

# District Development Model study: Exploring Implications for the Skills Development at District Municipalities



**F A S S E T**

*Make the future count*



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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>CoGTA</b>	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
<b>DBSA</b>	Development Bank of Southern Africa
<b>DDM</b>	District Development Model
<b>FAS</b>	Finance and Accounting Services
<b>FASSET</b>	Financial and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>GRDM</b>	Garden Route District Municipality
<b>HEIs</b>	Higher Education Institutions
<b>HWSETA</b>	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>IDP</b>	Integrated Development Approach
<b>JDMA</b>	Joint District Metro Approach
<b>LED</b>	Local Economic Development
<b>LGSETA</b>	Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>MEC</b>	Member of Executive Committee
<b>MFMA</b>	Municipal Financial Management Act
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NSDP 2030</b>	National Skills Development Plan 2030
<b>ORTDM</b>	Oliver Reginald Tambo District Municipality
<b>PFMA</b>	Public Finance Management Act
<b>POPIA</b>	Protection of Personal Information Act

<b>PSET</b>	Post-School Education and Training
<b>SALGA</b>	South African Local Government Association
<b>SDF</b>	Spatial Development Framework
<b>SETA</b>	Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>SLA</b>	Service Legal Agreement
<b>SMART</b>	Smart, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1. Introduction

This research study report starts by tackling the background and emergence of the District Development Model (DDM). An overview evaluation of the model and its impact were explored through the lenses of two district municipalities, namely: O.R. Tambo District Municipality (ORTDM) and Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) case studies. The DDM can be termed as a practical Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) mechanism which enables all three spheres of government: national, provincial, and local governments to work in unison with communities and stakeholders in planning and budgeting. Furthermore, the DDM was adopted to help build a coherent State to bring about inclusive economic growth, spatial transformation, strategic infrastructure investment, and reliable service delivery for all.

### 1.2. Problem Discussion

The national democratic government which was catapulted to serve its people has been marred with various hindrances which present it as a shadow of its former self. This has led to the various social and economic problems to be experienced by the people the government serves. The South African context has experienced unprecedented service delivery protests due to inadequate provision of basic services. The lack of services is often attributed to operating in silos through an uneven distribution of services between the three spheres of government. It is against this backdrop that in 2019, the president launched the District Development Model in collaboration with the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to alleviate the operating in silos in the spheres of government.

### 1.3. Research Purpose

A first, the DDM was piloted in two district municipalities and one metro, i.e., O.R Tambo District Municipality, Waterberg District Municipality, and the eThekweni Metro. For this study, the O.R. Tambo District and Garden Route District Municipality have been used as case studies. This empirical study sought to explore an overview evaluation of the practical workings of the DDM to determine how it responds to the lack of service delivery in a sound, coordinated, concerted, and coherent manner. The study delved into proposed policies which will further inform the implementation of the DDM in response to the developmental government mandate of operating in unison. The study also sought to explore and determine the role that SETAs, such as FASSET can play in the execution of the DDM. Lastly, the study sought to make recommendations on how the government institutions, including SETAs, and other relevant stakeholders can support DDM as government developmental policy initiative.

#### 1.4. Background: Origin of the District Development Model in South Africa

The President in the 2019 Presidency Budget Speech (2019) identified the “pattern of operating in silos as a challenge which led to lack of coherence in planning and implementation thus has made monitoring and oversight of government’s programme difficult”. The consequence has been non optimal delivery of services and diminished impact on the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and employment. The President further echoed for the rolling out of “a new integrated district-based approach to addressing service delivery challenges and localised procurement and job creation, that promotes and supports local businesses, and that involves communities...”

As articulated by the Department of Corporative Governance and Traditional Affairs - *The District Development Model aims to improve the coherence and impact of government service delivery with focus on 44 Districts and 8 Metros around the country as development spaces that can be used as centres of service delivery and economic development, including job creation.*

The DDM study has been conducted by FASSET’s Skills Planning & Research Unit with the following questions and subsequent objectives taking precedence:

- (i) What is the understanding of the DDM by local municipalities?
- (ii) What is the extent of coordination between the local provincial, and national governments in supporting of the DDM?
- (iii) What is the role played by relevant stakeholders in support of the DDM?

Objectives:

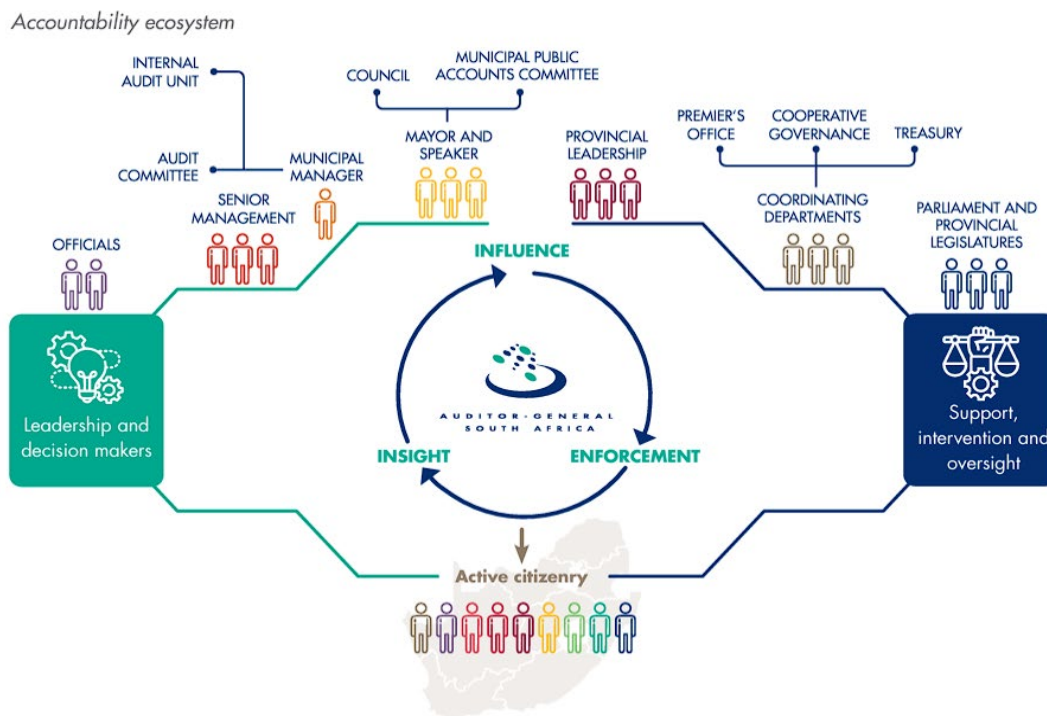
- (i) To explore the understanding of the DDM by local municipalities.
- (ii) To understand the extent of coordination between the local, provincial, and national governments in supporting the DDM.
- (iii) To determine the role played by relevant stakeholder in support of the DDM.

This study targeted two district municipalities, i.e., O.R. Tambo and Garden Route Districts. Within these districts, the key participants targeted were local municipalities, civic society, organised business, youth formations, and the education sectors. As it is explained in the methodology, the collection of data included focus group interviews and interviews with key informants.

### 1.5. Latest Audit Performance of Municipalities

Accountability in municipalities is supposed to follow a specific process that ties to other role-players. There has been growing concern about the performance of municipalities. The 2021-2022 Auditor General Report shows that there is considerable work to be done in municipalities, particularly in the management of funds including application of controls as stipulated in the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), Municipal Finance Management Act, and other government policies. Diagram 1a below shows the process through which municipalities should operate. As it can be noted on the diagram, there is an array of stakeholders that should be involved in processes of municipalities.

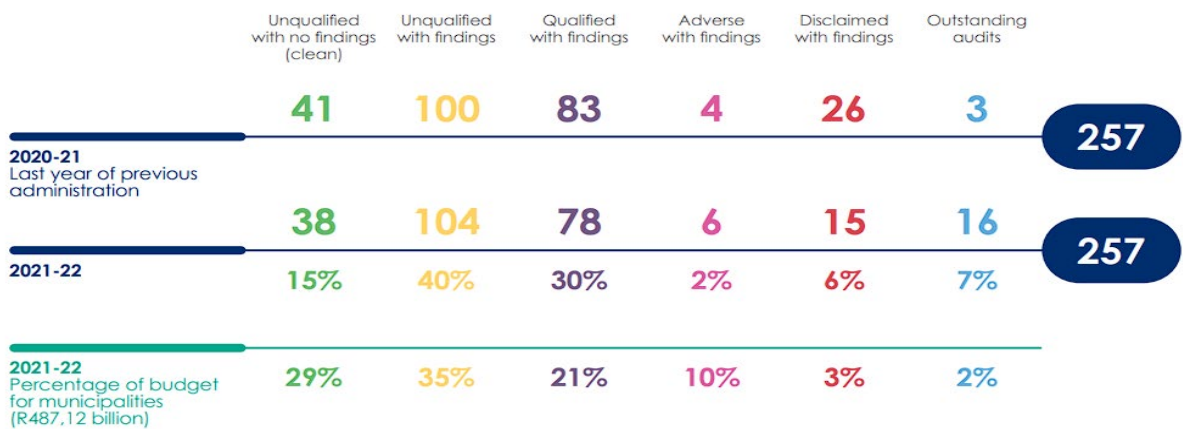
Diagram 1a: AG recommended accountability ecosystem



Noting figures 1b, 1c, and 1d below, we note that as FASSET there is more work to be done in municipalities. Key to this is not punishment of wrongdoing, but for us is to help prevent the possibility of any mismanagement of funds of whichever nature in municipalities. These issues suggest a lack of compliance with government procurement systems and intended/unintended mismanagement of funds, and perhaps a greater degree of poor coordination and brokenness of the system.

