



**Information Bulletin of the Eastern Cape
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• **Problems and achievements**

Integrated Planning in the Eastern Cape:

Background

In October 1995 the Development Facilitation Act, 67 of 1995 was promulgated in Parliament. In 1996 the Local Government Transition Act (Second Amendment) was passed. These two pieces of legislation introduced an integrated, efficient and equitable planning framework for local and regional government. The new legislation was to move urban and regional planning out of the social and spatial boxes of the past into the public arena where communities could engage in planning processes and hold elected councillors accountable for planning decisions.

In 1996 a Consultative Forum was formed in the Eastern Cape to ensure smooth implementation of the new legal framework. The Forum would also support local authorities in the formulation of the Land Development Objectives (LDOs) and Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) expected of them in terms of the new legislation.

The Consultative Forum consisted of representatives from all the stakeholders in the LDO / IDP process: The Departments of Housing and Local Government and Land Affairs, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), planning consultants and local authorities including District Councils. The Forum was mandated:

1. To formulate the Provincial Regulations in terms of which LDOs and IDPs would be implemented in the Eastern Cape
2. To develop a user-friendly planning handbook for use by local authorities in the Eastern Cape in drawing up LDOs and IDPs
3. To set up the Provincial Tribunal

In December 1997, the Provincial Regulations were gazetted and in January 1998, the Planning Handbook for Local Authorities in the Eastern Cape was published. The Tribunal was constituted. Because the initial mandate had been fulfilled the Consultative Forum did not commit to new terms of reference and Forum activities came to a halt.

During 1998 local authorities embarked on the LDO / IDP process. Some authorities engaged NGOs for assistance; others started the process with the help of planning consultants. A few local authorities felt confident enough to do the planning on their own. Whatever form the planning process took, most local authorities encountered problems or obstacles in the new process which in practice seemed more complicated than envisaged on paper.

Towards the end of the year it was clear that for most part the LDO / IDP process in the Eastern Cape was fragmented and riddled with issues that needed to be resolved.

Under the auspices of the Department of Housing and Local Government, the Office of the Premier, GTZ and the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (Ecsecc), a provincial Indaba was organised to review the planning process in the Province. The objective of the event was to identify the major achievements, the most pressing problems and, together with all the role players involved, look at ways to resolve the obstacles.

This Info Bulletin reflects on the Indaba and briefly states the activities of the recently established co-ordinating structure – the LDO / IDP Consultative Forum – to address the issues raised at the Indaba.

The MEC for Housing and Local Government opened the Indaba. What follows is a summary of his speech:

Realising development objectives – MEC Sam Mazosiwe

In his opening speech, the MEC for Housing and Local Government, Mr Sam Mazosiwe described the LDO / IDP process as a particular approach to realise development objectives.

He emphasised the fact that the LDO / IDP process marked a significant paradigm shift from past planning approaches. "The process introduced an all inclusive participatory approach based on a unified vision,

translated into strategic objectives and transformed into tangible and sustainable development products."

He said the Indaba was a platform to review the process and to share experiences on the practice. It was also instrumental in creating an enabling environment to exchange ideas on best practices, outline emerging problems and try to find practical solutions and develop alternative scenarios to reach developmental goals.

The formulation of LDOs and IDPs had to be viewed within the context of the development mandates of local authorities as described in the Constitution and the White Paper on Local Government. "It is clear from the White Paper on Local Government that the product emanating from this process would form the basis of the future capital funding support for local authorities."

Mr Mazosiwe urged local authorities to use the planning process to ensure that their LDOs and IDPs clearly reflected their vision and that their development proposals were realistic, reliable and sustainable.

He added that it was fundamental that the planning process was underpinned by partnerships between local authorities. "Co-operative governance is not only a vertical process between national, provincial and local spheres of government. The process of joint planning between local authorities is actively encouraged and pursued by the provincial government "

"Local authorities have reached different stages on the articulation of their working plans. The journey has not been plain sailing but that is natural when one embarks on a new way of doing things."

The national and provincial context

The Department of Land Affairs – Stephen Berrisford

Mr Berrisford started by commending the LDO / IDP planning process in the Eastern Cape as a model process for co-operative governance. Because of co-operation between government departments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, the Provincial Regulations contributed to a much better process. "The Planning Handbook was another feather in the Eastern Cape cap."

