coverage.

Chapter Four

RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the research methodology chapter is to outline the research processes that were followed in executing the research. The selection of research participants from both the municipal services consumer side and from the municipal services provider side forms the first section of the chapter. From the consumer side, the research indicates the number of Soweto townships and households that were sampled, followed by the number of community focus groups, the townships where these were held and the number of participants in each group. From the service provider side, municipal services managers in the city of Johannesburg were interviewed. The initial intent of the research was to interview councillors and senior municipal administrators from the city of Johannesburg. However, interviews could not be secured due to the lack of permission from either the MEC or the municipal mayor. The probable reasons for refusal of access relate to turmoil in Soweto regarding the introduction of prepaid service meters. Accordingly, both councillors and managers at Johannesburg were weary of speaking about service delivery matters to outsiders. Councillors and senior officials from municipalities outside of Johannesburg were instead interviewed as proxy and the chapter gives the rationale for their inclusion in the research. Later, interviews to confirm these proxy results were conducted (cf. 4.2.4.4). The second section of the chapter outlines technical adherence to methodological rigor in sampling, developing survey questionnaires and conducting focus groups, etc.

4.2 Research participants

4.2.1 Community - consumer survey

A fieldwork survey was conducted by the researcher with the help of two fieldworkers and took place between the 3rd and 28th of March 2003. A total of 200 questionnaires were administered in the two regions of Soweto (regions 6 and 10). Four townships were randomly selected from each of the two regions and within each selected township, participating households were selected using random systematic sampling methods. A total of 25 households were interviewed in each township, making the total survey sample from the 8 selected townships 200 as follows:

Table 5: Characteristics of the survey participants

Interviewed townships	Number of interviews township N (%)	Average respondent age		Respondent gender	
		Mean age	Q1-q3	Male N (%)	Female N (%)
Region 6	100 (50)				
Chiawelo	25 (12.5)	52.4	46-53	14 (7.04)	11 (5.53)
Naledi	25 (12.5)	57.56	52-66	8 (4.02)	17 (8.54)
Jabulani	25 (12.5)	56.4	48-65	10 (5.03)	15 (7.54)
Dobsonville	25 (12.5)	58.68	51-69	10 (5.03)	15 (7.54)
Region 10	100 (50)				
Dube	25 (12.5)	63.64	49-75	8 (4.02)	17 (8.54)
Diepkloof	25 (12.5)	60.24	53-73	10 (5.03)	15 (7.54)
Meadowlands	25 (12.5)	57.84	50-67	7 (3.52)	17 (8.54)
Orlando West	25 (12.5)	61.56	53-70	15 (7.54)	10 (5.03)
Total	200 (100)	58.54		82 (41.21)	117 (58.79)

Participation in the survey was asked of each household head or breadwinner. In the absence of this head or breadwinner, any responsible adult within the household, that is, over the age of 16 years, was interviewed. Participants' ages ranged from 27 to 91 years, with a mean age of 58.54, and the majority being female participants.

4.2.2 Community focus group meetings

A total of four focus group meetings were held in four townships between July 2003 and February 2004. During the survey interviews, a telephone list of participating households was compiled from which a few households were selected and recruited by telephone to participate in follow-up focus group discussions. A single household head or breadwinner in each case was requested to make arrangements for using their house for the meeting in each of the four townships and to purchase the refreshments. Households were reimbursed for the refreshment costs on the day of the meeting.

Table 6: Community focus group participants

Focus groups	Township	Date of the meeting	Number of participants		
			Males	Females	Total
Focus group 1	Dobsonville	19 July 2003	1	4	5
Focus group 2	Dube	26 July 2003	6	5	11
Focus group 3	Chiawelo	7 February 2004	3	5	8
Focus group 4	Meadowlands	24 January 2004	2	3	5
Total			12	17	29

4.2.3 Reliability of the survey data

Self-reported income and employment data which are collected through surveys are always suspect of inaccuracies or misleading. The closest measure of well being, according to Meyer and Sullivan (2003), is the use of consumption and self-reported income. Misleading reports are often the case where such data is used as a measure of affordability to pay as was the case in this research and as revealed in the public choice theory (cf. chapter two). Although income is used in the analysis, the findings relating to the income should be treated with caution.

As a check and balance mechanism, the income data was also tested against the household possessions of consumer durables, which are also referred to as

the LSM data (cf. chapter three). Other than these concerns, the survey fieldwork interviews can be reported to have been conducted reasonably reliably by the fieldworkers and the researcher.

4.2.4 Interviews with services managers and councillors

Box 8: Original methodological intent of research

The original plan was to interview councillors and senior municipal officials in the city of Johannesburg. It proved impossible, however, to obtain the permission of the MEC or the mayor. Since councillors could not be interviewed in Soweto and in view of similar work that was being done in Mpumalanga, permission was therefore obtained to interview councillors and senior officials in Mpumalanga instead. The use of these councillors and senior officials' perceptions is proxy for the perceptions of councillors in Johannesburg. Although these are different provinces and municipalities, the perceptions relate to the application and implementation of the countrywide local government systems, which are discussed in chapter three, and the perceptions are therefore applicable to the Soweto context as well.

Service providers that were interviewed include services managers and councillors from the city of Johannesburg, Mpumalanga municipalities (Govan Mbeki and Emalahleni local municipalities) and KwaZulu-Natal (Emnambithi local municipality).

4.2.4.1 Service providers in the city of Johannesburg

Initial communication with the city of Johannesburg about possible interviews pointed at the Contract Management Unit (CMU) to be the most relevant unit that should be interviewed about service delivery and the performance of the utility companies.

i. The CMU

A single in-depth interview meeting that lasted nearly three hours was held with the director of the CMU on the 20th of February 2004. The CMU is responsible for, among other things, setting up and managing service delivery standards for the utilities, which are Pikitup, Johannesburg Water and City Power. From this meeting, it was pointed out that further interviews with the service utilities may help identify their own delivery experiences and problems.

ii. Johannesburg Utilities

Two meetings were held, each with a single senior services manager from the service utilities JW and Pikitup in order to understand their service identification, delivery perceptions and understanding of the non-payment problems in regions 6 and 10. Such meetings were also held in February 2004 on the 26th and 27th, respectively.

4.2.4.2 Mpumalanga municipalities

Discussions with the CMU and with the Institute of Democracy's (IDASA) Local Government Centre (LGC) revealed that certain municipalities had a good grip on issues that the research was trying to investigate, specifically attaining popular community participation and turning the non-payment municipal deficit problem into positive municipal budgets. IDASA had in some instances worked and in other instances continued to work with some of the interviewed municipalities in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

In order to complement interviews from the Johannesburg CMU, the identified municipalities in both Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal that were perceived to have positive lessons for this study and for attaining high service delivery standards were interviewed as follows:

- i. Mpumalanga MEC for Local Government and Traffic Safety
A discussion took place with Mr Baba Mohammed, the former MEC of the Local Government and Traffic Safety Department in Mpumalanga to help understand his experiences of service delivery within the Mpumalanga municipalities, especially regarding the prevalent service delivery gaps and community participation.
- ii. Govan Mbeki local municipality
A total of 18 senior municipal officials and councillors at the Govan Mbeki municipality in Secunda were interviewed individually in order to understand their perceptions of the internal municipal processes that have an effect on service delivery. The findings from these interviews also formed part of the discussion with the MEC.
- iii. Emalahleni case study municipality (Witbank)
The municipality of Emalahleni is a good case study on community engagement that yielded positive service payment solutions. A discussion with the municipal speaker in June of 2004 revealed how the municipality attained its financial turnaround from a huge debt and poor community participation to good profits and better participation levels.

4.2.4.3 KwaZulu-Natal municipality

- i. Emnambithi case study municipality
The Emnambithi local municipality in KwaZulu-Natal is another good case study on service delivery turnaround that was brought about by community initiative, that is, through training offered to a group of local church-based women. This group of women was trained on the functions of the municipality, their rights as citizens, on communication, assertiveness and negotiation skills. A discussion with the group trainer revealed how the entire process

unfolded and the effect it had on community participation and service delivery.

Table 7: Sampled service providers

Municipalities	Participants	Date of the meeting	Number of participants		
			Males	Females	Totals
City of Johannesburg					
1. Johannesburg CMU	Dr Laila Smith (Director)	February 2004		1	1
2. Johannesburg Water	1 anonymous service manager	February 2004	1		1
3. Pikitup	1 anonymous service manager	February 2004	1		1
Mpumalanga municipalities					
4. Mpumalanga provincial department of Local Government & Traffic Safety	Mr. Baba Mohammed (Former MEC)	June 2003	1		1
5. Govan Mbeki municipalities	11 senior managers 7 municipal councillors	May – June 2003	10 5	1 2	18
6. Emalahleni municipality	Lesley Ntuli (municipal speaker)	June 2004	1		1
KwaZulu-Natal municipality					
7. Emnambithi municipality	Terrance Jacobs (Church-based Community Organisation)	June 2004	1		1
Total			20	4	24

4.2.4.4 Supplementary interviews about service provision in Soweto

Supplementary interviews were held in order to confirm the relevance and applicability to Soweto of the proxy findings from service providers in both Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. Individuals who were deemed well versed in service provision in Soweto for the period 2002 to 2005 were requested to confirm or refute the applicability of proxy interviews to Soweto, as well as add new perspectives on service delivery pertinent to Soweto. Supplementary interview request letters (Appendix 5) and the following three questions were emailed to identified experts: (a) Did local government in Johannesburg have policies or guidelines on service delivery quality during 2002-2005? What

quality standards were put in place? (b) Was there a municipal policy regarding community participation in service delivery during 2002-2005? If so, as a result of this policy, which services were prioritised? (c) Do you think service provision challenges (affordability to pay and community participation) in Soweto are similar to those of proxy municipalities (Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal)? A total of four proxy interviews were conducted by telephone with experts that were identified through snowballing methodology (Welman and Kruger, 2001). The names, affiliation and dates of these telephone interviews are reflected in the table below.

Table 8: Supplementary interviews about service provision in Soweto

Interviewee's Designation	Affiliation	Responsibility	Date of the meeting
1. Project Manager	Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)	National Project Consolidate Facilitator	18 October 2005
2. Service delivery facilitator (seconded to the city of Jhb)	Seconded to the city of Johannesburg	Project Consolidate Service Delivery Facilitator	19 October 2005
3. Performance Management Specialist	City of Johannesburg	Performance Management Specialist: Office of the City Manager	07 November 2005
4. Service delivery specialist	City of Johannesburg	Project Consolidate: People participation	03 November 2005

4.3 Research methodology

Empirical research methodologies or research processes that were followed in identifying the research population, the sample, conducting fieldwork, ethical considerations, data capturing, coding and analysis belong to both the qualitative and quantitative research frameworks (Mouton, 2001:143-180, and Babbie and Mouton, 2001:74). The chosen methods ensured proper exploration and understanding of human behaviour and experiences following a series of steps that are detailed in Mouton (1996:130), Morse

(1991:283), Babbie (1995:84) and Myburgh and Poggenpoel (1995:5), which are briefly discussed below.

4.3.1 Population and sampling

In order to give responses to the raised research questions (cf. chapter one), two population categories from where possible answers are likely to be found were immediately identified. These categories are firstly the municipal services consumers and secondly, the service providers or municipalities. The respective sample units identified were households and municipal services managers. With the focus of the study being the city of Johannesburg, the underdeveloped communities within Soweto were randomly selected, that is, eight townships, four each in of regions 6 and 10. A total of three service managers were purposefully selected for participation from the city of Johannesburg. In order to gain more perspectives, an additional 21 service providers were interviewed as reflected in the above table. The study included a sample of 200 households that were random systematically sampled and 24 municipal or municipal linked personnel, that is, councillors and senior officials that were purposefully sampled. Four (4) individuals deemed to be well versed in service provision in Johannesburg were purposefully sampled for supplementary interviews to either confirm or refute findings from proxy municipalities.

Social sciences methodological experts argue that studying limited contexts and sample sizes does not guarantee generalisations (Botes, 1995:5; Burns and Grove, 1993:65, and Mouton, 2001:56). The expanded interviews with service providers and case study discussions from Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal municipalities are partly aimed at overcoming this obstacle. The inclusion of other provinces does not, however, guarantee full generalisation but gives possible trends and optimises learning from some of the possible best practices (Polit and Hungler, 1991:254).

4.3.2 The survey questionnaire

A survey questionnaire was drafted using, among other things, the amassed literature, which is documented in both chapters two and three, and incorporating some aspects of the HSRC's SASAS. The questionnaire was drafted with sections that collect household information (income, expenditure, number of occupants), respondent demographic information, understanding of local government issues/functions, participation in local government activities, perceptions of service delivery and payment or non-payment of municipal services (Appendix 1).

- Pilot and field survey

The developed questionnaire was piloted among ten households⁸ in Chiawelo township to test for clear understanding of questions, overcoming ambiguity and bias, etc. (Fink, 1995:41, and Rubin and Rubin, 1995:57). Minor adaptations were made to the final questionnaire from the pilot lessons. The final questionnaire was administered to a total population of 190 respondents. The researcher, with the assistance of two freelance fieldworkers with the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) and the HSRC, did the administration of the questionnaires, including the pilot. Fieldworkers were given an introductory letter (Appendix 2).

4.3.3 Focus groups

Four focus group discussion meetings were held, each meeting in a single township with Soweto residents as follows: Region 6: Chiawelo and Dobsonville and Region 10: Dube and Meadowlands. The focus group meetings consisted of between five and eleven participants, which is cited to

⁸ Household: A person or group of persons who live together and provide themselves jointly with food and/or other essentials for living. The definition of household used here is in line with the Stats SA definition which includes the four-night rule, according to which a person is a member of a household if he/she spends an average of four nights a week in that household (STATS SA, 2001).

be marginally good to control and facilitate (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:59; Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:38-39; Kvale, 1996:173, and Seidman, 1998:68-69). While focus groups were being conducted, a tape recorder was used in capturing the discussions. At the same time, notes were also taken to capture important non-audio aspects, such as facial gestures and emotional expressions that would otherwise not be recorded (Morse and Field, 1996:80).

4.3.4 Individual interviews

Both in Mpumalanga, either with the MEC or within Govan Mbeki and Emalahleni municipalities and in KwaZulu-Natal at Emnambithi, with councillors and senior officials, discussions took place in the form of individual face-to-face interviews. Individual interviews were conducted with the four service delivery experts in Soweto/Johannesburg City. Rather than conducting face-to-face interviews for the supplementary interviews, telephone discussions were held. The general use of individual interviews is recommended for less bias since the research participants do not hear the answers of others.⁹

4.3.5 Ethical considerations

Both the service consumers and service providers were asked permission to conduct the survey, focus groups and individual interviews. In all cases, no interview refusals were encountered. Focus group interviews with households were arranged by telephone from the list of telephone numbers of the households that participated in the survey, which preceded focus group interviews. In Meadowlands, a single survey participant helped arrange the focus group participants as a research informant (Babbie, 1995:285 & 445). Discussions involving the dates and times of meetings were also arranged with service providers by telephone. In order to gain their trust, participants

⁹ Barrier Analysis: A tool for improving behavior change communication in child survival and community development programs. Available at: http://barrieranalysis.fhi.net/how_to/how_to_conduct_barrier_analysis.htm

were assured anonymity regarding their identities or linking their names to the type of information that was used (Rubin and Rubin, 1995:94). Some participants, however, such as the MEC and the director opted to reveal their identities.

4.3.6 Data coding and capturing

Quantitative data was captured into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Non-precoded responses were post coded into numeric values for possible statistical analysis (Fowler 1993:125, and Babbie, 1995:369).

Qualitative interviews, that is, both the focus group and individual interviews, which were tape recorded, were later transcribed (Appendix 3). The transcripts are simple narratives from the discussions and are also seen to be the best qualitative raw data sources that capture all the aspects of the discussions (Welman and Kruger, 2001:189).

4.3.7 Data analysis

Survey data was analysed using SPSS for Windows version 12.0 in computing descriptive, that is, central tendencies (frequencies and cross-tabulations) and inferential statistical, which is trend analysis and hypothesis testing [t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA)] (Norusis, 1993).

Focus group and individual discussion transcripts were analysed using Tech's methods of qualitative transcribed data following eight steps, which are (Creswell, 1994:155):

- i. Reading through all the transcripts carefully with a purpose of getting a general sense of the whole and underlying meaning of the transcripts
- ii. Picking a single shortest or most interesting transcript and going through it once again

- iii. Making a list of topics or clusters to get similar topics
- iv. Going back to original data and abbreviating the topics as quotes and writing quotes next to the appropriate segments of the text
- v. Developing the most descriptive wording for the topics and converting them into categories by grouping related topics
- vi. Making final decisions on abbreviations for each category and alphabetising existing data
- vii. Assembling the data material belonging to each category in one place and performing a preliminary analysis
- viii. Recoding the existing data

4.4 Conclusion

The intention of this chapter was to discuss the procedures that were followed in collecting empirical research data. It can be concluded that the methodologies followed in terms of the identification and sampling of the households were appropriate given the limited financial resources. The sampled service providers in the city of Johannesburg alone, which include the CMU, JW and Pikitup, did not provide sufficient information and experiences. Due to the reluctance of utilities to provide services non-payment and default data, and the inability to secure councillor interviews in Johannesburg, proxy municipalities were included. The inclusion of the Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal municipal case studies therefore positively added to the wealth of information that otherwise would be missing. Supplementary interviews with service delivery experts in Soweto helped to confirm the interviews from proxy municipalities and also added new perspective on service provision in the city of Johannesburg. It can be concluded that the chapter provided justification for all the pertinent decisions that were taken and processes that were carried out.

Chapter Five

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION OF MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IN SOWETO

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings from both the household survey data and focus group discussions with the sampled Soweto communities. The chapter provides answers to the four research questions that were raised for the municipal services consumers (cf. chapter two), which cover ability to pay for municipal services measured through household socio-economic status, the community's perception of the importance of the various municipal services rendered, their participation in the identification and prioritisation of these services and lastly the community's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the various services.

The presentation of the findings is made systematically in line with these questions. Community ability to pay for municipal services was measured using, among other things, household income, employment status and living standard measurements. Community perception of the importance of the various municipal services to their households was assessed using variables like preference and importance of the various services and perception of the privatisation of basic services. Participation in municipal activities such as voting and ward committees was assessed by including the possible reasons for non-participation as well. Lastly, to determine community satisfaction with municipal provision of basic services, satisfaction with municipal performance since the 2000 local government elections, satisfaction with service charges and the possible causes and effects of dissatisfaction, etc., formed part of the discussion.

Box 9: Municipal services consumer data presentation

The survey data used in this chapter is representative of household heads in eight Soweto townships. In terms of mean stated household income, these townships have been classified into four well-off and four worse-off areas.

5.2 Demographics of the service consumers

Demographic characteristics of the households from which data was collected include home language and respondents' highest educational level.

(N=200)

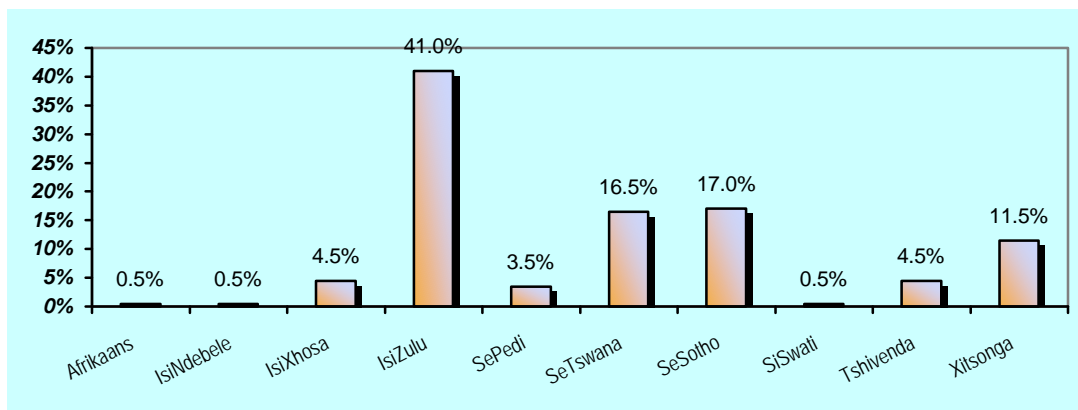


Figure 3: Respondents' home language¹⁰ (N=200)

Just less than half of the surveyed respondents (41%) were Zulu-speaking, followed at a distant second by Sotho (17%) and Tswana (16.5%). Most township residents, however, use languages interchangeably, for example the Basotho group, that is, Pendi, Tswana and Sotho, easily communicate in any of those languages and so do the Nguni group, that is, Zulu, Swati and Xhosa.

¹⁰ Home language: Instead of the term 'mother tongue', 'home language' was used in this survey and it refers to the language spoken most often in the household, which may not necessarily be the person's mother tongue.

Table 9: Respondents' highest educational level (N=173)

Educational levels	N (%)	Educational levels	N (%)
Primary		Secondary	
Sub B/Grade 2	2 (1.1)	Grade 8/Standard 6	27 (14.8)
Grade 3/Standard 1	1 (0.5)	Grade 9/Standard 7/Form 2	12 (6.6)
Grade 4/Standard 2	9 (4.9)	Grade 10/Standard 8/Form 3	28 (15.3)
Grade 5/Standard 3	9 (4.9)	Grade 11/Standard 9/Form 4	21 (11.5)
Grade 6/Standard 4	13 (7.1)	Grade 12/Standard 10/Matric	37 (20.2)
Grade 7/Standard 5	17 (9.3)	Subtotal	125 (68.4)
Subtotal	41 (27.8)	Higher	
		Diploma/Certificate with Grade 12/Std 10	5 (2.7)
		Degree	2 (1.1)
		Subtotal	7 (3.8)

The majority of respondents (81.5%) had completed post-primary studies, that is, academic levels above Grade 7, and only 3.8% had post Grade 12/matriculation qualifications.

5.3 Ability to pay for the municipal services

As a measure of ability to pay for the municipal services, some aspects of the LSM data were collected. These data types included employment status of the head of the household, monthly respondent and household incomes, monthly household expenditure and ownership of a series of LSM household utilities. The collected data types were aimed at distinguishing the well-off households from the worse-off ones, in order to compare behavioural tendencies between those that can afford to pay for municipal services and those that cannot.

Table 10: Respondents' current employment status (N=198)

Unemployed	N (%)	Employed	N (%)
Unemployed, not looking for work	4 (2)	Self-employed (full time)	7 (3.5)
Unemployed, looking for work	76 (38.4)	Self-employed (part time)	10 (5.1)
Pensioner (aged or retired)	63 (31.8)	Employed (full time)	15 (7.6)
Housewife, not working	6 (3)	Employed (part time)	9 (4.5)
Student	8 (4)	Other (specify).....	---
Total unemployed	157 (79.3)	Total employed	42 (20.7)

A total of 79.3% of the respondents were unemployed¹¹. Amongst these were students and pensioners. This 79.3% unemployment from this survey is, however, much higher than the 28.2% official unemployment estimates by Statistics South Africa (STATS SA, 2001). Forty-two respondents were employed and in addition, 76 households had a second member of the household employed. When all the households are aggregated, 118 out of 200 households, which accounts for 58.5%, had an employed household member earning an income on a full-time or part-time basis, which included the respondent or another household member.

