University of the Witwatersrand

Rethinking Public Participation at Local Level:

A Comparative Analysis of Elias Motswaledi and

Steve Tshwete Local Municipalities

Sebote Thabitha Matladi

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in Development Planning.

Johannesburg, February 2008

CHAPTER 1:

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to explore the importance of public participation in service delivery by local authorities. This will be done involving Steve Tshwethe and Elias Motswaledi Municipalities. Public participation is a very important element of local governance. Gauci (undated: 1) has mentioned that "councils' engagement and interaction with their local communities is a defining feature of local government as a sphere of government." There is currently a global trend of decentralizing decision making in order to achieve better service delivery. The process transfers decision-making powers from central state organs to intermediate governments, local governments and communities. The extent of the transfer varies, from administrative de-concentration to much broader transfer of financial control to the regional or local level. While there are solid theoretical justifications for decentralised systems, the process requires strong political commitment and leadership in order to succeed. The path, depth, and ultimately, the outcome of decentralization reforms depend on the motivations for reforms, the initial country and sector conditions, and the interaction of various important coalitions within different service delivery sectors (Gauci, undated).

1.2   BACKGROUND

Sihlongonyane and Karam (2003) argue that despite democracy in the country and other African Countries, the legacy of apartheid is still visible in major cities in South Africa. However after the new government came into power in 1994, it involved the rethinking of municipal boundaries to amalgamate and integrate those areas that belonged together due to their proximity and potential synergy. The legislative bases for this restructuring are the Local Government Municipal Systems Act of 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) and the Local Government Municipal Structures Act of 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).

Local communities needed to be actively engaged in decision making process beyond the normal routines of being voters. Some scholars has shown that if role players in government and civil society plan , implement programmes and project together the outcomes are likely to be responsive to the needs of the communities. Under such circumstances while service delivery

might be evident, the intended beneficiary would still regard the government as unresponsive to their needs.

In South Africa, it has been observed by Fakir, (2006:3) that "technocratic instrumental delivery capacity, as well as developmental democracy, will ensure more sustainable local government, and therefore, legitimacy and credibility for government at local level." It is therefore expected that the involvement of local communities in decision making processes has the power to lend legitimacy and credibility to local governance. Mathekga and Buccus (2006) write that with the demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa, it was expected that the new government would define itself with the needs and wishes of the majority of the country's population. During the apartheid era the majority of the population could not take part in the country's governance but were rather recipients of such governance. The new government introduced formal institution that would enable the achievement of a democratic order (Mathekga and Bucus, 2006). However, it is further argued by Mathekga and Buccus, (2006:11) that "while the institutions of local government have been created with genuine intentions to positively affect and to bring about social and economic delivery at local government, these institutions have not been able to live up to expectations."

These scholars observe that there is a perception that the local government system in the country can work well without necessarily the input of local communities since they have been seen by the technocrats as having a negative impact in service delivery. In this instance local government structures have simply ignored the input of local communities by making up excuses that these communities do not have the requisite know-how. It also needs to be appreciated that the technical know-how alone is not adequate "to ensure optimal functioning of local government. There is also a compelling need to acknowledge "the importance and effect of substantive democracy and active citizenship as an important ingredient in a democratic setting (Mathekga and Buccus: 12). The South African Constitution gives more power to the local people in major decisions affecting their communities and also seeks to provide avenues wherein the people can actively and directly participate in governance.

1.3   OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this research is to determine the role of community participation in effective and efficient local governance. In the end it is expected that the paper will also

make recommendations on the best and appropriate methods of significantly engaging local communities in local governance. The specific objectives that will also serve research objectives for the study are:

- How does public participation improve the level and quality of public service delivery?

- Why is it important for authorities to consult with residents before providing services?

- What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation at local government?

1.4 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996: Chapter 7) states that it is the objective of local governments to "encourage the involvement of communities and community organization in the matters of local governments." The local governments' institutions must provide an enabling environment so that public participation opportunities are harnessed through the decentralization of power and availing resources to local communities. Despite the provision by the country's Constitution for local communities' participation in local governance, some local authorities still pay lip service to such and do not involve their local communities in major decision making processes. A lot of reasons have been mentioned by these local authorities but the following reasons by Landsberg (2002) and(Mathekga and Buccus 2006) are dominant:

i) Local communities do not have the requisite technical know-how to contribute in local governance.
ii) Public participation in major decision making will cost the local government time and resources and impact negatively on service delivery.
iii) It is never too easy to reach a consensus in a community
iv) Local governments are democratically elected and therefore have the responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the communities.

It is through the research that I will look at what local communities have contributed towards the development of their communities and at the same time question whether any of the above reasons have any credibility. I will also look at the relationship between ward councillors and community development workers, with particular emphasis on participatory democracy which is at the pinnacle of community empowerment. I will then try and explore as to what extent (if any) remuneration impact on the various role players in their endeavour to deliver on their mandate of effective and efficient public service delivery to the communities they serve. I will then finish off by making recommendations (based on working models from other countries) as to how public participation can be enhanced in our local communities without necessarily stifling or delaying service delivery or project implementation. Although public participation is considered a critical element in service delivery, there still exist incidences where local governments ignore the potential of such public participation. In reality most local governments reflect just the rhetoric, bureaucratic and project based approach that is aimed at community management instead of community participation.

While a number of scholars have researched extensively on the public participation it is worth noting that such research was mainly on public participation as a concept and as a philosophy. However, researchers in South African have not actually been able to adequately explore the extent to which ward committees and other relevant stakeholders have helped to promote local level governance and its resultant accountability. This research is largely meant to contribute to the growing knowledge base in this field by articulating and discussing what are just perceptions concerning the functionality of ward committees, community development workers (CDW) and other relevant bodies in South Africa. The study seeks to find out how effectively ward committees and CDW have performed this function. It is intended to generate data that could provide more insight for a comparative analysis of the ward committee system together with other bodies in the context of human development and democracy in South Africa.

1.5   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Question One: How does public participation improve the level and quality of public
                     service delivery?

Question Two: Why is it important for authorities to consult with residents before providing services?

Question Three: What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation at local government?

1.6   CONCLUSION

Public participation in service delivery processes and the problems that are usually associated with attempts to include local communities realistically and effectively in shaping out their own development changes are not just unique to South Africa. Existing literature and specific examples are available and have been reviewed in this research. The chapter outline in this research paper is presented below. The study sought to highlight the differences and similarities in achievement or otherwise of public participation in local governance between the two local municipalities of Steve Tshwethe and Elias Motswaledi. The reporting structure therefore follows the following format:

Chapter one –:   The current chapter presents the general background to the study. It also provides the objectives to the study and the reasons that compelled me to undertake this particular study.

Chapter two –:   This is basically the conceptual framework for the study. Under this chapter I looked at the existing literature on public participation and how theory advices different governments and organization to achieve effective public participation. The chapter also explores the different forms of public participation.

Chapter three –:   This chapter is about the method that will be followed in answering the objectives.This chapter will illustrate how knowledge will be consolidated through different sources of data.

Chapter four –:   This chapter provides case studies for the two local municipalities of Steve Tshwethe and Elias Motswaledi.

Chapter five –:   This chapter provides research findings for interviews with key persons from the two case study areas (Steve Tshwethe and Elias Motswaledi Local Municipalities).

Chapter six –:   This chapter gives a detailed analysis of data from the interviews and reports from the two local municipalities.

Chapter seven –:   This last chapter provides the research study conclusion and also offers recommendations on resolutions of particular problems and challenges highlighted in the report.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an assessment of existing literature on public participation in the context of service delivery. This will include both international and South Africa-specific literature. The first sections and sub-sections seek to present different definitions and forms of public participation. Subsequent sub-sections focus on the South African case and discuss the different models of public participation in the South African context. The last sections of this chapter are dedicated to public participation at the local level in South Africa, where the study elaborates on the opportunities and challenges of public participation as seen through service delivery.

2.2   DEFINITIONS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A simplistic definition of public participation can be equated to decentralization which according to Conyers and Hills (1994:213) means dispersal of "decision-making power among many individuals (or parts of an organisation) at 'lower' levels in the spatial hierarchy – in other words, to individuals or groups located away from the spatial centre of decision-making authority" Conyers and Hills (1994:213) recognise that the "most critical political motivation for public participation is the local communities' right to actively and meaningfully participate in making decisions about their communities' development, and thereby becoming part of that process".

For the purpose of this study the "public" refers to the community, which in this case would mean all people living in a particular area (ward), irrespective of their educational levels or gender.It is therefore important to highlight that it is the local communities whose interests are sought to be served by a particular developmental initiative that should propose the need for changes that could be realised by means of a developmental project.