He explained that two laws provided the framework for the planning process: the Development Facilitation Act and the Local Government Transition Act. The two laws demanded two sets of requirements but Mr Berrisford emphasised that the planning should still be considered as one process.

He said the Department of Land Affairs was working towards one, coherent legal framework for municipal

planning. "As planning requirements from different government departments increase, co-operation and integration between local and national spheres of government become very important."

Mr Berrisford said because the process was required by national government there had to be support for the process from national government to local authorities. There was good progress on contractual arrangements to also ensure support for rural and under-resourced local authorities.

He emphasised that planning for land reform had to be part of the Integrated Development Plan.

Like the MEC he stressed the importance of realistic, sustainable and useful products emanating from the LDO / IDP Process. He said it was important that local authorities should be proud of their plans based on their implementation value rather than "on the thickness of the planning document".

The Department of Constitutional Development – Brian Marrian

Mr Marrian divided that local government transformation into three phases:

1. Pre-interim phase
 - Deracialisation
 - Combining municipalities
2. Interim phase
 - Democratisation
 - Democratic local government elections 1995 and 1996
3. Phase of full transformation

The agenda for full transformation was the White Paper on Local Government:

The legislative implications of the White Paper:

- Municipal Demarcation Act (1998)
- Municipal Structures Bill (1998)
- Municipal Systems Bill (1999)

The White Paper envisaged developmental local government where local authorities functioned as autonomous spheres of government. At the heart of developmental local government was Integrated Development Plans. These plans replaced the old Structure Plans or Guide Plans. IDPs would set performance indicators according to the priorities of the community. The IDP required an annual performance report to analyse performance of the past year and set targets for the coming year.

The Municipal Systems Bill would regulate core municipal systems such as development planning, participation and partnerships. Public Participation was a critical part of the LDO / IDP Process. The Batho Pele – People First – Campaign, which was about improving the efficiency of the public

sector, was also enshrined in the Municipal Systems Bill. It envisaged empowered citizens as the drivers of transformation. Participation and communication would provide a basis for development planning and performance management systems. Residents would be involved in determining service and developmental priorities. They would also be able to compare the performance of their local authority with other municipalities and alternative service providers. It would also give residents forums from which they could voice grievances.

The Chief Executive Officer or the town clerk (the municipal manager) should manage the process but strategic leadership from councillors was an imperative for the process.

Mr Marrian said the Department had seen little evidence of councillor involvement in the plans so far received by the Department. The approach in these plans was engineering-orientated and technical rather than developmental.

The Department of Housing and Local Government – Kojo Gyan

Mr Gyan said the Department expected 102 plans – six District Council plans and 96 other planning areas.

At the time the Department had received 68 working plans. Of these 23 had been approved, 34 were outstanding and the rest had been returned to local authorities for amendments.

Limited financial support was available for the planning process. The Department therefore had to assist with specific problems relating to the planning process. These included:

- limited human resources
- over-stretched financial resources
- local authorities who regarded the planning process as additional work
- low level of commitment from certain local authorities
- inability of local authorities to meet benchmarks and time frames in the planning process

Case Studies

Four case studies were presented at the Indaba. These case studies represented different approaches to the planning process in the Province.

The Amatola District Council represented a district council process, Graaf-Reinet an urban TLC process, the Maluti Region a regional process and Willowvale a joint planning process by the TLC and the TRC.

To avoid being prescriptive and to allow for the different approaches to the planning process, the planning committee of the Indaba did not propose a uniform format for reporting. The weakness of such an open-

ended reporting framework was that not all the case studies were dealt with in equal depth.

We highlight some of the lessons learnt.