¹¹ According to the official or strict definition, the unemployed are those people within the economically active population who (a) did not work in the seven days prior to census night, (b) wanted to work and were available to start work within a week of census night, and (c) had taken active steps to look for work or to start some form of self-employment in the four weeks prior to census night. The unemployment rate therefore refers to the percentage unemployed economically active population (STATS SA, 2001).

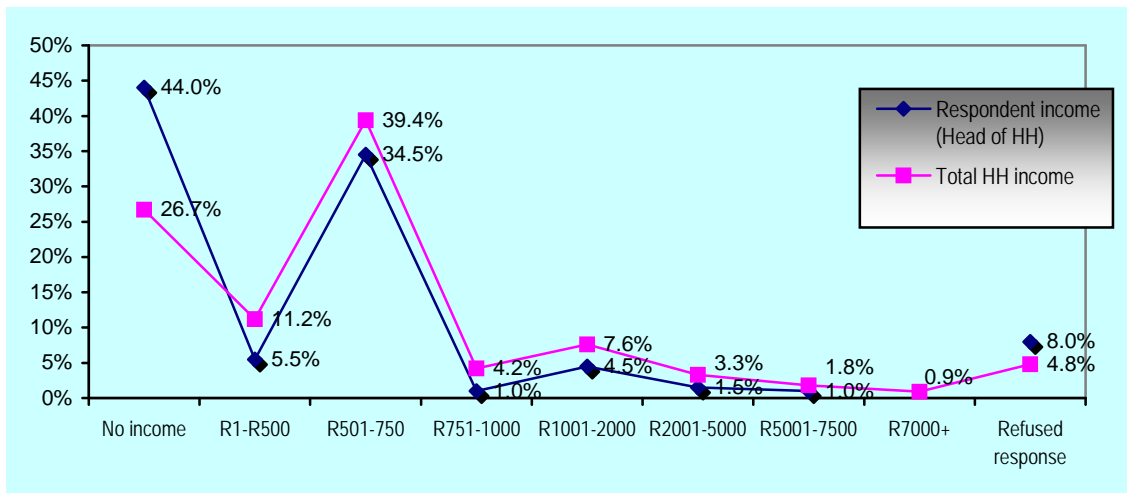


Figure 4: Personal/respondent and household monthly income (N=200)

In households where no one is employed, the estimated monthly income accounts for pension, remittances and other grants such as government child grants. More than half of the households (54.5%) earned between R500 and R5 000. In accordance with the UNDP definition of US\$2 a day as a poverty line measure, an average of $\pm 30\%$ households from this survey at an average of four occupants each lived below the poverty line.

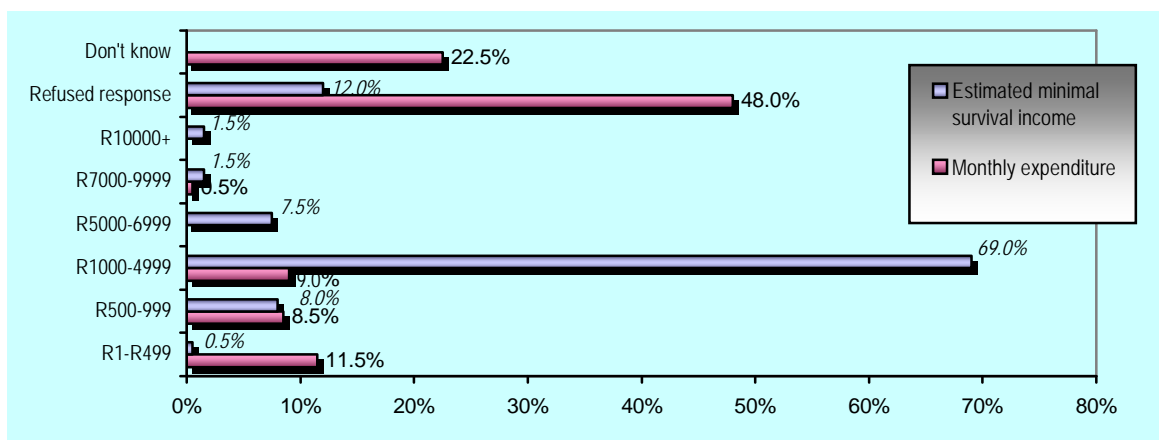


Figure 5: Amount in general estimates that goes into household monthly expenditure (N=200)

Households' monthly income and expected minimum monthly survival income related closely between R500 and R2 000 for the majority of households. Household monthly expenditure on three main accounts included furniture accounts (41.2%), university or student fees (23.5%) and clothing accounts (16.2%) [N=68]. Other household accounts of less significance include bank loans (1%), monthly burial society fees (1.5%), car instalments (2.9%) and personal insurance (3%). Not a single household was, however, found to be paying a house bond.

Table 11: LSM utilities owned by the household (N=200)

Household LSM items	N (%)	Household LSM items	N (%)
Household amenities (N=200)			
Refrigerators	170 (85)	Microwave	65 (32.5)
Vacuum cleaner	12 (6)	Washing machine	43 (21.5)
Television	171 (85.5)	Coal stove	98 (49)
Hi-fi or music centre	94 (47)	Electric stove	190 (95)
Radio	135 (67.5)	Computer	7 (3.5)
Geyser	29 (14.5)	Heater/air conditioner	168 (84)
Water supply (N=200)			
Piped water tap inside household	75 (37.9)	Piped water tap in yard	123 (62.1)
Toilet & ablution facilities (N=199)			
Flush toilet outside the house	152 (76.4)	Flush toilet inside house	47 (23.6)
Communication facilities (N=199)			
Cell phone	34 (17.1)	Both land line & cell phone	21 (10.6)
Land line	54 (27.1)	No phone in household	90 (45.2)

The majority of these households are high electricity consumers, which is reflected in their ownership of electronic utilities such as refrigerators, televisions and heaters, etc. In addition to the household items, 55% of households had four-roomed, 12% five-roomed, 11.5% three-roomed, 11% seven-roomed, 7.5% six-roomed, 2.5% eight-roomed and 0.5% nine-roomed families including the backroom shacks, which are often used to generate extra income or accommodate extended family members [N=200].

To determine behaviour with regard to the perceived importance of service, payment tendencies, participation in municipal service provision activities and satisfaction levels, an average township income was computed to classify the well-off and worse-off townships. The findings of this ANOVA are reflected in the table below.

Table 12: ANOVA of average household income per township (N=200)

Analysis of variance						
Townships	N obs	N	Mean income	Std dev	Minimum	Maximum
Chiawelo	25	16	2167.50	2493.74	625.0000000	8750.00
Naledi	25	15	1641.67	2307.73	250.0000000	8750.00
Jabulani	25	17	794.1176471	915.3008988	250.0000000	400.00
Dobsonville	25	20	593.7500000	397.1009251	0	1750.00
Dube	25	16	1851.56	2233.37	625.0000000	6250.00
Diepkloof	25	15	2658.33	7572.49	250.0000000	30000.00
Meadowlands	25	14	696.4285714	349.1551813	250.0000000	1250.00
Orlando West	25	17	823.5294118	870.5902536	250.0000000	4000.00

The four highest income averages are R2 658,33 in Diepkloof, R1 851,56 in Dube (region 10), R2 167,50 in Chiawelo and R1 641,67 in Naledi (region 6). These four townships are therefore classified as well-off and the rest as worse-off for analytical comparisons.

Table 13: Classification of sampled townships

<i>Well-off townships</i>	<i>Worse-off townships</i>
Diepkloof	Orlando West
Chiawelo	Jabulani
Dube	Meadowlands
Naledi	Dobsonville

Table 14: Affordability of municipal services to household (N=200)

	Water supply N (%)	Electricity N (%)	Refuse removal N (%)	Sewerage system N (%)
Very affordable	20 (10)	2 (1)	13 (6.5)	14 (7)
Affordable	79 (39.5)	31 (15.5)	99 (49.5)	100 (50)
Neither	4 (2)	3 (1.5)	6 (3)	5 (2.5)
Expensive	37 (18.5)	50 (25)	29 (14.5)	28 (14)
Very expensive	60 (30)	114 (57)	53 (26.5)	53 (26.5)

More than half of the survey respondents (50.5%) believed that water services, refuse removal (56%) and sewerage system charges (57%) were affordable. Electricity charges according to 82%, however, were more expensive.

The following shows a trend analysis of the affordability of the four basic household services by the well-off and worse-off townships (condition: ignore the undecided responses).

Table 15: Trend analysis of affordability of various basic household services by well-off and worse-off townships (N=200 in each case)

Institution	Townships	Unaffordable	Neither	Affordable	Total N (%)	Prob
Water supply	Well-off	56.70	25	44.44	100 (50)	0.0873
	Worse-off	43.30	75	55.56	100 (50)	
Electricity	Well-off	50.61	66.6	45.45	100 (50)	0.6362
	Worse-off	49.39	33.33	54.55	100 (50)	
Refuse removal	Well-off	53.66	83.33	45.54	100 (50)	0.2463
	Worse-off	46.34	16.67	54.46	100 (50)	
Sewerage system	Well-off	53.09	80	46.49	100 (50)	0.2632
	Worse-off	46.91	20	53.51	100 (50)	

Focus group discussions, however, revealed service charges to have increased with the awarding of title deeds. Whereas the municipality used to take responsibility for repairing broken windows, unblocking toilets and sewerage

pipes, after awarding title deeds, households have to constantly pay to unblock sewerage and toilet pipes as reflected in this quote: “...*Ok, right I will tell you. Service delivery is very-very poor. First point, if the window breaks now you have to pay or once there is blocked sewerage, you go to the municipality, they appoint a contractor and he only unblock it after you have paid him R150 or R200. We used to enjoy these free of charge; we did not to buy doors or taps... We only used to pay rent like those who live in flats and the landlord fixed all the problems.*”

(Focus group 1)

5.3.1 Community perception of the municipal measurement of affordability

Although focus group participants indicated their willingness to pay for all the services, their unhappiness was with the non-reading of service meters. Residents believed that estimations that are based on payments suggest affordability. Some residents insisted on proving through their services statements that because of their continuous payments, their service charges had been steadily increasing. “...*People are paying, but most cannot afford. One will pay that R100 and next month it will be R200 and it continues to grow. Yes, you can afford. I have seen it many times. I have seen people charged R1 500 and it goes up to R2 000. Let's assume it is R150 this month and I don't pay, what will likely happen next month is that it will likely be R100 or remain the same. If you pay, you can afford and you pay for those who cannot. So people stop paying. If you stop paying, it goes down. You pay R150 next month is R300 and you pay, it goes to R500. It will never go down...*”

(Focus groups 1 and 3)

5.3.2 Municipal exemption of households from services payment

Certain community members are exempt from paying for their municipal services consumption. Such groups of individuals, in terms of the Systems Act section 74(c), are supposed to be defined by the municipality in its indigent

policy (cf. chapter three). Exempt groups and methods of subsidisation of tariffs for poor households are also supposed to be communicated to the public. Focus groups participants, however, seemed not to have this knowledge: *“...They do not know who is employed and unemployed here. They only check this through payments or non-payments of services. They evaluate through the statements. If you pay, it means you can afford and then you pay for those who can't. Even though local government said it will provide free water services, no one gets free water. No one gets free water everybody has to pay even though they said 600 free litres. You still end up paying a lot and there is no difference. There is nothing new despite promises of free this and free that...”*

“...It would really help to pay a flat rate but even when they do that, they should investigate households wherein no one works because it will come back to affordability once more. Some people can't pay electricity, water and pay school fees, transport etc. A flat rate may be just right...”

(Focus groups 1, 2, 3 and 4)

It is evident from the findings of this section that ability to pay for municipal services is relatively low since the average household income per month per township is less than R2 000, with the exception of Chiawelo and Diepkloof. Both Chiawelo (Protea) and Diepkloof (Diepkloof Extension) seem at face value to be upmarket suburbs or to have higher levels of income. Other findings of importance include an assumption that payment of services could reflect household ability to pay for of municipal services and a lack of information on the indigent policy reflects poor contact between the municipality and communities.

5.4 Importance of the various municipal services

In order for community members to indicate their perceived importance of the various municipal services, an assumption was made here that households should have knowledge of their municipality and the different functions that it performs.

5.4.1 Knowledge of the municipality

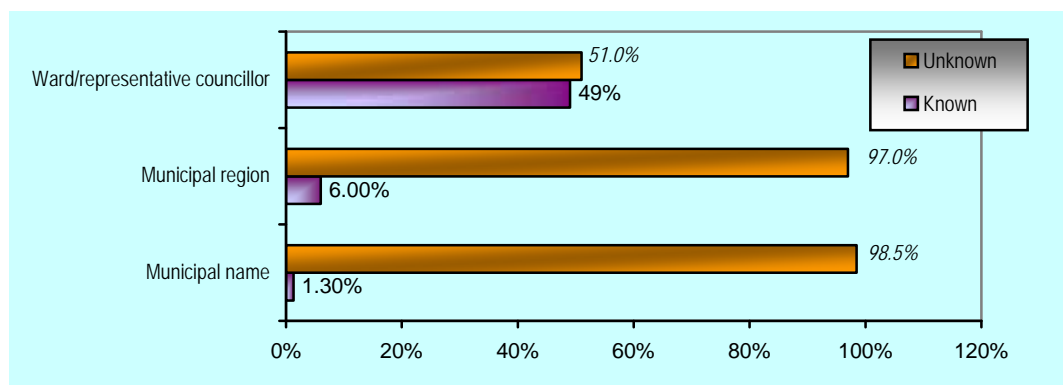


Figure 6: Name of municipality, municipal region and representative councillors (N=200)

An overwhelming majority of the survey respondents, that is, 98.5% and 97%, did not know the names of their municipality and municipal region, respectively. Nearly half (49%), however, knew their ward councillor [N=199]. Focus group participants blamed this lack of knowledge on their ward councillors *“...I just heard that our ward councillor is a lady down there, but I do not know her. Maybe only people very close to her house may know her, the rest, I don’t think so...”* *“...That person does not know the problems here. I also have not heard of a meeting called in this area. They don’t talk to us, so we have no information about the municipality and its intentions...”* *“...We remain fully uninformed...”* *“...There was one person who used to drive around here but he does not come anymore. It is long time ago, around 1996*

or so. He used to go around with a loud speaker or even drop papers from house to house. We don't know if he is still working here or not..."

(Focus groups 1, 2, 3 & 4)

Table 16: Three main functions of the municipality according to respondents
(N=200 in each case)

The delivery of and/or maintenance of...	Function 1 N (%)	Function 2 N (%)	Function 3 N (%)
Water	157 (79.3)	1 (0.5)	-
Electricity	18 (9.1)	80 (43)	-
Refuse removal	13 (6.6)	39 (21.3)	110 (75.9)
Sanitation/sewerage	6 (3)	59 (32.5)	13 (9)
Parks	-	2 (1)	14 (9.7)
Health	-	1 (0.5)	7 (4.8)
Do not know	4 (2)	1 (0.5)	1 (0.5)

The majority of the survey respondents (78.5%) perceived the municipality to be in charge of the delivery of or maintenance of water services. From the focus groups, however, housing, specifically the transfer of title deeds, seemed to be even more important *"...I have respectively been here since 1966 and 1969. During the initial period of stay, all the families rented these houses, which belonged to the municipality. We were renting because we had not received title deeds by then. The house belonged to my mother..."* *"...Most of us in this area got our title deeds in 1999, but some are still waiting even today..."* *"...They will not change the names until the rental debt is fully paid. If you can't pay the debt, the house will remain in the names of your parents, dead or alive, so where else can we go...?"*

(Focus group 2)

The community's perceived main functions of the municipality, namely water and electricity provision, seemed to vary greatly from what communities saw as priority issues or activities on which the municipality should be focusing its attention. The community's perceived priority activities in their areas are reflected in the table below.

Table 17: Activities on which municipality should be focusing most of its attention (N=200)

Activities	Priority 1 N (%)	Priority 2 N (%)	Total N (%)
Creating employment	67 (33.5)	43 (21.5)	110 (55.0)
Improving service quality	62 (31)	44 (22)	106 (53)
Providing free services	23 (11.5)	29 (14.5)	52 (26)
Combating crime	17 (8.5)	28 (14)	45 (18.9)
Meeting community expectations	16 (8)	41 (20.5)	57 (28.5)
Consulting communities	10 (5)	11 (5.5)	21 (10.1)
Dealing with corrupt officials	5 (2.5)	4 (2)	9 (4.2)

5.4.2 Privatisation of basic services and preferred provider

When the Igoli 2000 vision was introduced, the aim was to partially privatise the basic municipal services, increase service payment collection and reverse the huge municipal debt that was accumulated during the mid-1990s to early 2000s. Since then, the city of Johannesburg has set up utilities to provide these services, and residents have been contesting against the installation of prepaid service meters (cf. chapter three). Asked if households were afforded an opportunity to choose service provision by either the corporatised utilities or directly through the municipality, households responded as follows:

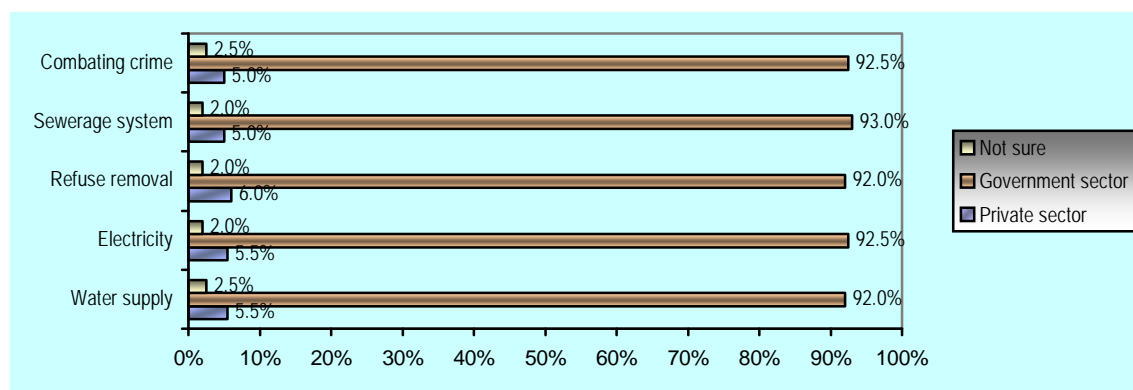


Figure 7: Preference for provision of certain basic services by the government and private sector (N=200)

Overwhelmingly, the majority of respondents were in favour of government supply of all the given services. There are, however, significant Pearson chi-square differences in the preference of provider between the well-off and worse-off townships at 0.020 (water supply), 0.035 (electricity), 0.023 (refuse removal), 0.051 (sewerage system) and 0.030 (combating crime), which indicate the well-off townships' preference for private sector delivery.

This preference for local government as a service provider is despite the perceived improvement in the delivery of water services and garbage collection that has been brought about by the JW and Pikitup utilities, respectively, as indicated in the focus group discussions: *"...The Johannesburg water are the ones who come here to fix some of these problems. Even here in our house, they came in 2002. The Johannesburg Water people, if you phone them, they come. I remember even there, they were phoned and they did not take more than 3 hours to arrive..."* *"... These guys work very hard and things are not like before..."*

(Focus group 4)

The findings of this section make it clear that there is very poor community knowledge of the basic municipal information, which is reflected in a lack of knowledge of municipal name, the region and, to some extent, ward representative councillors. Households, however, seem to highly value all three basic household services, that is, water, electricity and refuse removal. The value placed on these services is reflected in the communities' reluctance to see these basic services privatised and in their perceptions of the municipality's three main functions as being the provider of these services, although the municipality's creation of employment and improvement of service quality is among their main wishes as well.

5.5 Community participation in service provision

There are numerous ways to participate in a democratic system of governance. Chief among these is the regular voting system through which communities elect their political representation (councillors) to the municipal council every five years. Participation is also informed by the community's level of trust in municipal structures and processes and the accessibility of such structures in terms of communication and visibility.

5.5.1 Participation through the voting system

Asked if they would be voting in the upcoming local government elections in 2005, 37% of the surveyed respondents indicated a definite yes, 31% possibly yes, 4% possibly no, 9.5% definitely not and 18.5% were undecided [N=200]. The focus group discussion participants indicated that they had lost faith in the electoral system, believing that the government only delivers certain services upon elections as a ploy for attracting voters: *"...They only do one street when there are elections, 'but you will pay'. They say Soweto will be like Johannesburg, no it won't happen. There is no monitoring. You see, there is where the problem lies. If they were going to evaluate the performance of all ministers, they say we take 10-50% of your salary away. No, they do nothing like that, instead they say thank you and change your office to another portfolio. RDP houses have been built, but they have no value. If there are big storms or earthquakes, many people would die, because it is one layer. No house can stand with one brick, they must be doubled..."*

(Focus groups 1, 3 and 4)

Factors that influence the decision not to vote in the 2005 local government elections vary from being too young to vote (87%), disillusionment with politics (4.3%), to others (8.7%) [N=23]. Factors that may, however, most likely motivate the non-voters to continuously participate in municipal activities included loyalty to a political party (27.1%), a sense of duty or

obligation (30.7%), a visible improvement in the delivery of services (30.7%), more honesty amongst politicians (6.5%), more visible evidence of commitment by the municipality to their areas (4.5%) and an increase in employment (0.5%) [N=199].

5.5.2 Participation through the ward committee system

Total attendance of ward committee meetings by surveyed respondents was at 55%. A 52% non-attendance was found in region 10. There are significant differences in ward committee meeting attendance between townships, with more attendance in region 6 and lower attendance in region 10 at Pearson chi-square value of 0.049. The differences suggest high attendance rates in Dube and Meadowlands and lower attendances in Naledi and Dobsonville.

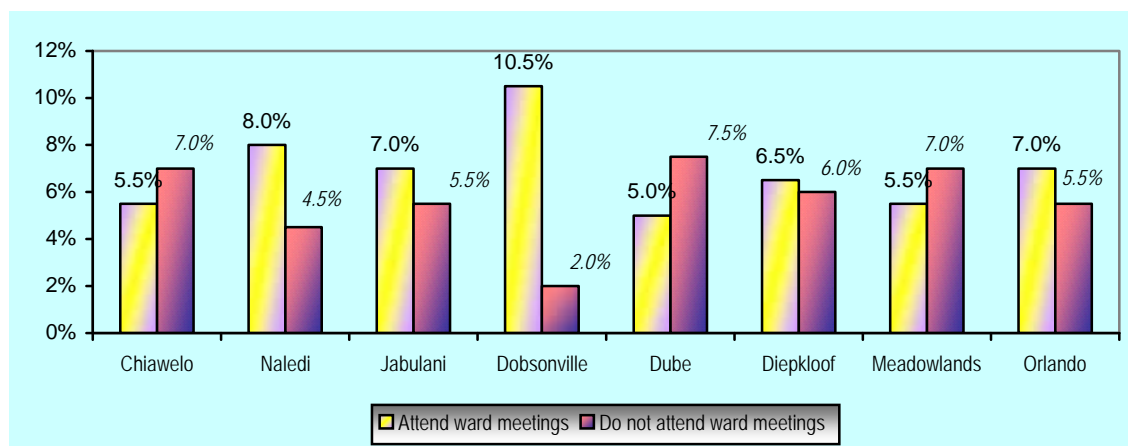


Figure 8: Attendance of ward committee meetings (N=200)

Although the comparisons of attendance between the well-off and worse-off townships yield no significant differences, trends suggest that the worse-off townships (attend 54.6% and not attend 44.44%) are more likely to attend ward committee meetings than the well-off townships (attend 45.4% and not attend 55.6%).