According to Burbridge (1988:189) the concept of public participation would then be "the organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulate institutions, on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control" Heymans and Totemeyer's (1998:5) observation is that participation is necessary "because socially progress

and development require the full utilisation of human resources, including in particular the active participation of all elements of society in defining and achieving the common goals of development, as well as the assurance to disadvantaged population groups of equal opportunities for social and economic advancement in order to achieve an effectively integrated society". Burbridge's (1988) observation is that participation is necessary "because social progress and development require the full utilisation of human resources, including in particular the active participation of all elements of society in defining and achieving the common goals of development, as well as the assurance to disadvantaged population groups of equal opportunities for social and economic advancement in order to achieve an effectively integrated society." As seen thus far, there are different levels and degrees of participation and it is important to note these. Mitlin and Thompson (1995:232) points out that "participation can bring about increased access to, and control over, vital resources and decision-making processes by local people, cutting away bureaucratic red tape and institutional constraints a sit proceeds"

According to Beer (1997: 21) public participation comes along with community capacity building which creates a "development milieu… in which the human being [in any particular community] becomes the subject of his/her own development rather than the object of other people's worlds… and other people's priorities and whims." (Beer, 1997: 21) The latter author argues that community capacity building enables local communities to move away from being mere recipients of development to being masters of their own development; masters of their own destiny!

White (1996:12) asserts that participation must be "seen as a political process, whereby there are underlying issues such as *who* is involved, *how* and on *whose terms"*. This means that participation will decline over time because of the variety of stakeholders whose interests may be fulfilled at different times. For an example, women working in farms during harvesting time may not be able to attend meetings, which mean their interests will be compromised.

Philips (1993) refers to local government as the third level of government, whose mandate is to bring government closer to the population. Services such as water, sanitation electricity and waste removal are the responsibility of municipalities (Local Government Bulletin, 2007). The South African Constitution states that "municipalities have the responsibility to make sure that all citizens are provided with services to satisfy their basic needs". Municipalities must make sure that people in their areas have at least the basic services they

need. Despite the pieces of legislation to fast-track service delivery, it should be noted that the local government is faced with a challenge of service delivery backlogs it incurred from the apartheid government.

The Municipal System Act (2000) indentifies the IDP as a tool which municipalities must use to improve the quality of the lives of the poor and marginalized communities. The latter has recently become a "major challenge for municipalities especially in maintaining effectiveness and efficiency when providing services in outlying regions" (Nyamukachi 2004:16). Section 153 of the Constitution emphasizes that municipalities must strive, within its financial and administrative means, to achieve these objectives. In order for municipalities to attain the above challenge, they must strive to structure and manage their administration, and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and economic development of the community (Nyamukachi 2004). Chapter 4 of the 2000 Municipal Systems Act provides that, municipalities must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. For the purpose of the study public participation is the process whereby all stake holders come together to discuss developmental issues, which affects all the residents irrespective of their background. Below follow discussions of the models of public participation.

2.3   MODELS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.3.1 VILLIERS' MODELS OF PARTICIPATION

According to Villiers (2001) there are "four ways in which ways in which public participation in the legislative and policy-making process may be facilitated" (Villiers, 2001: 91) and these are discussed below. These are the pure representative democracy; basic model of public participation; realism model of public participation; and the possible ideal for South Africa.

2.3.1. 1"Pure" Representative Democracy

This is simply a voting exercise where the constituents or a local community elects into office representatives who will then pass laws in the legislature; and oversee these laws' implementation by the executive organ of the government. This form of public participation is only limited to election time as it is considered adequate that the assumption that these representatives will act on behalf of and with the interests of the communities who voted

them into power (Villiers, 2001). In this way observers, as argued by Janda, Berry and Goldman (1989), contend that people can govern indirectly through their elected representatives and proponents of this form of participation believe that choosing representatives through elections and the formal procedure of voting is the only workable approach to public participation in a large complex territory (such as South Africa). However, it needs to be noted that these representatives only represent those members of the community who elected them. This model has received criticism from a wide range of scholars who opine that while "[v]oting is central to majoritarian model of government… it is not the only means of political participation. In fact [e]lections are [viewed as] a necessary condition of democracy, but they do not guarantee democratic government" (Janda, Berry and Goldman 1989:226).

However, in this form of participation it is usually expected that local communities can participate in governance through forming interesting groups, holding public officials to account by regularly contacting them, campaigning for political parties (and even running for office) and at some point protest unpopular government decisions. This is merely political participation and actually falls short in addressing local communities' needs especially in respect of service delivery. One very obvious disadvantage about this model is that it excludes those members of the communities who are not eligible to vote (Janda, Berry and Goldman, 1989).

2.3.1.2 A Basic Model of Public Participation

The basic model of participation is slightly different from the pure representative democracy model in that it involves the intervention of the local communities at periodic intervals and through periodic interactions with their elected representatives in between elections. In South Africa, a typical example of this may be the National Council of Provinces' "Taking Parliament to the People". However, it is not explicitly clear what kind of interactions this entails. Unlike the earlier models, there is no exclusive definition on who is able to take part in this model's participatory processes. Whilst it may include those who are ineligible to vote due to various reasons, one can also assume it caters for every member of the community. This form of public participation might seem all encompassing but in practice it has been observed that the only members of the community who are actually able to interact with the elected community representatives are the few powerful elites, otherwise regarded as

stakeholders. These are usually people with vested interests in the development of a particular community and might include business people, interest groups and other organised civil society organisations. It needs to be highlighted that it is not all the time (and sometimes it is not really possible) that interests of other members of the community be taken into account in this form of participation (Villiers, 2001).

2.3.1.3 A 'Realism' Model of Public Participation

Villiers (2001) argues that this model "offers the most effective form of public participation [and such arguments are] based on an essentially corporatist model of political interaction, where consensus is reached at a 'round table' consisting of primary interest groups" (Villiers, 2001: 94). An example of this will be an organisation or institution made up of organised labour, employers and government. However, as Villiers (2001) further observes, that if "[a]applied to the legislative process, the key public actors [will] consist of the broader general public or electorates [constituents], represented by their elected representatives on the one hand, and the various key interest groups or stakeholders on the other. The public participation process arbitrates an exchange between the two [stakeholders]" (Villiers, 2001: 94). For there to exist a successful and effective balance of the two groups' interests, there needs to be a dynamic relationship between the negotiating stakeholders, that is the elected representatives, and their constituents, and such dynamism can only be achieved if capacity and resources at their disposal allow for that. South Africa, just like many other countries in Africa and elsewhere has a number of problems counting against such form of public participation. These include the all-important limited resources, the vast size of the country and the-not-so-reliable transport links between urban and rural settlements (Villiers, 2001).

The other problem is with regard to the fact that the elected representatives are always aligned to a particular party and therefore these representatives are only accountable to their respective parties and not the local people (communities). This observation is strengthened by Lance Joel, the current executive director of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) who is of the opinion that problems at most municipalities are worsened by the fact that some municipalities fill employment vacancies along party political affiliation and loyalty (Ntuli, 2007). Villiers (2001) observes that this form of public participation has similar weaknesses as that of the pure form of participation discussed above. Despite all the limitations, it is observed that this form of public participation can be

enhanced through strengthening the party representative-community link. In fact "[t]he elected representative must be able to act with confidence as mediator between the common good and the interests pursued by organised participants [and thus] while ensuring that organised interest groups have the opportunity to participate, time, energy and resources must be invested in building a strong, vibrant, contemporary and meaningful link between MP [member of parliament] and constituent" (Villiers, 2001: 94-95). To a certain extent this seems to be the most favoured form of public participation in South Africa.

2.3.1.4 The 'Possible Ideal' for South Africa

Since all the three discussed models of public participation do not make meaningful attempts to accommodate the lowest among the low member of the community, it is hoped that this model of participation will address the challenges identified above. This model of representation enables participation of three groups in governance (and hence development) for the three groups of stakeholders consisting of: those who are organised and strong; those who are organised but weak; and lastly those who are weak and unorganised. In this particular model political parties play a major role and the party in majority is the one that attains government. The political party is not in charge of decision-making processes, but has control over the rules that govern the whole process of decision-making (Villiers, 2001).

It is also worth noting that if the majority party has strong and efficient regional and local structures, then this could enable the existence of an efficient interactive network between individual community members and their elected representatives. Local communities can participate actively in the development of their areas by channelling their needs, aspirations and even grievances through the party structures at local level. Other groups with specific and vested interest like labour movements could subscribe to the majority party and hence make it easy for themselves to articulate their members' interests to the majority party. An example of such an arrangement is the tripartite alliance between the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the African National Congress (ANC) (Villiers, 2001).

While the above four models represent the different prototypes of public participation applicable in different instances in South Africa, it needs to be noted that the "possible ideal model" offers plausible options and practically relevant public participation opportunities for

the South African context. Local government is promoting community involvement in government decision-making processes in order to meet their social and economic needs to improve the quality of life.