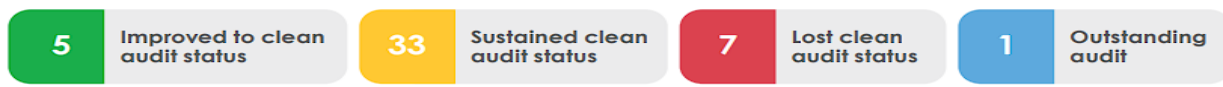


**Figure 1b. Audit Outcomes – Municipalities**



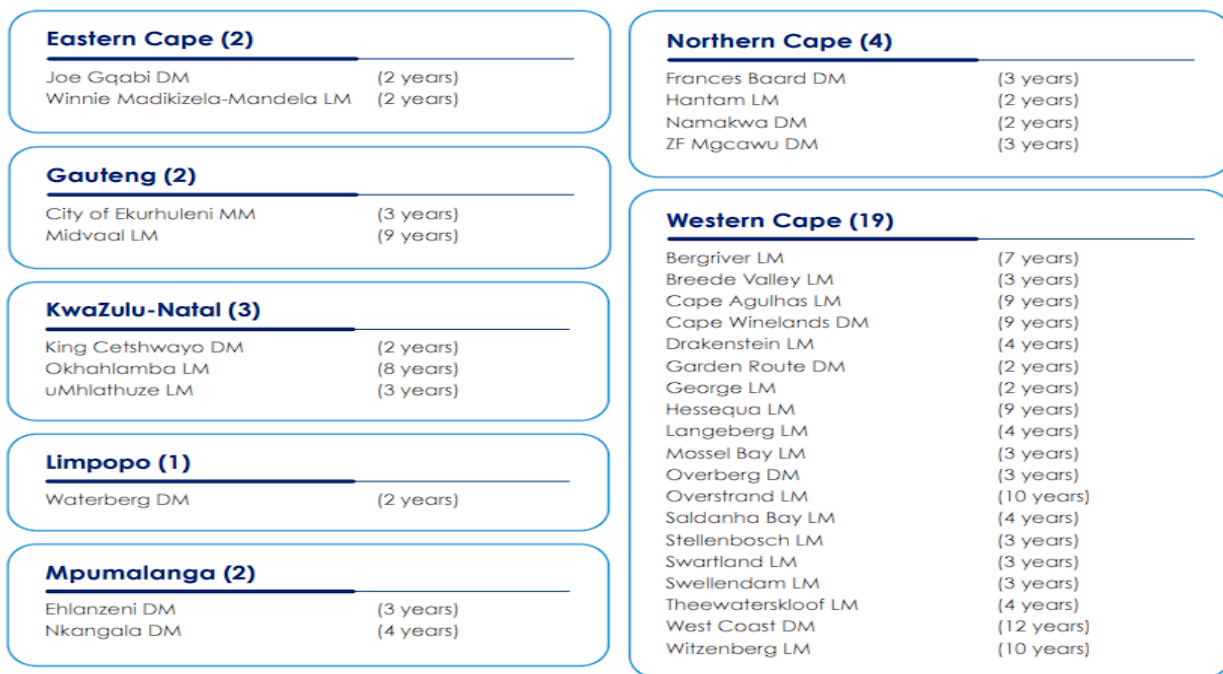
Source: AG

**Figure 1c: Movement in Clean Audit Status – Municipalities**



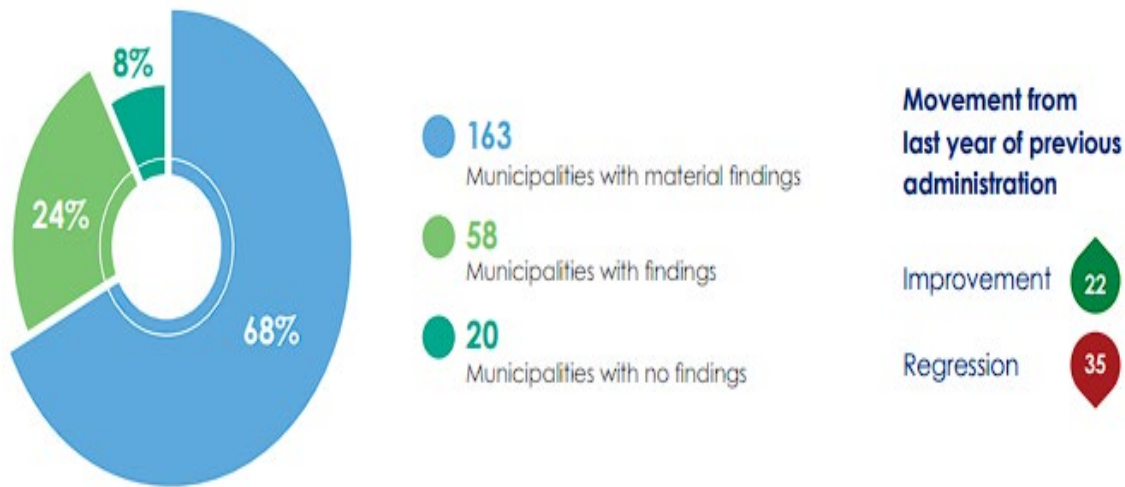
The municipalities that maintained their clean audit status continue to be an example of what is possible.

**Municipalities that sustained clean audit status and number of years clean**



Source: AG

**Figure 1d: Status of Compliance with Supply Chain Management Legislation**



Source: AG

### 1.6. Conclusion

This section explored the overview and background of the study. In doing so, it laid out a foundation of what to expect from this report. Section two that follows explores literature with particular focus on the foundation of the government of the Republic of South Africa. The section starts by exploring the structure of the South African political structure. Secondly, the section deals with the extent of success of the government policies and plans that were put in place for local municipalities before the start of the DDM. Thirdly, the chapter investigates international comparisons of similar policies that have or are being implemented in another countries. In exploring this sub-section, comparison of three countries is made, with particular focus on Rwanda, Ireland, and Singapore.

## SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

Intergovernmental relations are not restricted to federations alone, but rather to all multi-tiered or multi-sphered dispensations, whether through provisions in the Constitution or by enabling legislation, as is evident from the South African situation. Even though South Africa is regarded as a unitary state, some have suggested that it has some federalist characteristics.

The DDM is an integrated planning model of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs which seeks to be a new integrated, district-based, service delivery approach aimed at fast-tracking service delivery and ensure that municipalities are adequately supported and resourced to carry out their mandate. The DDM was approved by government structures, including Cabinet to integrate service delivery that will be more practical, achievable, implementable, measurable, and clearly aligned to the key priorities of the government. The model seeks to change the face of rural and urban landscapes by ensuring complementarity between urban and rural development, with a deliberate emphasis on local economic development. South Africa has 257 metropolitan, district, and local municipalities. This number comprises of 8 metros, 44 district, and 205 local municipalities. They are focused on growing local economies and providing infrastructure and service.

### 2.2. South African Political structure

In South Africa, the basis for the system and process of intergovernmental relations is entrenched by the text of the Constitution, 1996 “and not whether it is classified as federal or decentralised unitary, by academics or political parties as the classification of the Constitution as federal, unitary or quasi-federal is not material or conclusive, albeit interesting from an academic perspective”, (De Villiers & Sindane, 2011, p. 8).

According to Anderson in Wright (1978, p. 8) “intergovernmental relations are important interactions occurring among governmental institutions in all spheres. The distinctive features of intergovernmental relations suggest the increased complexity and interdependency of political systems. The characteristics of these more complex and interdependent systems are the number and growth of governmental institutions; the number and variety of public officials involved in intergovernmental relations; the intensity and regularity of contacts among those officials; the importance of officials’ actions and attitudes; and the preoccupation with financial policy issues”. The

Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 13 of 2005 describes intergovernmental relations as, “relationships that arise among different governments or among organs of state from different governments in the conduct of their affairs”. Intergovernmental relations acknowledge affairs among several departments and sectors within the three spheres of government and puts an emphasis on public officials acting in an inter-jurisdictional context, while they also focus on informal working relationships in institutional settings. “Intergovernmental relations are intended to promote and facilitate cooperative decision-making and ensure that policies and activities across all spheres encourage service delivery and meet the needs of the citizens in an effective way”, (DPLG 1997:3).

The fundamental principles of government as outlined in Section 41(1) of the Constitution of 1996 are best exemplified by cooperative government, along with the ways in which these principles are put into practice through the creation of institutions and structures. The three realms of government work together in cooperative government, which calls for each to play a defined function. Cooperative government does not overlook differences in strategy and point of view among the spheres, but rather promotes discussion to solve the needs of the people they represent by utilizing the tools at their disposal.

Cooperative government and intergovernmental relations have different conceptual meanings. Cooperative government is about government partnership and the principles that go along with it, such as national harmony, peace, appropriate cooperation and coordination, good communication, and preventing conflict. The values of cooperative government can be institutionalized and enshrined in law through intergovernmental ties, which may also include the executive or legislative branches of government (Audit Report 1999:12). According to Chapter 3 of the Constitution from 1996, cooperative government is the theoretical foundation for achieving the goal of fostering a development-oriented state.

The whole-of-government planning framework was a relatively recent development in the intergovernmental relations system, which highlighted challenges facing intergovernmental relations policy and planning. “The challenge was to create synergy in the planning processes operating in the various spheres of government”, (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2008, p. 19). To encourage the successful completion of cooperative work, integrated planning and policymaking there should be support by implementation techniques that are coordinated.

According to the Inaugural Report (2008, p. 32), the following pertains to the abundant challenges related to the successful undertaking of joint work and includes “the definition of clear mandates to intergovernmental and interdepartmental task teams, the need to map intergovernmental programmes and projects to individual public institutions’ budgets, effective decision-making when

the number of relevant stakeholders is large and authority and accountability is diffused and the need to create a culture of joint work rather than a fixation on individual institutional achievement". When policy agendas overlap ministerial mandates, the administration of service delivery programmes raises the issue of jurisdiction amongst institutions.

The obscured local government structure in South Africa is seen as a problem for intergovernmental relations. First, it is suggested that there should be a concern over the ambiguity surrounding the roles and responsibilities of district and local governments as well as the conflicts that exist between the two types of municipalities (Policy Review on Provincial and Local Government 2009). The two-tier system of local government was initially intended to ensure a more equitable distribution of services and resources across local and district municipalities, allowing local municipalities to oversee service delivery while districts would carry out four specific mandates in support of the effort to address the spatial inequalities caused by apartheid (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2011:38). Nonetheless, policy changes, reformed the role of districts in several ways, including the ones listed below: the Municipal Structures Act of 2000 was amended to make districts responsible for key municipal services, and the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act of 2005 allowed for the establishment of district intergovernmental forums to promote cooperation between the districts and its local municipalities. The forum has statutory obligations, including coherent planning and coordinating with other local governments.