Amatola District Council

Problems / Lessons

- **Tight time frames.** The limited period made it impossible to integrate the LDOs of the different local authorities into the regional perspective. Ideally, constituent local authorities should have had their LDOs completed before those of the District Council so that they could inform the District Council LDOs.
- **Lack of vital information.** It was difficult to get information and there were gaps in the information that was received. Some government departments never attended District Council workshops despite the fact that they had been invited. This made it difficult to prepare five-year plans. It was also difficult to align District Council and Provincial Government planning.
- **Support to constituent authorities.** Because the District Council and its constituent authorities were engaged in the planning process at the same time it was difficult for the District Council to provide support to the constituent authorities.
- **Genuine participation.** Community representation at council workshops was poor. The question arises as to whether the needs as prioritised in these workshops really reflected the needs of the community.
- **Funding.** The unequal distribution of funds to TLCs and TRCs hampered the process of LDO formulation. One proposal was that funds should be allocated for planning in a particular geographic area rather than just to the TLC. Funds from the Department of Land Affairs had not been fully utilised. This could have been because of ignorance or it could have something to do with the criteria for access.
- **Provincial support.** Support from provincial departments had been disappointing. There was consistent participation and support from the Departments of Water Affairs and Forestry, Housing and Local Government, Economic Affairs and the Office of the Premier. Eskom also presented its five-year plan for the region.
- **Issues falling through the cracks.** Some of the needs identified by the community fell outside the mandate of the District Council. It was important to refer these needs to the various departments to ensure that they were addressed.
- **The Handbook.** It had a primary municipality in mind and did not make a distinction between a District Council and a local authority. More emphasis could have been given to the section

dealing with LDO formulation, as that was the core of the exercise.

- Communication. Internal and external communication was vital during the planning process. The District Council appointed a contact person who ensured that the staff involved in the planning process had access to information related to the planning process. Regular co-ordination meetings were held.

Graaf-Reinet

Problems

- No support from the private sector
- Meetings were disrupted
- Unemployed people were not properly organised
- Interest in the process declined towards the end

The Maluti District

Strengths:

- LDO / IDP planning process helped the TRC to become better known in the district.
- The District Planning Committee (DPC) was a useful co-ordinating structure, linking processes of the TRC, line departments, civil society and the community
- Sectoral task teams strengthened co-ordination of role players in the different sectors
- It linked the LDO / IDP processes with specific projects, e.g. community based land management, Eco-tourism, Working For Water

Weaknesses

- TRC not adequately equipped with regard to resources and skills
- DPC not strong enough on higher level co-ordination and was still reliant on NGO support.
- Lack of confidence and recognition of the TRC by line departments and the public.
- Elections take TRC away from development planning role.

Willowvale

In Willowvale, the TLC and the TRC embarked on a joint planning process.

The Office of the Premier supported the process as a pilot project. The Border Rural Committee (BRC), an NGO, was appointed to assist the local authorities in the planning process.

Lessons

About joint planning

- All parties must be involved from the start to ensure commitment.
- Actual steps should be completed in order to ensure continuation of the process.
- The skills required to undertake such a task require careful consideration of all the skills available in the community.
- The different roles and responsibilities of the local authorities are unclear in terms of legislation.

About the Planning Committee

- All the members of the Committee should be committed to the planning process.
- Members should have the necessary time available to receive training and to be involved in the planning process.
- Financial support should be sufficient to cover the actual costs.
- Because of the geographical distances, there should be sufficient consideration for support, networking and communication procedures.
- Documentation needs to be completed in a concise and timely manner from the start

About administration assistants

- Vehicles should be available especially in the rural areas.
- The following resources should be available: computer, maps, charts, up-to-date regional information, sample documentation requirements.
- These assistants should have enough time for and be committed to the process. They learn from and support the Planning Committee.
- Accountability. The district council employed the assistants but they serve the TLC that has different requirements.

About resources

- Financial resources should be available timeously and with clear release procedures.
- There should be support in terms of procedures, suggestions and feedback.
- Administrative support should include adequate time, commitment and stationery.

Group discussions

The Working Plan

Key issues / problems

- How to access funding for local authorities and Planning Committees
- Lack of capacity and the dominant role of consultants

- Limited participation of communities and other stakeholders
- Unclear guidelines from and lack of commitment by district councils
- Lack of support from provincial and national government departments
- Inappropriate and too tight time frames

Recommendations

- There should be "bridging finance" from the Department of Housing and Local Government for the Working Plan process
- Funds from the Department of Land Affairs should be channelled through the district councils
- NGOs could assist district councils to help TLCs and TRCs to draw up working plans and to access funds
- Ensure additional capacity to assist with the Working Plan; either consultants or external professionals
- Provide guidelines for appropriate forms of outsourcing (contract compliance, tendering etc.)
- Build and maintain capacity at provincial government and district council levels
- Provide appropriate models of working plans that suit different types and sizes of local authorities
- Create a provincial co-ordinating structure to:
 - ⇒ Look at capacity and implementation needs of local authorities
 - ⇒ Look into funding problems and facilitate bridging finance to kick-start the planning process
 - ⇒ Provide examples of planning models for smaller local authorities
 - ⇒ Ensure co-ordination of inputs and roles from public institutions like Public Works, Eskom, DWAF etc.
 - ⇒ Ensure targeted capacity building for local authorities, planning committees and other organisations
 - ⇒ Provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the LDO /IDP process
- The co-ordinating structure could consist of:
 - ⇒ The Department of Housing and Local Government
 - ⇒ The Department of Land Affairs
 - ⇒ The six district councils
 - ⇒ Other appropriate government departments
 - ⇒ NGOs, consultants and other role players that could provide input in the planning process