Table 1 below demonstrates eight different approaches of public participation developed by Arnstein, (1969):

2.3.2 Arnstein's Model of Participation

Participation	Example	Cluster
Citizen control	Self government – the community makes the decision	Degrees of citizen power
Delegated power	Government ultimately runs the decision making process and funds it as well	
Partnership	Joint projects – community has considerable influence on the decision making process but the government still takes responsibility for the decision	
Placation	Community is asked for advice and token changes are made	Degrees of tokenism
Consultation	Community is given information about the project or issues and asked to comment; their advice may or may be sought either through meetings or brochures	
Informing	Community is told about the project either through meetings or leaflets, community may be asked how to use the project site or adjacent areas	
Therapy	Community is informed about the project and its benefits; there is no opportunity for stakeholders to express their concerns	Non-participation
Manipulation	Community is selectively told about the project	

Figure 1: Arnstein's Ladder of citizen participation (modified by the author)

The following points summarise the above ladder of participation:

- The highest category of Arnstein's modified level is a category of non-participation whereby the communities are told about the projects and its benefits and are not given the platform to express their concerns.

- The level of tokenism is whereby communities are fully informed and are given the opportunity to express an opinion. However, there is no guarantee that the decision making body will take into consideration the opinions of the communities in their final decision.

- All municipalities must aim at citizen empowerment as highlighted by Arnstein ladder of participation as the highest category of participation, whereby there is partnership and sharing of power between government and the citizens. The citizens influence decision making process while the government takes responsibility for the decision and funding. Therefore, public participation should be facilitated by government structures and sustained by civil society organisations which served as an important platform for people-driven initiatives.

Public participation must therefore strive to empower people, make local government responsive to people's needs, increases the capacity of communities to influence the decision-making processes and allows for the sharing of power amongst all groups. Having given an account of the participation models by the two authors, it is necessary to assess the models in terms of their practicality and here follow the assessment of the models.

2.3.3   Assessment of the models

Exclusive public participation has its limitations in that it:

-People are reduced to voters

-The community is informed of final projects or processes.

The community is excluded from participating in developmental processes.

Inclusive public participation promotes the following:

-Empowerment of the community

- Capacitating communities to influence decision-making processes

-Creation of trust between government and the communities.

The empowerment level (lowest level) in modified Arnstein's ladder and the " possible ideal" model in Villiers reflects the aim of South African government as per the Constitution and the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 and the Municipal Systems Act of 2000., which will be discussed below. However in respect of public participation, there are factors limiting the achievement of public participation, such as lack of skills to promote public participation and implementation of projects and these will be explored later in the chapter.

Having provided some of the models of public participation, it is now necessary to consider the South African policy and legislative framework on public participation.

2.4 LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, various legislative instruments and institutions have been put in place to facilitate the success of public participation in local government level. This section deals with some of those instruments and the role they played in achieving public participation, in respect of service delivery, at local government level.

2.4.1 **The Constitution, Act 108 of 1996**

The *Constitution of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996: Chapter 7) states that it is the objective of local governments to "encourage the involvement of communities and community organisation in the matters of local governments." Section 16 of the *Constitution* also states that "a municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that compliments formal representative government with a system of participatory governance". Public participation is provided for in the *Constitution* through the establishment of representative and participatory democracy where public participation at local government is necessary for effective local governance, and hence service delivery. Section 160 (4) provides that local authorities can only pass a by-law if such by-law has been discussed in a public arena to enable local communities to make input.

2.4.2 **Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998**

The *Municipal Structures Act* 117 of 1998 provides for the establishment of ward committees. Ward committees have been identified by this Act as important structures through which the communities must be involved in local government activities. This Act provides for the establishment of ward committees which would serve as mediators between the people and government. Section 5(3) (a) recognises ward committees as the "official specialised participatory structure in the municipality" which must ensure active participation of the community in integrated development planning (IDP) processes, and budgetary processes, and similar other processes. Section 2 clearly defines the status of ward committees as being that of an advisory in nature. They should be independent and strive for impartiality as well as performing their functions without fear, favour and prejudice. Chapter 4 of the Act provides guidelines on how ward committees may execute their duties in order to achieve the desired results.

2.4.3 **Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000**

Section 16(1) of this Act re-emphasise the need for municipalities to develop a culture of community participation as a means to bring about service delivery. It is further elaborated herein that community participation may be fully realised where communities are empowered to participate in developmental and similar planning processes.

This Act also hints on participation as a "core principles, mechanisms and processes which will help municipalities to uplift communities whose lives were adversely affected by the legacy of apartheid". The importance of public participation is highly constructed in this Act, particularly where municipalities are required to produce IDPs that will improve the affected (local) communities' social, economic and similar needs. Throughout this IDP process (conceptualisation to outcome) municipalities are obliged to privilege community participation; and it is through participation in IDP processes that communities gain the ability to decipher and monitor local government's performance in meeting the objectives set out in IDPs.

2.4.4 **White Paper on Local Government, 1998**

The general agreement in the DPLG is that there is a need to "reduce the social distance between public representatives and the people" (White Paper on Local Government, 1998:65). Ward committees are seen as one of the mechanisms to achieve this goal. These committees if properly structured and functioning can "provide every metropolitan resident with a local point of access to municipal government and strengthen the accountability of ward councillors to local residents" (White Paper on Local Government, 1998:65). This policy and legislative framework people- centred and include them in decision-making The White Paper on Local Government (March 1998) and the municipal structures Act stipulate the key tasks of ward committees as follows:

- The preparation, implementation and review of integrated development plans
- The establishment and implementation of a municipality's performance management systems
- The monitoring and review of a municipality's performance
- Preparation of a municipality's budget

2.4.5 **Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), 1994**

In South Africa, Public participation is strongly emphasised in the White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme of 1994. Section D of the White Paper sets out a form of governance that is relevant and informs quality service to local communities. This policy framework provides that municipalities need to develop mechanisms to ensure that their delivery systems are inclusive, and accommodative of marginalised or disadvantaged groups. It further guides municipalities to develop mechanisms to interact with community groups to identify service needs and priorities as well as community resources that can be channelled for development planning processes.

2.4.6 **Public Participation through ward committees**

The Municipal Structures Act of 1998 requires municipalities to establish ward committee system, and that ward committees must be established in every ward. The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 sets out guidelines around the establishment; composition and functioning of

ward committees' leadership of ward councillors. This Act requires municipalities to provide the required support for the successful involvement of ward committees as drivers for public participation. Ward committees are structures elected to assist the ward councillors to promote a link between government and communities. The functions of ward committees are clearly stipulated above in The White Paper on Local Government.

Although ward committees are legislated bodies, they alone cannot perform the duties mandated to them by the communities. The inception of community development workers in 2003 earmarked a period whereby the government deployed these multi-skilled public servants in communities to help people access government services and poverty alleviation programmes (http/www.safrica.info). The inception of this structure was done with the intention that they will perform the following:

-"to help people access government services and poverty alleviation programmes,

-to interact with ward committees, councillors and local municipalities, among others and

- to help government with service delivery by improving communication and helping local people to access services to which they are entitled" (http/www.safrica.info)

From the discussion above, it is clear that the essence of the South African approach to public participation in principle is premised on"

- Commitment to public participation
- Community empowerment
- Decentralised decision-making
- Peoples' involvement through IDP'S

Having provided the models of public participation, the South African policy and legislative framework, it is necessary to consider some international trends, which will be discussed below.

2.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

Providing essential services such as school, water and transport is a very crucial element in local government and it is important for local governments to recognise that not only should they provide these services but they should also "give prominence to a wider role of community leadership and citizenship" Stoker (2002: 31). However in South Africa, the provision of such does not lie with the Local Government but the National government. Local governments everywhere in the world should strive to facilitate community

participation in achieving the above objectives. It is given that public participation in service delivery would not be possible to achieve if not supported by an enabling policy framework. This subsection looks into international experience of public participation. United Kingdom, France, Spain and Italy and Brazil are hereby being considered.

Discussions below focus on a few international examples as reported by Stoker (2002).

2.5.1 United Kingdom

Public participation in the United Kingdom is facilitated by the central government through policies of the Labour government. It has been observed that the previous government by the Conservative party only concerned itself with programmes that sought to reduce expenditure and also introduced "managerialist principles and practice to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery" (Stoker, 2002: 35). Stoker (2002) argues that in the latter instance, the programme adopted by the Conservatives undermined service delivery and standards in many local authorities and the party were not very accommodative of democratic politics at the local government level. However, this changed with the Labour party who recognise the value of a local community for any community leadership and democratic politics in local government Stoker (2002).

Presently in the United Kingdom, local authorities have three main responsibilities. Top amongst those responsibilities is for local authorities to:

> "work with other interest [groups and/or stakeholders] to develop a shared vision of what needs to be done in their locality. Secondly they should develop mechanisms to work in partnerships with public agencies, private companies, community groups and voluntary organisations to deliver benefits to their community. Third [and last], they should act as the guarantor of good quality services for all their citizens and enable people to hold to account the organisations operating in their area" (Stoker, 2002: 36).