In South Africa, it is important to develop and/or identify a relevant organisation or institution to launch significant institutional and policy reforms in areas of shared responsibilities amongst ministries. Even though its duty extends beyond simply encouraging intergovernmental relations, the Department of Cooperative Government at the time was seen as the guardian department for cooperative government and intergovernmental relations in South Africa. Before submitting their proposals to Cabinet, the Department of Cooperative Governance held a discussion about the need for an organizational structure to support cooperative government and to carefully review both the policy and related legislation that have an impact on local and provincial government (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2011:62).

The DDM is a multi-level planning and electoral cycle strategy that focuses on 52 district and metropolitan spaces as IGR impact zones for more efficient collaborative planning, budgeting, and implementation. The DDM implementation is considered to signify and comprise both immediate and short-term measures as well as medium- to long-term actions and fitting into a logical framework. It is part of the institutionalization of a programmatic IGR approach. Although each domain, sector, or entity has specific constitutional rights, obligations, and authorities, they all work together to

coordinate planning, budgeting, and implementation processes that support local and regional development. A Single Government Plan (as an Intergovernmental Compact) for each space serves as the framework for accountability and serves as a guide for all strategic investment spending and project delivery within the 44 Districts and 8 Metros as developmental spaces (IGR Impact Zones).

The DDM is designed to bring about change at three institutional stages. When it comes to monitoring, reporting, and assessment, this comprehension defines and distinguishes between each:

1. DDM institutionalisation (nationally);
2. at the level of One Plan (District/Metro territory); and
3. at the municipal level, in terms of municipal performance.

These distinctions inform the kind of monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities to be undertaken.

The DDM focuses on outcomes and impacts. Outcomes and impacts are by their very nature and definition “medium-term results” and the “results of achieving specific outcomes” over the long-term. There then needs to be monitoring, reporting, and evaluation across implementation phases ranging from immediate to longer-term outcomes, albeit with differential implications at each of the institutional levels. The district municipalities are the closest to the constituencies or the public. These are the implementers of policies at the most basic level of government, and therefore, the DDM is about the outcomes of the developmental policies and the impacts these have on the public.

A variety of local government policy and capacity interventions and changes are already underway at the municipal performance level. These are both older than the DDM and offer the DDM's policy goals with a solid foundation. The majority of that is now taking place in municipalities that are not part of the DDM, although these interventions could be helpful in relation to the goals of the DDM strategy. With an emphasis on the capacity for managing performance information, this level of the reform therefore adopts a continuous, long-term approach to the monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.

## 2.3. The Extent of Success of the Development Plans Existed in ORTDM and GRDM Prior to District Development Plan

### 2.3.1. Garden Route District Municipality Joint District Municipality Approach

The Garden District Municipality (GRDM) is responsible for drafting the District Integrated Development Planning (IDP) Framework Plan, a mechanism to ensure alignment and integration between the IDPs of the GRDM and Local Municipalities of: □ Bitou □ Knysna □ George □ Mossel Bay □ Hessequa □ Oudtshorn □ Kannaland.

We were fortunate as FASSET to meet with Dr. Helena von Schlicht who is a District Mayor in Cape Winelands District in July 2023 at the Inaugural District Development Model Conference. Our interaction paved a way for us on the methodology that we applied on this research. Dr von Schlicht presented in the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual District Development Model Conference held in Stellenbosch. Through her presentation, we were able to capture the highlights of local government and role of Districts in support of local municipalities. In her presentation, she indicated how the Joint District Metro Approach (JDMA) could be used as the existing model to which the DDM can be aligned. Ideally, the DDM is supposed to provide pathways through which various key social partners including, the private sector can work together to ensure municipalities work for the benefit of their residents.

### 2.3.2. O.R. Tambo Local Economic Developmental Policies Implementation

Local Economic Development and Infrastructure Development branches of the municipalities existed as main branches that dealt with service delivery before the inauguration of the DDM. The DDM was not instituted as a government plan to stop or substitute the existing plans, but to enhance the single-focused cross governmental approach to service delivery. As noted in Xesibe report (see: Xesibe Holdings 2023) that reviewed the District Development Model in the Eastern Cape, DDM was based on already existing local municipalities policies and development plans.

As outlined in the Xesibe Holdings case study, many local municipalities within the OR Tambo District depend on grants transfers due to the lack of revenue collection and non-implementation of revenue enhancement strategies (Xesibe Holdings, 2023). The Municipal Infrastructure Grant budget has been spent appropriately by most of the local authorities; however, Mhlontlo and Nyandeni are the only municipalities that utilized at most 70% of their capital budget (Xesibe Holdings, 2023, p. 72). The report further noted that, None of the municipalities performed excellently in the development of the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Strategy. In addition, most municipalities in the district performed poorly in the Corruption Prevention Mechanisms indicator due to not adopting fraud prevention policies.

## 2.4. International comparison

In this sub-section we are exploring three (3) countries that we sort to compare their Districts and Local Municipalities' Development Plans that are at equivalent of the DDM.

### 2.4.1. Rwanda

Rwanda has a multifaceted developmental approach to local and district government. Interestingly, it shares significant common implementation strategies with South Africa, including the involvement of

organised business, social partners, organised labour, and traditional authorities. It is evident in Rwanda that at a time of instituting a policy for local and district development, most local and district municipalities relied heavily on national government transfers. In addition, there was a significant lack of coordination.

Like in South African context, Rwanda has National Local Economic and Community Development (LED) and the Community Development (CD) policy. The main purpose of the LED and CD policy is to address several issues identified:

*1. Limited LED planning capacity of local governments and their stakeholders:*

- (a) Inadequate data management system,
- (b) Challenge in citizens' participation,
- (c) Limited private sector engagement in LED planning and implementation,
- (d) Dependence of on Central Government transfers, and
- (e) Insufficient coordination.

*2. Limited private sector participation in LED:*

- (a) Entrepreneurship challenges,
- (b) Limited scope for public private partnerships at the local level
- (c) Neither protection nor incentives for local entrepreneurs competing on the local market,
- (d) Limited market outside of Kigali, 3. Inadequate local infrastructure.

Policy objectives:

1. To enhance the capacity of LED and CD actors to identify local economic opportunities;
2. To enhance the LED and CD planning and coordination capacity at national and local level;
3. To enhance the enabling environment that attracts private sector investment for LED;
4. To improve mobilization of finance for LED;
5. To improve district revenue mobilization for district LED investment;
6. To mainstream cross cutting issues in this policy.

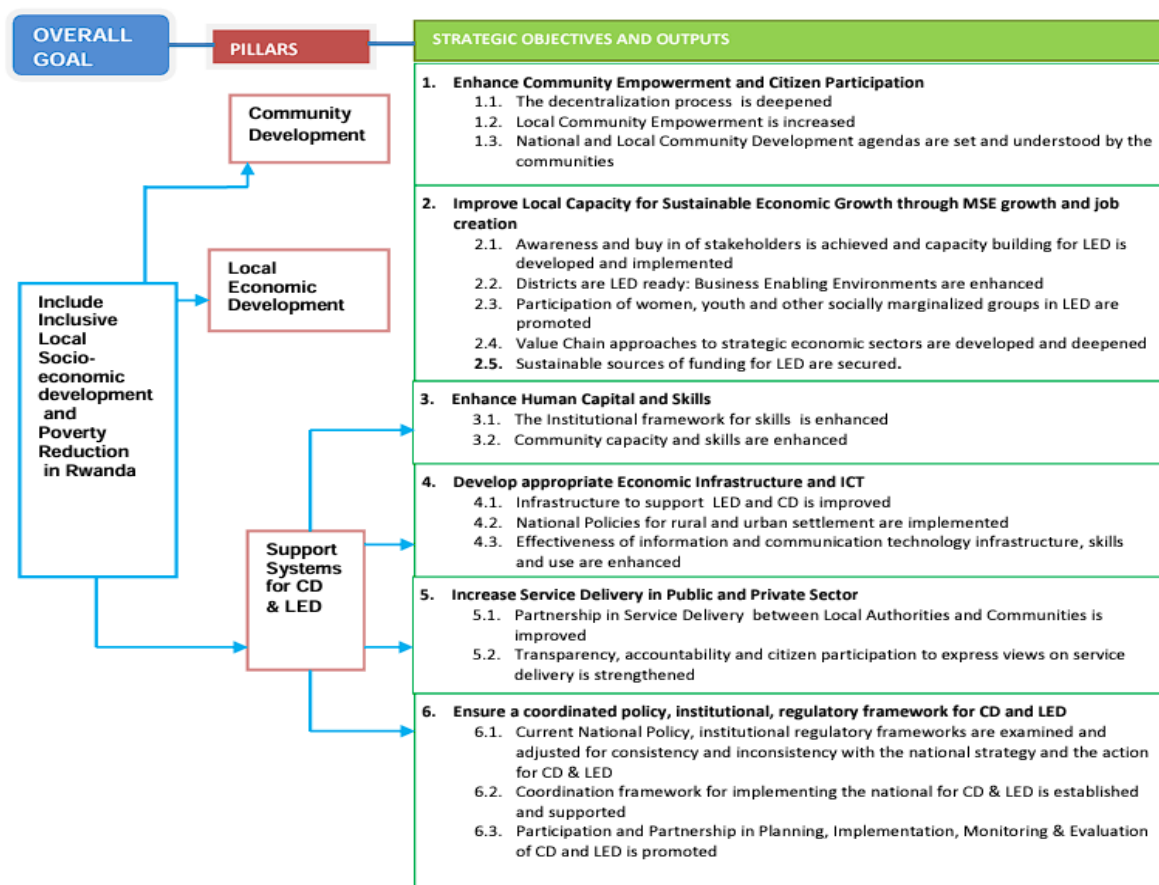
Rwanda has an equivalent of the DDM in the form of the National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development (LED) whose aim is to contribute to the effective



implementation of Vision 2020, EDPRSII, DIP, and the Community Development Policy by reinforcing coordination among actors, enhancing focus on Community Development and LED and putting communities and businesses at the forefront of addressing local issues. Notably, the word coordinated approach to development of local communities and economy seems to be resonating with that of the DDM approach in South Africa. And inclusion of different partners for development also appears to have been Rwanda’s model of implementing the National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development.