Formulating LDOs and IDPs

Key issues / problems

- The Planning Committees were not clear about their role in the process
- The Planning Committees were not sufficiently committed to the process

- There was a lack of support for the process from decision makers
- Enforcing IDP mechanisms
- Lack of co-ordination between authorities
- Lack of funding and implementation capacity in rural communities
- Joint planning overburdens the TLC
- Weak situational analysis in rural areas

Recommendations

- Public input should be transformed into action plans by experts
- IDPs should be the responsibility of the CEO
- Workshops should be compulsory
- All role players should be sufficiently empowered to take part in the planning process
- Local solutions for local problems

Linking the community and the local authority

Key issues / problems

- Financial constraints
- Communities far apart and isolated
- Political differences
- Poor participation at meetings and workshops
- Officials not aligned to bottom-up approach
- Councillors and the community not sufficiently informed about the IDP

Recommendations

- Provide appropriate capacity building and training
- Create communication mechanisms
- Design an appropriate plan for the allocation of financial resources
- Identify the most appropriate local language to use in the planning process
- Hold regular ward and zone meetings
- Maximise the use of NGOs

The relationship between the TLC, TRC and the District Council

Key issues / problems

- Joint planning
 - ⇒ When is joint planning appropriate?
 - ⇒ Finances for joint planning
 - ⇒ How to ensure sustainability of a joint planning process
 - ⇒ How to deal with the differences in function and administration procedures of TLCs and TRCs
 - ⇒ IDP issues difficult to integrate
- Provincial support

- Funding
 - ⇒ Streamline present funding mechanisms
 - ⇒ Lack of funds for TRCs
 - ⇒ Funds to be channelled through the district council
- The role of the District Council
 - ⇒ How and with what will the District Council assist TLCs and TRCs?
 - ⇒ How does the DC understand its role?

Recommendations

- Increase capacity of the DC
- Establish a DC Forum
- Ensure greater co-ordination between Housing and Local Government, the Department of Land Affairs, District Councils, local authorities, NGOs, consultants and the Department of Constitutional Development
- Establish a provincial communication strategy and information management system

The relationship between local authority, provincial and national plans

Key issues / problems

- Interdepartmental co-ordination
- Roles and responsibilities
- Willingness and commitment
- Capacity
- Financial tensions
- Information
- Compatibility between spheres of government

Recommendations

- Formalise information flow through links with existing info centres
- Review budgeting, financial management and resources allocation systems to ensure equity across the three tiers of government and financial functionality of local authorities
- Optimise the Inter-governmental Fund (IGF)
- Ensure real commitment by top management and political leadership
- Ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation of plans
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of different role players
- Develop a harmonised and well-focussed capacity building programme for local authorities to ensure transformation and empowerment

Panel discussion

The panel consisted of representatives from the Departments of Housing and Local Government, Land Affairs and Constitutional Development, Border Rural Committee, Afesis-Corplan, the Eastern Cape Local

Government Association and the Eastern Cape Institute of Town and Regional Planners.

These are some of the questions the panel dealt with:

Q: How will a joint planning process between TRCs and TLCs ensure rural – urban integration?

Firstly there should be an acknowledgement of the legislative and functional differences between the two councils. The TRC does not have a service delivery function but the TLC does. The process should nevertheless be integrated and good relations between the two councils are important. The product of the planning process should also reflect the different functions of the councils.

Q: Is joint planning compulsory?

It is not compulsory but the department supports and encourages it strongly especially in the light of the current demarcation process. Where TLCs have started the planning process without TRC involvement it will make sense to go back and incorporate the TRC in the planning process.

Q: Is an HRD plan part of the IDP?

Human resource development is an important element of the IDP.