2.5.2 France, Spain and Italy

Stoker (2002) observes that these three countries' local politics were similarly constrained by the post-war experience of the dominant central government. However, that changed in the period beginning in the 1970s when a whole range of political and economic changes provided an enabling environment for the emergence of a better and dominant local government. Since that time local governance in the three countries has grown to be flexible and accommodative of an entrepreneurial approach to local government. Most cities in these countries have gone on to use the unique value of their localities to benefit its citizens. For example, Barcelona is today well known for its "conferences and exhibitions but has put in place a range of modern management systems to improve service delivery to its citizens, as well as a structure of decentralized offices and committees to achieve greater responsiveness to the public" (Stoker, 2002: 37).

2.5.3 Brazil

Porto Alegre demonstrated good practice of public participation in local governance and act as a source of inspiration for building some process of participation related to budgetary affairs. The municipality was faced by problems such as:

1. accelerated population growth, which resulted in acute infrastructure deficiencies
2. financial and administrative problems which left third of its population devoid of urban infrastructure and basic services.
3. The income, which originated from taxes, was not enough to finance minimum public works needed for the development of the City
4. Citizens were living in non-regulated settlements without access to drinking water, basic sanitation and without paved streets, much like many townships in South Africa. (Municipality of Porto Alegre, 2000)

As a result of these problems, the community embarked on a participative budget process to address its developmental and financial crisis.

A. Participatory budgeting process

There was an increase in regions as the result of community participation gaining momentum from two regions to 16 regions that allowed for maximum participation of all City communities. The City formed a Forum of Regional and Thematic Delegates as well as a Board of Participative Budget which were the representations from the 16 regions whose key responsibility was to discuss City plans, their costs and the feasibility of their implementation. They also were to recommend for the adoption of the City budget and its investment plans (Municipality of Porto Alegre, 2000).

Unions, women's rights organisations, youth, health, education and culture and five participatory structures were established to ensure the inclusion of individuals and structures on themes such as "the organisation of the city and urban development, circulation and transportation, health and social services, education, culture and leisure and economic development and taxation" (Municipality of Porto Alegre, 2000:10).

In order to ensure transparency and frank relations between the public and the city administrators, the communities were consulted using plenary and preliminary meetings.

Overall results of Participatory budgeting were that the government funds were utilised to fulfil the demands of the population. There was an improvement in service delivery for example- an increase in water supplied and an improvement in basic sanitation services.

This municipality did face challenges during the participatory process like tension, however, due to better understanding of issues and the development of trust between the participants, the tensions eased off.

The lessons learnt from this case study are that public participation is a prolonged process and requires continuous focus on the project. Involving communities in matters of local government, results in mutual trust between City officials and community members, (Municipality of Porto Alegre, 2000).

The discussions on the international case studies above therefore give weight to the already pronounced significance of public participation in local community development. Local communities in the five countries discussed above are evidence that the role of local communities in development decision-making is important in shaping their communities' development planning processes. The municipality of Porto Alegre provides a good example that through transparency and community involvement, the communities can work together to achieve better service delivery and that the needs of the community will be met in time. Having explored the international case studies, it is important to now focus on the practices of public participation.

2.6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE

South Africa's *Municipal Structures Act* of 1998 is a momentous legislative instrument that seeks to enable participatory development within the local government sphere; and as such it identifies ward committees as vital structures through which public participatory processes may be achieved. Section 5 (3) provides that the composition of ward development committees must "consist of members of different interest groups within a community and the committees are under the stewardship of a politician, who is a councillor."This Act further point out that ward committees serve as a communication conduit through which local political representatives and the community jointly take part in community development with members of the public. These committees further operate wherein community members may voice their concerns and also highlight their collective needs and aspirations in relation to any development affecting the community (Department of provincial and local Government, 1998)

Outside the ward committees other structures and/or avenues still exist through which community members are able to participate in the development of their local communities (Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality, 2006 & 2007, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, (2005 & 2006). These include apolitical civil society organisations; community development workers (CDWs); public gatherings; and the ordinary tête-à-tête interactions characteristic of a 'community'. How do the latter 'structures' relate to municipality-specific community participation processes? They become relevant where questions of how the effectiveness and impact of public participation in ward committees are rallied between the 'formal' and

'informal' spaces characterising politicians and the community respectively (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2006). All opportunities for cooperation need to be harnessed and any possible conflict area need to be resolved through a smooth public participation process. Civil society organisations are important for their apolitical nature and they seek to protect (or advance) and advocate for the interests of the vulnerable members of the community. Steytler and Mettler (2006:65) argue that "civil society organisations are important in ensuring that key performance goals for local government. Civil society organisations' role in the ward committees can therefore not be ignored or simply be wished away".

2.6.1 **The role of the community in governance**

There is large and growing evidence that certain types of public goods and services derived through service delivery are enhanced correspondingly with an increased active participation of the communities for which they are intended. For example, as end-users of the services, communities play a vital role in ensuring that such services are well provided for, and they are also well positioned to monitor the quality of such services. Local communities have, at their disposal, the benefit of local information and can assess the specificness and uniqueness of the obstacles facing development agencies in providing particular services. Public participation also serves to "provide volunteering opportunities for members of the local communities, provided that specific and requisite mechanisms exist to enable such efforts" (Gupta, Gauri and Khemani, 2004:48).

Gupta, Gauri and Khemani (2004) identify one of the greatest challenges in development, and hence service delivery, as the reconciliation of resources (financial and kind) with the socio-economic, political needs and aspirations of the local communities. This can only be achieved through active and effective local community participation in public debates. Local communities must be able to present their needs to development agencies for consideration into development plans. Public participation in major decision-making processes for development purposes is therefore fundamental in "achieving relevant and appropriate solutions" (Gupta, Gauri and Khemani, 2004:59). In its simplest form, participatory planning embodies consensus in identification of local community needs and aspirations and therefore ensures that development programmes and projects are relevant to and specific to the communities they are intended for. This way "development planners are able to carefully

utilise scarce resources meaningfully and minimise waste" (Gupta, Gauri and Khemani (2004:63).

Local communities are therefore able to identify with their development projects as they would have contributed significantly in conceptualising them (Sewell and Coppock, 1977). Democracy advocates for an active citizenship. Therefore, it is through this view that local communities' participation in developmental processes should be made possible. However, it is important that participation does not only mean voting political representatives into positions of leadership and then all decision-making powers are vested in the few who are elected into such positions. Those elected representatives need to closely interact with their local communities and create an enabling environment that results in the local communities' participation in their own development. Adding the idea of participation to the concept of representative democracy is not only critical for legitimacy but is also effective from the pragmatic point of view in that it dictates for constructive resources' allocation and use (Planact, 2006).

"Participation gives a better understanding of the democratic system, and in most democratic governments ensures a close interaction between the governed and those who govern" (Planact, 2006:7). It is a two-way relationship which brings the government closer to the population at grassroots level. This is a form of a social contract that enables reflective decision-making processes; ensures that developmental initiatives are relevant and consistent with a particular community; and also that it allows government and the local communities to work together towards a common and relevant solution. Public participation in service delivery also gives prominence to transparency. This (transparency) is another important aspect of development that can be achieved through public participation as it allows government officers to act in certain ways and refrain from any corrupt tendencies. "This means that the government has a duty to make information available to all citizens.

This information can be obtained from municipal offices and people's centres. Communities should be well informed about government or council activities, and should refuse to pay bribes if requested to do so by councillors and officials. All reports, including financial reports and budgets, must be available for the public to see [and t]he public should be aware of laws and by-laws" (Planact, 2006: 29). All these enable local communities to effectively and efficiently make contributions in their communities' development. Local people are

therefore able to make informed contributions during consultations because they possess the right information regarding their development and the resources available.

Having described the South African policy's commitment to public participation as well as experiences, it is important to understand the factors limiting and promoting the achievement of these policy objectives.

2.7 **EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Landsberg (2002:14) agues that "one of the serious challenges facing the South African government is the gap between policy [conceptualisation and objectives] and implementation" He further notes that this could be attributed to the fact that "government at both provincial and local has relatively weak state capacity" (Landsberg, 2002: 14). This view is strengthened by Mathekga and Buccus (2006) who argue that in South Africa the major challenge of public participation is that those local institutions and structures tasked with spearheading the processes of local communities' inclusion in decision-making often do not fulfil this legislative responsibility. This could be attributable to various factors principal among them being the distrustful and disrespectful relations or perceptions that local communities have of these participatory institutions; the councillors leading them hold part-time positions else, and this makes it difficult for them to "master and minute [the] details of the office they hold" (Ntuli, in Sunday Times, 2007:14). The other notable challenge would be to instil the sense of 'community' and pride that communities derived through being involved in local governance matters. There is a need for true local community participation and that must not involve simply seeking a non-reflective and uncritical deliberation of the developmental matters at hand (Mathekga and Buccus 2006).

Public participation in South Africa acknowledges that local communities have a past and culture and that historic legacy coupled with the local communities' experiences and knowledge of their settlement is critical in order to understand the unique problems in any community (Cleaver, 1999). It is through public participation that local governments can conceptualise programmes that are relevant to the affected community, and thereby avoiding speculative projects that are bound to fail and turn into white elephants. It is also through

public participation that local communities are able to feel a sense of ownership for projects in their communities (Cleaver, 1999).