One significant difference between National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development and District Development Model, is that the DDM has no emphasis of skills development in its approach. The National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development as presented in the diagram below shows in point number 3 that skills development forms part of the development of local and district municipalities in Rwanda.

**Figure 2a: National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development in Rwanda**



According to the Ministry of Local Government, there remains many challenges for Community Development including resistance to change in the community; poverty and illiteracy rates; the pressure of population growth on land; infant malnutrition and government budget constraints (Ministry of Local Government, 2012). In addition, it is said that the CD Policy has not been well implemented probably due to lack of CD strategy, implementation plan, and an adequate coordination mechanism.

#### 2.4.2. Singapore

According to the World Bank Report, 50 years ago, Singapore was confronted with high unemployment, poor infrastructure, and a housing shortage (World Bank, 2023). Today the city-state is ranked as one of the most liveable cities, boasting one of the highest levels of human capital development in the world (World Bank, 2023).

After the exponential industrialisation of Singapore in the 1960s, the island nation's development trajectory was launched, and manufacturing became the main driver of growth. According to the World Bank, in the early 1970s, Singapore reached its full employment and joined the ranks of Hong Kong SAR, Republic of Korea, and Taiwan a decade later as Asia's newly industrializing economies (World Bank, 2023). The manufacturing and services sectors remain the twin pillars of Singapore's high value-added economy.

The World Bank Report further says that the overall growth of the Singapore economy was 3.2% in 2018. Value-added manufacturing, particularly in the electronics and precision engineering sectors, remain key drivers of growth, as are the services sector, particularly the information and communications industries. These grew 6.0% year-on-year, and the finance & insurance industries grew by 5.9% year-on-year. Economic growth was expected to moderate in 2019, with the government forecasting a range of 1.5% to 3.5%, projecting the rate to be slightly below the middle of the forecast range.

In 2017, Singapore launched the regional finance hub 'Asia's Infrastructure Exchange': "the go-to place where infrastructure demand and supply can connect, where infrastructure expertise and financing can be obtained, and infrastructure needs are met." In its announcement, the government highlighted the country's strong ecosystem, one that integrates infrastructure players along the whole value chain – multilateral banks, private financiers, lawyers, accountants, engineers, and other professional services.

The launch of regional finance brings a total development approach at district or regional level approach to development, in a sense that this drives the development not based on government

transfers rather on business-oriented approach to financing development and bringing more investment to the system. This approach shows the difference in the context of South Africa and Rwanda, where there is over reliance on government transfers and not so robust economic development particularly on manufacturing and finance fronts.

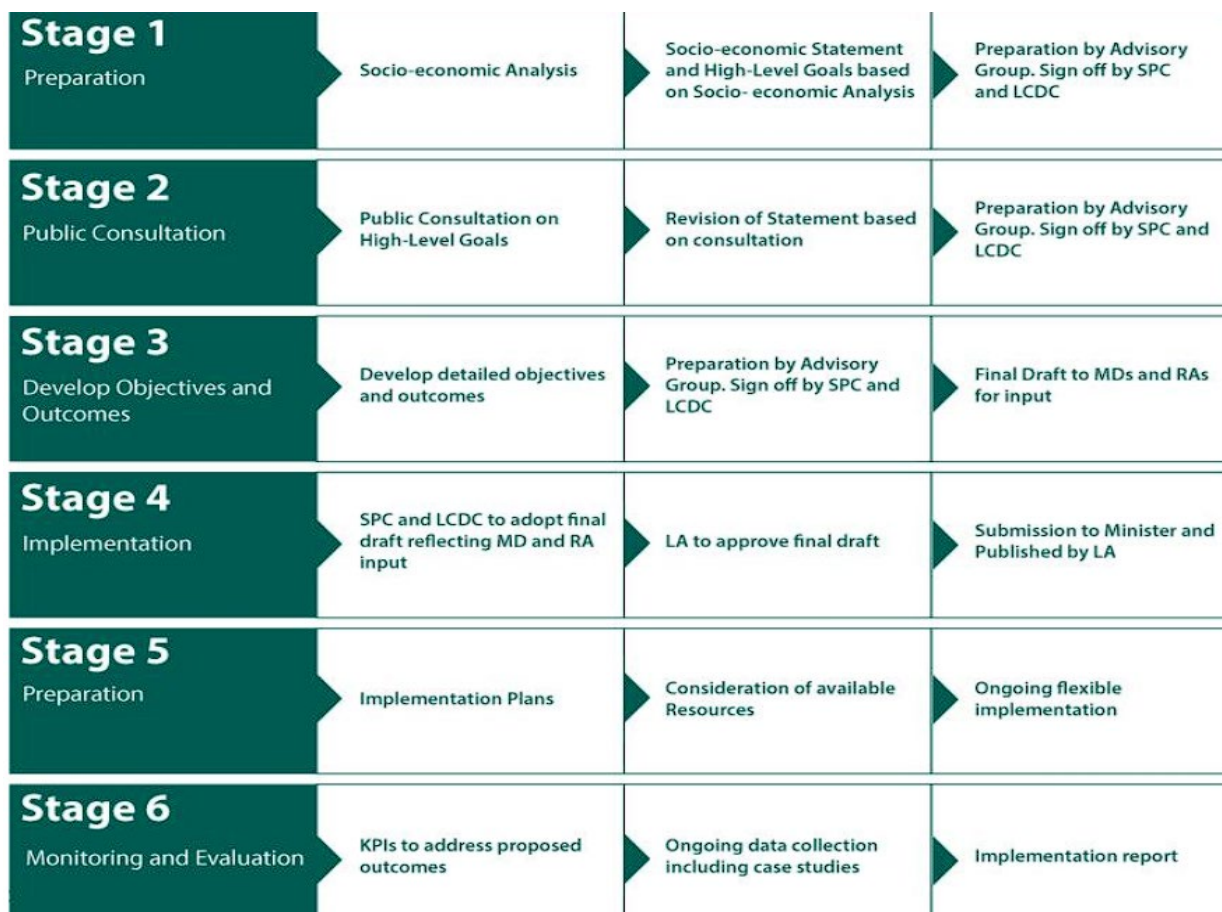
#### 2.4.3. Ireland

In Ireland, the Initiative to Support Local Economic Development is the core initiative at the level of the DDM in South Africa, National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development in Rwanda and partially, the Singapore Regional Finance Hub Approach. The Initiative to Support Local Economic Development was developed at the back of the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016–2021 (Dublin City Council, 2015). It was developed during 2015 by the Dublin City Local Community Development Committee and the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee. It was adopted by Dublin City Council in December 2015.

Interestingly, Ireland’s approach to local, district or regional economic development is centred on business-led growth and development. Business Chambers or organised business from different regions are included in local economic plans and their role is well articulated. This is not an approach that is emphasised in South Africa. In the South African local and district development, businesses tend to want to get something out of government rather than supporting government to achieve its local and district level development programmes.

Presented in the table below, is the new Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 that is built on and replaces the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021. There are some similarities of Ireland Local Economic and Community Plan with DDM, more especially with respect to monitoring and evaluation part, which aligns officials’ KPIs to address proposed outcomes and how the achievement of such will be measured.

**Figure 2b: Phases of Local Development Plan in Ireland**



## 2.5. Conclusion

The goal of South Africa's cooperative governance system and formal and informal intergovernmental relations is to promote greater engagements among the three spheres of government to advance a stable and responsive governance structure that upholds the values and guiding principles of public administration. Although there is a formal framework for intergovernmental relations and important intergovernmental relations mechanisms exist in the three spheres of government, there are still many issues that need to be resolved. Related issues in the implementation of intergovernmental relations include inadequately defined roles and placement of intergovernmental relations units in provinces; lack of coordination between provincial departments and municipalities as well as between adjacent

municipalities (due to South Africa's complicated local government system); and direct assistance to municipalities in reviewing infractions.

The building of intergovernmental relations practitioners' skills as well as the creation of a framework for planning and monitoring their execution should be considered. Every area of government has a special role to play in resolving conflicts that arise from having to do multiple tasks at once while interacting with other areas with the aim of advancing the ideals of cooperative governance.

As delineated in Chapter 3 of the Constitution, 1996, “the spheres of government must, while cooperating with each other, foster friendly relations; assist and support one another; inform and consult on matters of common interest; coordinate their actions and legislation; adhere to agreed procedures; and avoid legal proceedings against one another”. Even though South Africa's system of intergovernmental relations has historically had a great success, it is crucial to reassess the government's cooperative governance policy objective to set far higher standards for performance, effectiveness, and accountability.

## SECTION THREE: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research method that was used to conduct this study. It provides and describes the research method, selection criteria of the respondents, reason behind selected classes of respondents, the study area, the process of collection and analysis of data as well as addressing ethical implications. The first section of this chapter provides research design and research approach. The objective of this is to explain the reasoning behind choosing to do qualitative research and justify the means of method used for the research study. The chapter will commence with a description of the research approach, how interviews were conducted, followed by the sampling technique and tools used. For this study, the thematic analysis is used to analyse data.

### 3.2. Research Approach

As the topic concerning the DDM was new for the researchers, the purpose of beginning with the interviews was to get in-depth lens from officials in the municipalities, business, NGOs, community forums, and citizens at large. This made it possible to assess and delve in an in-depth manner. Following an inductive approach where the chain moved from a bottom-up approach, with our observations and data gathering first, then using this to find patterns, and then to a theory (Bradford, 2017). This slightly unusual approach by beginning with the interviews and from there building the conceptual framework, instead of the other way around, was done in the search for a scope.

Qualitative studies are expressed through words, concepts, and patterns. The process involved in this study was formulating research questions and analysing through interpretation and summing up or categorizing patterns and themes. Qualitative research relies on the data the researchers have gathered and obtained. It is research that does not intend to gather statistical information or other types of data quantification. Usually, the outcomes of qualitative research are attained through analysing practical situations, (Golafshani, 2003: 600).

### 3.3. Research Method

#### 3.3.1. Sampling Approach

In conducting this study, non-probability sampling was used. This was chosen as it is a sampling technique that is more aligned with the nature of the study. Sampling technique refers to the method used to narrow down the different elements in collecting data from a subgroup. A sample consists of a few chosen elements which enable researchers to save time, costs, and human resources and are more likely to provide more reliable results, thus fewer errors (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 235–41). Non-probability sampling means that each element is of subjective judgment of the researcher rather

than random selection. This is more common when time is a constraint. For this research, a combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used.