The Department of Constitutional Development's Local Government Transformation Programme has one area that focuses on HRD. This programme has been going for four years now. Through this programme, resources are available for capacity building and management support programmes. Initially the Department of Constitutional Development (DCD) was not clear on who should be the target of the capacity building programme. Should it be directed at councillors, in which case it should have a political component, or should it be directed at officials in which case it should have an administrative component?

Nationally there has been an inventory of training programmes relating to local government. This covers a range of programmes presented by various institutions from universities and NGOs. During the pilot phase, training requirements have been established. The Department hopes to fine-tune the methodology and the curriculums in 1999.

There is also the Provincial Co-ordinating Training Board that offers various training programmes through the ECLGA.

Q: What is the progress on the Provincial IDP?

The Province started a provincial spatial plan. This is in its final draft stages. The plan has been made available

to local authorities because the provincial plan is an important guideline in their own planning processes.

The Department will wait for local authority plans before the provincial plan is finalised to give meaning to the bottom-up approach to planning. The local authority plans will form the basis for the final provincial plan. These plans will also serve as input for a revision of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy.

Q: TLCs are confronted with various legislative requirements. When will these be simplified and streamlined?

Simplification and harmonisation of legislature is necessary. A task team is currently looking at the rationalisation of planning legislation based on DFA principles. This should be finalised in 1999.

Q: Is a local economic development plan part of the IDP?

The budget in the LDO / IDP plan has to reflect the revenues local authorities hope to raise but a local economic development plan is not an expressed requirement of the IDP.

Q: To whom should the TRCs refer local land problems?

There are efforts to streamline land transfer issues within the Department of Land Affairs. Land claims should be referred to the Land Claims Commission. The Land Rights Bill will address issues of tenure and restitution. This Bill will probably only be promulgated after the election. Issues brought to the TLC should be referred to the Department of Land Affairs in the Province.

A requirement for local authorities to qualify for a DFA grant is the potential of its plan to impact on land reform.

Sustainable land reform requires integration in the LDO / IDP process. To ensure that municipalities do not plan in isolation, the approved LDO / IDP has been given strong legal impact.

Conclusion

The Indaba highlighted the following achievements of the LDO / IDP process in the Province to date:

- The planning process is underway in most local authorities.
- Efforts to involve public participation have been made in a number of cases. The quality of this participation is currently being evaluated.
- The Planning Handbook for Local Authorities in the Eastern Cape provided some guidance.
- National departments are working towards one, coherent legal framework.

- The Provincial Regulations in the Eastern Cape contributed to an easier implementation process.

The following critical issues need to be addressed:

- Co-ordination
- Communication
- Enthusiasm for the process is on the decline
- Capacity building
 - ⇒ Training facilitators
 - ⇒ Skills transfer to enable local authorities to drive the process
- Appropriate planning methodology
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities of the different role players
- Funding
- Clarity on the requirements for an "appropriate plan"?

The Indaba strongly recommended the establishment of a co-ordinating structure to address the above issues.

The way forward

On April 23, 1999 the first meeting of the Eastern Cape IDP / LDO Consultative Forum took place. This co-ordinating structure was established as a result of recommendations made at the Indaba.

At the meeting the following overall function was defined for the Forum:

To enhance co-ordination and integration of the LDO / IDP Process in the Eastern Cape

The Forum will be accountable to the Office of the Director-General through the Department of Housing and Local Government. The Department of Housing and Local Government will chair the Forum and the Department and the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (Ecsecc) will share secretariat responsibilities.

The Consultative Forum will consist of representatives of all IDP / LDO stakeholders. They are:

- National, provincial and local government
- District councils
- The Eastern Cape Local Government Association (ECLGA)
- Non-governmental Organisations
- The South African Planning Institute
- Parastatals (Eskom, Telkom etc.)
- Organised labour

The Forum will be open for other individuals and institutions for contributions.

Five Task teams were appointed to address specific issues that were identified at the Indaba:

- Funding – convened by the Border Rural Committee
- Research and Information – convened by Ecsecc
- Policy and Co-ordination – convened by the Department of Housing and Local Government
- Capacity building – convened by the Amatola District Council
- Monitoring and Evaluation – convened by the Department of Housing and Local Government

The Consultative Forum will meet bi-monthly. The task teams will meet as often as required by their work and they will report to the Consultative Forum.

The Consultative Forum will function until July 2000. This will enable the Forum to observe the completion and implementation of the first cycle of the planning process. After that the Forum will dissolve unless otherwise decided by its members.

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