Of the respondents who attend ward committee meetings in either areas, 46% attend every time meetings are held, 38% only once in a while, 14.8% on a need basis, that is when they require certain information from the ward committee meetings, and 0.9% could not remember when they had last attended [N=108]. Focus groups suggest that attendance of ward committee meetings is an indication of confidence that the municipality will act on participants' suggestions from these meetings, that government or politicians will keep their promises and that they can influence municipal decisions: *"...That now, people go if they feel like because there is no gain. They only preach what they don't deliver. We will do this and that for you and then they don't deliver. They do their braai and from there it is over. You see now, they preach, but there is no delivery...". "... It is not that people do not attend meetings, they do go but people are confused. It is not that people do not want to attend, it is because they do not know what is good now - the old government or the new government. The old government built free houses, not these low cost houses. Whereas the new government has promised free services, you still have to pay for it. They promised they will give you free service. It is because they are no longer involved, they are contracting these companies, what do you call it..."*

(Focus groups 2 and 4)

Given the argument that participation and attendance of ward committee meetings is directly related to the influence exerted on the given structural decisions, survey respondents were asked if they thought it was easy or difficult to influence municipal decisions (cf. chapter three). More than half of the respondents (55.3%) indicated that it was difficult for them to influence municipal decisions, 28.6% thought that it was easy, 4.5% thought that it was neither easy nor difficult and 11.6% did not know [N=199]. Some focus group participants discredited policies on popular community participation, believing that such policies are not put into practice: *"...The whole thing about all those policies is often meant to brainwash you. The government*

creates all those policies, nice policies but after that, what they say in parliament is not implemented. They don't make follow up on what they say in parliament. They don't go down and check if their policies are being implemented, they just take their cars and go home after creating policies..."

(Focus group 1)

5.5.3 Participation as a factor of institutional trust

Community participation in structural arrangements or institutions is a reflection of the level of trust that communities put in such institutions. In the survey, households were asked to indicate the level of trust that they place in different institutions, which indirectly could measure or give reasons for their level of involvement and support of such institutions.

Table 18: Amount of trust participants have in the following institutions in their area (N=200)

Institution	Strong trust N (%)	Trust N (%)	Neither N (%)	Distrust N (%)	Strong distrust N (%)	Don't know N (%)
The police	39 (19.5)	86 (43)	11 (5.5)	45 (22.5)	16 (8)	3 (1.5)
Municipal councillors	9 (4.5)	77 (38.5)	17 (8.5)	57 (28.5)	31 (15.5)	9 (4.5)
The media (newspaper, radio & TV)	56 (28)	102 (51)	13 (6.5)	20 (10)	4 (2)	5 (2.5)
Businesses	10 (7.1)	104 (52.8)	19 (9.6)	13 (6.6)	8 (4.1)	39 (19.8)
Municipality/local government	15 (7.5)	102 (51)	22 (11)	29 (14.5)	27 (13.5)	5 (2.5)
Political parties	15 (7.5)	76 (38)	14 (7)	51 (25.5)	38 (19)	6 (3)
The church	91 (45.5)	82 (41)	12 (6)	12 (6)	3 (1.5)	-
Other community members	41 (20.5)	88 (44)	25 (12.5)	38 (19)	7 (3.5)	1 (0.5)

With the exception of the municipality, trusted by 57.6%, there is a general lack of trust in the political institutions such as political parties and ward councillors, distrusted by 44.5% and 44% of the total surveyed respondents, respectively. The highest level of trust from this survey is in the religious

institution/church (86.5%). There are significant differences in trust of the given institutions between townships (0.014 Pearson chi-square differences) with high trust levels in Dobsonville and Meadowlands and distrust in Dube and Orlando.

Table 19: Chi-square test of level of trust in various institutions by townships

Townships	Trust N (%)	Distrust N (%)	Statistics	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-Sided)
Zone 6			Pearson chi square	56.014 ^a	35	0.014
Dobsonville	17 (73.9)	6 (26)	Likelihood ratio	55.952	35	0.014
Dube	6 (28.6)	15 (71.3)	Linear-by-linear			
Zone 10			Association	.488	1	0.485
Meadowlands	16 (72.7)	6 (27.3)	N of valid cases	200		
Orlando	11 (46)	13 (54)				

Trend tests suggest opposing trust direction between the well-off and worse-off townships with strong distrust by the well-off and strong trust trends among the worse-off townships.

Table 20: Trend analysis of level of institutional trust by well-off and worse-off townships

Institution	Townships	Distrust	Neither	Trust	Total N (%)	Prob
The police	Well-off	59.02	54.55	45.60	99 (50.25)	0.0832
	Worse-off	40.98	45.45	54.40	98 (49.75)	
Municipal councillors	Well-off	53.41	47.06	46.51	95 (49.74)	0.3638
	Worse-off	46.59	52.94	53.49	96 (50.26)	
Businesses	Well-off	61.90	47.37	46.61	77 (48.73)	0.2382
	Worse-off	38.10	52.63	53.39	81 (51.27)	
Municipality/local government	Well-off	53.93	45.45	47.86	99 (50.77)	0.2000
	Worse-off	41.07	54.55	52.14	96 (49.23)	
Political parties	Well-off	57.30	64.29	41.76	98 (50.52)	0.0372
	Worse-off	42.70	35.71	58.24	96 (49.24)	
The church	Well-off	60.00	58.33	48.55	100 (50)	0.3154
	Worse-off	40.00	41.67	51.45	100 (50)	

Although there are high levels of distrust by the well-off townships in local councillors, the municipality and political parties, the distinction between

government at the local municipal level and the national spheres seems to be non-existent among all residents, as reflected in focus group discussions: *“...Ja, let us look at what you said, people’s attendance of municipal meetings since 1994 - Promises, promises, but they were not there. Mandela used to speak reality. But when the government pulled out, and you have the new government, people saw that now there is nothing here. They went and vote again. That is why we had historically in our voting campaigns, two voting days. This was done to increase the numbers. Can you see now, people are getting sick and tired. These kids are clever they can’t take it...”. “...You see now, when Mandela came, things were great because the old man meant business and everybody understood him, everybody could listen, but now with this government, they don’t know what they are doing. You can see how much they blame each other on TV - the Hyfer Commission. If Mandela was there this would not happen. He once said you do not wash your dirty linen in the public. They are just blaming each other instead of sitting down and solve the problems...”*

(Focus groups 1 and 3)

The level of distrust in one government sphere seems to affect the other sphere, which is why the ANC was reported to be unhappy and highly embarrassed by the city of Johannesburg’s inefficiencies with the billing system.

5.5.4 Participation as a factor of accessibility

When the sphere of local government was created, the argument for it was that it would be the most accessible sphere of government to the local communities (Rautenbach and Malherbe, 1998, and Khan, 2000). To give effect to accessibility, a ward committee system that would facilitate community interests and a community link with the municipal council was established (cf. chapter three). However, being a sphere closest to the people does not necessarily guarantee sufficient participation and efficiency of the

system. Other important aspects of accessibility include the language of communication, location of the municipal offices and timely availability of municipal information.

Table 21: Main method of communication by municipality (N=200)

Through...	N (%)	Language of communication	N (%)
Regular mass meetings	9 (4.5)	My mother tongue	37 (18.5)
Committee meetings	74 (37)	My second language that I clearly understand	140 (70)
Newsletters	113 (56.5)	A third language that I hardly understand	8 (4)
They do not communicate with me at all	3 (1.5)	A language I do not understand at all	11 (5.5)
Other ...	1 (0.5)	Unspecified	...4 (2)

Although most residents use language interchangeably, some of these residents see the use of one language to be perpetuating ethnic divisions and thereby affording unlegislated privileges to particular ethnic groups and making municipalities less accessible to others, as revealed in the focus group discussions: “...*You see things are not the same. This area is full of Vendas and Shangans but in other areas like Zone 2 the municipal workers cut grass there and do other things but not here. Where the Vendas and Shangans live, there is a big difference. Like last week, I went to the branch meeting of the ANC and when you speak in Shangan, they say they don't understand; they want you to speak Zulu or Xhosa. When I go to the meeting and talk in Shangan about my problems, they don't listen. When you try and speak in English they say most people are illiterate and don't hear what you are saying. Most of the municipal officials and councillors are Zulus here... yes, yes, there is no one speaking or representing us here in the municipality. Even if there was, I don't think they would listen to him...*”

(Focus groups 2, 3 and 4)

Although the municipality is reflected to be effective in terms of its communication strategies and language of communication, respondents in focus group interviews believed that there is not enough consultation when pricing of services is determined: “...*they just put increments from nowhere forgetting that 95% of the people are unemployed. Even if they are employed, most of them are paid low wages, poor salaries whatever it is... whereby you can't be able to supporting their children, paying for water and house renovations. And their increments you know, they just come from nowhere, whereby. From the blue they just say that now we are going to increase prices of water and electricity...*”

(Focus groups 1, 2 and 3)

The efficiency and effectiveness of most organisations and to a large extent the municipality as well is now measured in terms of their responsiveness to clients' needs, queries and problems. It for this reason that the city of Johannesburg has also put in place the customer services centres where communities can walk in or phone to report their problems or verify any municipal information. Asked on how well they thought the municipality was responsive, survey respondents indicated marginally poor municipal responsiveness.

Table 22: Consultation by and responsiveness of municipality (N=200)

How well does municipality...	Very well N (%)	Quite well N (%)	Neither well nor badly N (%)	Quite badly N (%)	Very badly N (%)	Do not know N (%)
... respond to your needs	7 (3.5)	64 (32)	18 (9)	46 (23)	46 (23)	19 (9.5)
...respond to enquiries	4 (2)	75 (37.5)	14 (7)	41 (20.5)	43 (21.5)	23 (11.5)
...consult on matters affecting communities	2 (1)	63 (31.5)	12 (6)	46 (23)	50 (25)	27 (13.5)
...respond to community feedback	8 (0.4)	63 (31.5)	7 (3.5)	44 (22)	52 (26)	26 (13)

Lack of efficiency and effectiveness by the municipality in dealing with the reported problems is of serious concern to residents. Prior to the establishment of the regional administrative centres and call centres, the inability of the municipality in receiving residents' complaints and dealing with problems was to some residents even more serious: *"...You phone someone in town, in the city and report the case. Sometimes they come and sometimes they do not come. You can report a several times. We once had a problem when our taps were leaking, we phone a lot and those meter readers are way too old now and needs to be changed. In my household too, the meter is leaking even now. We ended up asking some private plumbers to come and fix it for R175. Things are hard and difficult in this area..."*

(Focus group 2)

Consultations and feedback are not necessarily one-way traffic. There is an expectation as well that even outside the ward committees, community members will continuously engage the municipality formally or informally through visiting the municipal offices, communicating with ward councillors, paying municipal services and attending ward committee meetings. The findings reveal the community's own responsiveness to these factors to be very poor.

Table 23: Respondents' payment of levies and communication with the municipality (N=200)

When last did you...	In the last 3 weeks N (%)	In the last 3 months N (%)	In the last 5 months N (%)	In 6 months + N (%)	I have never N (%)	I cannot remembe r N (%)
...visit municipal offices	49 (24.5)	28 (14)	16 (8)	32 (16)	40 (20)	35 (17.5)
...communicate with ward councillor/s	16 (8)	15 (7.5)	10 (5)	45 (22.5)	77 (38.5)	37 (18.5)
...pay your municipal levy	67 (33.8)	53 (26.8)	9 (4.5)	21 (10.6)	21 (10.6)	27 (13.6)
...attend a ward committee meeting	17 (8.5)	23 (11.5)	15 (7.5)	35 (17.5)	63 (31.5)	47 (23.5)

Trends reveal more participation by the well-off townships in terms of municipal visitations, communication with ward councillors and payment of municipal services in comparison to the worse-off townships.

Table 24: Trends on when last households paid their levies and communicated with the municipality

When last did you...	Townships	In the last 3 weeks N (%)	In the last 3 months N (%)	In the last 5 months N (%)	In 6 months + N (%)	Never N (%)	Prob
...visit municipal offices	Well-off Worse-off	55.10 44.90	41.67 58.33	50 50	75.86 24.14	45 55	0.0395
...communicate with ward councillor/s	Well-off Worse-off	68.75 31.25	40 60	90 10	58.14 41.86	41.56 58.44	0.0233
...pay your municipal levy	Well-off Worse-off	50 50	49.25 50.75	41.18 58.82	66.67 33.33	80.95 19.05	0.0184
...attend a ward committee meeting	Well-off Worse-off	41.18 58.82	61.11 38.89	66.67 33.33	65.63 34.38	46.03 55.32	0.1026

The general accessibility of the municipality, which is indicated in the figure below, reveals that the municipal councillors are the most accessible (38%) of all the municipal structures, followed by municipal information. Municipal offices are inaccessible according to 83% of the total survey respondents.

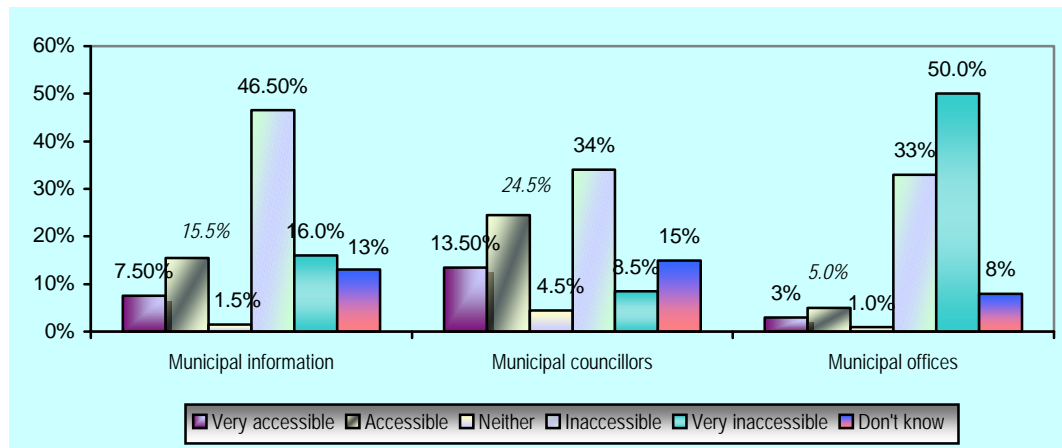


Figure 9: Accessibility of municipal information, councillors and offices (N=200)

There are significant differences in the level of accessibility of municipal information, councillors and municipal offices between the townships at Pearson chi square of 0.002, 0.001 and 0.001, respectively.

Table 25: Chi-square test of accessibility of municipality by townships

How accessible is/are...	Dobsonville		Diepkloof		Orlando		Jabulani		P-Value
	Inaccess ible N (%)	Accessible N (%)	Inaccess ible N (%)	Accessible N (%)	Inaces sible N (%)	Accessibl e N (%)	Inaces sible N (%)	Accessible N (%)	
Municipal information	2 (2.4)	23 (27.1)	2 (2.4)	16 (18.8)	7 (8.2)	13 (15.3)	4 (4.7)	18 (21.2)	0.002
municipal councillors	8 (9.5)	17 (20.2)	9 (10.7)	9 (10.7)	13 (15.5)	6 (7.1)	11 (13.1)	11 (13.1)	0.001
municipal offices	1 (1.1)	24 (26.1)	---	21 (22.8)	5 (5.4)	17 (18.5)	---	24 (26.1)	0.001

Significant levels of inaccessibility of municipal councillors are found at Orlando township, there is total accessibility of municipal offices in Diepkloof and Jabulani and some levels of inaccessibility of municipal information in Orlando in comparison with other townships. Trend analysis of municipal accessibility between the well-off and worse-off townships reveals some perceived level of accessibility by the well-off and inaccessibility by the worse-off townships of the information, councillors and municipal offices.

Table 26: Trend test of accessibility of municipality by well-off and worse-off townships

	Townships	Inaccessibl e	Neithe r	Accessibl e	Total N (%)	Prob
Municipal information	Well-off Worse-off	44.90 55.10	83.33 16.67	50.67 49.33	87 (48.60) 92 (51.40)	0.1683
Municipal councillors	Well-off Worse-off	46.15 53.85	85.7 14.29	47.06 52.94	72 (48.32) 77 (51.68)	0.1272
Municipal offices	Well-off Worse-off	46.60 53.40	66.67 33.33	51.21 48.15	96 (49.74) 97 (50.26)	0.4535

The general impression from the findings of this section is that community participation in municipal activities through the voting system has not withered. There is poor participation, however, in ward committee activities and poor attendance trends by the well-off townships and better attendance by the worse-off townships of the ward committee meetings. Other indicators of non-participation are poor visitation to the municipal offices and the general lack of consultation by the ward councillors. The inaccessibility of the municipal offices, councillors and municipal information is, however, high among the worse-off townships.

Poor participation in municipal activities may be influenced by perceptions that communities cannot easily exert influence on the municipal decisions or

processes. In general terms, there are trends of distrust in all municipal structures by the well-off and trust by the worse-off townships, although the well-off perceive the municipality to be responsive to their needs.

5.6 Satisfaction with the provision of municipal services

Community satisfaction with municipal service provision is presented using measures such as satisfaction with municipal service performance levels and happiness or satisfaction with service charges. Other causes of dissatisfaction or possible outcomes of unhappiness with either or both municipal services performance and service charges are presented.

5.6.1 Municipal performance in service delivery

Performance in service delivery after the 2000 municipal elections has been rated to be generally good by the majority of surveyed respondents for the most basic household services as reflected in the figure below.

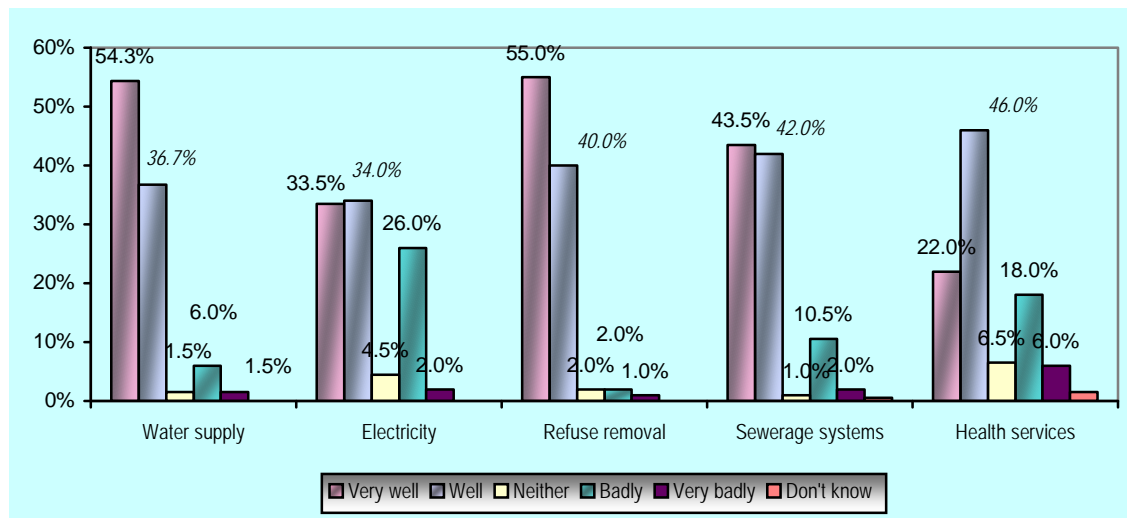


Figure 10: Performance of municipality in handling basic service matters (N=200)

Most of the government measures of performance are the actual number of households with access to these services and not what the households think

about service delivery. The general level of service delivery over time is perceived by the focus group participants to have improved, specifically in terms of garbage collection, and the efficiency with which the water problems are fixed: “... *There is only one service that I think has improved drastically, the garbage collection. They have given us big free garbage bins and the yards, streets, including the communal dumping area is now clean. There was a big movable garbage cargo out there, which was always full, and garbage was all over the place, now it is clean. The tractor used to come and collect it once in a while and now it is no longer there. Now in a month they collect four times on Thursdays that means every Thursday they are here. Then, they didn't come that often. People had small bins in their houses and they collected rarely from the municipality and that is why people dumped all the rubbish in the communal dumping area. They collect from the houses now and not from the communal dumping area, but even then, there were no rubbish around because there was an old white guy who came around with a sjambok telling people to pick up litter in their yards and he tells you to put all those in cargo over there. But people know these days that the collectors will come on Thursday and they find everything waiting. I think the big bins are the only biggest improvement and this weekly collection as well.*”

(Focus groups 3 and 4)

Table 27: Trend test on how well municipality is handling basic service matters

	Townships	Good performance	Neither	Poor performance	Total N (%)	Prob
Water supply	Well-off	48.1	100	45.4	100 (50)	0.008
	Worse-off	51.9	0	54.5	100 (50)	
Electricity	Well-off	46.6	100	50	100 (50)	0.001
	Worse-off	53.4	0	50	100 (50)	
Refuse removal	Well-off	48.9	25	100	100 (50)	0.040
	Worse-off	51.1	75	0	100 (50)	
Sewerage system	Well-off	46.7	0	73	100 (50)	0.026
	Worse-off	53.3	100	27	100 (50)	

With democratic governance put in place only a decade ago, much of the poor service delivery as discussed in the focus groups is blamed on inexperience and to some extent a lack of interest and understanding of municipal activities by councillors: “...*Those councillors, most of them were previously without jobs. And most of them said they will stand and talk for the people but when they get there, and they get these big salaries, they forget their people. People are run by lying councillors, they can lie to their own people. They know the problems that their mothers have got and they still do not do anything. The government does not know that women and grown ups are signed papers of eviction from their homes...*”

(Focus groups 2, 3 and 4)

Satisfaction with the municipality’s performance in service delivery, with specific reference to community needs, enquiries, consultations and responding to community feedback reveals significant differences between townships. These highly significant Pearson chi-square values reveal the municipality to be irresponsive in all four areas in Naledi and Orlando. To the contrary, in Meadowlands, the municipality is seen to be very responsive only to the first two aspects, which are community needs and enquiries, and in Dobsonville, to all aspects but community needs.

Table 28: Responsiveness of municipality to community needs

The municipality...	Naledi		Dobsonville		Meadowlands		Orlando		P-Value
	Well (%)	Poorly (%)	Well (%)	Poorly (%)	Well (%)	Poorly (%)	Well (%)	Poorly (%)	
responds to our needs	5 (2.5)	15 (7.5)	---	---	13 (6.5)	8 (4)	5 (2.5)	17 (8.5)	0.028
responds to enquiries	5 (2.5)	15 (7.5)	18 (9)	5 (2.5)	12 (6)	7 (3.5)	4 (2)	18 (9)	0.027
consults on matters affecting communities	5 (2.5)	14 (7)	19 (9.5)	6 (3)	---	---	3 (2)	19 (9.5)	0.005
responds to community feedback	6 (3)	16 (8)	15 (9)	6 (3)	---	---	4 (2)	19 (9.5)	0.000

The focus group discussions suggest that non-responsiveness to matters that affect communities is due to councillors' and senior officials' lack of concern for the needs of the historically black townships, as most of them are now residing in the historically white suburbs: *"...Ja, what happens is that they have less concern with where they come from. They are very happy now that they live next to Helen Suzman, etc. Let me tell you, I have friends who tell me that Soweto is very dangerous. Where he grew up, you know that shocked me, I could not believe. They say no... Sam, you will never see me there anymore. They say there is very high crime. They say boys will blow you up. What is amazing is that it seems like they didn't see it before they left the township and the big question is what are they going to do about it because they are in positions of power? They just talk about these problems but no action – and they should be the ones doing the most because they have the experiences and relatives here..."*

(Focus groups 1 and 2)

The municipality is perceived to be paying more attention to affluent suburbs and therefore not responding to the pressing needs of the poorer communities in the townships. This behaviour is attributed to a perceived lack of interest by councillors in dealing with township problems since most of them have moved out of the townships to the former white suburbs: “...*If we compare townships and suburbs, there is a big difference. In the suburbs, if a drain blocks today, by the evening it will be fixed. But here in the townships, it will take three to four weeks. After a lot of paper work, that is when it gets fixed because service is highly poor. You can write all, the blockages and traffic lights among other things. All those services, blockages of sewerage, it can be blocked and by 6pm, they won't sleep until the white area is back to normal again, but never, it can't happen here in Soweto, the lights must function. The problem is that most of our administrators, including politicians stay in the suburbs. There is no one who stays here. These people are dangerous. When they travel, they use the main roads, they don't get into the townships...*”

(Focus groups 3 and 4)

Trend analysis reveals a marginally poor municipal responsiveness to community needs by the worse-off townships.