The following subsections highlights explicitly the opportunities and challenges of public participation as observed by Clapper (1996).

2.7.1 Challenges facing effective and efficient public participation

This segment of the literature review presents factors that have a potentially adverse impact towards the attainment of workable and resource-considerate public participation environment. In these, the factors considered here are the inevitability of conflict; likely favourable representation; the costs associated with participation; and the absence of requisite skills among communities.

A. Potential for conflict

According to Clapper (1996:70), "[t]he conflict potential in citizen participation is one of the major disadvantages" of the practice. There is likely to be internal community conflicts; or perhaps worse, conflict between the local community members and the local government structure's officers. Both of these occurrences are common in South Africa (For example, *Mail & Guardian*, 6 – 12 July 2007, pp. 4 – 5). This is supported by Foucault (cited in Flyvberg, 2002), who believes that where there is a number of role players' power dynamics tend to manifest themselves. Just like in any case scenario where a number of people are working together to achieve a common goal, it is not easy to agree on a common way of achieving such a goal. In fact in citizen participation these goals are usually not explicitly defined, and it is left to the local communities to reach a consensus and identify and adopt a singular and common goal that they believe will benefit the whole community.

As for conflict between the community and officials, it is common that these two collectives are considered to be representing inherently opposing interests; hence they approach each other with a measured sense of caution in most interactions. The public might feel that the practice is not worth their effort, especially when they feel that their exchanges with the

authorities is consistently used to serve the authorities' particular interests at the expense of the communities'. Simultaneously, local politicians and municipal officials may be of the opinion that the community's participation in decision-making is either 'hyper-democracy' or 'over consultation' and therefore seek to trim it down (Clapper, 1996).

B. Representativeness

Clapper (1996:43) argues that "it is impossible to achieve a situation where – in circumstances of a collective composed of heterogeneous interests – there are equally competent, articulate, assertive and organised participants". Some members amongst the negotiating members will have an upper negotiating hand over others and the participants in the former category are the same members who will continuously have greater influence on most, if not all, the decisions taken for the duration of the process. This likelihood raises the concern whether this influential – ordinarily small group of elite – can be trusted to act with the interests of the wider majority within view. In most cases, Clapper (1996) asserts, members of local communities need to be induced through corrupt means in order for them to grasp the need for citizen participation, and in the absence of such incentives they default in their promises and thereby rendering participatory decision-making non-representative due to low-turn outs. As a result, influential elites use incentives at their disposal to manipulate deprived community members to subjectively favour their decisions, often at the communities' expense (Clapper, 1996).

An example of this would include a businessman who proposes to set up a toxic substance manufacturing plant next to a community water source without duly undertaking a proper environmental impact assessment (EIA) study necessary for the authorisation of the intended (that is, proposed) business activities. Instead of consulting with the would-be affected community for their input through the EIA process, the businessperson in question may simply pay nominal – though relatively substantial – amounts of money to few influential community leaders, and thereby misrepresent this as the whole community's consent for the toxic substance manufacturing consent to commence its business.

C. Costs (time, finances, personpower, etc.)

The realisation of fully democratic and strictly participatory governmental, organisational or institutional processes necessitates a prerequisite willingness to invest specific resources. Among some, these resources translate into time, skill, expertise and money. The processes of consultation between the local community and politicians and/or municipal officials; and later amongst community members themselves are not inexpensive – in the broadest definition of the word. Whilst the process of realising the benefits accruing from the proposed project or service may be protracted, the most desperate and immediately-needy members of society may find it impossible to comprehend and reconcile the high financial and other costs that are associated with realising and enjoying these a number of years down the from the inception date. An interrelated problem is that where government invests resources aimed at educating citizens of the benefits of participation, the benefits of measuring the qualitative benefits deriving from this investment are proving impossible to grasp, let alone growing community members' audience of related educational initiatives or an increase in the number of participants in local government structures (Clapper, 1996).

D. Citizens' competence

Some of the projects proposed on behalf of or for the community are complex enough to be beyond the municipal employees' implementation competence, and therefore they will not reach the intended beneficiaries (community). Clapper (1996:74) argues that "in general, citizens cannot assess objectively the quality of service delivery"For example, processes such as the IDP calls for citizen participation, but these are not complemented by ordinary citizen empowerment processes to be, for instance, proficient in budgetary processes.

These considerations are an indication that power may not be separated from knowledge; and that without the necessary knowledge of the issues being dealt with in these decision-making processes, those with knowledge will continue to overwhelm those without (Flyvbjerg and Richardson, 2002). To add to this, it is generally not easy to sustain communities' participation in typically complex development planning processes and ensure their thorough participation, particularly where technical items are under discussion. In these circumstances, communities are likely to be used to rubberstamp outcomes that may not be in their favour, in hindsight.

2.7.2 **Factors enabling effective and efficient public participation**

The preceding subsection is a discussion of the various factors that impede the attainment of the effective and efficient public participation in community development planning processes. This segment of the discussion will be focused on the factors that enable public participation and thereby saving a local municipality's resources that would have potentially been unnecessarily spent. The following are considered: the reduction of community apathy; improving collective assertiveness; and instilling cooperative and mutually supportive development.

A. *Reduction of apathy in developmental issues debates*

Clapper (1996) observes that in America what persuaded most institutions to give more prominence to public participation is the fact that it was both necessary and important to give the local communities a sense of self-worthy. Before that local communities considered themselves as being powerless in respect of shaping development, even when these developments had direct impact on their lives. In fact, Clapper (1996) mentions that involvement and participation in respect of citizen-defining activities "reduces psychological suffering and overcomes the apathy of ordinary citizens, and should be the fundamental reason for urging citizen participation" (Clapper, 1996: 75). In this way the capacity of local communities to believe and act on their potential influence of government in relation to development grows, and thereby enhancing both the probabilities and possibilities of effecting relevant developments that meet the communities' needs and aspirations.

B. *Improve local people's assertiveness*

Few can argue against the fact that citizen or public participation enables independent communities through which meaningfully transformed individual citizens who are merely not "passive consumers of services [provided by]… others [but instead are]… producers of those services" (Clapper, 1996: 75). This way public participation is seen as an invaluable source of an indispensable resource – 'personpower'. Another great opportunity associated with this argument is that local communities possess extensive knowledge of their surroundings, and thereby involving them in major decision making ensures that development planning

professionals are able to tap into this useful knowledge during these mutually-defined planning processes. There are many instances in many countries today where projects have failed or cost more than was necessary because the implementing agencies (development planning professionals) did not know the unique conditions of the local environments within which they were working. At the same time potential conflicts resulting from, for example, cultural implantation and foreignness of projects are being avoided when development is mutually defined and shaped both by the community and implementing agencies (Clapper, 1996). It is also possible that through public participation, local communities are able to manage professionals and could actually make them account for all aspects of the project, programme or service being rendered; thereby this has the potential of also keeping check on would-be power-abusive and corrupt public officials (Clapper, 1996).

C. *The ability to win over supporters*

There are several limitations resulting in government's failings, elaborated in the literature considered in this section, toward fulfilling its service delivery obligations to local communities as outlined in various policy documents and legislation. Primary among these is the various community sectors' competition for the limited resources allocated for service delivery. It is therefore useful for government to involve local communities in development-related and similar decision-making processes so as to instil a sense of limited resource appreciation among affected communities. In so doing government may share some of the limited resources' constraints with the communities, and thence develop a sense of empathy in relation to difficulties associated with rendering services to these communities. If local communities are kept abreast of service delivery priorities, the whys and hows of resource allocation and utilisation this may result in shared understanding between both the local government sphere and the various community sectors. Potential expressions of service delivery discontents will be better contextualised than in an environment of non-participatory development planning (Clapper, 1996). Lastly, community participatory development planning processes have the potential of ameliorating and harmonising counter-constructive community-specific relations through rendering these communities development initiatives (outcomes) that are aimed at joint-responsibility and benefit. In other words, public participation is an optional way of managing community conflicts before they spiral out of hand (Clapper, 1996).

2.8 **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In some instances, local communities' empowerment and access to basic services had characterised local governance. In this respect, Janda, Berry and Goldman (1999) argue that "[g]overnment ought to be run by the people" (Janda, Berry and Goldman, 1999: 225). Whilst this statement professes democracy, it provides neither a clearly detailed not a procedure-based guidance of how local people can effectively become an indispensable feature of their communities' development. On its own such a statement can solicit different interpretations from politicians and development planners respectively, with each one giving their suited interpretation to it in order to protect and advance their interests – at all costs. Consequentially, the loser is the community (Janda, Berry and Goldman 1999). It is also important to note that "each citizen's ability to influence government should be equal to that of every other citizen, so that differences in personal resources do not work against the poor or otherwise disadvantaged" members of the community (Janda, Berry and Goldman 1999: 255).