- Purposive sampling design, more precisely a judgment sampling was selected to continue this study. Judgment sampling involves the choice of individuals who are the most suitable to provide the appropriate information (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015, pp. 78–81).
- Snowball sampling is the continuous loop of purposive design, the people who first were interviewed based on the researcher's judgment were able to provide access to other suitable individuals meeting set criteria. This works well for closed networks where industry specialists and officials can be very difficult to find and contact (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015: 82).

### 3.3.2. Process of selecting candidates to interview.

The sample design was conducted through approaching district municipal and local municipal officials with the assistance of them arranging for their stakeholders to partake in the research study. In the case where higher authorities were not available, they delegated their next in line to represent them. Interviewing random people would have not served its purpose as empirical questions were not going to be addressed and the data would have been skewed.

## 3.4. Conducting Focus Group Interviews

### 3.4.1. Interview Questions

There are two primary methods to consider when planning the interviews for this study, unstructured and structured interviews. Unstructured interviews mean that no questions are organized in advance and are ideal for finding solutions to unknown problems and the discussion evolves with time. Albeit, considering the interpretive paradigm of the interview is to grasp underlying resonances from subjective interpretations, opinions, and attitudes (Leavy, 2017: 19–20).

To successfully explore areas of interest in interviews, it is valid to formulate appropriate questions. “When writing the guide, ask yourselves what you need to know in order to answer the research question?” (Bryman and Bell, 2011: 486). This structured interview was done with open and probing questions. Easterby-Smith et al., 2015: 214–17) mention that the aim of qualitative interview questions is to attain an understanding from respondents' perspectives that not only includes viewpoints but also the reason, to capture the meaning and interpretation for these viewpoints. Hence, this structured interview consists of 30 prepared questions to capture these insights.

Structured interviews were done for two reasons. Firstly, to keep consistency within the research and secondly, avoid risks in getting potential bias results. Another way that helped deal with the broad concept of the research was to find different ways to get different meanings. In other words, breaking

down big ideas into multiple and more tangible questions. Some questions were also highly selective in terms of the answers the researchers desired.

#### 3.4.2. Guide to Interviews

The interview questions were shared prior to the focus group sessions. This was done for the participants to have an idea of the discussions that will take place and where necessary prepare responses prior the focus group sessions. In instances when one does not share the questions prior the sessions the participants might feel like they are being bombarded due to other questions requiring one to ponder pensively about the responses that they provide. The questions were open-ended.

#### 3.4.3. Interviews through Microsoft Teams

Face-to-face interviews can be one of the best approaches in comparison to virtual ones. Depending on the scope of the research factors such as body language, facial expressions, etc. can be taken into consideration. Risks such as interruptions, issues with an internet connection, poor volume, or other technicalities are then avoided. Bogner et al. (2018, p. 663) argue the idea that face-to-face is a prime alternative when conducting interviews. The interviews were distributed due to most of the interviews in the O.R. Tambo District being face-to-face and the focus group session for Garden Route District Municipality being online due to financial constraints. However, both districts were instrumental and provided in-depth insights.

### 3.5. Interview Notes and Transcribing

Saunders et al. (2012: 394) propose that recording and taking notes simultaneously is a method that can benefit researchers and increase precision. By doing this simultaneously for this research was to achieve two things; firstly, to be able to take notes during the live session, ask follow-up questions, and interact with the text itself. Secondly, allow the researchers to go back and listen to the recordings, reflect, and assess as a team. The group split up roles, one or two would be taking notes, and the other one was to play the role of being the lead interviewer whilst taking his own notes where possible. This method was used to give the researchers both a chance to focus on the interview and its questioning and listening. The transcribing process itself was executed by the researchers moments after the interviews were finished or before the next interviews were conducted.

#### 3.5.1. Themes and Patterns

All the content which is not mentioned in the findings is not because it was less important or interesting for the study. However, the true value and support it had as well as correlation with other respondents. Some respondents conveyed the same patterns and themes, which were distinguished during the transcribing process. These patterns and themes were clustered in different topics from the interviewees regardless of if it was one interviewee who represented a pattern or theme, it will still be



taken into consideration as it is a qualitative study. The final themes and subcategories/patterns are discussed in the analysis and findings.

### 3.6. Collection Procedures: Data sampling, Sample Method and Sample Size

In this study, we used the purposive sampling method. We chose this type of data collection procedure because participants in the study were carefully chosen to provide desired information for the study.

Sampling in research often refers to the selected group of people to be participants in that particular study (Bryman, 2008a). Generally, a researcher cannot take the whole group and make it participants in the study unless it is a country study in which every member of a society must be studied. In this study, non-probability sampling was used. Non-probability sampling is one in which the research participants carefully selected according to the questions and objectives of the study (Bryman, 2008; Nayak & Singh, 2015). Consequently, research respondents often called research participants were carefully selected to respond to research questions and research objectives based on their experiences and in-depth knowledge about the study at hand. Drawing from Bryman paper, the respondents were chosen systematically based on the idea of non-probability sampling to answer questions asked by this research report (Bryman, 2008a: 171–76). There are multiple forms of sampling (Abowitz and Toole 2010; Kothari, 2004), but a non-probability sample based on this study's research questions and objectives was chosen.

### 3.7. Data quality control

According to Rubin (2009), data quality control refers to how the researcher can ensure that the data-gathering instruments are used to measure what they are supposed to measure and measure consistently: **reliability** and **validity**, respectively. Furthermore, Kimberlin & Winterstein (2008) state that the evidence of reliability and validity are prerequisites to assure the integrity and quality of a measurement. In the case of this study, immediate short feedback debriefing sessions helped to shape the data quality. Reliability in social science research is concerned with the question of whether the results of the study are repeatable (Bryman, 2008b). In this study, reliability was affirmed through giving assurance that if a study like this can be performed there is possible that same results can be obtained. For example, we learnt from the Xesibe Holdings Report, which studied the initial phase of the implementation of DDM in OR Tambo District (Xesibe Holdings, 2023). The report alluded to pertinent observations that we made during the interaction with participants in the same district. The data in this study has been collected using two forms and across different industry participants. It has been done to ensure reliability through crosschecking in all classes of participants the similarities and dissimilarities.

### 3.8. Data analysis

The data of this research study was analysed using content analysis for interview analysis. The nature of this study as proclaimed earlier is qualitative research. Content analysis was used given the nature of focus group interviews that we have conducted. While we had a set of questions to guide interviewees, it was open to participants that they can reply to questions openly and provide information based on their lived experience. During focus group interviews, some participants took a little bit longer than the scheduled time. This demonstrated how in-depth interviews sometimes have a way of escalating to other information which could have been not that necessary for the study in question. We listened to records carefully and analysed the responses in the context of the main question and other questions asked during the interview.

Table 4.1a. Themes generated from the data.

Codes	Themes	Sub-themes
Government spheres	Three spheres of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of three government spheres:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local government</li> <li>▪ Provincial</li> <li>▪ National</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Coordination	Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District and local municipality level coordination.</li> <li>• District/Local Municipality and Provincial/National level.</li> </ul>
Stakeholder participation	Support of relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community based organisation.</li> <li>• State Owned Enterprise.</li> <li>• Organised business (Chamber of Business)</li> <li>• Other (SETAs and others)</li> </ul>
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring and evaluation of service delivery	
Hindrances	Hindrances in the Implementation of DDM: Financial resources and human capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Resources</li> <li>• Human Capacity</li> </ul>

The following chapter contains the empirical findings of this study. All the information gathered from the interviews will be presented in this section. A study by Turton & Farrington (1998) of a watershed project to reverse degradation while reducing poverty implemented by the Union Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment in India from 1994 provides some insight on an accountability and reporting framework for projects implemented at the district level. Turton and Farrington (1998) argue that monitoring can become a powerful force for participation and democracy at the local level. It provides an opportunity for:

- Members of local communities to participate more fully in tracking physical and socio-economic progress and to propose course corrections, and such people to hold Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) and other agencies to account by ensuring financial transparency.

It is notable that the idea of a DDM was in existence, and it is further shown through the Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA) in the Garden Route District Municipality. This approach will be delved into further in the chapter.

### 3.8. Ethical considerations

FASSET conducts research as part of mandate as per the Skills Development Act, the Skills Development Levies Act, the White Paper for Post School Education, National Skills Development Plan Twenty Three, and other government frameworks. The research conducted by FASSET is not academic research, rather research that is conducted to fulfil skills development mandate. The FASSET Executive Management Team approves the Research Plans and endorses the methodology to be utilised in conducting research. There is no specific ethics application and approval that is therefore sort to conduct FASSET research.

All the respondents were first contacted via email and informed that the interview was completely voluntary, although everyone who was contacted agreed to the interview. A small summary was also provided to give insight on the topic and what could be expected from the interview, in addition, that any question that felt uncomfortable was acceptable to skip (neither did this occur). It was carefully disclosed that any information that was given throughout the whole process would be used to support the analysis, finding themes, patterns, but once the study is complete, the information would be deleted. Important to remember is that are never any amiss answers, it is up to the researchers to ask the appropriate questions and reach for an adequate response.

#### 3.8.1. Anonymity and Confidentiality

The data collected was not shared with anyone outside of this research or unauthorized. Easterby-Smith et al. (2015: 146), state that asking for permission to record an interview is crucial to be done before the recording begins during the interview. Therefore, at the beginning of each interview, a small introduction was proposed to explain their rights and ask if it was okay for us to take notes as well as record, which every respondent agreed upon. However, to ensure this and avoid any chance of misunderstanding between both parties, the script included a short presentation about us, the topic, and our purpose. The information mentioned above is to facilitate anonymity and confidentiality for the participants of this research during each interview.

### 3.9. Limitations of the study

This study has two possible limitations. First, definitions of what skills mean are very complex depending on the context that it is referred to. Second, the study was conducted on selected participants who have experience in the municipal activities as officials, civic society, youth formations, institutions of higher learning and other interest participants. This was done purposefully to obtain in-depth information from them, but it may have caused biasness in the information that these groups provided for the researchers. However, there is confidence that adding documents as a unit of analysis reduced the bias which may have occurred in the interviews. Furthermore, officials from the district office in the ORTDM did not avail themselves during the data collection session held in Umthatha.