Table 29: Trend test on how well municipality consults on and responds to community matters of importance

	Townships	Good response	Neither	Poor response	Total N (%)	Prob
Respond to needs	Well-off	47.83	61.11	49.30	90 (49.72)	0.5853
	Worse-off	52.17	38.89	50.70	91 (50.28)	
Respond to enquiries	Well-off	53.57	50	45.57	88 (49.72)	0.5936
	Worse-off	46.43	50	54.43	89 (50.28)	
Consult on matters affecting communities	Well-off	51.04	75	41.54	85 (49.13)	0.0884
	Worse-off	48.96	25	58.46	88 (50.87)	
Respond to community feedback	Well-off	51.04	85.71	42.25	85 (48.85)	0.0732
	Worse-off	48.96	14.29	57.75	89 (51.15)	

Local government policies call for community participation in the development of the IDP and in assessing municipal performance. Survey findings on the one hand reveal little participation in municipal activities where communities can effect these influences. Focus group discussions on the other hand reveal dissatisfaction with erratic or no consultation of communities by the municipality with regard to their service needs, satisfaction and delivery standards. Dissatisfaction seems to be heightened by consultations that often coincide with elections. Ward committees were established to avoid consultation through elections, and non-consultation or even participation renders ward committees inefficient: *“...Our municipality is failing the people. Most of the services are not up to scratch. We can say the government is part and parcel of the problem because they do not monitor. What they say, they do not do. They are less concerned and the only time when they come is during elections. Now they want to know what is happening - ‘can you tell us what your problem is?’ They go and build 10 houses and they give them to you in the next 10 months you go and vote and then damn, no more movement. You will never see them again. To be honest, services are very poor compared with the apartheid times. Services were cheap. Now they said services will be better, but services are now worse because you will pay those thousands of Rands. R400 to R800 a month without improvement and within a year, you see they make increases forgetting that there are no improvements that they are making, you understand? When you take something in a company, a product, if it increases in value, it is because they increase its quality but here, it is different, the quality stays the same.”*

(Focus groups 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Newly established regional offices seem to have provided relief that enables communities to deal with the municipality on a face-to-face basis. There is still, however, some level of dissatisfaction with the functionality of these

offices, often because they are used to record information and problems and make referrals rather than effecting immediate service: “...*There is a municipal office for the whole of Meadowlands here at Zone 2. I don’t know what they do in that office because when I went there they told me that they don’t have plumbers. They say their municipal plumbers were in town...*” “...*They sent someone, a private person who charged me R175. The problem is not really fixed because I am still experiencing leaks. And is a lot of water wastage right now. The municipality came into some areas to change all the toilet utilities but they did not come into our area. Like in Zone 9, they have beautiful toilets and we didn’t get them. Those people did not pay a cent; our toilets are too old...*”

(Focus groups 1 and 3)

5.6.2 Satisfaction with the municipal service charges

There are three aspects that were revealed through the focus group discussions that seem to determine satisfaction with municipal service charges. These aspects are a link between ability to pay and consultation, variations and disparities in service payments and unjustified service charges.

5.6.2.1 A link between ability to pay and consultation

Participants talked about their confusion about a change in the payment system that was not communicated. Before they did not pay for getting broken taps fixed, but in the current system they are expected to pay for maintenance services: “...*They just put increments from nowhere forgetting that 95% of the people are unemployed. Even if they are employed, most of them are paid low wages, poor salaries whatever it is... whereby you can’t be able to supporting their children, paying for water and house renovations...*”

“...We used to pay but we don't pay any more. In fact they didn't come; it is only recently that they come to fix our broken taps. We had a similar problem and ended up getting someone to fix it and we paid him from our pockets. There is Mr X; he does it for all these families in this area. It is also because it may take weeks if you report and wait on the municipality, it is better you do it yourself and pay for it. Also because he is cheap, but the municipality does not charge for fixing burst sewers...”

(Focus groups 1, 2, 3 and 4)

5.6.2.2 Variations and disparities in service payments

Huge and unjustifiable variations in the service charges between residents are of serious concern. A simple example is the service charges of a single person that are higher than those of a family with extended family members. Finding out these disparities seems to be simple as neighbours indicated that they compare their municipal charges at all times. Section 74(b) of the Systems Act, however, calls for service charges that are proportional to the individual use of that service as was also reflected in focus group discussions: *“...We don't pay the same now irrespective of our consumption. Others pay R100 and some R1 000 even if we use the same rate. How can a businessperson pay R65 using all the services, water and electricity and an ordinary household pay R500? A flat rate is better. A flat rate still may have to be set at different levels for pensioners at lower rate compared with those who work...”*

(Focus groups 1 and 3)

5.6.2.3 Unjustified service charges

Focus group participants were not happy about the inability of the municipal officials to read service meters monthly in their houses. Unread service meters present baseless or even falsified charge statements: *“...Ja on these matters I am not sure because these people*

don't enter every house to read every month. They just estimate because sometimes there is no one in the house. Like in my household, I got an electricity statement of R350 for only this month, can you believe it? The only thing that we are using often is the TV and we only cook in the evenings. And they had promised to lower the electricity rates, yes they really said they will - no they won't ever do that, they are lying. They once said they will cut even the old electricity debt as well. There are two kinds of debt, the rental and the electricity debt. My electricity debt amount to R11 000 but they also differ from household to another. Some have been paying and their debt is lower compared to those who have not been paying at all..."

(Focus groups 1, 2 and 4)

5.6.3 Possible causes and effects of dissatisfaction with services

There are numerous writings on non-payment of local government services and their consequences. Among the reasons for non-payment is the inability to pay due to high unemployment and low income levels. In this case, the average household income, which was inclusive of respondents' own income, was the same as individual income at R1 500, with the majority (30.5%) of households earning between R500 and R750. Such households are advised to apply for free basic services to the municipality as indigent. Other writings, however, suggest historical non-payment to be a cohesive and collective behaviour (Hoosen, 1999, and Moss and Obery, 1987). This research reveals the following factors about payment and non-payment perceptions:

Table 30: Agreement and disagreement with service payment and delivery statements (N=200)

Statement	Strongly disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neither N (%)	Agree N (%)	Strongly agree N (%)	Don't know N (%)
I am not prepared to pay for municipal services	101 (50.5)	72 (36)	1 (0.5)	9 (4.5)	17 (8.5)	-
I am too poor to pay for municipal services	17 (8.5)	53 (26.5)	6 (3)	50 (25)	73 (36.5)	1 (0.5)
Where people do not pay, nothing happens to them	7 (3.5)	30 (15)	3 (1.5)	49 (24.5)	44 (22)	67 (33.5)
Government has promised us free services	1 (0.5)	7 (3.5)	4 (2)	60 (30.3)	97 (49)	29 (14.6)
Everyone should pay for his service consumption irrespective of poverty level	13 (6.5)	29 (14.6)	8 (4)	96 (48.2)	46 (23.1)	7 (3.5)
Government should not render free services to all	64 (32)	87 (43.5)	5 (2.5)	13 (6.5)	8 (4)	23 (11.5)
A standard fee on services should be levied to all people	5 (2.5)	9 (4.5)	3 (1.5)	66 (33)	113 (56.5)	4 (2)
Only the rich should pay municipal services	45 (22.5)	67 (33.5)	5 (2.5)	14 (7)	32 (16)	37 (18.5)

Although the majority of respondents (86.5%) were prepared to pay for their services, many saw themselves as poor (61.5%). More than two-thirds (79.3%) expected free services as promised by government, 75.5% believed government should render free services and 89.5% preferred a standard fee for services for all people. There was also no significance difference between the non-income-earning households, the single-person income earner in a household and households where there was more than one income earner regarding their opinions of whether or not to pay for municipal services.

Trends analysis by the well-off and worse-off townships of the statements reflected in the table above reveals opposing trends and some marginal differences between the two groups only in two statements. The trend reveals an expectation of free services and an expectation that government should render free services to all by the worse-off townships.

Table 31: Trend test on agreement or disagreement with payment and non-payment statements

Statement	Townships	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Total respondents N (%)	Prob
Government has promised us free services	Well-off	75	50	47.13	82 (48.52)	0.1395
	Worse-off	25	50	52.87	87 (51.48)	
Government should not render free services to all	Well-off	46.36	60	66.67	87 (49.15)	0.0717
	Worse-off	53.64	40	33.33	90 (50.85)	

Free service delivery expectations reflected in the table above were also confirmed in focus groups, where it became evident that participants were highly dissatisfied with unmet service delivery expectations that were raised by politicians during the election campaigns. *“...They should better those services. It is every simple, you do what you said you will do and come back to the people to ask, ‘are you happy, are you satisfied?’ Yes or no? They promise us streets but go and look. The old government made this road here, up to today, nothing has happened to it. They tell us we will plan, after elections they get R4 billion, they come and give you the figures but they don’t do anything. The government comes after 5 years...” “...We have paid R200 billion in service and tax and some people are giving business to their brothers-in-law. They only go to government to enrich themselves. We have now seen it; most people who go into political parties are just enriching themselves, not to work for you and me. Forget about it. Never, it is like in the taxi industry, the driver does not wait to be paid by his boss; he steals R20 every day for the whole month...”*

(Focus groups 1 and 2)

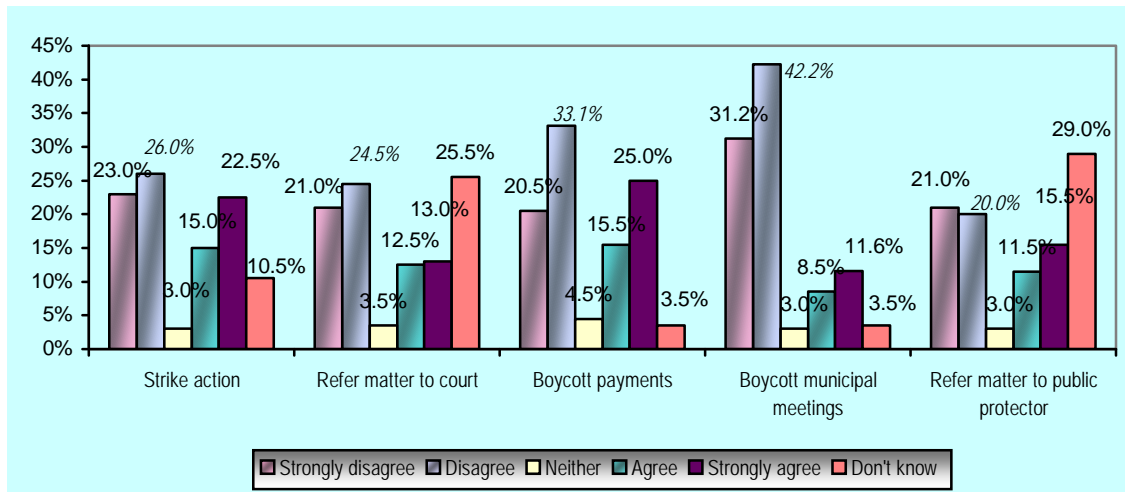


Figure 11: Action taken to express dissatisfaction with the municipality
(N=200)

The possible actions that may result from dissatisfaction with the municipal actions that relate to service delivery yield significant differences between the townships Chiawelo, Naledi, Diepkloof, Meadowlands and Dube at the Pearson chi square of 0.001. Whereas the first four townships all view demonstrative actions against the municipality as unnecessary, Dube residents deem actions like strikes, referral of matters to courts, boycotts of service payments and meetings or sending matters to the public protector necessary in order to register dissatisfaction.

Table 32: Action taken to express dissatisfaction with municipal actions

	Chiawelo		Naledi		Dube		Diepkloof		Meadowlands		P-Value
	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	
Strike action	2 (1%)	17 (8.5)	4 (2)	16 (8)	21 (10.5)	2 (1)	17 (8.5)	2 (1)	20 (10)	3 (2)	0.0001
Refer matter to the courts	3 (1.5)	9 (4.5)	---	---	16 (8)	7 (3.5)	17 (8.5)	2 (1)	16 (8)	5 (2.5)	0.0001
Boycott payment of services	4 (2)	16 (8)	---	---	18 (9)	6 (3)	18 (9)	5 (2.5)	17 (8.5)	6 (3.5)	0.0001
Boycott municipal meetings	---	---	14 (7)	8 (4)	21 (10.5)	3 (1.5)	22 (11)	1 (0.5)	23 (11.5)	1 (0.5)	0.0001
Refer matters to public protector	---	---	4 (2)	7 (3.5)	14 (7)	8 (4)	17 (8.5)	3 (1.5)	16 (8)	5 (2.5)	0.0001

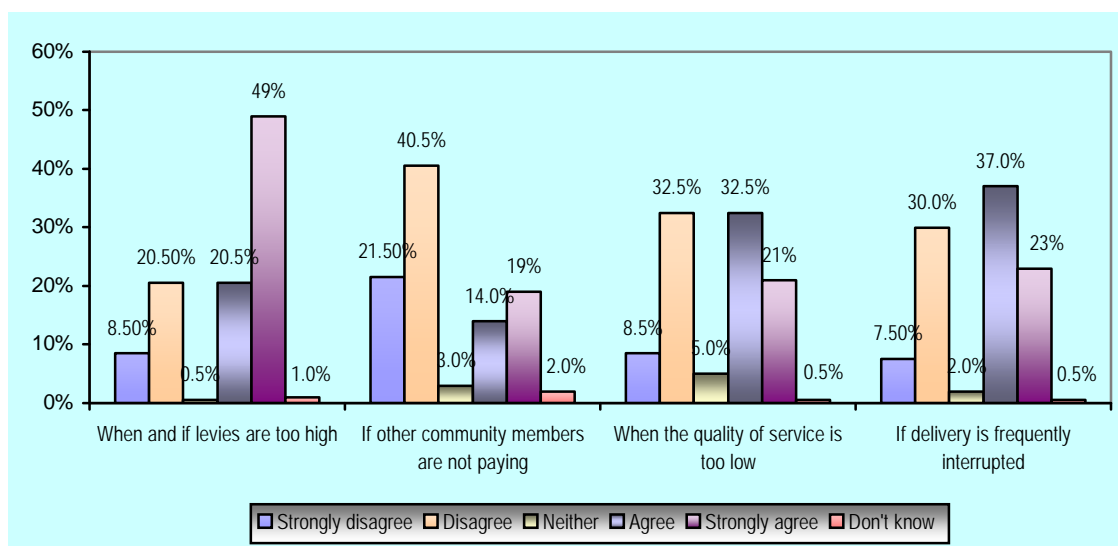


Figure 12: Conditions under which residents are not prepared to pay for municipal services (N=200)

Pricing of the municipal services is the biggest determinant for non-payment behaviour of 69.5% of respondents. The second most important determinant of non-payment behaviour of 60% of respondents is the lack of efficiency in delivery, represented by frequency of interruption of service delivery.

Table 33: Trend analysis of conditions under which residents are not prepared to pay municipal services

Statement	Townships	Won't pay (%)	Neither (%)	Will pay (%)	Total respondents N (%)	Prob
When and if the levies are too high	Well-off	51.72	100	48.92	99 (50)	0.6968
	Worse-off	48.28	-	51.08	99 (50)	
If other community members are not paying	Well-off	51.61	83.33	45.45	99 (50.51)	0.4753
	Worse-off	48.39	16.67	54.55	97 (49.49)	
When the quality of services rendered is too low	Well-off	42.68	80	53.27	100 (50.25)	0.0548
	Worse-off	57.32	20	46.73	99 (49.75)	
If delivery is frequently interrupted	Well-off	46.67	50	52.50	100 (50.25)	0.4292
	Worse-off	53.33	50	47.50	99 (49.75)	

The general impression from this section is that the well-off townships are concerned with municipal services pricing and the worse-off ones are concerned with the quality and efficiency in delivery. The section reveals very positive household perceptions about municipal delivery of the basic household services after the 2000 local government elections. Comparisons of perceptions between the well-off and worse-off townships reveal a lack of responsiveness of the municipality to community needs by the well-off townships, whereas the worse-off townships are discontent with municipal consultations and response to feedback and queries. Non-assessment of household affordability to pay by the municipality, which is also linked to a household's lack of information on the indigent policy, has led to dissatisfaction with service charges and charge variations between

households. While households express the general willingness to pay for municipal services, many see themselves as poor and the worse-off townships expect delivery of the promised free services.

5.7 Conclusion

It can be concluded from the findings of this chapter that the ability to pay for municipal services by the researched community is very low. More than two-thirds of the households are unemployed and the average household incomes are below R1 500 for nearly two-thirds of all sample households. To the contrary, more than half of all households seem to be well-off as measured by possessions of the LSM utilities such as ownership of refrigerators, televisions, heaters and electric stoves, etc., which suggest higher electricity consumption. Interestingly, for the Soweto townships, electricity is the only basic service that is offered by a utility outside the city of Johannesburg's control and that is Eskom. The well-off townships, however, perceive the basic municipal services to be unaffordable compared to the worse-off townships. Although communities perceive the basic municipal services to be the most important services for their households, that is, water and electricity, communities also believe that the municipality should, above all things, focus more of its attention on job creation, which highlights the enormity of the unemployment problem. Nearly all households prefer provision of basic services by government rather than the private sector. There is a general poor participation rate by the sampled communities in municipal activities such as ward committees and some of the reasons for non-participation include feelings of distrust of both municipal councillors and the municipality itself as an institution, although the highest levels of distrust prevail among the well-off townships. There is average satisfaction with the municipal provision of basic services, mainly water, sewerage and refuse removal, although the highest levels of satisfaction are among the worse-off townships. Although the well-off townships are dissatisfied with

service provision, they are satisfied with accessibility, consultation and communications between them and the municipality. Areas of concern and dissatisfaction by the worse-off townships include the perceived non-fulfilment of the free basic service provision, and perpetual dissatisfaction may lead to boycotting of payments, followed by possible strike action.

Chapter Six

SERVICE PROVIDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

6.1 Introduction

The chapter presents findings from interviews with the service providers, that is, both the municipal services managers and councillors. The aim of the chapter is to provide a discussion that reflects on methods that the municipality uses in service identification, provision and its perception of the application and enforcement of quality management standards, including perceptions of the payment problems. Theory suggests that it is important that the identified questions (cf. chapter two) be looked at from the perspectives of both the municipal councillors and services managers/administrators. The service provision and payment section explores the possible entitlement culture and how it can be overcome. The internal municipal politics that sometimes cloud administrative activities, often with devastating effects, like staff retrenchments and infighting between municipal managers and mayors, its causes and effects to service delivery is explored. Proxy municipalities where the political versus the administrative portfolio problems and community proactiveness in engaging municipalities had positive spin-offs on service delivery are discussed.

Systematically throughout this chapter, the proxy interviews from the Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal municipalities are supported or even refuted by findings from the supplementary interviews on Soweto. The supplementary interviews were held with persons knowledgeable about service provision between 2002 and 2005 in Soweto (cf. 4.2.4.4).

Box 10: Service provider data presentation

Interview materials used in this chapter were obtained from three service managers in Johannesburg. Since councillors would not be interviewed in Soweto, the perceptions of councillors from Mpumalanga have been used as a proxy. Since the perceptions relate to the countrywide systems of local government, perceptual data is relevant in the case of Soweto.

6.2 Method of service identification and prioritisation

Discussions with the CMU revealed addressing of backlogs as the main service identification methodology. Although community structures such as ward committees have a significant role to play in services identification and prioritisation, the functionality of these institutions throughout the country is in question. Supplementary interviews with Project Consolidate officials revealed that service prioritisation through the ward committees may forever be deemed ineffective as individual ward committee priorities differ from municipal-wide priorities. *“...there are conditions where there are conflict of priorities of the ward and those of council. When you prioritise as a ward you are thinking about yourself alone and the council prioritises when it thinks about the entire municipality. This is a natural conflict and the municipality will often prevail for political reasons. That is why we always have politics of water delivery and prepaid services from lobby groups and opposition parties...”*

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

6.2.1 Need to address service delivery backlog

The city of Johannesburg, according to the CMU, is confronted with a huge service delivery backlog, which was carried over from the various TMLCs that now make up the city of Johannesburg. The municipality's main aim is therefore to reduce the backlog and at the same time address new demands,

although the accumulated municipal debt makes it difficult to achieve this objective. *“...It takes a long time to get things right. I think service levels have deteriorated a little bit in general. This happens in all transitional phases of service delivery in all cities, service levels goes down before they pick up because you had a lot of people moving into the city and you also get a level of VIPs moving out of the townships and therefore a growing demand and a shrinking revenue base at the same time. We have more waterborne sewerage connections, an upward shift from communal taps to water taps inside the stands although the density of people and number of households has also increased throughout the city. We have achieved a lot as far as service delivery is concerned in actual numbers but not as much as we would like...”*

(Individual interview, CMU, JW)

Supplementary interviews confirmed findings from CMU and JW that the amalgamation of the various TMLCs had an impact on service delivery efficiency in the short to medium term. *“...Perhaps in the medium to long term, regions need to be given more powers to handle service activities. You see, when you integrate the institutions you need to take control. Before integration, they all made their decisions, which was quicker and now everything is congested in Braamfontein. Centralisation was necessary because you need to deal with cross-subsidisation of poorer regions. Now people in Midrand feel a bit deprived because things take longer than before, but at the same time, Soweto is getting a better deal because it is highly subsidised by other regions. There is bound to be frustrations from those municipalities or regions that functioned well and are now realising service quality lowering. As institutions mature over time you will realise a need for decentralisation once more. It is the same throughout the country; districts too are given water distribution powers to cater for cross-subsidisation of local municipalities...”*

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

While numerous families have received title deeds of their old 'matchbox houses', many more are still waiting and most receive title deeds directly in new housing developments. Besides the RDP houses, other new housing developments are built by the section 21 companies that have development agreements with the municipality. Families have to make arrangements for finances with the banking institutions to finance their house bonds.¹²

Although families who still await allocation of their title deeds are unhappy at being treated as title deed holders, the CMU believes that households need to be educated in their responsibilities as homeowners and about the backlog involved in addressing housing allocation. *"...I think that communities need to know that as soon as you get title deeds, the houses belong to you and like any owner, they assume all the responsibility of the property including fixing broken windows, etc. Even if you were renting a flat, you need to fix broken windows, you can't run to the owner every time and tell him that I have broken a window, it is your duty. I do not know how the arrangements were like during the previous government, but I doubt that they would fix broken windows and doors, it encourages a tendency of dependency and low level of responsibility..."*

(Individual interview, CMU)

6.2.2 Need to improve the revenue management systems

From interviews with Project Consolidate officials, the general municipal management systems and not revenue systems per se are seen to be in question for most municipalities. Johannesburg, however, is seen to be highly progressive in its management systems. *"...the problem often is not money or the lack of it, but wishing that problems will go away and not talk about*

¹² The discussion was presented on the city of Johannesburg website by Sindane, Lucky – 'City hands over title deeds in Soweto', Johannesburg News Agency. Available at: http://www.joburg.org.za/2004/april/april15_deeds.stm

them. Johannesburg has highly qualified officials and management rarely interferes with administrative management, which direct opposite of many other municipalities. The main problem is infrastructure management and non-upgrading of these. The chief financial officer in Johannesburg is one of the best in the country, so is the municipal manager. They both have been there for some time now and understand the institution and its problems...