Often the need for public participation has simply been replied to with electioneering and casting votes for representatives who thence become part of a remote parliament, legislature or council. Under these circumstances, it has been argued that even though decision-making is centralised, local communities are still afforded the opportunity to influence decision-making processes by choosing the people who take decisions on their behalf. However, this is mere tokenism and elitist democracy that cherishes electoral (representative) democracy, and shows contempt for direct citizen participation in decision-making processes. Further, there is also a need to differentiate between democracy and public participation as these two do not necessarily refer to one and the same thing.

In the context of this research, the discussions above become relevant given the fact that the study herein being undertaken looks into the relationship between community participation in service delivery (development) processes whose reality is also being determined by a defined public expenditure management environment that has particular local translations and implications when looked through local budgetary processes.

This research report contains a theoretical framework for public participation, ward committees, and community development workers in South Africa's context. Definitions of public participation and their implications for service delivery have been thoroughly considered. Below here, public participation and ward committees are discussed in relation to both the current socio-economic needs and the policy guidelines that inform South Africa's specific context.

This research is premised on the normative planning theory that recognises the uniqueness of each local community and does not prescribe solutions for communities basing on experiences from elsewhere. There are various planning theories that are available to planners in their endeavours to achieve public participation and these are discussed below.

2.8.1   Normative planning theory (Communicative Theory)

Under this theory, Watson (2002) argues that the Sub-Saharan region is unique and will therefore require a theory that can best be adapted to the region and take into consideration the unique characteristics of the area. Scholars from this school of thought have faith in civil society. This approach is based on open and honest debate, strong civil society in governmental control. Habermas as cited in Harrison (2005) argues that the planning process is more important than the results, and further argues that as long as the framework for the exercise is right the results are bound to be right.

Whilst not necessarily dismissing other theories, Watson (2002) argues that the use of normative planning theories needs to be done in such a way that planners are able to recognise that conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa are vastly different from conditions in Europe. Although participatory development planning processes, as espoused by scholars such as Healey, Innes, Habermas, are laudable, their practical implementation and usefulness are questioned. According to Michael Foucault in Flyvbjerg et al. (2002), decision-making is determined by a wide range of power complexities.

White 1996:12 argues that "the interests from 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' do not match neatly". The author asserts that this may be attributed to the fact that participation is not always in the interest of the poor but it will depend on the type of participation and the terms on which it is offered White (1996). Therefore the outcomes of deliberations may not necessarily represent the true feelings and wishes of some or most participants. White (1996:17) agrees with Foucault when he argues that "participation is a complex and abstract

process where power is involved to determine whose interests is favoured over others". As seen through normative theories, participatory development planning processes are not always directly beneficial to the intended community.

2.8.2 Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism as put forward by Sandercock (2000) in Watson (2002) argues that there is need to appreciate and acknowledge the benefits brought about by diversity. The crux of this theory is that planning in a multicultural society calls for a multi faceted and multi dimensional approach. The outcome of this could be a creative and diverse urban morphology, which caters for people from different social, political and economic backgrounds Sandercock (2000) cited in Watson (2002). Sandercock also has great faith in the role of the civil society in addressing the needs of the marginalized. Sandercock (2000) cited in Watson (2002:32) further argues that "diversity needs to be celebrated and not repressed".

2.8.3 Just city approach

This planning theory is approach is concerned with a fair and equitable access to and utilisation of its resources and is supported by Fainstein in Watson (2002) who, whilst acknowledging the cultural diversity in our cities, believes that democracy is an illusive achievement in any given society. Fainstein cited in Watson (2000) concurs that democracy is what all planners and residents want in development or habitat planning but the truth is that it is not possible to achieve it. According to Fainstein cited in Watson (2000), development plans are dictated by resources and time available for the planners.

2.9 CONCLUSION

In summary, it is necessary to note that none of the planning theories discussed above can be adopted in its pure form when seeking to address the inadequacies of local community development. While South Africa's local development has borrowed from the normative planning concept of 'planning', it has also adopted certain aspects of other planning theories in the quest to address specific development issues. The theories herein considered are supportive of public participation, however only when considered in a continuum. The

literature above has elaborated on various positive and negatives aspects of public participation. Thereby I conclude with the reflection that the absence of public participation will have an adverse impact on service delivery in the sphere of local government. As a result, the remaining contents of the research report will be focussed on answering the following questions:

1.   How does public participation improve service delivery levels?

2.   How important is it for authorities to consult with residents before providing services?

3. What are the major contributing factors toward both poor and excellent levels service delivery in the local government sphere?

CHAPTER 3:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

To answer the research questions I employed an exploratory type of research. This is a comparative analysis which seeks to asses the performance of ward committees and community development workers. It was used as a vehicle to appraise public participation in the two municipalities. The study also provided me with a chance to identify how public participation has enhanced or stifled service delivery. It also highlighted opportunities and challenges with regard to public participation in service delivery.

3.1.1 Introduction to the case studies: Elias Motswaledi and Steve Tshwete local municipalities

The study relied on two case studies of category B local municipalities. These are Elias Motswaledi (EMLM) and Steve Tshwete (STLM) local municipalities which were put under Project Consolidate. Project Consolidate is an intervention mechanism that the government introduced to help underperforming municipalities (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2006). These two municipalities have contrasting achievements with regard to public participation in their development processes. There is a general perception that STLM excels in the area of participation, whereas EMLM has not been doing so well. Based on this, community members in STLM are seemingly happy with the service delivery in their areas because they identify with it and those in EMLM are not pleased with service delivery, more so that their voices are not heard (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2006). In support of the use of case studies, Yin (2003) argues that they provide researchers with exploratory investigation that help reveal social issues that can not be revealed in quantitative or other research. It is however important to indicate that in spite of the observation on case study research by Yin (2003) above, Patton (1987: 19), on the other hand clarifies that "case studies are particularly valuable when the evaluations aims to capture…unique variations from one program experience to another". He however warns that what the case study research brings out might not necessarily be generalised (Patton, 1987).

3.2   RESEARCH METHOD

Different data collection techniques were used to address the various research questions. The following section, therefore, highlights the techniques that were employed in this research, in table 2 below.

<p align="center">**Table 2: Data matrix**</p>

3.2.1   Sources of data

The researcher undertook primary and secondary data collection. The research followed a

	Objectives	Literature review	Research method	Key Informants
1	How does public participation improve the level and quality of service delivery?	Review existing literature on participation and service delivery.	Interviews with key informants	Councillors; mayors; focus groups consisting of community members; municipal managers; magoshi; community development workers.
2	Why is it important for authorities to consult with residents before providing services?	Review of implemented projects, and integrated development plans	Interviews with ward councillors; municipal managers and/or municipal mayors	Mayors; two focus groups consisting of community members from each municipality respectively; municipal managers; magoshi; community development workers; literature review.
3	What are major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of local governance?	Review of literature on governance, and policies.	Interviews with municipal managers; and community development workers.	Two focus groups consisting of six people from both municipalities respectively; one-on-one interviews with municipal mayors and managers, literature review.

qualitative and descriptive case study design in order to gather in-depth, rich information on the nature and form of public participation, ward committees and community development workers from two sites in South Africa. To gather the required information that informed these research questions, the researcher relied on **in-depth interviews** and the **review of written documents** (Finch, 1986 and Patton, 1987). Interviews provided primary data for my research (Patton, 1987 and Conyers and Hills, 1994) as did focus groups. The above-mentioned techniques are discussed below.

3.2.1.1 Secondary data

A. Review of written documents

I consulted published and unpublished literature to get secondary data. Documents such as Integrated Development Planning reports for each area, municipality reports about implemented projects, policy documents, local newspapers and media reviews were solicited from the respective municipalities and where possible, from the source. Based on this, I read from the available South African and international literature regarding what has been done with regard to promotion (or otherwise) of public participation in service delivery. This literature served to detail the opportunities and challenges that have been experienced in integrating and incorporating public participation into service delivery at both STLM and EMLM.

3.2.1.2 Primary data collection

A. Questionnaires

A questionnaire was used to gather information from key informants. The content of the questionnaires were not the same; the questionnaire was structured according to the areas of involvement of the different key informants. However there were questions which were the same for all the respondents. This was done with the purpose of getting respondents' experiences on public participation and the content of the study. The questionnaire included: questions which permitted only certain responses and questions which were used for complex questions that could not be answered in a single word but required more detailed information.

The questions were also designed in such a way to respond to the objectives of the study. A total of **21 interviews** were conducted with the following representatives:

- Two municipal mayors (one from each municipality).
- Two municipal managers (one from each municipality)
- Two community development workers (one from each municipality)
- Two ward councillors   (one from each municipality)
- Twelve focus group members (six from each municipality)
- One local chief from Elias Motswaledi Municipality

B. In-depth interviews

I held in-depth interviews with local politicians. These comprised the ward councillors and the mayors. The expectation here was that as political leaders of these municipalities to whom administrators report, they are better positioned to give vital information on the level of public participation in the development process of their respective municipalities. I talked to the professionals/administrators, mainly the planners and the municipal managers who are directly involved in the development processes within these municipalities. These technocrats, on the other hand, are in a position to provide information on how they are able to involve local communities (through public participation) in their local communities' development processes. A tape recording for these in-depth interviews was used to enable me to later on reconcile what I had written down with what had be to transcribed from the recorded taped. In addition to what I obtained from the written documents, in-depth interviews with politicians and professionals also provided added information to answer the question on the importance (or otherwise) of public participation in service delivery.