### 3.10. Conclusion

This chapter deliberated on the research methodology employed in conducting this study. The study employed the qualitative method in that it sought to get in-depth expressions from relevant stakeholders involved in the service delivery and the DDM in all spheres of government in the two sampled study areas. The study was structured in that there was a set of questions in the interview schedule used to collect data using a purposive sample. The sample size involved a total of thirty (30) participants in both study areas. Participants were assured of confidentiality and that the information would also be used for research purposes in producing the study results. Attendance from district officials was poor in the sessions but all other relevant stakeholders fairly attended.

## SECTION FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

### 4.1. Introduction

In most states, more than one sphere of government has been found necessary for the performance of the multitudinous activities required for the fulfilment of public needs. The plurality of governments in a state has far-reaching implications for its system of government and administration. The key question which arises is how the responsibilities for the performance of public functions are, or perhaps should be, distributed among the various levels or spheres of government. Despite the obvious importance of the distribution or assignment of such responsibilities from both a political and an administrative perspective, there is a paucity of scientific knowledge concerning the phenomenon. In South Africa, three spheres of government exist, and these are namely, the local, the provincial, and the national governments. The DDM as a national strategy is embedded in all spheres of government. The local government as municipalities is the one closest to communities and implements the DDM.

The local sphere of government is regarded as the cornerstone of democracy. This is because local government, as the word 'local' suggests, forms the fundamental, regular and proximity that the citizens have with their government. In this respect, the South African Constitution makes it clear that the municipalities as a level of government play a crucial role in the life of every citizen (Municipality Electoral Amendment Act 1, 2016) particularly at the local level of government. It is through the citizens' experience with municipal service delivery that they can judge the effectiveness of their government. The current local government environment is volatile, and municipalities must adapt to constant environmental changes. The principles of cooperative government are provided by the Constitution (1996) to be used as a mechanism that can restore peace and relations between officials and the communities. The complexity of municipalities is also exacerbated by political will that is influential on the state power use (Mohale, 2017: 53).

The issue of networks is crucial for municipalities to maintain vertical governance relations between them and stakeholders and between them and the provincial and national government. Municipalities can fulfil their political mandate by communicating, collaborating and allowing stakeholders to participate fully in decision making relating to their needs and demands. The engagement must enable the government spheres and various other stakeholders to share knowledge and expertise. It is empirical to note that policymaking is a vital process in every government worldwide. According to Gumede (2015), policymaking involves addressing issues of substance facing citizens or a country through various means such as legislative frameworks, decision making and stakeholder. The role of stakeholders in policymaking is pivotal. It is pivotal because their role in the preparation of policy

statements, formulation and implementation of policy at a local sphere is of essence for the growth and development of any nation.

The District Development Model (DDM) can be described as a values-driven process of stakeholder engagement, founded on principles of agility, bottoms-up solutions and practicality, to yield inclusive growth, employment and economic transformation at district level.

## 4.2. The Role of three spheres of government and how they are centred in the implementation of the DDM.

### 4.2.1. Local Government

The local government sphere in South Africa is assigned a crucial role of rebuilding local communities and environments as a basis for a democratic, integrated, prosperous, and truly non-racial society (South African Local Government Association (SALGA), 2015: 11). The local government system of governance during the apartheid period was subservient, racist, illegitimate, and in a state of continuing crisis (Koma, 2012; De Visser, 2009). Hence, the transformation of local government into a fully-fledged and non-racial institution of governance was impelled by a legacy of an urban economic logic that systematically favoured white urban areas at the cost of black urban and peri-urban areas with tragic and absurd results (Visser, 2009: 9). Nonetheless, the transition to a new local government system saw the local government being given a distinct status and role to build democracy and promote socio-economic development of the local communities as a sphere of government closest to the people. Today, local government has a constitutional mandate and developmental obligation to create integrated, economically and socially resilient communities. Thus, local government is now institutionalised within the premise of an integrated development (Koma, 2012).

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), Section 152, mandates local government to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. Furthermore, Section 153 (1) stipulates one of the developmental duties of all municipalities that a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of communities, and to promote social and economic development of such communities. Furthermore, local government is mandated to promote the Bill of Rights which reflects the nation's values of human dignity, equality and freedom, and uphold the principles enshrined in the Constitution (South African Local Government Association (SALGA), 2015).

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) further translated the constitutional objects and duties into the concept of developmental local government. It defines the new mandate as local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and to improve the quality of their lives. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) establishes the basis for a new developmental local government as a framework for transforming and addressing the inherited system of local governance (SALGA, 2015: 11).

The White Paper on Local Government further identifies three key developmental outcomes that local government must focus on, which include the provision of sustainable household infrastructure and services, creation of liveable and integrated local areas, and promotion of the Local Economic Development (LED) and community empowerment and redistribution. In essence, the White Paper on Local Government suggests that local government must be developmental in nature. To become more developmental, the instrument provides three approaches which can assist municipalities, namely integrated development planning and budgeting, performance management, and working with local citizens and partners. The local government mandate is further expressed in the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) which builds on the White Paper on Local Government to establish a new planning framework for developmental local government.

The Local Government: Municipal Systems act (32 of 2000) assigns municipalities to promote social and economic development, ensure access to affordable services and promote involvement of local communities in municipal affairs. The Act provides principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to achieve their developmental mandate. The Act requires municipalities to undertake an integrated development planning process to develop an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) which will assist local governments to achieve their objectives and give effect to their developmental duties as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

According to section 25(1) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000), each municipal council must, within a prescribed period after the beginning of its elected term, adopt a single, inclusive and strategic plan which links, integrates and coordinates plans and consider proposals for the development of the municipality. The IDP specifies the development priorities and objectives of the municipal council including LED. All municipalities in South Africa must develop a LED strategy and integrate such strategy into the IDP. LED is one of the most strategic tools through which local municipalities adhere to their developmental duties, as prescribed by the Local

Government: Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998). According to Hofisi, Mbeba, Maredza, and Choga (2013: 539), as cited in Kamara (2017: 100), the LED agenda in the context of South Africa, unlike in other countries, is neither voluntary nor just a local government initiative, but a constitutional requirement. Local governments are therefore mandated to promote and uphold the values and principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The next section focuses on the role that local governments are expected to play in LED planning and promotion.

#### 4.2.2. Provincial Government

There are nine provincial governments. Every province has a Legislature made up of between 30 and 90 Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs). Some provincial laws are approved by Legislatures. The Legislature also passes a provincial budget every year. Legislatures are elected in provincial elections that are held with national elections, every five years.

A Premier is elected by the Legislature and appoints Members of the Executive Council (MECs) to be the political heads of each provincial department. The MECs and the Premier form the Provincial Executive Council (Cabinet). Provincial government is headed by a Director General and provincial departments are headed by a Deputy Director General or a Head of Department. They employ Directors (managers) and public servants to do the work of government. Most of the public servants in the country fall under provincial government – these include teachers and nurses. Each province must develop a Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS) that spells out the overall framework and plan for developing the economy and improving services. Provinces also have a Spatial Development Framework (SDF) that says where and how residential and business development should take place and how the environment should be protected.

The provincial MEC and Department of CoGTA are responsible for the coordination, monitoring, and support of municipalities in each province.

#### 4.2.3. National Government

Laws and policies are approved by Parliament which is made up of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). The National Assembly is made up of Members of Parliament, elected every five years.

The NCOP was set up to ensure that provincial and local government are directly represented in Parliament. It is made up of representatives of provincial legislatures and local government. Each province has a set number of permanent and rotating representatives. The NCOP must debate and vote on any law or policy that affects provincial or local government. The President is elected by



Parliament and appoints a Cabinet of Ministers. They act as the executive committee of government and each Minister is the political head of a government department.

Each government department is responsible for implementing the laws and policies decided on by Parliament or the Cabinet. Government departments are headed by a Director General and employ Directors (managers) and public servants (staff) to do the work of government. Every department prepares a budget for its work. The budgets are put into one national budget by the Treasury (Department of Finance), which must be approved by Parliament. The Treasury must balance the income and expenditure of government in the budget and will rarely give departments everything they ask for.

The Presidency coordinates the work of government and provides direction and strategic support to ministers and departments. The Presidency monitors and evaluates overall progress towards achieving government goals. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) sets the policies and framework for the Public Service at national and provincial level. This role may be extended to local government in the future.

Some departments only exist at national level because they deal with issues that concern the whole country. Examples are Defence, Foreign Affairs, Water and Forestry, Science and Technology, Trade and Industry, Mineral and Energy, Public Enterprises, Home Affairs, and Public Service and Administration. Other departments have national and provincial departments because they deal with direct provincial service delivery. Examples are Basic Education, Housing, Health, and Social Development. Provincial or local government may not do anything that is against the laws or policies set down by national government. Provincial government gets most of its money from the national government through Treasury. Local government also gets grants and some loans through the Treasury.

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) (which resides at the national level) is responsible for national coordination of provinces and municipalities. In every province, the provincial COGTA departments monitor and support municipalities.

### 4.3. Coordination of projects

#### 4.3.1. The District and Local Government Coordination

The Garden Route District Municipality respondents understood the DDM as the model that involves all spheres of government in the acceleration of service delivery and development. According to the respondents, the DDM calls upon letting go of the silo approach and ensures co-planning, co-budgeting, co-implementation, and co-monitoring of projects. The DDM focuses on unblocking

existing challenges to infrastructure. Another respondent added that the DDM is the coordination of service delivery and ensures relevant stakeholders in different spheres of government and the private sector are part of the processes informing local government strategies and plans. There was also concern from the OR Tambo District Municipality in Mthatha that there is no support for the local initiatives by the district itself. The district representatives never show support or attends to the calls from the municipalities. The Western Cape being one province that is run by a different government, the Democratic Alliance and not the African National Congress, had already started its Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA) by the time the President announced the DDM in 2019. Respondents within the Garden Route District Municipality of the Western Cape stated that the JDMA is the same as the DDM but there was an agreement that the Western Cape Government continues using the JDMA term in the province.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa as enacted in 1996 introduced a shared authority in local government. While the references in the Constitution to municipalities sharing authority over the same area are skeletal, the concept was further elaborated in the White Paper on Local Government issued in 1998. By the end of that year, this vision resulted in the Municipal Structures Act. Nevertheless, amendments to the Act made fundamental changes to the original vision, even before the new system of district and local municipalities came into being on 5 December 2000 with the first election of the new councils. The new model that merged sees district municipalities as direct service providers, deviating considerably from the original idea of them as coordinator, supporter, and equalizer between local municipalities. This model is, however, flexible as a district's service delivery role depends in large part on the capacity of both the districts and its local municipalities.