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

According to the interviews with the CMU, the quantity and quality of service rendering is directly related to the finances in municipal coffers. All the South African municipalities were reported in September of 2002 to be highly indebted, which impacted on their ability to deliver on growing service requirements. The city of Johannesburg thus introduced 'innovative measures' in tackling the debt problem by installing prepaid meters, which also led to anti-privatisation demonstrations. Without community knowledge of the indigent by-laws, many households who qualify did not apply and many of them had their services cut off. The CMU argues that the municipality cares for all community members, rich and poor, and that the households that cannot afford their monthly service charges should make payment arrangements with the municipality. *"...If people cannot afford to pay off their debts, they can come into the municipality to make arrangements. I think the problem at this stage is that it is still difficult for the city to determine the ability and inability to pay by residents..."*

(Individual interview: CMU)

Supplementary interviews refute suggestions that service provision is directly related to the availability of municipal finances. The political will instead, as well as expertise of municipal officials, is perceived to be the main determinant of service delivery. *"...It is not only financial capability that delivers basic goods, cost is therefore not the only factor but the political aspirations of the people need to be addressed, which is why the national*

government has to transfer funds to municipalities. Provinces too do not rely on their own fiscal capacity. You have to maximise your fiscal but where indigents are 100% you can't expect financial viability. But even in cases where you are getting transfers from national government, you are still required to show proper management and the problems with most of our municipalities are about poor financial management and not lack of funds..."

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

Another important problem confronting the city of Johannesburg is its dysfunctional billing system, which has received enormous criticism even from the ANC for inefficient revenue collection and therefore hampered service delivery. Over time, the billing system has cost the city billions of rands in revenue as residents, including those who reside in affluent suburbs, continue to receive incorrectly estimated service charges, either overbilled or underbilled for essential services such as water. Interviews with the CMU revealed that the municipality is taking action towards solving this problem. *"...In a normal sense, people are billed according to how much they have consumed and where there are no meters in place, it is problematic to bill people. Where there are no meters, often the area average is used in billing on estimates those households that have no meters. The reason why we are putting meters everywhere is to avoid this problem; otherwise, the municipal charges are based on meter readings..."*

(Individual interview, CMU)

Supplementary interviews revealed that the above challenges are not only peculiar to Johannesburg. The only difference between these municipalities is how they handle publicity and criticism and how open they are about the state of municipal affairs. *"...the challenges of municipalities are more or less the same. All municipalities have similar challenges but one of the reasons that Johannesburg is used often as an example is that it often comes out with its problems. In 2002 they ran a road show to let people what their problems*

are – water problems, meter reading, data cleansing and billing systems among others. By doing so, they get support from financial and other institutions, which differentiate it from other municipalities...”

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

Despite the installation of prepaid meters and options for indigent applications, service charges are reported to be highly unreasonable and families receive basic free water at lower consumption levels. Although all the three utilities in the city of Johannesburg are providing services directly to the households, the municipality is paying these utilities and is responsible for collecting service charges. Standard service tariffs for water and electricity are made public on the city of Johannesburg’s Internet website and through the service centres. Such rates as at June 2004 were:

Table 34: City of Johannesburg municipal service tariffs

Water	Charges	Refuse	Charges
Informal settlements	Free	Informal settlements	R5,00 per month
First 6 000 litres	Free	Erf up to 300 m ²	R21,60 per month
7-10 000 litres	R3,30 per kl	301-1 000 m ²	R38,20 per month
11-15 000 litres	R4,40 per kl	1 001-2 000 m ²	R53,35 per month
16-20 000 litres	R5,50 per kl	Greater than 2 000 m ²	R70,65 per month
20-40 000 litres	R6,60 per kl	Flats/townhouses	R38,20 per month
More than 40 000 litres	R7,80 per kl	Garden refuse (contained)	R150,00 per cubic meter maximum
Institutions	R5,72 per kl	Builder refuse (contained)	R150,00 per cubic meter maximum
<i>Non-domestic</i>	R7,80 per kl		

Source: City of Johannesburg (2003)

A case study discussion with the Speaker of the Emalahleni municipality on ward participatory approaches and community inducement of payment for services revealed a positive initiative that overcame the municipal debt and created a self-sufficient municipality with the highest services payment system in the country.

...This happened between the years 1999 and 2000 at the area that covers Witbank. Before 2000 we had a summit and at that time I was the director of the local municipality. I was asked to convey a meeting of all citizens on the electricity cut-offs and to address the payment of services problems. Many people attended, including the local business. The city and townships were in a state of decay. The garbage trucks in use were bought in the 1970s and were breaking down daily. Many houses did not have electricity and water reading meters.

We agreed that there will be a committee to report to council, although our work was partially interrupted by the municipal 2000 elections. We firstly established a committee, a section 12 notice. We resolved to write letters to the ward committees and organise communities and had strategic workshops facilitated by Idasa. We got to understand that three-quarters of the electricity and water meters did not work. We were using various debt collection policies from the previous transitional local councils. Only two out of ten of all the households were paying for services uninterruptedly for 12 months. After we had a cut-off committee – we studied if it was only the people who were not paying whose electricity was cut-off.

We reached a new agreement with the municipal council that if people were unable to pay, they should approach the council or councillors to get registered under our indigent policy. All the people who were not registered and at the same time not paying, would be treated as defaulters and were to receive added penalties to the cut-offs. Communities were told that not a single household will be left out in this new process. Councillors asked for print outs from the databases of who will be cut-off and to check the level of payments within their wards. Between 2001 and 2002 we realised an improved payment from 20% to 85%. In 2001 we held a national record of payments in the historically black townships of 80% payments and 87% payment in our historically white areas. We have now for the first time in the history of

our municipality reached new payment levels of 90%. Now we have replaced all our old garbage trucks, we bought new trucks and we don't have problems of truck breakdowns any more. The streets are thus clean at all times and the street lights are on. Our huge debt is reversed and we are realising surplus.

We have also realised that we had to engage ward committees that we required a municipal wide policy that people know and that is municipal wide communication policy. Because of this engagement with other organs of civil society, we have improved payment of services through the participation of all the citizens. Before January of this year (2004), we had outreach programme. The mayor went to the communities to discuss budgets, although people continued to raise other problems. We see now that if we needed to improve and get the support, ideas should come from the communities. Citizen participation is necessary and must be taken into consideration. Hence the non-payment of series is a thing of the past in our municipality...

(Municipal speaker: Emalahleni municipality)

6.2.3 Establishment of service level agreement contracts

Central to the service delivery mechanisms are the contractual agreements into which the municipality enters with the service utilities. The municipality has to ensure that the delivery of services by utilities is fair, equitable, transparent, cost-effective and competitive, etc. To ensure competitiveness of the utilities, the CMU is in the process of setting up and refining service level agreements that pinpoint delivery targets and the performance monitoring processes. The utilities prepare annual business plans, which outline the KPIs. The CMU then evaluates the company's performance against the agreed KPIs. The CMU, however, expressed concerns over the backlog in terms of compiling the accurate KPIs and their implementation, which is an enormous task. Part of the evaluation will also include customer complaints and queries since the CMU will be able to track these from the call connect

service. According to the interviews with both the CMU and utilities, these agreements should ideally spell out the quantity and quality of services to be delivered. The CMU, which is responsible for developing these agreements and targets, defines the task as challenging. *“...There are over 500 service performance indicators that we have to develop and perfect for monitoring and evaluation. Putting these targets in place for each utility is not a simple task and it takes too long to finalise...”* *“...Yes, of course targets were set although I have not been with the city long enough to know if they are being realised. Performance contracts between the city and the utilities and trying to implement or set penalties where there is non-delivery. The biggest problem is measuring targets and we are in the process of putting targets in place. It takes very long time to have established target measures that can be used consistently at all times because they should be triangulated to obtain feedback from all the directions – from the service deliverer like JW, from the councillors, administrators in departments and from the communities. This will enable detecting where the problems lie and if all the concerned stakeholders are happy or concerned with any aspects of service delivery...”*

(Individual interviews, CMU, JW and Pikitup)

In the mean time, it is argued that service customers should call the responsible utilities for their areas and make alternative arrangements if they will not be in their households on specified dates when the service meters are being read.¹³ Communities are also given the dates on which meters will be read in all the municipal wards to overcome estimation problems. *“...The utilities are not operating in all the areas yet, the City Power specifically. They are in charge of the northern suburbs and Eskom is still in charge of Soweto. The important move will be to have uniformity in all the service delivery through a single supplier to overcome the disparities in costs, billing systems and different service delivery levels...”*

¹³ Sindane, Lucky ‘Meter readers make a date with Joburg’, 9 July 2004. Available at: http://www.joburg.org.za/2004/july/july9_meter.stm

(Individual interview, CMU)

6.2.4 Privatisation and its effect on delivery

According to the CMU, the decision by the city of Johannesburg to corporatise municipal services is not only legal, but strategic as well, informed by section 82 of the Systems Act. This semi-privatisation enables the municipality to objectively police service delivery. The CMU pleads for the distinction of privatisation from corporatisation, since the city of Johannesburg continues to have total control of the utilities and the setting of service tariffs in terms of section 83(a) of the Systems Act. *“...Unlike conventional businesses, the utilities remain public services, limited by such socio-economic and developmental objectives as, for example, free water and electricity for the poor. There is a difficult balance between financial performance, public duty and social responsibility...”*¹⁴. Whether the corporatisation-privatisation distinction is understood by the APF and communities is a different question. The disconnection of poor people’s electricity, also referred to as ‘brownouts’, caused by incorrect or inflated billing seems to be a consequence of privatisation. Disconnections continue to be a cause of misery for thousands of black working and unemployed families in Soweto.¹⁵ Interviews with the service providers revealed that the decision on prepaid meters was made by the municipal council and not utilities. *“...The decision to put prepaid meters lies with the municipal council. Utilities cannot just go and put these meters without the knowledge of the City Council, that cannot happen. These decisions are taken to avoid accumulation of huge city debts like the one we had in 1999. I know that people don’t like it but often it is those who cannot afford to pay and they should apply through the municipality as indigent*

¹⁴ The Contract Management Unit (CMU). Available at: http://www.joburg.org.za/cmu/cmu_challenges.stm

¹⁵ Paley, Dawn (2003) discusses the consequences of only the poor having prepaid water meters in Soweto. Available at: <http://www.alternatives.ca/print975.html>

because these things are meant for people who can afford to pay, people who are earning income...”

(Individual interview, CMU, JW)

The city of Johannesburg has chosen the corporatisation method for efficiency and effectiveness reasons in service delivery. Although privatisation and corporatisation are not synonymous to the municipal administration, Soweto residents are standing up against the first phase of a plan to install prepaid water meters by JW because they believe that prepaid meters stop all water supplies unless water is paid for in advance. The Freedom of Expression Institute has also taken JW to court in a bid to gain access to information about the plan to install prepaid water meters in Soweto. The Institute researcher, Harvey (cf. chapter three) said that there is no adequate research in place to assess the possible effects of the system in low-income and high-unemployment areas. It is believed, however, that prepaid services in such conditions could increase hardship, ill health and poverty. The APF also issued a statement reflecting this concern, "We are opposed to the ANC government's GEAR policy (neo-liberal economic policy) that allows our water to be owned and run by private companies".¹⁶ *“...There is no difference, no effect on service delivery brought about by the privatisation process. Say Johannesburg Water – they take orders from the municipality. The politicians still take decisions on how much of a service should be delivered. The costs or charges are decided by the municipal council and not by the utilities themselves. I know that the Joburg Water sits on the Water Forum with councillors to discuss delivery mechanisms and problems thereof...”*

(Individual interview, CMU, JW)

From supplementary interviews, Project Consolidate officials acknowledge that corporatisation of services in the city of Johannesburg, compounded by

¹⁶ 'South Africa: Campaign against pre-paid meters intensifies', 24 September 2003. Available at: <http://www.irc.nl/content/view/full/4140> (June 2004)

the amalgamation of various municipalities, has led to huge inefficiencies. It is hoped, however, that these will be overcome in the medium to long term. *“...The corporatisation model is not 100% bad but it needs clear reporting structures. One may argue why they did not create specialised departments rather than ‘independent’ entities? It was not well conceptualised who will do the meter reading. Currently the city has nine database systems running in parallel of one another. The ultimate would be to have a single database that City Power, JW, Pikitup and all other entities utilises...”*

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

6.2.5 Problems associated with current service delivery models

Discussions with Mr Mohammed revealed that there is a lack of direct contact between communities and the regional administrative centres, which are responsible for services delivery. The lack of provision for administrative centres to communicate directly with ward committees renders ward activities inefficient and at the same time overwhelms the office of the municipal manager and speaker with information from wards.¹⁷ The problems, which are caused by the direct reporting of ward committees to the speaker and the municipal manager, even on urgent service delivery matters, result in huge service delivery backlogs. This indecision and shifting and centralising of responsibility are deemed unnecessary and can easily be curtailed by delegating some service delivery responsibilities to the regional services centres and ward committees, which is suggested in the recommendations chapter.

Challenges raised by Mr Mohammed were also echoed in the supplementary interviews. Accordingly, community participation is seen as lacking and totally absent from wards and regional services centres, respectively. Where

¹⁷ Discussions held at Nelspruit government office between the researcher and the MEC during August 2003 while conducting interviews with selected Mpumalanga municipalities on roles and responsibilities of government officials vis-à-vis councillors.

ward committees are established, they are also seen to lack understanding of their roles and responsibilities “...*the model we have should start at ward level. In Johannesburg we have 100% wards but their functionality is in question for a number of reasons. There are party political conflicts at play in the ward committees although these are non political forums; there are also conflicts because some members see these institutions as a forum for deriving financial incentives. There are numerous examples of internal infighting. People who participate in ward committees complain of lack of funding. Often it is the lack of political will and not unavailability of funds. There is no proper funding model for the ward committees. Funding policies are being developed by DPLG as we speak and proper model for the administration of funds is also being worked on. Everything evolves around the ward councillor and there are disparities throughout all municipalities...*”

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

This section reveals that there are no clearly defined municipal methods of service identification and delivery other than addressing the delivery backlog that was carried over from the various TLCs. In order to meet new service delivery expectations a proactive strategy that addresses service charges collection and finalisation of service level contracts with utilities will be required. Without these contracts, service performance and community satisfaction cannot easily be assessed.

6.3 Municipal service provision and the payment question

6.3.1 Building a citizenship rather than an entitlement culture

Recent literature on non-payment and participation in municipal activities is seen as centred on the community’s perceptions of exclusion or victims of the state. In order to build citizenship participatory governance within the municipalities that goes beyond political elections, it is important to

transcend these perceptions (cf. chapter three). The commercialisation and cost recovery of core services at the expense of greater public participation is seen to have side effects, creating passive customers who relate to the municipality only in terms of their problems. The municipality's narrow definition of efficiency as a cost recovery principle therefore commodifies the relationship between the state and the service users and is undesirable. *"...I think the municipality has to start treating people like customers and tell them that we will relate to you only if you pay for your services. Building that kind of relationship is important because with it comes the responsibility from the citizens, to pay for the services that they use, just like they relate to a private business..."*

(Individual interview, CMU)

Non-participation by communities in monitoring their elected representatives is cited to be a result of possible uninterest and communities are seen to be active when they have compelling interests, and specifically when they have service delivery problems.¹⁸ In the interim, however, the municipality believes that through the regional centres, communities are able to express their problems, which are immediately picked up by the utilities and the CMU. *"...There are customer complaints centres now in the regional centres. It takes long for people to recognise institutional setups and to have a good level of trust. These centres have been there now only for a few years and they are already helpful, people are phoning in daily and when they realise that their complaints are seriously tackled, they will start trusting this institution..."*

(Individual interview, CMU)

¹⁸ Terrance Jacobs – case study presentation at an IDASA workshop on 10 years of democracy: Lessons from the field, 15 June 2004. Ouraadsal-Pretoria.

6.3.2 Politics vis-à-vis administrative service management issues

In the supplementary interviews, service provision experts for Soweto agreed that municipal challenges throughout the country are generally the same and had the following to say about the applicability of findings from other provinces to Soweto: *"... Yes, many challenges of local government such as the functionality of wards, service delivery and debt and revenue collection are generally the same throughout the country."* The city of Johannesburg, however, is perceived to have the required service delivery expertise, in partnership with crucial support institutions, more mature in their processes of handling finances, criticism and service delivery matters than the smaller and rural municipalities.

Interviews with municipal councillors and senior administrative officials at Govan Mbeki local municipality suggest that efficiency in service delivery is dependent on, among other things, clearly defined roles and responsibilities of joint political-administrative municipal committees. Not so well defined roles, responsibilities and process maps for reporting community concerns and executing council resolutions lead to a dysfunctional municipal management structure. Supplementary interviews with Project Consolidate officials echoed similar sentiments. The problem is perceived to be with the new generation of managers who are not experienced. The problem is also compounded by councillors who do not understand their responsibilities and therefore constantly intervene in administrative processes. These problems are cited to be highly prevalent in many South African municipalities but to a lesser extent in Johannesburg. *"... We have a problem with new generation of managers who are not 100% sure of what they are doing. Biggest problem is the division of powers between officials and councillors. In practice, councillors want to run day-to-day activities of a municipality although it is different in Johannesburg. Councillors were involved in procurement until now that the new Municipal Finance Management has made forbidden them from administrative matters. Officials do their obligations and only report to*

council. Many professionals are unhappy because they can't easily influence the processes and therefore do not derive financial benefits out of the system..."

(Supplementary telephone interviews)

Some of the findings from the proxy municipalities are summarised in the table below.

Table 35: Challenges facing municipal administrative and political committees	
<i>Execution of resolutions</i>	<p>A lack of understanding of politicians' roles in service delivery and the role of the Portfolio Committees is perceived to have an effect on the implementation of council resolutions by the operational departments. <i>"...Departments are supposed to execute resolutions passed on by the Portfolio Committees from the municipal council to avoid any confrontations. There is also frustration on the part of officials because they feel that they have to explain themselves at all times to the politicians although they do not report directly to politicians..."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Govan Mbeki Snr Admin)</p>
<i>Portfolio Committee role</i>	<p>The dominant role of the majority party in the municipality is perceived to have a bias effect on the execution of municipal resolutions and service delivery in general. <i>"...Because Portfolio Committees are largely ANC, they often execute the requirements of the ANC and not necessarily listen to the people or concerns from other minority parties..."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Govan Mbeki councillors)</p>
<i>Policy guidelines</i>	<p>The functions of the political committees are largely undefined. The lack of by-laws that define roles and responsibilities of especially full-time councillors and the</p>

unavailability of process maps that guide decision-making processes are perceived as serious problems.¹⁹ *“...Other challenges include, getting all the municipal policies and by-laws approved in line with the legislations. We need to review our current policies, the ones we have are very old from the previous racially divided municipalities...”*

(Govan Mbeki councillors and Snr Admin)

Communication

On the one hand, councillors through the Portfolio Committees are seen to exert a lot of delivery pressure on departments and on the other hand, they are seen to have little understanding of how departments function. *“...The major problem is that councillors do not understand the difficulties that we are experiencing. There are no funds. Our communication mechanisms are not functioning well and information is not well disseminated...”* *“...Communication systems are not integrated and understood, it leads to longer time for formal appointments to take place in the departments. Some departments are understaffed and some of the employees are not well skilled...”*

(Govan Mbeki Snr Admin)

Resources

Finance is often the biggest impediment to the execution of municipal plans and council resolutions, and therefore affects the overall municipal performance. *“...There is a big financial challenge. Lack of funds is always raised when resolutions are not undertaken...”* *“...The major challenge facing departments and Portfolio Committees is that there is enormous amount of unemployment in the municipality which leads to poor payment of services and therefore not much funds for the municipality...”*

(Govan Mbeki councillors and Snr Admin)

Relationships

Although the prevalence of good relations between councillors and administrative staff is perceived to be central to good service delivery, relations are poor due to, among other

¹⁹ The municipality must define the specific role and responsibility of “each political structure and political office bearer of the municipality and of the municipal manager” (section 53(1) of the Municipal Systems Act).

things, a lack of constant communication and understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. *"...Every year there is a joint bosberaad between full-time councillors and HoDs to improve relationships. The relationship is always good if you agree with whatever councillors tell you. But often, much interference from politicians who try to give directive to the administrative staff..." "...Not very good because of past administrative problems and accusations especially because head of departments seem to look down on councillors and only talk to them at meetings unless forced by circumstances..." "...The situation is not ideal, but adequate..." "...PR councillors do not have a lot of contact with staff..."*

(Govan Mbeki councillors and Snr Admin)

6.3.3 Perceptions of the internal municipal service delivery systems

Both the municipal councillors and senior administrators raised related issues of importance regarding the kind of image that the municipality projects to the community. Among the factors that shape community perceptions of the municipal image are the attitudes of municipal staff and the public relations or communication of municipal decisions and actions.

Table 36: Factors hindering service delivery and staff performance

<i>Customer relations</i>	<p>There is a belief that administrative staff need to be familiarised with the Batho Pele²⁰ principles to foster amongst them a culture of good customer relations since poor relations often adversely inform poor perceptions of communities about the municipality.²¹ <i>"...our frontline staff does not treat people well and they need training, especially on Batho Pele principles..."</i></p> <p>(Govan Mbeki Snr Admin)</p>
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²⁰ Batho Pele ("people first") is a good customer relations policy presented to the public by the National Department of Public Services.

²¹ Schedule 2 to the Municipal Systems Act also outlines a Code of Conduct for Municipal Staff Members which includes fostering "a culture of commitment to serving the public and a collective sense of responsibility for performance...".