C. Focus groups

Patton (1987: 135) observes that a focus group interview is "a highly efficient qualitative data collection technique". With this in mind, I used this method (rather than have one-on-one interviews) with community members. In addition, focus group interviews helped me save

time as opposed to individual interviews (Patton, 1987). The already existing structures at ward level were also vital for focus group interviews. I therefore held focus group interviews in the ward that I selected from those that make up each municipality.

D. Sampling

The selection of participants for the focus group interviews was through purposive sampling to enable a wider community participation and representativeness. It is worth pointing out that in selecting these focus group interviewees I had to rely on the input from the ward councillors and the professionals. This type of sampling (as observed by De Vos 2000:154) is based entirely on the researcher's judgment and "enables the researcher to select samples that compose of community elements that contain the most characteristics, representative and typical attributes of the community under study". The focus group provided rich vital information on the perceptions of the communities with regard their role in the development process. A non-random sample was used to select the ward committees' members to be used for focused group interviews (Conyers and Hills, 1994).

E. Wards

For the purpose of this study two wards were selected, that is one ward (ward 12 for EMLM and 19 for STLM respectively) from Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality and Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality. Having resided in the two municipalities, it was helpful in that I was familiar with both wards. The ward is one that has been successful in service delivery through public participation, in the case of STLM; and a ward that had not done so well in so far as public participation in service delivery is concerned, in the case of EMLM.

I also used recording tapes to maximise on the information I got from this data collection method. This method provided data that helped me and hence the study to answer the question on what the contributing factors were for both poor and good quality levels of local governance. The view of the community members was vital in answering this question. I was also helped by two people in each municipality, who served as secretaries in conducting the focus group. Although a tape recorder was used during the interviews, it is worth pointing that some of the responses were well-captured by these two people. These two also helped

me in arranging for the venue, members of the focus group and also capturing some of the responds from the informants

3.2.1.3 Pilot-testing the questionnaires

It was essential to pilot-test the questionnaires in their semi-final form. This made sure that errors of whatever nature were rectified immediately at little cost. (De Vos, 2000:158) argues that "only after the necessary modifications have been made following the pilot test should the questionnaire be presented to the full sample". The questionnaire was piloted on my research partner, an official from Ekurhuleni Municipality and also on a group of students which were used for a focus group piloting exercise. At the first instance I observed that the questions were vague and revised them to capture what the research sought to achieve and/or investigate. Secondly I observed the behaviour of each focus group member and realised how imperative it was to look for extra people to help during the actual interviews.

3.2.2   Ethical considerations

I exercised caution to ensure that data collection exercise ran smoothly. With this in mind the following prevailed.

I.   With regard to interviews with politicians and professionals, I took it upon myself to explain to them the intentions of this research. This was meant to allay fears the abovementioned potential interviewees might have. Whistle-blowing is one aspect that is rife in the country and this was so that they could not be afraid that the intension was to portray their municipalities in a bad light.

II. With regard to the ward committees I explained to them what the research was meant for. I also had to make it clear to them that there was nothing personal about the research and as such it should in no way be used to attack any person. This is mainly because it is common to find that the ward committees and the ward councillors are not in good terms with another and as such anyone would utilise a given opportunity to attack one another. If allowed this could further exacerbate existing community tensions.

III. I informed them that I would not identify the respondents by name and this was made clear to them, even where and when the respondents preferred to be identified.

IV. I advised those being interviewed on the onset that they had the right to stop the interview and that they were not obliged to provide reasons as to why they have terminated the interview. I also sought consent from the interviewees by a way of requesting their consent, through consent forms and consent letters for voluntary participation in the study.

V. During interviews the questions were probing but not invasive as if one is interrogating. Raised expectations are often a problem during research. I was also aware that most people expected that I was going to do something about the situation (seeing that I was doing a research on the problem) but I explained to them, thoroughly, that mine was just academic research.

Government officials and councillors were also sceptical to participate in this research because they perceived that the findings would be used to discredit the way they have been conducting themselves. I also needed to explain to the key informants the motive behind the research and that the study was in no way meant to attack their (officials and councillors) performances or lack of it but rather to identify the opportunities and challenges of public participation in service delivery at local government level. While their personal views were also accommodated, it needs to be pointed out that in this research I preferred it if the government officials gave the government's (or institutions they represent) opinion on the research matters. I also needed a reference letter from my supervisor or course coordinator to introduce myself and the letter clearly stated the purpose of my research.

While this research used tape recording as a form of taking field notes (apart from writing notes), it needs to be noted, however, that some respondents especially the ward councillor from the (Elias Motswaledi local municipality) objected to this mechanism because of his fear of being held responsible for particular remarks which could be interpreted to be critical of the authorities. Some of the interviews were taped, all with consent.

3.2.3 Limitations of the research

The possible constraints that were encountered during this research include (but were not necessarily limited to) the unavailability of respondents especially those in the public service.

It must also be borne in mind that it was a very difficult exercise for those public servants to open up to me especially regarding that national policies and the way they implemented national projects was concerned. It was also necessary to differentiate between what was public policy and what is an individual's point of view. This is especially relevant with government officials where care needs to be taken that whatever response officers give should actually reflect what is contained in public policy and not necessarily their own thoughts. This is because this research attempts to identify whatever opportunities and challenges exist in service delivery through public participation. Responses by both officials and councillors, therefore, are not their personal individual opinions but rather government's opinion. There were also limitations in terms of time available for the research, and budget constraints.

The fact that only one ward from each municipality (EMLM and STLM) was used for this research, limits the generalization of the results. These two do not necessarily represent the true reflection of events in these two municipalities.

3.3   CONCLUSION

The methodology employed helped me achieve the aim of the research. This achievement enabled me to understand the perceptions, assertions, beliefs, views and myths of the community with regard to public participation in service delivery at local government level. It is also hoped that whatever findings arise from this research positively added to the already existing body of knowledge that sought to establish good practices in public participation as a necessary instrument for the achievement of local community development. These findings also highlighted the degree of effectiveness of grass roots level structures, in this case the ward committees, within the field of municipal participatory planning.

CHAPTER 4:

THE CASE STUDIES-STEVE TSHWETE AND ELIAS MOTSWALEDI LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

It has been shown from Chapter 2 what the requirements for an effective public participation in development and service deliveries are. It was also shown how important public participation is for service delivery. Public participation not only give satisfaction to the community for being involved, but also ensured that the services that are delivered are what people need and have contributed to for them to be realised. The Government of South Africa is committed to public participation and this is discernible from the public participation policy. The commitment is evident in the number of policies and legislation that are meant to provide opportunities for participation and ensure that it is indeed realised. With this in mind it is important that I now turn the focus to the two case study areas for this research. The aim is to establish what the case study areas have done with regard to public participation in their development planning processes. Before going into what the two municipalities have done, it is important that I profile these two in more detail.

4.2   CASE STUDY AREAS

4.2.1   Background to Steve Tshwete Local Municipality

Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (See **Figure 1**), is part of the Nkangala District Municipality and located in Mpumalanga Province and covers an area of 3 993 square kilometres with an estimated population of 146 978 (Steve Tshwete Local Municipality-STML, 2007). Its municipal offices are located in Middelburg, the major town in the region and it is here that development decisions for the municipality are made. Middelburg has a population of 24 915 which "amounts to 17.24% of the total population of the municipality" (STLM: 14).