The provinces are tasked to assist the municipalities in the drafting process. The MEC for local government may facilitate the coordination and alignment of Integrated Development Planning (IDP) of a district municipality and local municipality. Further, under the Systems Act the MEC may take steps to bring resolution to disputes or differences that arise in connection with planning, drafting, adoption or review of the IDP between a district and local municipality.

#### [4.3.2. The District and Provincial Government Coordination](#)

According to the respondents in the local government in the OR Tambo District Municipality in Mthatha, the DDM ensures that if there is an initiative by a department either at the national or provincial level, there is coordination of that programme in all municipal wards, and not a single local municipality is left out.

As aforementioned, the Provincial Government relies on grants and loans from the Treasury. The respondents from the Graden Route submitted in reiteration that provincial government coordination

exists within the district on the combined projects, but the support from the national government is lacking. The national government is the champions of the DDM but required support from them is not provided to the local government. Respondents further indicated that there is more leeway in getting grants or funding from external stakeholders like the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), etc., and even from international companies. These institutions tend to easily assist local governments when approached through the DDM concept. The provincial government assists the local government through the monitoring of the projects that are introduced by either the national or the provincial governments. In essence, the district is meant to deliver on the services as the one closest to the masses and support should be given to the District by the provincial government in ensuring that the national strategies like the DDM are implemented.

#### 4.4. Stakeholders' engagement in service delivery

The involvement of stakeholders is mandatory in the execution of DDM processes and initiatives. Therefore, the three government spheres cannot isolate them in driving programmes and projects. Stakeholders comprise of community members, municipalities, investors, interest groups, non-government organisations and private sector institutions. Below are some of the steps that include stakeholders' involvement in service provision:

##### *Developing a detailed communication plan*

The IDP guides municipalities to develop their plans by including all the resources and goods needed in a particular municipal jurisdiction (Van Der Waldt, 2014). The plan must reflect all the various channels to connect all possible stakeholders to participate in the itemised plan (Ekung, Okonkwo, & Odesola, 2014). These items can be useful in participatory budgeting and in the planning of public projects, where communities reflect their needs through identified appropriations.

##### *Creating a conducive environment*

It is significant for the ward councillors and other leaders to provide a conducive environment for stakeholders to participate in the issues affecting their municipality (Ekung et al. 2014). Stakeholders can participate well when they are briefed about the issues such as project goals and have all details at hand – the who, what, when how and why. Clarity on responsible persons can also alleviate the fear of failure and can shed understanding of how the engagement will be unfolding amongst stakeholders. Government in its various spheres need to create a conducive environment which allows investors to swiftly tap into the space and invest. The various legislative frameworks and red tape tend to hinder investors investing and having sound autonomy.

### *Interacting and communicating with stakeholders*

A healthy communication between the stakeholders and the municipal officials is needed to provide services effectively and to implement the public project without excluding any stakeholder (Ngilambi & McCubbin, 2017). Managers and municipal officials must provide stakeholders the opportunity to contribute with inputs during service provision, especially in new projects and when there are changes needed. Stakeholders must be constantly briefed with new developments and be provided with all crucial information to assist them to perform their roles well, especially in the early stages of developing a service and a public project.

#### **4.4. Monitoring and evaluation of service delivery**

The process of monitoring and evaluation is essential for good governance as there is feedback provision on the effectiveness of policies, programmes, procedures and services. Programmes which are not guided by monitoring and evaluation processes are more likely to have its progress hindered due to successes and areas of improvement not being identified.

### *Relevance of stakeholders' support in the implementation of the DDM*

The Local Government: Municipality Act 32 of 2000 gives directives to municipality to ensure inclusive, consultative and participatory strategies in implementing the IDP plans. Active community participation in decision-making, planning and implementation were emphasised. The implementation of the IDP ranges from education, health, waste management, tourism, security, transportation, roads, housing, land distribution, climate change etc. (Dlamini & Reddy, 2012). As a driver for this study, two district municipalities were made use of, namely: OR Tambo District Municipality (ORTDM) and Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM). It is noteworthy that the abovementioned district municipalities are fundamentally distinct in nature due to various aspects such as being under the political leadership of different parties. This distinctive nature has directly and indirectly played out in how service delivery has been executed. The data which was gathered from the focus group sessions and individual interviews at the ORTDM and GRDM was collated and interpreted according to the following themes:

### *Stakeholder engagement in planning for service delivery and development*

As highlighted previously that the two district municipalities were detected to be distinct in nature, it is noteworthy that at a broader level the GRDM exuded an approach which showed achievement of greater strides when compared to the latter. It was further noted that within a district municipality, local municipality found themselves singing a different tune. One of the respondents in the ORTDM who a community is representative vehemently expressed how the relationship between the community and

the King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality (KSDLM) had deteriorated to a point whereby there was a lack of attendance for community and committee gatherings. It was further expressed that the environment was not conducive for businesses to tap into the space. Such statements had exacerbated the notion of operating in silos which in essence goes against the mandate of the DDM. Furthermore, officials at the KSD Local Municipality had highlighted that the private sector needs to play a more visible role in driving the objectives of the DDM. The respondents through the engagements had painted a picture which presented a relationship which is tainted among the various stakeholders. The notion of public participation being fragmented kept on appearing in the ORTDM which was attributed to lack of knowledge by citizens on what responsibilities fall under the mandate of local municipalities.

Things, however, take a different turn in the GRDM pertaining to the engagement and participation of the various stakeholders. It was noted that there was utilisation of clusters to ensure that there is greater focus on projects to be dealt with and tackled. In the GRDM there is collaboration with other role-players. In general, in terms of the greater DDM there has been implementation on 7 key sectors which are executed through clusters, with 2 or 3 projects per cluster. Some clusters are well represented as there are also business representatives. The clusters are namely:

- Energy
- Tourism
- Agriculture

It is empirical for stakeholders to use their knowledge and experience to participate in planning and development processes to promote long-term community involvement and development in communities. The respondents were asked whether they have been exposed to mechanisms that can improve their participation. One of the respondents in the GRDM stated that they aim to work on a stakeholder management system where they will be able to have people from community organizations/ citizens register as stakeholders through an IT related system. There shall be widespread engagements on the various projects through this system. Further it was revealed that there is a local economic business forum with Mossel Bay having launched it and it being productive. SETAs in the GRDM have been instrumental in the execution of the DDM's mandate. LGSETA, HWSETA and MerSETA run projects which assist the district municipality in driving its objectives. The respondent also expressed that there was a project in the pipeline with the FoodBev SETA. Furthermore, in the GRDM, citizen engagement fundamentally plays a pivotal role in stakeholder participation as it occurs through a main public participation structure which is the IDP budget and

PMS Rep Forum which take place in November and April annually. Through this platform projects and what is envisioned for the region is communicated. There is also a public participation policy which has been compiled and requires sound implementation. For both district municipalities social media and radio have been used to drive citizen engagement.

At a district level the IDP reform is structured in a way that community organisations are granted the space to attend. For instance, Mossel Bay has a development forum whilst Oudtshoorn has an IGR or Stakeholder Forum and Bitou also has a forum. It was further noted that in ORTDM key important role players such as Organised Business showed a lack of support in the execution of municipality service delivery plans. The disjuncture between the two district municipalities is a one which remains a cause for concern because overall stakeholder engagement is a priority in the GRDM whereas in the ORTDM it was not fundamentally granted the same attention which it deserves. In the Ingquza Hill Local Municipality one of the respondents raised that what needs to be considered are some of the concerns which have been raised by SMMEs, such as the lack of support for their programmes by the municipality. It was further stated that it was a cause for concern because they exude the necessary skills which are required by the municipality. In response to this concern the municipality sought to launch an incubation programme, however it has been marred with several obstacles. One of the respondents for the local municipalities in the ORTDM expressed how the relationship between local businesses and the municipality was wearying and not cordial due to how fragmented it was because most of the ownership belonged to foreigners. As a result, the relationship was based on receiving privileges, such as tenders instead of being centred on innovation, developing and uplifting.

Furthermore, one of the respondents from Knysna Local Municipality stated that there is a lady who in the Economic Development Department, however she is paid for and hosted there. It was noted that the district municipality caters for her needs. Therefore, that is how the buy-in and coordination between the locals in the district and the district occurs when it is a district-based project. There are also steering committees which form an instrumental role in the planning and implementation of projects which are in the pipeline. Public participation must involve follow-up visits to the stakeholders and the beneficiaries to determine the extent to which decisions are affecting the community members and to assess the level of impact of municipal decisions in service provision. It is also the responsibility of the municipalities and national government to monitor and evaluate the extent to which local needs are addressed through service delivery.

#### *Monitoring and evaluation of the DDM mandate*

Projects and programmes which have been implemented require an analysis of how impactful they have been in adhering to the objectives and mandate. Since the DDM's inception in 2019 there have

been great strides which have been achieved in terms of the delivery of services. The strides can be further cascaded as in some cases the silo approach is still very much evident. In the GRDM the respondents were in unison that there is a process in motion which monitors whether clusters are feeding back into technical steer committees consisting of all the municipalities and feedback to the strategic steer committees, which comprises of municipal managers' forum, CFOs and Department of Local Government. Monitoring and evaluation for both district municipalities occurred at a monthly, quarterly and annual rate. One of the major projects which is in the pipeline is the launch of a college which comes into the fore to address skills development dilemma. This project in the pipeline is monitored in evaluated to ensure that it means its deadline and shall be fully professional. For both district municipalities budgetary constraints were highlighted as a major impediment in the execution of projects and programmes.

#### 4.5. Extent of coordination and championship

The coordination can be better explained by extent to which parties are working together both horizontally and horizontal. The single most important objective of the DDM is to stop working in silos. The institutions mandate by government to drive the implementation of DDM objectives include government department responsible for Cooperative Governance and Tradition Affairs and the Development Bank of Southern Africa. Other champions and district level were appointed at institutional level.