<p><i>Institutional culture</i></p>	<p>Other concerns by both councillors and administrators are about the projected municipal image. Both are concerned that communications need to be effective and proactive at all times and that frontline staff in direct contact with the community members should be given customer relations training. <i>“...There is lack of communication on certain matters by HoDs, especially electricity cut-offs that are done in wrong areas or not communicated to the communities concerned...”</i>²² <i>“...Staff working directly with clients should improve their communication skills...”</i></p> <p>(Interviews, councillors and Snr Admin)</p> <p>Almost all South African municipalities came into being through the merger of numerous TLCs. Since staff members from these various municipalities have different cultures and norms that ultimately affect the quality of work and dedication etc., interviewees preferred that a systematic culture harmonisation process be introduced. <i>“...The culture is different in the new municipality and the staff has to cope. In the long run, we need a single municipal culture. People have to be introduced to what is the ideal here in this municipality regarding work ethics, treatment of clients, etc...”</i></p> <p>(Govan Mbeki Snr Admin)</p>
<p><i>Resources</i></p>	<p>Due to the lack of service charges collection and other primary resources like municipal human resources, numerous work activities are not easy to execute. Some councillors argue that the municipality should be transparent and make this kind of information public to enable communities to hold informed perceptions about the municipal ineffectiveness and effectiveness in service delivery. <i>“...There is lack of resources, e.g. cars, personnel and overalls and the problem seem to be financial in</i></p>

²² In the Johannesburg Unicity, such communication will be made either by regional services centres or the utilities rather than by the departmental heads, whereas at Emalahleni and Govan Mbeki, service delivery responsibility lies with the departments.

nature. Some employees are therefore demoralised and their ability to do work is affected. Addressing the problem of resource shortages, e.g. stationery, computers will affect the attitude change by municipal workers and therefore overcome a negative work performance...” “...There is a big backlog that hinders the delivery and will remain for a few years. In the mean time, communities should have a true reflection of the problems that we encounter here. Let them know how many staff we run short of and how much money in order to deliver certain goods, that way, they can't easily blame...”

(Govan Mbeki councillors and Snr Admin)

Addressing the problem of staff shortages and salary disparities that were inherited from the previous transitional municipalities is perceived primary in order to effect employee satisfaction. *“...There is a slight problem in our municipality, we have completed placements, but there is still staff shortage in some departments and most of the staff members are not happy because of low wages. 98% of the appointments are not suitable. This is because politicians play a big role in the appointments process...”*

(Govan Mbeki Snr Admin)

***Service
delivery
levels***

Various factors affecting service delivery levels are fostered by different departmental requirements such as staff competency, training requirements and effectiveness of management systems. *“...Staff seems to be competent; service delivery can definitely be improved. It is about systems and management including the IT systems. We need to work on practical systems. The process has however started with the head of HoD of Administration, Finance, Safety and security, the mayor and municipal manager...” “...In general, staff is doing their work, although there is a need for training and skills development. Some staff members require improvement of literacy levels, including councillors. ABET classes are in place, but career-pathing is being developed...”*

(Govan Mbeki Snr Admin)

The internal municipal systems for service delivery in the city of Johannesburg are perceived by Project Consolidate facilitators to be highly efficient in comparison to most municipalities, especially those interviewed in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. There is recognition, however, that although the IDP process prioritises certain services and identifies key performance indicators and that there is a need to assess these through the balanced scorecard, the assessment is often not carried out as planned for reasons that range from non-completion of key performance indicators to lack of capacity.

6.3.4 Community-led services delivery improvement case study

Discussions with Terrance Jacobs, an organiser for the Church-based Community Organisation, revealed that communities are often more enthusiastic about engaging with the municipality when they have immediate problems to resolve. Jacobs presented a case study that reflected on an effective municipal engagement initiated by a community in Emnambithi municipality in KwaZulu-Natal:

...Thank you. As an organiser, I train people to approach municipal officials with their problems from an attitude of power. If you've been an organiser for many years, especially during the struggle, you know that people get organised about what they are passionate about. We are starting from the faith base – it's the core for one wanting to influence the world.

Two years ago I received a letter from a women's group in Loskop near Drakensberg. It was handwritten and it said, 'we have heard what you do from the papers in Durban. We want you to help us too. We have many problems and most people in urban areas don't want to come to rural areas.' Leaders of this group of women included Winne Malisela. One of the biggest problems was they had no water for 10 years. We stalled, and then went to the municipality eventually a month

thereafter. We had a meeting with the municipal manager. The manager said, 'you don't have water? – I didn't know that. Someone should have told me.' The next day, a truck delivered water.

A short while later the delivery stopped again. So we arranged a meeting with the top municipal service officials. We picked up people from Loskop and travelled to Ladysmith. We arrived and we were told that the official could not meet with us. 'It is a typical response from government officials to treat organisations like ours, with a church identity, as unprofessional. This is a problem with our democracy.' The women were well trained and demanded a meeting with the official who is second in charge.

Eventually we had the meeting, with the right people. An official with all his maps and designs and statistics, laid it in front of us. He said, 'this is how municipal government works, this is our plan.' Winnie banged the table and called him 'little boy' in Zulu (he was younger). She said, 'I'm not worried about the rest of the municipality. We want to know only one thing, 'when will we get water?' He said, 'are these church people?' He expected church people to be less confrontational and less demanding.

The ladies said, 'we will call for a boycott'. This led to action – we had the chief whip on the telephone line and we asked for a meeting and explained why we had all these demands. Eventually, in December 2003, the village received communal taps. By January water stopped again. We started engaging the municipality all over again. Now the water has been turned on, and it has stayed on. The municipality came to learn that we are close allies of theirs, that if we cooperate, they look good and so do we. Now the women have won and they want to take on others issues such as drugs abuse. This has led to a different community feeling that if they organise their voice, they will be heard, regardless of structure. They define how structures should function and how government should be engaged – formally or informally...

(Terrance Jacobs: Church-based Community Organisation)

Discussions in this section show that communities feel entitled to municipal services and reversing that culture will require a customer approach to their treatment by the municipality, which was also confirmed by Nakedi (2004).²³ Interviews in Mpumalanga municipalities show that internal municipal processes are also central to the effective service delivery process by a municipality. The case study shows the developmental challenges facing municipalities, depicting the culture of no interest in participation by communities; that communities do not participate for the sake of participation, but participate to address problems that they feel passionate about and for direct benefits. The case study, however, reveals that planned engagement between communities and the municipality can yield positive results.

Findings of the supplementary interviews in Soweto reveal, however, that ward committee participation is high, especially in areas with severe service delivery problems. Ward services priorities in most Soweto townships in the past ranged from upgrading municipal facilities, concern over opening and closing times of facilities, especially clinics, implementing HIV/Aids programmes, the need for taxi ranks and clearance of informal settlements. It is acknowledged that community priorities often go beyond the scope of local government but are generally in line with the Mayoral strategic priorities for 2030.

²³ The paper 'Democratic participation in local governance' presented by Brian Nakedi formed part of the series of papers presented at the workshop on 10 years of democracy: Lessons from the field, hosted by IDASA on 15 June 2004 at Ouraadsal-Pretoria.

6.4 Conclusion

It can be concluded that addressing the service backlog within the city of Johannesburg is the current aim and main method for identifying and delivering municipal services. Lack of proactiveness in service identification and delivery is revealed to be due to low revenue streams which are partly blamed on dysfunctional billing systems and huge debts that were carried over from the various TMLCs. The municipality is, however, in the process of rectifying the billing system problems, compiling and verifying the recipients of the indigent services and at the same time establishing service level agreements with the services utilities. Partial service delivery concessions through the various service utilities are perceived by the municipality not to comprise 'privatisation'. The municipality argues that service tariffs and performance levels of the utilities are still managed by the municipality in its contact with communities through ward committee discussions at which community views are accommodated. Non-participation of communities in municipal activities like ward committees and IDPs are perceived to be a historical factor caused by incapacity to participate on the part of communities; non-payment of municipal services is also perceived to be a historical factor that has turned into an entitlement culture. This culture is caused by communities' lack of comprehension of their responsibilities and how their collective efforts, that is, payments and otherwise, lead to dysfunctionality of the municipality, thus the need for skills and leadership development in these communities. Poor delivery is attributed to variations in work ethics and culture among staff from various TMLCs, poor skills and hence the need for capacity building too of the municipal officials and councillors on 'people first' principles, resources allocation and performance orientation, etc.

Chapter Seven

CONCLUSION

The local government events on service delivery in Soweto between 2002 and 2004 were characterised by a mixture of services privatisation or corporatisation, installations of prepaid meters and ensuing protests. A brief chronology of these events is outlined below.

Box 11: Chronology of service delivery in Soweto

- a. Local government elections 2001
- b. Acknowledgement by the municipal council that the city has accrued a debt of more than R7,9 billion
- c. Prepaid service meters installations continue 2001-2003
- d. Default and protests against prepaid services continue 2002-2003
- e. A measure of calmness by communities is observed 2004
- f. Municipal council through the Executive Mayor Amos Masondo announces that it will scrap a R1,5 billion service debt owed by the indigent households (4 May 2005)²⁴
- g. Economic as well as social analysts (Kagiso Securities; Industrial Development Corporation; Econometrix and T-Sec) wary that amnesty may influence non-payment behaviour²⁵
- h. 37 000 indigent households apply for municipal subsidy by 6 July 2005²⁶

In generating the conclusions to this research, the six questions that were raised in the second chapter will now be individually considered. The

²⁴ Ndaba Dlamini. May 4, 2005. Free service for Joburg's indigent. Available at:

http://www.joburg.org.za/2005/may/may4_debt3.stm

²⁵ Thomas Thale. May 4, 2005. Welcome from economists for city's debt write-off. Available at: http://www.joburg.org.za/2005/may/may4_debt1.stm

²⁶ Lucky Sindane. July 6, 2005. Indigent register is successful. City of Johannesburg: Available at http://www.joburg.org.za/2005/jul/jul6_subsidy.stm

conclusions on each of these questions are made from the findings presented in chapters five and six and, where relevant, these are also augmented by references to the findings by other authors. The conclusions on the raised questions are followed by a presentation of the general conclusions on the state of local government in South Africa. Here, comparisons are made about findings from service providers and consumers where appropriate. Some aspects of the research that were not explored from both sides, such as the ability to pay, are not compared. The comparative presentation is followed by a section on research conclusions and recommendations.

7.1 Conclusions on municipal service consumers

Conclusions from service provision experts in Soweto on the two questions about service consumers (cf. chapter 4) are that the city of Johannesburg does have policies on service delivery quality although much of the municipal focus has been service targets (quantity). Since utilities are relatively new, service delivery quality standards are also new and mainly being developed. The municipality also has policies on community participation. Ward committees were fully established in Johannesburg during 2002-2005, although effective participation did not happen for reasons other than the lack of policy and participative institutions.

7.1.1 The importance of municipal services

The researched communities understand the basic functions of the municipality, which they indicated to be, among other things, the delivery or maintenance of the basic services like water, electricity and refuse removal. Although functions of the municipality are well understood, communities think that the city of Johannesburg municipality should focus its attention on creating employment and providing houses. These are, however, the competencies of the private sector and the provincial department of housing, respectively. The findings confirm the reference by Craythorne (1990) to local

government as the guardian of all community needs and mainly social welfare in communities whose core needs are not accommodated through the market forces (cf. chapter two). Thus, even where there is consensus on local government competencies as described in Mueller (1989), and by the Municipal Structures and Systems Acts, the extension of local government functions into what may be perceived to be the 'private domains' of employment creation and housing seem inevitable especially in South Africa where apartheid redress remains imperative.

Poor or worse-off households are revealed here to be pro-government delivery of basic services, whereas the well-off households support private sector provision. It can be concluded that the well-off suburbs think that subsidising the poor townships is not their responsibility; a reason for the Sandton residents to have originally refused having been classified under the same municipal region as Alexandra.²⁷ Another reason includes the municipal use of aggregated rather than actual services consumption, which is generally higher for the well-off suburbs. For this reason too, the well-off townships would prefer private sector provision and private consumption of basic services from which they will be able to pay solely for their own household's actual rather than estimated consumption.

7.1.2 Community participation

Chapter 4 of the Systems Act urges municipalities to encourage and create conditions for local communities to participate in activities such as preparation, implementation and review of IDPs, performance management systems budgets and provision of services. Mechanisms for participation include political structures, councillors and other appropriate mechanisms such as petitions and complaints, notification and public comments,

²⁷ As reported by CNN International on 31 August 2002, 'Nearly 10,000 Alexandra residents marched to a Sandton Convention gathering against wealth divide'. Available at: <http://archives.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/africa>

meetings, hearings and report back to communities. However, municipalities should communicate information about available mechanisms, processes and procedures for participation. From the findings of this research, there is positive community participation in municipal activities like voting and ward committees. Where apathy to participation exists among the researched communities, it is due to poorly provided services in the townships compared to other suburban areas, especially the white suburbs. The proxy municipality of Emnambithi revealed that non-participation is an outcome of numerous factors like the lack of competencies, skills and leadership on the part of communities and is not necessarily an indication of unwillingness to participate. The municipal councillors on the other hand are perceived by communities to be more visible when canvassing for elections. This finding correlates positively with Haffajee (2000), who cites interaction with communities by political parties to be on the basis of promises which are often never fulfilled (cf. chapter three).

Although the comparisons of attendance of ward committee meetings between the well-off and worse-off townships yield no significant differences, trends suggest that the worse-off communities are more likely to attend. Attendance of ward committee meetings is an indication of confidence that communities place in the municipality regarding the influence that they can exert on its decisions (cf. chapter three). Whereas Daniel and De Vos (2002) and Smith and Vawda (2003) view community participation as an outcome of both trust and accessibility of the municipality, trends from this study suggest strong distrust of the municipality by the well-off communities but the well-off communities perceive the municipality to be accessible. While the purpose for communication and visitation of the municipality by community members was not fully explored, it can be concluded that the well-off communities have the means to both communicate with and visit municipal offices whereas the worse-off communities do not. For the same reason, the worse-off communities participate better in ward committees because of their

proximity. The general inaccessibility of the municipal councillors by the worse-off communities goes against the original intent of the Igoli 2002 plan for better accessibility, encouragement and facilitation of community participation, which were cited in Kongwa (undated). Lack of municipal information feeding through to the communities results in apathy and withdrawal from municipal activities and may also contribute to non-payment for services.

There is often short-sightedness regarding the participative ability of communities. Proxy interviews at Emalahleni municipality revealed that high participation rates could be attained through the facilitation of community participation workshops and through the empowerment of ward councillors with participative skills. A systematically fostered participative culture has also proven to have positive effects on the payment of the basic municipal services in the proxy municipality of Emalahleni, which reversed its books from a deficit to a surplus budget. It is safe to conclude that community participation and payment of services are mutual activities that lead to the improvement of service provision and service standards. It can also be concluded that the sample Soweto communities are not involved in municipal services identification and prioritisation other than reporting the service interruptions and voting at municipal elections. As Smith and Vawda (2003) indicate, it is important to build citizenship consciousness in communities through participation or risk communities' attitudes of being 'victims of the state'.

7.1.3 Ability to pay for municipal services

Section 74 of the Systems Act requires a municipal tariff policy to treat service users equitably in its application and the amount which individuals pay to be proportional to their service usage. For the poor households, the tariff should cover only operational and maintenance costs. Other methods of subsidisation for the poor households should also be established. It is evident

from the findings of this research that communities are not aware of other methods of subsidisation that exist. Other methods are likely to be accessed by well-off communities as they are reflected on the municipal Internet website rather than through distributed hard copies.²⁸

The LSM data, including employment status, income and expenditure within sampled households, revealed that more than two-thirds of these households are living below the poverty line. According to the city of Johannesburg's social package, most of these households would qualify for 6 kl of water free to all, 50 kW of electricity free to all, no assessment rates charged on properties valued less than R20 001 and free sanitation and refuse removal. Even the highest average income for the households that are classified in this study as well-off, which is between R1 641,67 and R2 658,33, seem to be relatively worse-off and this therefore leads to the conclusions that more than two-thirds of the surveyed communities qualify for indigent services. There is, however, a contrast between household incomes and ownership of LSM utilities by these households like refrigerators, televisions and heaters, which are possessions of middle-income households (SAARF, 2001). Other household characteristics like number of rooms, which range between three and seven, suggest a much higher living standard than was reported. This contrast confirms the low reliability associated with the self-reported income and employment data that are collected through surveys (Meyer and Sullivan, 2003). The difficulty of revealing both public goods affordability and preferences by households is embedded in communities' attitudes of entitlement to municipal services and a lack of the sense of 'citizenship', which was raised by Smith and Vawda (2003). Reversing this culture will require a customer approach that engages communities in their responsibility

²⁸ According to the city of Johannesburg, a R355m social package was announced by the Executive Mayor on 30 May 2002 which includes 6 kl of water free to all, 50 kW of electricity free to all, no assessment rates charged on properties valued less than R20 001 and free sanitation and refuse removal to particular vulnerable groups who register. Available at: <http://www.joburg.org.za/help/subsidy.stm#benefit>

and ownership of the municipality and its processes.²⁹ Reporting high or actual household income may suggest ability to pay and, as demonstrated in the public choice theories, all persons enjoy free-riding and are therefore not prepared to pay for public goods since non-payment does not necessarily lead to exclusion from consumption (Cullis and Jones, 1998). Although the majority of surveyed households are revealed to be poor, they believe that basic services like water, refuse removal and sewerage system charges, with the exception of electricity, are affordable. This reported affordability of the service charges is regardless of the group discussion outcomes of the self-reported non-payment for the services and knowledge of non-payment by most households. Whereas electricity provision by Eskom to the Soweto community and City Power to other suburban areas may explain perceptions about the unaffordability of electricity, it can be concluded that non-payment of the other services could be the result of an unwillingness to pay.

There are contrasts in views about the payment of municipal services, the unwillingness expressed through the focus groups and willingness expressed in the survey. The expressed unwillingness is partially due to the unhappiness with the non-reading of service meters, which translates to aggregate rather than actual service consumption payments. The expressed willingness seems not to be followed by actions of payment. More than two-thirds expect free services as promised by government, believe government should render free services and, if charged, prefer a standard fee on services for all. The Social Package, which is described above, stipulates the qualifiers of indigent services. Non-payment for services thus represents refusal to pay rather than inability to pay.³⁰ The availability of the poor or indigent when

²⁹ Brian Nakedi made the remarks about entitlement as he presented his paper 'Democratic participation in local governance' presented at the workshop on 10 years of democracy: Lessons from the field, which was hosted by IDASA on 15 June 2004 at Ouraadsal-Pretoria. Leila Smith who is the Director at CMU in the city of Johannesburg also made these remarks.

³⁰ Cf. footnote 23 for the exemption of payment of services by poor households.

meters are read does not provide clarification on wrongful billing of the wealthier suburbs like Sandton as indigent. It can be concluded here that central to the measure of ability to pay for municipal services is the communication of the Social Package and the actual classification of all households in order to determine the actual defaulters.

7.1.4 Community satisfaction with the rendered services

As stated by Corrigan *et al.* (1999), it is important to understand that municipalities by themselves cannot create satisfactory quality of life but they can create favourable circumstances for this to happen. Satisfaction with the municipality by the communities should therefore be viewed in this light and the assessment of satisfaction with the municipality should not be based on the outcomes of indirect circumstances. From this research, general satisfaction with the municipal provision since 1994 by all the researched communities was reported, specifically with garbage collection and the efficiency with which the water problems are handled. The well-off townships, however, perceive the water, electricity supply and refuse removal services to have deteriorated over time. Much of poor service provision is blamed by communities on councillors' inexperience and to some extent their lack of interest in advancing their represented communities. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) has, however, provided much of the required councillor training over the years although the outcomes of these training workshops in terms of strengthened municipal performance is undocumented. Dissatisfaction is higher where communities see the municipality to be non-responsive to the community's immediate pressing needs and problems. Discussions with communities led to conclusions that non-responsiveness to matters that affect townships is due to councillors' and senior officials' lack of concern for the needs of the historically black townships as most of the municipal finances are received from the well-off suburban areas.

Where some levels of dissatisfaction are expressed, these relate to the newly established regional offices, which seem to have provided relief and enabling communities to deal with the municipality on a face-to-face basis. The dissatisfaction with the functionality of these offices, however, is because they are used in the main for recording information and problems and making referrals rather than taking decisions to effect immediate service delivery. Communities are also dissatisfied to find out that there are huge and inexplicable disparities in service charge statements among households in the same vicinity. Households easily find out these disparities when they do service charges comparisons, which are reported to be common. There is also evidence that households in well-off suburban areas like Sandton also receive free services and are classified as indigent or poor and such reports infuriate the worse-off townships. These incorrect household classifications suggest serious problems with the services billing system as articulated in Gumbo *et al.* (2002).

The findings reveal the well-off households' satisfaction with municipal services to be influenced by municipal services pricing. For the worse-off, the quality and efficiency of delivery is what matters. Whereas the majority of the worse-off believe that they were promised free services, the majority of the well-off believe the contrary. It can be concluded that poor communities literally interpret the political election campaigns about municipal services to mean absolute non-payment, whereas the well-off understand that municipalities still have to collect some funds to sustain service provision. The free services campaigns can therefore be deemed to have been misleading to the worse-off communities. Although there are disappointments about service delivery, the majority of the communities indicated that they may never resort to boycotting the payment of municipal services or municipal activities. Despite their sentiments, the same communities have huge municipal services debt. It can be concluded that although communities articulate a preference for payment of municipal services, their actions depict

both the free-riding and dependency tendencies, knowing that the municipality is less likely to take action against non-payment.

To attain community satisfaction, proper internal and external municipal systems need to be in place. These systems include well documented and understood policies or by-laws, well motivated and happy employees and a good community liaison or communications strategy. On the one hand, high service provision standards need to be fostered, including staff competency, training and effective management systems, which were found lacking at the proxy municipality of Govan Mbeki. On the other hand, addressing the problem of staff shortages and salary disparities that were inherited in the previous TMLCs is central in effecting employee satisfaction. By the same token, well mobilised communities for participation in municipal activities create a better understanding of municipal processes and problems, and the outcome is a better satisfaction level.

7.2 Conclusions on municipal services providers

Whereas the service provider interviews were conducted in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal, additional telephone interviews with service provision experts for Soweto agreed that municipal challenges throughout the country are generally the same since they operate within relatively new policy frameworks. It is acknowledged, however, that metropolitan municipalities and specifically the city of Johannesburg face some unique challenges too. These municipalities are more proficient at addressing general service delivery problems, they have better skills, they have the capacity for delivery and collaborate better with private institutions for accessing funds or addressing their problems than do the smaller and rural municipalities. Sections that follow provide conclusions on the two research questions that pertain to the service providers.

7.2.1 Municipal methods of services identification and prioritisation

Section 73 of the Systems Act requires a municipality to give priority to the basic needs of local communities and to ensure that all members have access to at least the basic municipal services. Such services should be equitable and accessible and provided with economic efficient and effective use of available resources. Cullis and Jones (1998) talk of the need to identify and understand the needs of communities before engaging in services delivery in order to attain a satisfied customer base. The attainment of this requires rigorous research activities, which were found lacking in both the city of Johannesburg and proxy municipalities.

It can be concluded from the findings of this research that the city of Johannesburg uses the following methodology in identifying and prioritising the delivery of basic municipal services:

- a. The city is currently addressing the service backlog that was carried over from the TMLC system and the backlog that is accumulating due to the rapid population growth within the city. The municipality's main aim is the reduction of this backlog and for this purpose, the municipality does not necessarily seem to need immediate and thorough consultation with communities on these already identified and well documented backlogs. The same conclusions were echoed by Project Consolidate facilitators (supplementary interviews) who have realised that more emphasis is on the attainment of services quantity targets and that, like any other municipality, the city struggles in achieving service quality targets.
- b. For all services other than the backlog, the municipality makes provision on a need basis and also on the services' nature and urgency. Some of these services relate specifically to upgrading the aging electricity and water supply systems and the demand for these

supplies in newly established residential areas. City Power, however, seems not to cope with this new demand, especially on the West Rand where outages have become a daily occurrence.

The municipality acknowledges that due to high population growth after 1994 and due to a need for uniformity in service delivery in all suburban areas, service levels may have deteriorated during the transitional phase. The deterioration of service standards in the townships is also compounded by the movement out of the townships by the middle class households. The city expects service levels to pick up once again in the interim phase, described to be the period after the second local government elections.

The lack of municipal capital, which is exacerbated by the accumulating municipal service debt, is making it difficult for the city of Johannesburg to render free basic services to all. The debt and poor service charges collection is partly due to the dysfunctional billing system, which categorises some well-off suburban areas and households as poor and in need of 'free basic service' and some poor households as well-off. It seems that the reintroduction of privatisation in the city of Johannesburg since 1922 and the installation of prepaid service meters were partly aimed at overcoming the debt and non-payment problems. Although the concessions of municipal services are legal and also a 'strategic decision', this possible solution to the debt and non-payment problem has social consequences like disconnection of electricity to the poor in the absence of good databases for indigent households. The only comfort is that the municipality remains responsible for service pricing, although there is currently no evidence that adherence to section 74c(i) of the Systems Act is enforced, which requires that only the operating and maintenance costs should be recovered from poor households. Population growth, backlogs and poor finance recovery may be acceptable justification for the current poor service provision. Poor publicity of these facts and the municipal plans to rectify these, however, have tarnished the image of the

municipality, leading to negative perceptions and conclusions regarding the current service provision system.

From the proxy municipality of Govan Mbeki, role confusion between the political and administrative offices was revealed to affect the efficiency in service delivery. Roles, responsibilities and process maps which are not clearly defined for identifying services, reporting community concerns and executing council resolutions lead to the dysfunctional municipal management structures. The functions of the political committees are often largely undefined and the lack of by-laws to guide roles and responsibilities of especially ward councillors and to guide decision-making processes is a serious problem. Councillors through the Portfolio Committees are seen to exert a lot of delivery pressure on administrators while perceived to have little knowledge of the functionality of service departments.

7.2.2 Municipal perception of quality of services provided and application of quality management standards

In terms of section 38 of the Systems Act, a municipality must establish a performance management system that is in line with its priorities, objectives, indicators and targets contained in its IDP. Mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing outcomes and impact of the system and set targets should be carried out at least once a year. In section 42, communities are required to be involved in the development, implementation and review of not only the IDP, but the performance management systems as well. The interviewed communities attend the general municipal ward committee gatherings and do not have any idea of IDPs or municipal performance management systems.

Since its establishment of services utilities, the city of Johannesburg has not as yet finalised its service provision performance systems. Thus, the efficiency and effectiveness of the service utilities are currently unknown. Efficiency is described by Cockayen *et al.* (1999) as the quantity and quality

in service provision and effectiveness as the final outcome in comparison to alternative systems (cf. chapter two). For utilities to be regarded both effective and efficient, their contracts with the city of Johannesburg have to reflect fair, equitable, transparent, cost-effective and competitive delivery targets. Discussions with the CMU reveals that in the absence of performance contracts, the utilities are expected to prepare annual business plans, which outline tentative KPIs against which the CMU and the municipal council can evaluate their performance. Performance indicators were, however, expected to be finalised before the beginning of 2005.

7.3 General conclusions

Local government is an enormously significant sphere of government and has been given the attention it deserves, including incremental national funding from R45.8 billion in 1996/7 to R86 billion in 2003/4, which is an increase of between 7% and 15.3%.³¹ There has, however, been a series of other problems like community protests against firstly the disestablishment of cross-border municipalities and their reincorporation into various provinces, and secondly against the lack of or poor service delivery by municipalities, especially in the townships of the Free State, Western Cape and Mpumalanga. In his parliamentary opening address of 2005, President Thabo Mbeki remarked about the importance of local government as an instrument for fighting poverty by delivering the basic services to poor communities:

Last December we passed the 10-million mark in terms of South Africans who have gained access to potable water since 1994. Free basic water of 6 kilolitres per household per month is now being provided to about three-quarters of households in the areas of our country that have the infrastructure to supply potable water. Project Consolidate of the

³¹ Information is reflected on Budget Trends given by the National Treasury of the Republic of South Africa in the report called Trends in Intergovernmental Finances: 2000/01-2006/7.

*Department of Provincial and Local Government will further increase the capacity of the municipalities to improve our performance. Our social sector programme for the coming year will include the intensification of the programmes we identified last year, to meet our long-term objectives such as the provision of clean running water to all households by 2008, decent and safe sanitation by 2010 and electricity for all by 2012.*³²

The President admitted that there were serious failures brought about by the lack of capacity in government, but that government would in the course of 2005 complete discussions with Eskom, the provincial governments and local municipalities to ensure that free basic electricity is provided to all with the minimum delay, and that municipal capacity is improved to ensure that the target of providing sanitation to 300 000 households per year is met as from 2007.

On the 29th of October 2004, the Minister of Provincial and Local Government, Mr Mufamadi launched the above-mentioned Project Consolidate, which is defined to be “a practical hands-on programme of support to municipalities”.³³ In his address, the Minister indicated that “... *We announced a range of measures aimed at revitalizing local government because our municipalities are best positioned to address the daily needs and challenges of our people...*”. The basic understanding is that the policy framework is sufficient and thus the principal purpose of Project Consolidate would be to deepen the thrust and impact of existing policies and development programmes, accelerate the removal of service delivery backlogs and facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of government’s programmes on social and economic transformation. The focus will be 136

³² Address of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the second joint sitting of the third democratic Parliament in Cape Town, 11 February 2005.

³³ Press statement on the occasion of the launch of Project Consolidate, which is a hands-on programme of support for local government, 29 October 2004.

municipalities that were identified to require targeted additional support. The primary aim of the targeted hands-on engagement programme will be areas requiring immediate and direct action. Teams will be deployed to work at municipal level to assist in addressing practical issues of service delivery and local governance, specific in areas like:

- Public participation, ward committees and community development workers
- Indigent policy, free basic services, billing systems and municipal debt
- Expanded public works programme, municipal infrastructure grant and local economic development
- Performance management framework, indices and communication³⁴

The task team will be made up of development professionals and specialists deployed in this two-year engagement programme that brings together the national and provincial government and other key partners in the private sector and parastatals, to find new, creative, practical and impact-orientated modes of engaging, supporting and working with local government.³⁵

Although more than half of the country's municipalities, including the city of Johannesburg, are not part of Project Consolidate, this does not necessarily suggest that the excluded municipalities do not require support. To the contrary, excluded municipalities do also require additional support, although perhaps not to the same extent as the identified municipalities. As revealed in chapters five and six of this research, the city of Johannesburg too still faces many challenges regarding service delivery, service performance standards, the billing system and ensuring community participation.

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Press release statement by the Minister of Provincial and Local Government on the Launch of Project Consolidate on 1 April 2005

7.4 Recommendations

7.4.1 How gaps in the service provision and community participation system could be addressed

In order to overcome the perceptions of the municipal services level disparities that are formed on the basis of black townships versus white suburbs, the municipality should address uniformity in service provision to all suburbs. Currently, Eskom provides electricity to Soweto while City Power provides electricity to all other suburban areas and this causes suspicion among township communities.

A single tax base system for all of Johannesburg, as was recommended by the Soweto Commission, now exists (PLANACT, 1998). Although this expands the revenue base for redress in Soweto, the city of Johannesburg still faces numerous challenges regarding its billing system. In order for the municipality to overcome its debt and service charges collection problems, it will be important that it immediately institute mechanisms to rectify the faults associated with the billing system. Since one of the focuses of Project Consolidate is helping municipalities with their billing systems, it would be necessary for the Project Consolidate team to identify municipalities other than the 136 that have deficiencies and require possible assistance. The city of Johannesburg is one of those municipalities that may benefit from assistance with its billing system. Central to the billing system is the identification and categorisation of poor households that qualify for indigent services provision. Without a proper municipal database for the classification of households according to their ability to pay for municipal services, the debt problem is likely to remain. The problem of revealing community ability to pay for municipal services is compounded by the community's unwillingness to be classified as able to pay, as this raises fears of incremental service

charges. There is therefore a need for the municipality to explore alternative methodologies for revealing household preferences of the municipal basic services and of ability to pay. At the same time, there is also a need for dedicated service meter readers to overcome the problems associated with aggregated service charges, which are not a true reflection of municipal services consumption. The activities of the already contracted service meter readers who pinpoint dates on which service consumption will be read in all municipal wards require monitoring at all times.

The municipal ward committees are a relatively new governance institution in South Africa. In some municipalities, these are not as yet established. In his parliamentary opening address, the President remarked that 85% of ward committees were established. This suggests that some communities are not exposed to the activities of the ward committees and that even functional ward committees may also not be very experienced. The same can be said about ward councillors with regard to their responsibilities for ward committee activities. It is important that the municipality take the training further than the empowerment of ward councillors to training other ward committee participants. The empowerment process could impart useful skills to the community structures, thus overcoming the prevalence of poor ward committee attendance and effecting better community and municipal service co-ordination and management.

The current roles and responsibilities of the municipal regional administrative or service centres seem to comprise menial activities like capturing community service concerns relating to municipal basic services like water, waste and electricity. The interaction between the ward committees and the regional service centres seem to be undefined. Discussions with the former Mpumalanga MEC for Local Government and Traffic Safety revealed that if empowered, the regional services centres could play a meaningful role in their interaction with ward committees regarding

service provision. The current reporting lines between ward committees and municipal administration do not influence communication with and directly to regional services centres by ward committees. Even in the presence of functioning ward committees, the lack of direct contact between communities and the regional administrative centres, which are responsible for services delivery, renders the ward committees powerless and regional service centres inefficient. The directing of urgent service management and delivery matters from ward committees to the municipal council through the municipal speaker rather than seeking timely resolutions result in huge service delivery backlogs.

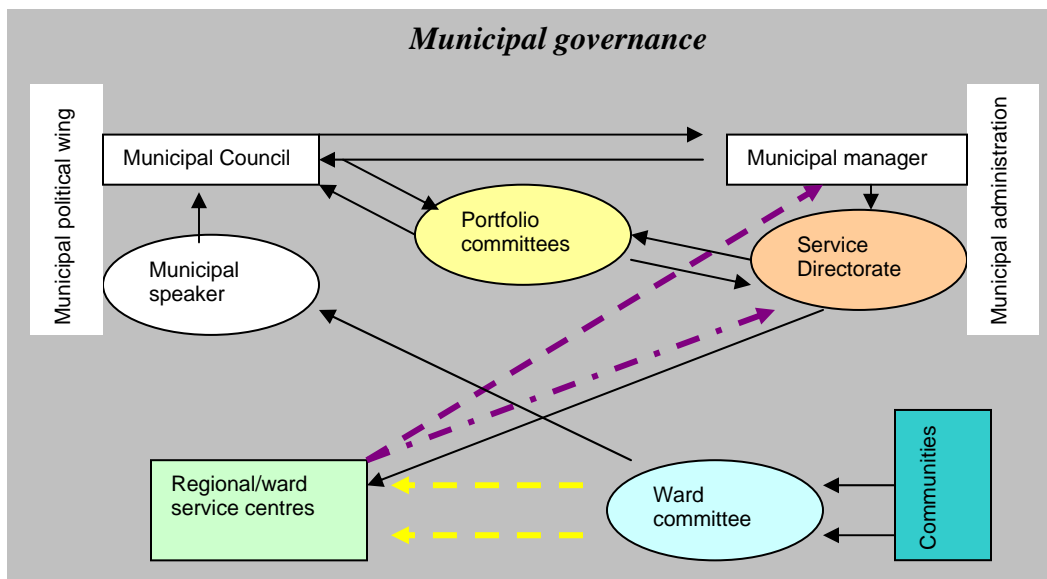


Figure 13: Alternative municipal service delivery models

Decisions regarding service rendering seem to be one-way traffic, that is, dictated from the political wing of the municipality through portfolio committees to the administrative wing. It is for this same reason that municipal councillors, especially those that sit on portfolio committees, are perceived to be interfering with service delivery systems. The broken lines in the above figure depict the missing link, whose enforcement could result a different service delivery perspective. The redefinition of roles of regional

services centres, including communication and liaison between the centres and ward committees, could enable speedy service delivery and provision of immediate solutions to community queries and complaints.

Municipal administrative staff, especially the services personnel, are the 'face' of the institution. Their behaviour and treatment of community members is a reflection of the image of the municipality. The proxy municipality of Govan Mbeki revealed that some of the complaints that communities raise relate to the treatment that they receive both from service officers and from other frontline staff. A possible solution to the image tarnishing behaviour by municipal staff is their exposure to or training in the Batho Pele principles to foster amongst them a culture of good customer relations. Since the city of Johannesburg came into being through the amalgamation of various TMLCs, it is possible that the municipalities brought together varying organisational cultures and norms and these need to be harmonised through training workshops etc.

7.4.2 Recommendations for policy purposes

The findings of this research, especially from the benchmark municipality of Govan Mbeki, suggest that roles and responsibilities between the political and administrative offices are either confused or not clearly defined. Without a clear definition of roles and responsibilities of significant municipal structures like the portfolio committee, the likelihood is that services managers will remain under dual reporting systems and thus continue to be frustrated. There is therefore a need for by-laws that clarify the roles and responsibilities of individuals who sit on committees that bring together both the political and administrative wings of the municipality.

The usage of two different providers of the same municipal service in one municipality has serious consequences relating to differences in service efficiency and effectiveness and possibly service charges. The city of

Johannesburg is currently making use of two electricity providers, which are Eskom and City Power. The problem is not only that there are differences between the two service providing entities; but the communities that are served are historically divided as white and black suburban areas. The city of Johannesburg therefore should enact a policy to enforce uniformity of service provision throughout the municipal suburbs; alternatively, the need for this disparity should be outlined, including its possible benefits to the residents.

At present, numerous households are dissatisfied with service estimations, which either indicate excessively high charges that do not reflect household consumption or low charges that rob the municipal coffers. The use of aggregates when it comes to municipal services does not benefit either the communities or the municipality and this way of doing things should thus be reviewed. A policy is required that will enforce meter reading, either by contractors or by households themselves.

7.4.3 Further research

Areas where further research is required are as follows:

- a. The privatisation of municipal services or installation of prepaid meters: There is currently no empirical research to suggest that the privatisation of the basic municipal services or installations of prepaid services meters in the city of Johannesburg have led to better access of the basic services by many and improved efficiency in service provision or in payments. Eskom supplies prepaid electricity to nearly 300 000 households as stated by Sindane (undated). The APF (2003) argued against prepaid meters and said that they had no consideration for the poor. At the same time, the Social Package has been revealed, which seems to take care of the poor. How the two balancing acts affect the state of access to the basic services remains unknown.

- b. Now that almost 80% of ward committees have been established throughout the country, there is a need for research to establish their functionality, including those in Soweto. A study on the functionality of ward committees by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in 2004 revealed that 67% of surveyed ward councillors and other stakeholders believed that ward committees had no delegated powers and 60% did not hold meetings. Research into this area would enable ward committees to learn from each other's experiences, but also enable the identification of areas where interventions are required.
- c. It can be concluded from the findings of this study that it is relatively easy to identify community preferences for municipal services (cf. chapter five). From both the public choice theory and also from the findings of this research, it becomes evident, however, that revealing ability to pay by individual households is a bit more difficult. There is a need therefore for new socio-economic methodologies for exploring the various ways in which households' actual ability to pay may be revealed. The use of consumption as propagated by Meyer and Sullivan (2003) would be a better start, provided that household consumption could easily be quantified and converted into monetary value.
- d. In the previous decade, numerous organisations which included SALGA and IDASA provided training to municipalities on councillor functions and responsibilities, performance management systems and IDPs, etc. However, problems relating to councillors' inefficiencies and their improper interference in the administrative activities, inefficiency in community needs identification and poor monitoring and evaluation continue to be heard. There is currently no empirical evidence to correlate provided interventions with current performance or simply the effects or outcomes of these interventions.

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Appendix 1: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Household Survey Instrument for the Local Government Service Provision and non-payment within Underdeveloped Communities of the Johannesburg Unicity: Consumers' Perspective.

To be filled by fieldworker

Questionnaire Number			
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a). Municipal region	
Region 6	1
Region 10	2

b). Township (e.g. Meadowlands Zone 2)
.....

Household information

Household schedule	Write in from oldest (top) to youngest (bottom)			Age in complete years	Gender M=1 F=2	Relationship
	01	02	03			
Please list all persons in the household who eat and reside in the same household from the past 30 days	01					
	02					
	03					
	04					
	05					
	06					
	07					
	08					
	09					
	10					
	11					
	12					
	12+	Yes	No			

Select a responsible respondent in the household, preferably a parent, "head" or in their absence, any adult of the household over 16 years of age

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Age of respondent in complete years

	Years
--	-------

3. What is the highest education level that you ever completed?

No schooling	00	Grade9/Standard7/Form2	10
Grade 0	01	Grade10/Standard8/Form3	11
Sub A/Grade1	02	Grade 11 / Standard 9 / Form 4	12
Sub B/Grade2	03	Grade 12 / Standard 10 / Matric	13
Grade 3/Standard 1	04	Diploma/Certificate with less than Grade 12 / std 10	14
Grade 4/Standard 2	05	Diploma/Certificate with Grade 12 / std 10	15
Grade 5/Standard 3	06	Degree	16
Grade 6/Standard 4	07	Postgraduate degree	17
Grade 7/ Standard5	08	Other, specify.....	18
Grade8/Standard6	09		19

4. What is your home language?

Sesotho	01	Xitsonga	07
Setswana	02	IsiZulu	08
Sepedi	03	Tshivenda	09
Siswati	04	Afrikaans	10
IsiNdebele	05	English	11
IsiXhosa	06	Other, specify.....	12

UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

5-7. What do you think are the three main functions of municipality? (Do not read options)

The delivery of and/or maintenance of...	
Water	1
Electricity	2
Sanitation/Sewerage	3
Refuse removal	4
Health	5
Parks	6
Other, specify.....	7
Do not know	8

8. What is the name of your municipality? Please provide a municipal name.

Municipality known	1
Municipality unknown	2

9. In which municipal region do you belong? Please provide a region name.

Municipality region known	1
Municipality region unknown	2

10. Who is your ward councillor? Please provide a name

Councillor known	1
Councillor unknown	2

11-12. Which two of the following activities do you think your municipality should be focusing most of its attention? (read list)

	Priority 1	Priority 2
1. Consulting communities	1	2
2. Improving service quality	1	2
3. Dealing with corrupt officials	1	2
4. Creating employment	1	2
5. Meeting community expectations	1	2
6. Providing free services	1	2
7. Combating crime	1	2

PARTICIPATION

13. Do you attend ward committee meetings?

Yes	1
No	2

If No, skip question 14

14. When do you attend ward committee meetings held in your area?

Every time it is held	1
Once in a while	2
On need basis (when I require certain information)	3
Can not remember	4

15. How easy or difficult do you think it is for people like you to influence municipal decisions?

Very easy	Easy	Neither	Difficult	Very difficult	Do not know
1	2	3	4	5	6

16. Do you know where your municipal offices are located?

Yes	1
No	2

17-20. How well do you think your municipality...?

	... Respond to your needs	Respond to enquiries	Consult on matters affecting communities	Respond to community feedback
Very well	1	1	1	1
Quite well	2	2	2	2
Neither well nor badly	3	3	3	3
Quite badly	4	4	4	4
Very badly	5	5	5	5
Do not know	6	6	6	6

21-24. When last did you...?

	... Visit municipal offices	Communicate with ward councillor/s	Paid your municipal levy?	Attend a ward committee meeting
In the last 3 week	1	1	1	1
In the last 3 month	2	2	2	2
In the last 5 months	3	3	3	3
In 6 months +	4	4	4	4
I have never	5	5	5	5
I can not remember	6	6	6	6

25-26. How does your municipality mainly communicate with you?

<i>Through...</i> (one response)	<i>Language of communication</i> (one response)	
Regular mass meetings	1	my mother tongue 1
Committee meetings	2	my second language (which I clearly understand) 2
News letters	3	a third language (which I hardly understand) 3
Community radio	4	a language I do not understand at all 4
They do not communicate with me at all	5	
Other specify.....	6	

27-29. How accessible is...?

	... Municipal information	Municipal councillors	Municipal offices
Very inaccessible	1	1	1
Inaccessible	2	2	2
Neither accessible nor inaccessible	3	3	3
Accessible	4	4	4
Very accessible	5	5	5
Do not know/uncertain	6	6	6

30. Do you intend voting in the next municipal elections?

Definitely yes	1
Possibly yes	2
Possibly no	3
Definitely not	4
Do not know/Undecided	5

31. If not intending to vote, which factors do you think are influencing your decision not to vote? (do not read options)

Too young to vote	1
Not interested	2
Not registered as a voter	3
Disillusioned with politics	4
Poling stations too far	5
Other specify.....	6

32. Which one of the following factors would most likely motivate you to participate in municipal activities?

Loyalty to a political party	1
A feeling of duty or obligation	2
An improvement in the delivery of services	3
More honesty amongst politicians	4
More evidence of commitment to my area	5

SERVICES DELIVERY

33. After 2000 local government elections, how well do you think your municipality has performed?

Very well	Well	Neither	Bad	Very badly	Do not know enough about it
1	2	3	4	5	6

34. Which three services do you think are most important to be rendered in your locality?

Water	1
Electricity	2
Sanitation/sewerage	3
Refuse removal	4
Health	5
Combating crime	6
Other (specify).....	8
Do not know	9

35. Do you think that the living conditions in your community will improve or get worse within 5 years from now?

Strongly improve	Improve	Remain the same	Worsen	Strongly worsen	Do not know
1	2	3	4	5	6

36-41. How well would you say that your municipality is handling the following matters?

	Very well	Well	Neither	Badly	Very badly	Don't know
Water supply	1	2	3	4	5	6
Electricity	1	2	3	4	5	6
Refuse removal	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sewerage system	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health services	1	2	3	4	5	6

42-45. How affordable do you think the following services are to your household?

	Very affordable	Affordable	Neither	Expensive	Very expensive
Water supply	1	2	3	4	5
Electricity	1	2	3	4	5
Refuse removal	1	2	3	4	5
Sewerage system	1	2	3	4	5

46-49. Between government and private sector, of the following basic services, which would you prefer provided by what sector?

	Private sector	Government	Either	Not sure
Water supply	1	2	3	4
Electricity	1	2	3	4
Refuse removal	1	2	3	4
Sewerage system	1	2	3	4
Combating of crime	1	2	3	4

PAYMENT AND NON-PAYMENT OF SERVICES

50-57. Indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
I am not prepared to pay for municipal services	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am too poor to pay for municipal services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Where people do not pay, nothing happens to them	1	2	3	4	5	6
Government has promised us free services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Everyone should pay for his service consumption irrespective of poverty level	1	2	3	4	5	6
Government should not render free services to all	1	2	3	4	5	6
A standard fee on services should be levied to all people	1	2	3	4	5	6
Only the rich should pay municipal services	1	2	3	4	5	6

58-61. When would you decide not to pay your municipal services

<i>Indicate your agreement or disagreement...</i>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
When and if the levies are too high	1	2	3	4	5	6
If other community members are not paying	1	2	3	4	5	6
When the quality of services rendered is too low	1	2	3	4	5	6
If delivery is frequently interrupted	1	2	3	4	5	6

62-69. How much trust do you have in the following institutions in your area at present?