According to our focus group interview findings, what seemed to have been lacking is champions that are leading the activities to ensure maximum implementation of objectives set out in the DDM. In the interaction with officials in local municipalities we met, it was clear that the DDM is almost autopiloted, with no strong captainship. This is solely a problem of government as it does not support agencies who are mandatory in executing its programmes. The government need to be clear about the captains of the DDM and what is expected of them to ensure that objectives are achieved. There were many recommendations made during our interviews with stakeholders including amongst others, the need for improved accessibility of CoGTA senior officials and senior officials at DBSA.

#### 4.6. Hindrances in the Implementation of DDM: Financial resources and human capacity

##### 4.6.1. Financial resources

In the absence of money it is almost impossible to implement government policies. Undoubtable there is clear evidence that a lot of South African municipalities lack financial resources. In interacting with participants in the ORTDM, officials from municipalities told us that that they were struggling when it comes to financial resources. They indicated that their municipalities rely on national government

transfers and some of those funds often got depleted without having met all service delivery commitments they have made.

Often there is conflicting service delivery needs that cannot be met by single year budget. One municipality official made an example of road construction, he explained that often their annual budget is so small that it can only construct few tar road kilometres. The participant felt that the government was giving targets of the DDM model without having fully considered how much money that is transferred to municipalities and what it can afford to deliver in a given financial year.

#### 4.6.2. Human capacity

Based on the observation during the focus group session, we ascertained that most municipalities' officials were often political 'deployees' and also administrators. Being both deployed political official and administrator at the same time often conflicted officials' in serving of their political roles and administrative roles. We observed that, developmental plans are sometimes used as green flag to promote political party or any political association. In both capacities (political official and administrator), however, roles are very clear in terms of what is expected from the said official. This is evident on paper, but we could not tell if such clearly articulated roles are honoured with honest and no biasness relating to political affiliation. The reasoning for twofold role of officials in the municipalities was justified by some municipalities' officials by the need to cut costs of high wage bill.

Participants, in particular those outside of municipalities, organised business, youth representatives, NGOs and others they did not show any understanding of broader roles of local government rather than service delivery. One of the officials from municipality, alluded that the reason why community members and other representatives did not know broader responsibilities of local government was due to low public participation in municipalities imbizos and other community engagement initiatives.



## SECTION FIVE: RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

### 5.1. Introduction

The national government and provincial government are mandated by section 154 of the constitution, legislative and other measures to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions. The Presidential Coordinating Council and other government groupings extend such support to municipalities by ensuring concentrated and coordinated effort to implement service delivery projects.

### 5.2. Implication of the study findings for FASSET and SETAs in general

South Africa is often praised for its ability to formulate policies. But the problem is the implementation of such policies. For example, Marume, Mutongi and Madziyire (2016) says that “policies cannot be declared as being effective in themselves, nor can they be implemented by their mere statement, that is, they are not self-executing, without staff, access to information, and authority”. In other words, a lack of human resources (people, expertise, and experience) makes the implementation of public policy fail. Consequently, policy-implementors fail to implement policies because of their inability to understand the intentions of the policy. This statement is supported by Koma (2010) who pointed out that without the requisite knowledge and skills, human resources fail to implement policies effectively.

Over the years, during the implementation of the National Skills Development Strategy, and more recently post the promulgation of the National Development Plan, National Skills Development Plan and other government initiatives, it become evidence that the government expect that SETAs can assist in the implementation and support of its strategies. In the observation made on through this study, it is rather difficult for SETAs to support District Development Model. First the expectation of the DDM as model is that the implementation approach should be coordinated in singular form where municipalities work with all relevant stakeholders in implementation of service delivery. Second, the Districts are to play that coordination role between relevant and role players and municipalities.

Our findings suggest that the manner in which municipalities operate in particular on the implementation of DDM, it remains silo-minded and often very fragmented. This issue it often makes it difficult for SETAs or any other government institutions that wish to support municipalities as there is evident lack of champions for the model. During the physical interaction with municipalities for example in the ORTDM, we noted that the District was not interested in being part of the focus group even when individual interviews were requested, such requested were not entertained. We did pose a question to municipalities under the ORTDM whether they had any sort of coordinated arrangement

with their District, the answers were fragmented suggesting that the participants were not confident on the championship of DDM by the District.

### 5.3. Recommendations

The respondents shared various points about the way forward for the implementation of the DDM objectives. The recommendations were insightful due to various stakeholders sharing their ideas from the various spaces that they occupy. The following recommendations follow the sessions held for data collection and the observations of the researchers:

- Authorities need to engage stakeholders in all the planning and processes that include service delivery and development.
- Officials must tap on the competencies of the residents and other stakeholders to advance development in the area and use their innovative skills and ideas effectively during public participation for the benefit of the people who live in those wards irrespective of political affiliation.
- There should be strengthening of the ITR component.
- The involvement of sector departments and municipalities needs to be strengthened.
- The national government should enhance its visibility in the DDM projects as the custodian of national strategies and policies.
- Local government must provide regular reports to the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation in the Presidency as a way of performance management.
- Municipalities must ensure public participation in the projects to achieve the greater goal of government.
- Businesses must work with local government to develop the communities.

### 5.3. Conclusion

Through this study, it was demonstrated that stakeholder participation in service delivery is crucial to support the sustainability of municipalities even though the stakeholders are still marred by various issues. Findings from this study suggest that one of the main challenges is shortage of financial and human resources that could sustain development and service delivery in that area of jurisdiction. Local government, as the sphere of government that is closer to the people, is expected to continuously engage stakeholders in matters affecting them and ensure that representatives participate directly with the electorate.

It is evident from the results of the study that the members of the community do not fully participate the way they should in the activities of the local municipalities, especially in the ORTDM as evidence has shown. Lack of stakeholder participation emanates from various issues that include non-

compliance, political interference, and improper management of funds. This study indicated that there is a low level of stakeholder engagement at ORTDM, in service provision and in development projects and programmes.

It is an undeniable fact that the political leadership plays a major role in the execution of service delivery. The distinctiveness of the two district municipalities and its political heads was significantly shown in the coordination that they both shared. In the case of the GRDM, it is evident that they exude a much sounder approach in the execution of their programmes. The silo approach does exist here and there; however, the uniformity is sounder when compared to the ORTDM. Existence of the Joint District Metro Approach allowed them to work coherently as they were ahead of the national government's model. Essentially, the local government needs to work together with all relevant stakeholders, including the communities to achieve its goal of service delivery and community development.

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## ANNEXURES

### **FASSET District Development Model DDM study focus group questions**

**Venue: St John's College, Mthatha**

**Date: 2 October 2023**

**Time: 10:00 12:30**

1. What is your understanding of the District Development Model (DDM) and its objectives?
2. How well do you think the DDM has been implemented in the OR Tambo District so far?
3. In your opinion, what are the key strengths and weaknesses of the DDM in OR Tambo District? What works in support of this plan?
4. How has the DDM impacted the coordination and collaboration among different government departments and stakeholders involved in district development in OR Tambo District? Probe: Role of all stakeholders in support of DD.
5. How are the outcomes of the district plans measured?
6. What specific development challenges or issues in OR Tambo District do you believe the DDM has successfully addressed or has the potential to address?
7. Are you satisfied with the level of citizen engagement and participation in the DDM implementation process in OR Tambo District? If not, what improvements would you suggest? Or general participation of the citizens in supporting your local municipality plans? Probe: What is the involvement of the residents in the long-term planning?
8. How would you rate the effectiveness of the DDM in promoting equitable and inclusive development in OR Tambo District?
9. What role do you believe non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) should play in the implementation of the DDM in OR Tambo District? Probe: Role of other institutions like Higher Education Institutions, Organised Business, TVET and Community Education and Training colleges and players.
10. What opportunities do you think exist for economic development and job creation through the DDM in OR Tambo District?

11. Based on your experience or observation, what recommendations would you make to enhance the implementation of the DDM in OR Tambo District?
12. What activities are currently being implemented for spatial planning in the district?
13. Since the local taxes are shared upwards to the national government, what other sources of revenue does the district have?
14. What measures are in place in the district to lessen the growing rural-urban migration?
15. Does the district receive enough support from the Provincial Government, Metros within the Province, SOEs and the private sector in implementing the government's developmental goals like the NDP?
16. What challenges is the district faced with in the realisation of the DDM?

## **FASSET District Development Model (DDM) study focus group questions**

**Venue: Microsoft TEAMS**

**Date: 19 October 2023**

**Time: 10:00 - 12:30**

1. What is your understanding of the District Development Model (DDM) and its objectives?
2. Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA) Implementation Plan (One Plan) of Garden Route District, did it exist prior to launch of the DDM, or it is a replicate of the DDM?
3. How well do you think the DDM has been implemented in the Garden Route District so far?
4. In your opinion, what are the key strengths and weaknesses of the DDM in Garden Route District? What works in support of this plan?
5. What activities are currently being implemented for spatial planning in the district?
6. How has the DDM impacted the coordination and collaboration among different government departments and stakeholders involved in district development in Garden Route District? Probe: Role of all stakeholders in support of DDM.

7. What specific development challenges or issues in Garden Route District do you believe the DDM has successfully addressed or has the potential to address?
8. Are you satisfied with the level of citizen engagement and participation in the DDM implementation processes in Garden Route District? Or general participation of the citizens in supporting your local municipality plans? If not, what improvements would you suggest? Probe: What is the involvement of the residents in the medium and long-term planning within the district?
9. What role do you believe non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) should play in the implementation of the DDM in Garden Route District? Probe: Role of other institutions like Higher Education Institutions, Organised Business, TVET and Community Education and Training colleges play in support of the plan.
10. Please take us through the role of business within the Garden Route District and kind of collaboration taking place between local municipalities and local businesses.
11. What opportunities do you think exist for economic development and job creation through the DDM in Garden Route District?
12. Does the district receive enough support from the Provincial Government, Metros within the Province, SOEs and the private sector in implementing the government's developmental goals like the NDP?
13. What challenges is the district faced with in the realisation of the DDM?
14. How are the outcomes of the district plans measured?