	Strong trust	Trust	Neither	Distrust	Strong distrust	Don't know
The police	1	2	3	4	5	6
Municipal councillors		2	3	4	5	6
The media (newspaper, radio & TV)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Businesses	1	2	3	4	5	6
Municipality/local government	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political parties	1	2	3	4	5	6
The church	1	2	3	4	5	6

Other community members	1	2	3	4	5	6
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70-74. Indicate your agreement or disagreement.

<i>If you were dissatisfied with municipal actions, would you resort to...?</i>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know
Strike action	1	2	3	4	5	6
Refer matter to the courts	1	2	3	4	5	6
Boycott payment of services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Boycott municipal meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
Refer matters to public protector	1	2	3	4	5	6

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

75	What is the total number of rooms in the dwelling that your household occupies? (excluding bathrooms and toilets)	
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76. Which one of the following is the most often used source of drinking water in this household?

Piped tap water in the house	1	Borehole on site	4
Piped tap water in the yard	2	Rainwater tank	5
Public tap	3	Other (specify)	6

77. What type of working telephone does your house have?

Cell phone	1	Both land line & cell phone	3
Land line	2	Non phone in the household	4

78-91. Which of the following working items, do you have in the household? (read all options)

	Have	Do not have
Fridge	1	2
Vacuum cleaner	1	2
Television	1	2
Hi-fi or music centre	1	2
Radio	1	2
Geyser	1	2
Microwave	1	2

	Have	Do not have
Washing machine	1	2
Coal stove	1	2
Electric stove	1	2
Computer	1	2
Heater/Air conditioner	1	2
Other (specify).....	1	2

92. What type of toilet does the household use?

Flush toilet outside the house	1	A pit latrine	3
Flush toilet inside house	2	Bucket system	4

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

93. What is your current employment status (tick one option)

Unemployed, not looking for work	1	Self-employed (full-time)	6
Unemployed, looking for work	2	Self-employed (part-time)	7
Pensioner (aged or retired)	3	Employed full-time	8
Housewife, not working	4	Employed-part time	9
Student	5	Other (specify).....	10

94. How many other people in the household, apart from yourself are employed or self-employed and earn a salary?

95-97. What are three main accounts that you are paying monthly at the moment?

House bond	1	Student fees	4
Car instalments	2	Supporting a 2 nd / rural family	5
Furniture accounts	3	Insurances/personal policies	6
Other (specify).....			7

98. What amount, in general estimates do you think goes into monthly accounts in this household?

R.....
(Don't know = 999)

99. Please indicate firstly, your own monthly income followed by the household MONTHLY INCOME (including all sources like pension, government grants and investments)

	<i>Personal</i>	<i>Household</i>
No income	1	1
R1 - R500	2	2
R501 - R750	3	3
R751 - R1 000	4	4
R1 001 - R1 500	5	5
R1 501 - R2 000	6	6
R2 001 - R3 000	7	7
R3 001 - R5 000	8	8
R5 001 - R7 500	9	9
R7 501 - R10 000	10	10

R10 001 - R15 000	11	11
R15 001 - R20 000	12	12
R20 001 - R29 999	13	13
R30 000+	14	14
Refuse to answer	15	15
Do not know	16	16

100. What monthly income level do you consider to be minimal for your household, i.e., your household could not make ends meet with less?

R.....
(Don't know = 999)

Appendix 2: FIELD SURVEY INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Human Sciences Research Council
Lekgotla la Dinyakisišo tša Semahlale tša Setho
Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing
Umkhandlu Wezokucwaninga Ngesayensi Yesintu

HSRC

26 April 2003



To Whom It May Concern/
Soweto Community Member

PERMISSION FOR FIELD INTERVIEWS

This letter serves to notify you that these individuals who are seeking interviews with you or your household, do so in their professional capacity as field researchers of the project “Local Government Service Provision and non-payment within Underdeveloped Communities of the Johannesburg Unicity: Service Providers’ and Consumers’ Perspective”. The study, as reflected in its title has two phases and looks at the possible gaps, between government and communities that may be overlooked regarding service provision, community participation, satisfaction and payment.

When and if selected to participate, please do so, as your participation is highly appreciated and will help inform this process.

Sincerely
Netswera Godfrey
Project leader and/Chief Researcher
Human Sciences research Council (HSRC)
Tel: 012 3022840; Cell: 0824898839
Email: GNetswera@hsrc.ac.za

Appendix 3: SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

Meadowlands Zone 6 (5 participants)

Date: 24 January 2004

Interviewer: What I am really about is the issue of local government service delivery in the city of Johannesburg. Looking prior to 1994 people did not participate in local government elections and there were cases of rent boycott and non-payment of municipal services. The one question that I would like to ask you is: when you look at the city of Johannesburg, what is it that you can say about service delivery?

Respondent 1: Ok, right I will tell you. Service delivery is very-very poor. First point, if the window breaks now you have to pay or once there is blocked sewerage, you go to the municipality and report it and they appoint a contractor to come and only un-block it after you have paid him R150 to R200. Now you come to doors, we used not to buy our own doors to pay rent and like in a flat, the landlord fixes all the problems once you report. They just put increments from nowhere forgetting that 95% of the people are unemployed. Even if they are employed, most of them are paid low wages, poor salaries whatever it is... whereby you can't be able to supporting their children, paying for water and house renovations. And their increments you know, they just come from nowhere, whereby. From the blue they just say that now we are going to increase prices of water and electricity. It is not that people do not attend meetings, they do go but people are confused. Even when there are meetings, it is not

that people do not want to attend meetings; it is because they do not know now what is good now, the old government or the new government. Because the old government builds free houses, not these low cost houses. Whereas the new government has promised free services, you still have to pay for it. They promised they would give you free service. It's because they are no longer involved, they are contracting these companies, what do you call it,

Interviewer: Are they not providing free services?

Respondent 1: No... you see these jobs that we give them are for them to fight old retired women who have no money to pay for blocked sewerage. And if you have no money, you endure the smell until...until you pay. Often the blockages are not from a single house, it is an inter linkage that links numerous houses. But they will go to one house to demand the payments for the repairs. I was shocked. You can tell them that I stay alone and I can't cause these blockages but they will not listen.

Respondent 2: Our municipality is failing the people. Most of the services are not up to scratch. We can say the government is part and parcel of the structure though they do not monitor. What they said, they do not do. They are less concerned and the only time when they come is during elections. Now they want to know what is happening, "can you tell us what your problem is?" They go and build 10 houses and they give them to you in the next 10 months you go and vote and then damn, no more movement. You will never see them again. To be honest, services are very poor compared with the apartheid times. Services were cheap. Now they said services will be better, but services are now worse because you

will pay those thousands of Rands. R400 to R800 a month without improvement and within a year, you see they make increases forgetting that there are no improvements that they are making, you understand? When you take something in a company, a product, if it increases in value, it is because they increase its quality but here, it is different, the quality stays the same.

Respondent 1: They only do one street when there are elections, “but you will pay”.

They say Soweto will be like Johannesburg, no it won't happen. There is no monitoring. You see, there is where the problem lies. If they were going to evaluate the performance of all ministers, they say we take 10-50% of your salary away. No, they do nothing like that, instead they say thank you and change your office to another portfolio. What kills performance is that our seniors, they do not monitor. RDP houses have been built, but they have no value. If there were big storms or earthquakes, many people would die. Because it is one layer. No house can stand with one brick, they must be doubled.

Interviewer: You said they are playing with elders, do you know if there are differences with other age groupings?

Respondent 2: Because if we compare townships and suburbs, there is a big difference. In the suburbs, if a drain blocks today, by the evening it will be fixed. But here in the townships, it will take three to four weeks. After a lot of paper work, that is when it gets fixed because service is highly poor. Even though local government said it will provide free water services, no one gets free water. No one gets free water everybody has to pay even though they said 600 free litres. You still end up paying

a lot and there is no difference. There is nothing new despite promises of free this and free that.

Interviewer: Let me follow up on... firstly you spoke of breaking of windows and doors and that the municipality does not fix. What I would like to know is, "are the houses still the property of the municipality or the people?"

Respondent 2: Some of them have acquired title deeds.

Interviewer: For those that do not have title deeds, it means that they are still the property of the municipality and that the municipality should take care of whatever goes wrong?

Respondent 2: But they will tell you that they are in the process of issuing title deeds. They will tell you to fix all the problems and say the house will be yours ultimately. Even when they have not issue title deeds, the thing is that they are going to charge you rental. Like if you rent a flat, you pay rent; anything that breaks there, the landlord had to take care. Le me give you the example of the sewerage. If it rains, how much of the soil has been swept into the sewerage system?

Interviewer: You spoke of the people who should pay, who can't afford charges and as it is, they get charges and notice to pay from the municipality. The municipality has spoken of an indigent policy to say if you don't work or are a retired person then you are not required to pay... what about that?

Respondent 3: The whole thing about all those policies is often meant to brainwash you. The government creates all those policies, nice policies but after that, what they say in parliament is not implemented. They don't make follow up on what they say in parliament. They don't go down and check

if their policies are being implemented, they just take their cars and go home after creating policies. I can only mention one man and it is only Mandela who does what he promises the people. He is developing the country. Who is a person in the whole country who has sacrificed more than Mandela, at the age of 80? Mandela complained about the RDP houses and said they are not conducive for human residence. They built a small hall and parent and children stay in one room that is very bad because there is no privacy. Just one wall to say this is for mommy and daddy would be very good.

Interviewer: Another thing that you raised here is about difference between townships and the suburbs. You said if there is a blockage in the suburb, it gets fixed quickly.

Respondent 1: You can write all, the blockages and traffic lights among other things. All those services, blockages of sewerage, it can be blocked and by 6pm, they won't sleep until the white area is back to normal again. Never, it can't happen, the lights must function.

Interviewer: Now let us try to find out the answers to this. Why does it happen like this that if there are blockages here, they are not quickly fixed?

Respondent 1: The problem is that most of our administrators, including politicians stay in the suburbs. There is no one who stays here. These people are dangerous. When they travel, they use the main roads. They don't get into the townships, they use main roads.

Interviewer: Why really? Why would people move to the suburbs and not come to the townships?

Respondent 2: Ja, what happens is that they have less concern with where they come from. They are very happy now that they live next to Helen Suzman, etc. Let me tell you, I have friends who tell me that Soweto is very dangerous. Where he grew up you know I was shocked by that, I could not believe. They say no... "Sam, you will never see me there any more". They say there is very high crime. They say boys will blow you up. They didn't see it before they left?

Interviewer: Let us look at what you said. People's attendance of municipal meetings. What is attendance like of these meetings?

Respondent 4: That now...they go if they feel like because there is no gain. They only preach what they don't deliver. We will do this and that for you and then they don't deliver. They do their braai and from there it is over. You see now, they preach, but there is no delivery.

Interviewer: But now let us look at attendance since 1994. Has it changed or are people attending more or less these days, these council or municipal meetings?

Respondent 4: Promises, but they were not there. Mandela used to speak reality. But when the government pulled out, and you have the new government, people saw that now there is nothing here. They went and vote again. That is why we had historically in our voting campaigns, two voting days. This was done to increase the numbers. Can you see now, people are getting sick and tired. These kids are clever they can not take it. You see now, when Mandela came, things were great because the old man meant business and everybody understood him, everybody could listen, but now with this government, they don't know

what they are doing. You can see how much they blame each other on TV the Hyfer Commission. If Mandela was there, this would not happen. He once said you do not wash your dirty linen in the public. They are just blaming each other instead of sitting down and solve the problems.

Interviewer: Let's look at that issue... when you get the statement from the municipality, does it indicate the number of free litres or electricity that have been given for free?

Respondent 2: No, they don't indicate. It just indicates that R300 or R500 is due by you. What I can tell you is that, they can write what they write but the thing is that when it comes to paying, there is not comparison; you pay what you used to pay in 9 months.

Interviewer: When it comes to payments, when you look, are people paying?

Respondent 3: People are paying, but most cannot afford. One will pay that R100 and next month it will be R200 and it continues to grow.

Interviewer: Is there anything that the municipality is doing about those who do not pay?

Respondent 1: At the moment, they went as far as to say, out of what you owe, we will cancel so much. But still even if they cancel, if you do not have the money it does not help. These people are so surprised because they were not used to paying this much. I remember we used to pay R40 rental. Now it is R400, R500 and up. And the more you pay, the more they charge you. If you continue to pay, they say this one can manage and can double the price. If they charge you R1 000 and you pay, it grows to R1 500 and they say you are paying for those who cannot afford. And

you must know, the water that we use here compared to suburbs is very little. We do not have swimming pools. The water here is too little you run it in the morning for bath and back to work and you use it again to cook. They can't charge you like you like in Sandton.

Interviewer: You make an interesting point, you say, if one is paying, next month charges are higher?

Respondent 1: Yes, you can afford. I have seen it many times. I have seen people charged R1 500 and it goes up to R2 000.

Interviewer: Let's assume it is R150 this month and I don't pay, what will likely happen next month?

Respondent 2: It will likely be R100 or remain the same. They have now sent people to the lawyers, to the debt collectors. If you can't pay R150 per month, you end up listed by the lawyers for R15 000 sometimes.

Interviewer: Those who have been sent to the debt collectors or lawyers, what happens to them?

Respondent 4: They promise you that we will take the house. Some have many kids and instead of buying them food, they end up paying the lawyers.

Interviewer: In actual fact are there houses already taken by the municipality from people for non-payments?

Respondent 2: It is the lawyers who do these things but they were told that no one is allowed to take houses from people. They said you are increasing our problem if you take house from people because you expect us to build more houses once more.

Respondent 3: Those councillors, most of them were previously without jobs. And most of them said they will stand and talk for the people but when they

get there, and they get these big salaries, they forget their people. People are run by lying councillors. They can lie to their own people. They know the problem your mothers have got and they still do not do anything. The government does not know that women and grown ups are signed papers of eviction from their homes.

Interviewer: You say and always make reference to rent, but people are paying for services these days are they not? Was rent in the apartheid days inclusive of rental and service at the same time?

Respondent 1: It included everything, water, when a window is broken you get a service, and they come and fix it. And when the sewerage is blocked they come. Now you pay your own money. If it is blocked in your yard and it is not caused by you, perhaps a cat or soil runs down the drain, such things. This means you will pay all the time to unblock sewerage. The contractor is charging. The municipality phones the contractor and the contractor comes and fix.

Interviewer: Doesn't the contractor charge and gets paid at the municipal offices?

Respondent 1: I don't know if they are paid already, but when they come here, they say they want to be paid before they fix the problem.

Interviewer: If you compare the old rent and the new one with separate service charges which system do you think is affordable?

Respondent 1: The system that old ladies recommend every time they come from the municipal offices is the old one. They don't support apartheid, but they paid less. Do I lie? We are not saying that we do not like our

government, we love it but things are not done as promised because they don't monitor. They don't know what is happening.

Respondent 1: If you could go out and check the RDP houses, you could see that those are not houses. The old houses were 100% better and bigger. If big rains come, these houses would fall. The whole furniture would be in water.

Interviewer: Let me try and summarise this, you are saying that people are less interested in the municipality due to lack of services delivery. You say they come here more when elections are imminent. To make people more interested once more and to get them participative, what do you think should be done?

Respondent 2: It is to better those services. It is every simple, you do what you said you will do and come back to the people. "Are you happy, are you satisfied?" Yes or no? They promise us streets but go and look, they used pure soil in their construction. You go there now with your white shoes and they will come out dirty. The rain is washing away all that work, no improvement. The old government made this road here, up to today, nothing. They tell us we will plan, after elections they get R4 billion, they come and give you the figures but they don't do anything. The government comes after 5 years. We have paid R200 billion in service and tax and some people are giving business to their brothers-in-law. They only go to government to enrich themselves. We have now seen it; most people who go into political parties are just enriching themselves, not to work for you and me. Forget about it. Never, it is like

in the taxi industry, the driver does not wait to be paid by his boss; he steals R20 every day for the whole month.

Respondent 2: If Mandela could see what they are doing, he would say that I didn't have to suffer for 27 years for all this corruption. He said for all that we have sacrificed for there is no achievement. That old man tells these boys daily and they don't listen. He tells them you will get caught they don't listen. Where is that one who used to wear nice clothes? They call him Mr 4X4, he was in parliament. The only thing I can say is this; they should pay a certain contractor to run the streets. There is no mayor or councillor whatever it is and after that period, they can change. But if you are sending money to these structures, they don't know what they are doing.

Interviewer: Let's go back to the one on the ones who do not have title deeds. What charges do they get? Is it rent or do they get service charges as well?

Respondent 1: The next thing that they will tell you is that you are coming within the next group. But they can't have 2 charges because this one will ask how much I paid and I say R40 and it will cause problems. Title deeds or no title deeds, it does not matter. (I must leave now, I have another appointment, and they will finish with you.)

Interviewer: Thank you, it was a great help.

Respondent 1: Bye bye... tell them I am gone.

Interviewer: I think we covered a lot of things. Are there certain important things that relate to services and the municipality that we did not cover that you think is important? I am looking at the notes. But the interesting

part is the one you said, if you pay, the charges increase. This means that if you pay...

Respondent 2: You can afford and you pay for those who cannot.

Interviewer: What becomes the tendency then?

Respondent 2: People stop paying. If you stop paying, it goes down. You pay R150 next month is R300 and you pay, it goes to R500. It will never go down.

Interviewer: Does the municipality know families where there are people who do not work, you think? Or where old retired people live?

Respondent 3: They do not know. They only check payments or non-payments. They evaluate through the statements. A flat rate for all will be better.

Interviewer: Is there a flat rate?

Respondent 4: It used to be in place but not any more. We don't pay the same now irrespective of our consumption. Others pay R100 and some R1 000 even if we use the same rate.

Respondent 4: How can a businessperson pay R65 using all the services, water and electricity and an ordinary household pay R500?

Interviewer: Do you think, what kind of charges may help the situation?

Respondent 4: A flat rate. The flat rate still may have to be set at different levels for pensioners at lower rate compared with those who work.

Interviewer: But the problem is that it seems the municipality does not know who works and who does not?

Respondent 2: No they do not know and they don't check that.

Respondent 2: Un some houses they are using cards.

Interviewer: This prepaid, is it used here also?

Respondent 3: There are many who are using it here even in Zone 10.

Interviewer: Which one is better then, the prepaid or these estimations?

Respondent 3: The estimations are better because if you do not have money in the middle of the month, then you can't function. If you buy for R200 and it may get finished in 2 weeks and you will have no electricity.

Interviewer: If we check, for those people who do not pay, does the municipality cut off the power or don't they?

Respondent 4: There are places where they go and cut. But they check first. If they go and there is only one lady, they may cut, but if there are many young men, they may feel intimidated. And not cut off. This means the old lady will take her pension money and pay. You see the problem?

Interviewer: It means they check the place first?

Respondent 3: The old people are the ones who suffer the most.

Interviewer: Don't they indicate that we will cut off if the debt is this much?

Respondent 3: No they just come.

Interviewer: Does it mean they may cut off where there is small debt and leave a place with big debt?

Respondent 3: Yes, it happens at all times.

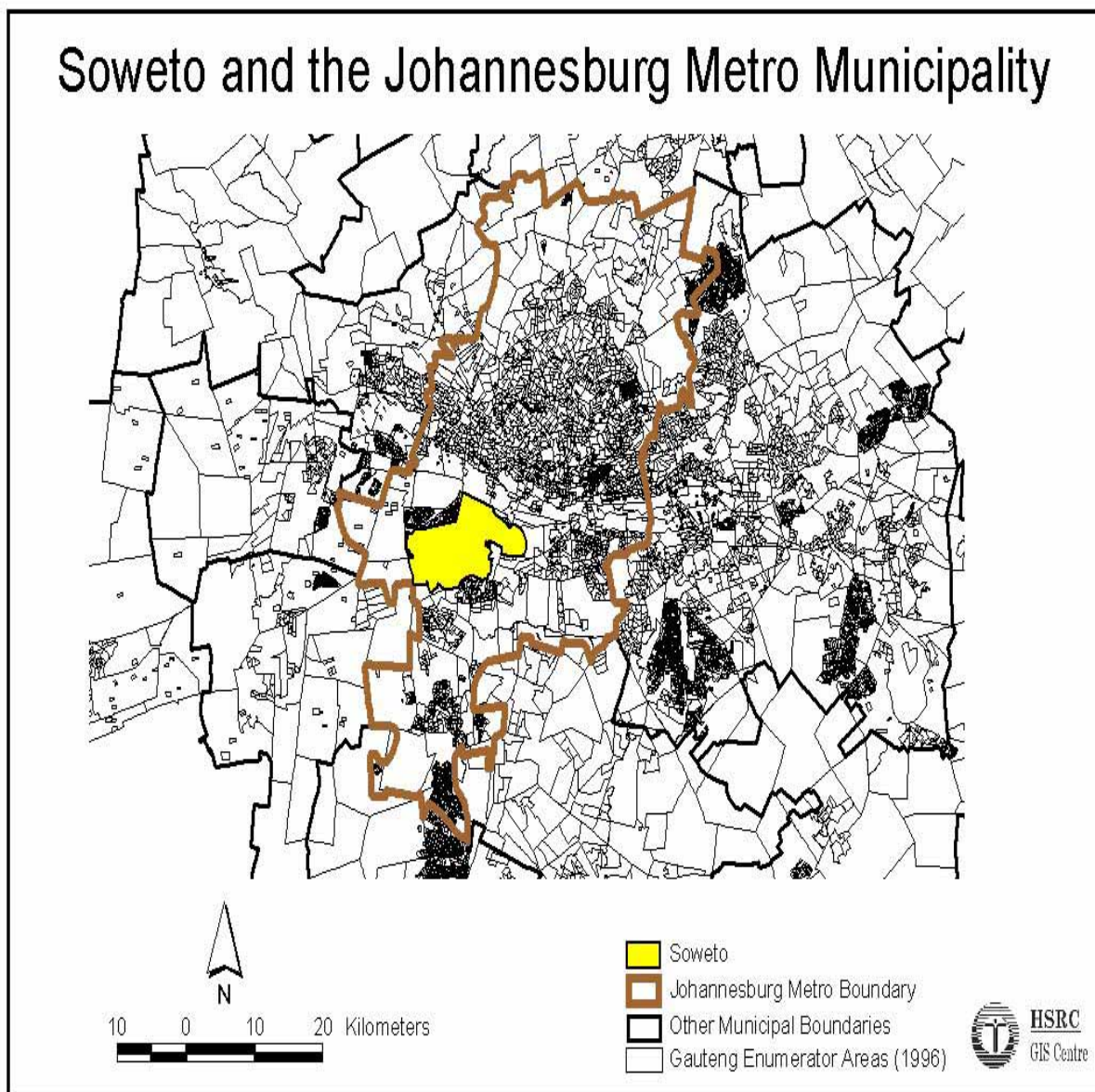
Interviewer: Do you have anything else that you think we did not talk about to add?

Respondents: No....no, nothing.

Interviewer: Ok, I think we have covered a lot. I will see what comes from other groups. Thank you of the information.

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Appendix 4: MAP OF THE STUDY AREA



Soweto re: 1996 census

Number of EAs:	2013
Number of people:	899 768
Number of households:	203 319



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Appendix 5: SUPPLEMENTARY INTERVIEWS LETTER

To whom it may concern

Mr Fulu Netswera is completing a doctoral degree in Sociology at this University. His research focuses on service provision issues in Soweto. I would like to ask you to support him in this endeavour. Please contact me if you need any further information.

Simon Bekker
Professor of Sociology
4.10.05

App 21