STLM consists of 24 wards which are the responsibilities of 47 councillors (STLM, 2007.). This is a "category B Municipality" (STLM, 2007: 6) which according to the Republic of

South Africa (1996: 82) means that it "has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority over its area". Besides Middelburg, "Mhluzi, Hendrina, Kwazamokuhle, Rietkuil, Pullenshope,Komati, Presidentstrus, Naledi, Lesedi, Kranspoort, Blinkpan, Koomfontein, Kwa-Makapane and Doornkop" are towns, villages and settlements that fall within STLM (STLM, 2007: 6).
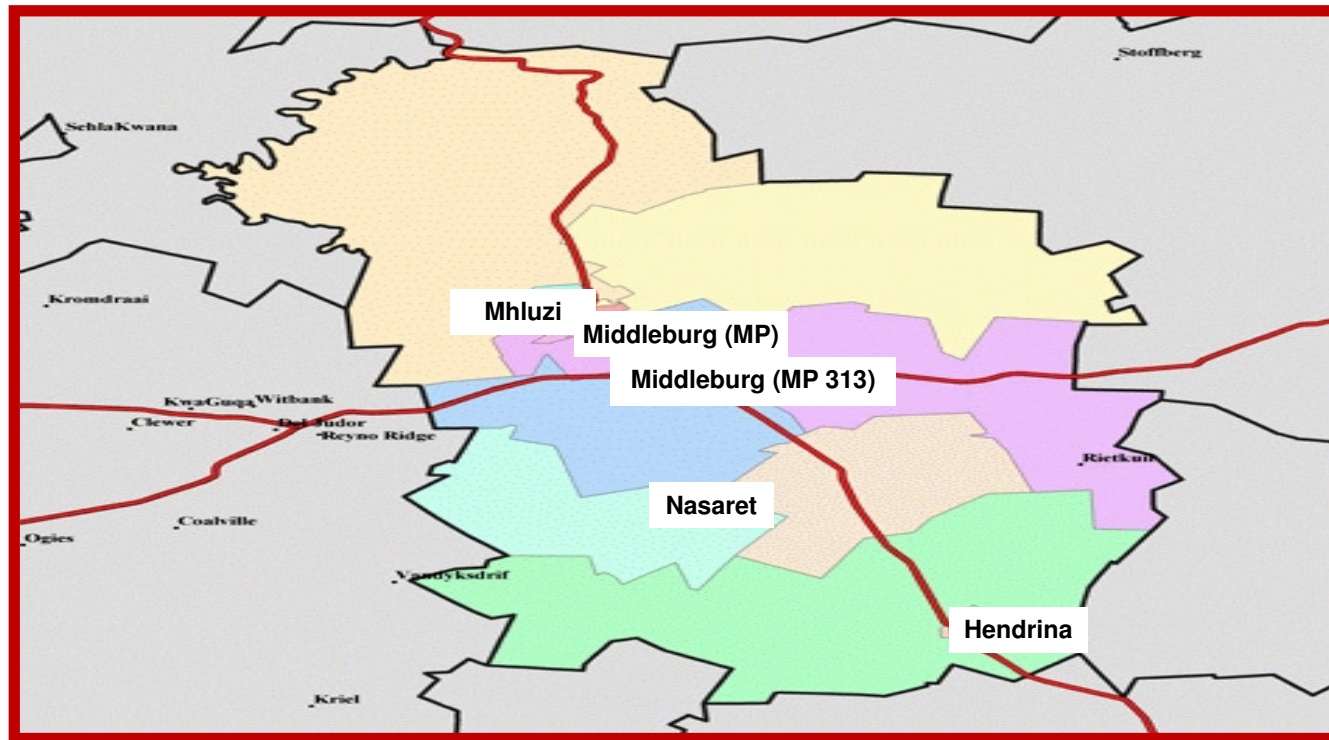
Figure 1: Steve Tshwete Local Municipality

Source: www.demarcation.org.za

4.2.1.1 EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Table 4: The Labour Force 2001

Area	1996	%	2001	%
Employed	47 423	80.4	41 678	64.6
Unemployment	11 574	19.6	22 798	35.4
Not economically active	-	-	31 619	-
Total labour force	58 997	100%	64 476	100%

Source: IDP, 2007

The above table presents the total labour force.

Table 5: Household Income

Household	2001	%	1996	%
None	5578	15.1	1691	7.1
R1-4 800	2163	5.8	929	3.9
R4 800-9600	5063	13.7	3122	13.1
R19 601-19 200	6397	17.3	5417	22.8
R19 201-38 400	6705	18.1	4740	19.9
R38 401-76 800	5008	13.5	3269	13.7
R76 801-153 600	3604	9.7	2947	12.4
R153 601- 307 200	1784	4.8	1563	6.6
R307 201-614 400	479	1.3	113	0.5
R614 401-1 228 800	123	0.3	-	
R1 228 801-2 457 600	95	0.3	-	
Over –R2 457 600	39	0.1	-	
Total	37 043	100	23791	100

Source: STLM, IDP 2007

The above table indicates that more than half of the population of the STLM falls within the lower income bracket (84%). There was an increase for household with no income from 7.1% to 15.1% from 1996 to 2001

Table 6: Level of Education

Persons	2001	%
None	15 769	27.8
Pre-School	2 063	3.6
School	37 243	65.6
College	958	1.7
Tecknikon	319	0.6
University	226	0.4
Adult Education Centre	48	0.1
Other	132	0.2
Total	56 758	100

Source: IDP STLM, 2007

The above table describes the level of education in the municipality which shows that 27, 8% have no qualification excluding infants. The municipality highlighted in the 2007 IDP that high levels of illiteracy reflects the need for education facilities for farm and rural schools.

According to the STLM 2007 IDP, 72.89% of households have water within their dwelling houses, 18.60% of households have water inside their erven and 266 households do not have standard water. The 2007 IDP reported that 74, 93% of households have flush toilets which are connected to the municipal sewer system, whilst 10.41% of households make use of chemical toilets which are temporary; a further 6.37% households make use of ventilated improved pit latrines and 0.54% use flush septic tanks. The 2007 IDP further reported that a total of 739 (4.42%) of households have no form of sanitation. The households that have no form of sanitation may be attributed to backyard dwellings or informal settlements or farms, which are not connected to the municipal sewer system.

It is reported in the 2007 IDP that 72.85% of households are provided with electricity , whilst 24.61% of households still make use of candles as a source of lighting and the remaining percentage of households make use of sources such as paraffin, solar or other means. The table below highlights the backlogs faced by the municipality.

Table 7: Summary of backlogs

Service	Housing	electricity	refuse removal	sanitation	Water
Mhluzi	5401	4545	770	4190	963
Middelburg	535	559	530	223	266
Hendrina	932	1244	619	685	452
Rural	2601	2826	3425	272	1722
Total	**9469**	**9174**	**5344**	**5370**	**7125**

Source STLM IDP, 2007

The above table summarises the total backlogs for the Steve Tshwete Municipal area. These backlogs are concentrated mostly in the rural and farm areas where the majority of the population is black.

4.2.2 Secondary data regarding public participation at Steve Tshwete Local Municipality

The STML (2005: 19) IDP points out that there has been some "unsatisfactory public participation" in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality development planning process despite efforts to involve the public. In order to address this problem, STML proposed in the 2005 IDP the involvement of the public in the development processes through a number of initiatives covering various development sectors. It is pointed out that there is need to involve the public in the proper use of land and even provide them with skills to help them contribute meaningfully in the processes (STML, 2005.). It is also reported in the 2005 IDP that the public should have influence over the economic development of the area and in an endeavour to achieve this; the municipality also formed the Local Economic Development Forum (LEDF) where the public has some representatives (STML, 2005). The above-mentioned are examples of initiatives that STLM came up with to enhance public participation

Despite these proposals to address in 2005 the lack of public participation unsatisfactory public participation was also highlighted as a problem area for the municipality in their 2006 IDP (STLM, 2006). With this in mind, further strategies were devised to ensure satisfactory

public participation. Amongst strategies put in place were the utilization of the available media to publicise public consultative meetings and that public participation will be availed adequate time so that "[t]he public should [not] feel that they are…under too much pressure" (STLM 2007: 15). There is no feedback in the IDPs on how all the initiatives that were promoted from 2004 until 2006 performed and it seems the problem persisted even in 2007. STML (2007: 4) also acknowledges "unsatisfactory public participation" as one of the weakness in the municipality's development process. With this in mind initiatives to further promote public participation continued as is evident in the 2007/2008 IDP.

STML (2007) points out that STLM has further devised other initiatives such as the Integrated Development Plan/ Performance Management System (IDP/PMS) and the ward committees to facilitate public participation in the development process. Surprisingly the very same mechanisms are proposed for the 2007/2008 IDP yet their implementation in previous years did not yield the desired results. Nevertheless including public participation in its development plans, STLM adheres to the requirements for public participation as required by the Municipal Structure Act of 1998 (DPLG, 1998b). It reported that the IDP/PMS forum is made up of various stakeholders amongst them the ward committee representatives, organized and non-organized groups' representatives and community representative (DPLG, 1998b.).

 The role that this forum plays is to provide checks and balances in the development decision making process where all stakeholders will own the final outcome of the discussions (DPLG, 1998b.). Another forum that promotes public participation is the Ward Committee. This is meant to ensure that the needs of the various groups are accommodated. This is achieved through the ward committee acting as the organizer for consultative meetings with the communities (DPLG, 1998b.). The IDP does not assess the extend of public participation in ward committees' success but this will be explained in the next chapter as it is the subject of this research.

4.2.2 Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality

Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality (**See Figure 2**) below , is located in the Limpopo Province, and covers an area of about 3 668 square kilometres with an estimated population of 221 638 (EMLM, 2007). It is one of the five municipalities that make up the Sekhukhune District Municipality (EMLM.). Its municipality offices are located in Groblersdal which

serves as the major town among the settlements that make up the municipality (EMLM, 2007 and EMLM, 2006). In total, EMLM consist of "62 settlements most of which are villages, R293 areas and Groblersdal" (EMLM, 2007: 17). EMLM consist of 29 wards and which are represented by 57 councillors (EMLM, 2007.). EMLM is also a "category B Municipality" (EMLM, 2007: 16) which has been constituted according to the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996).
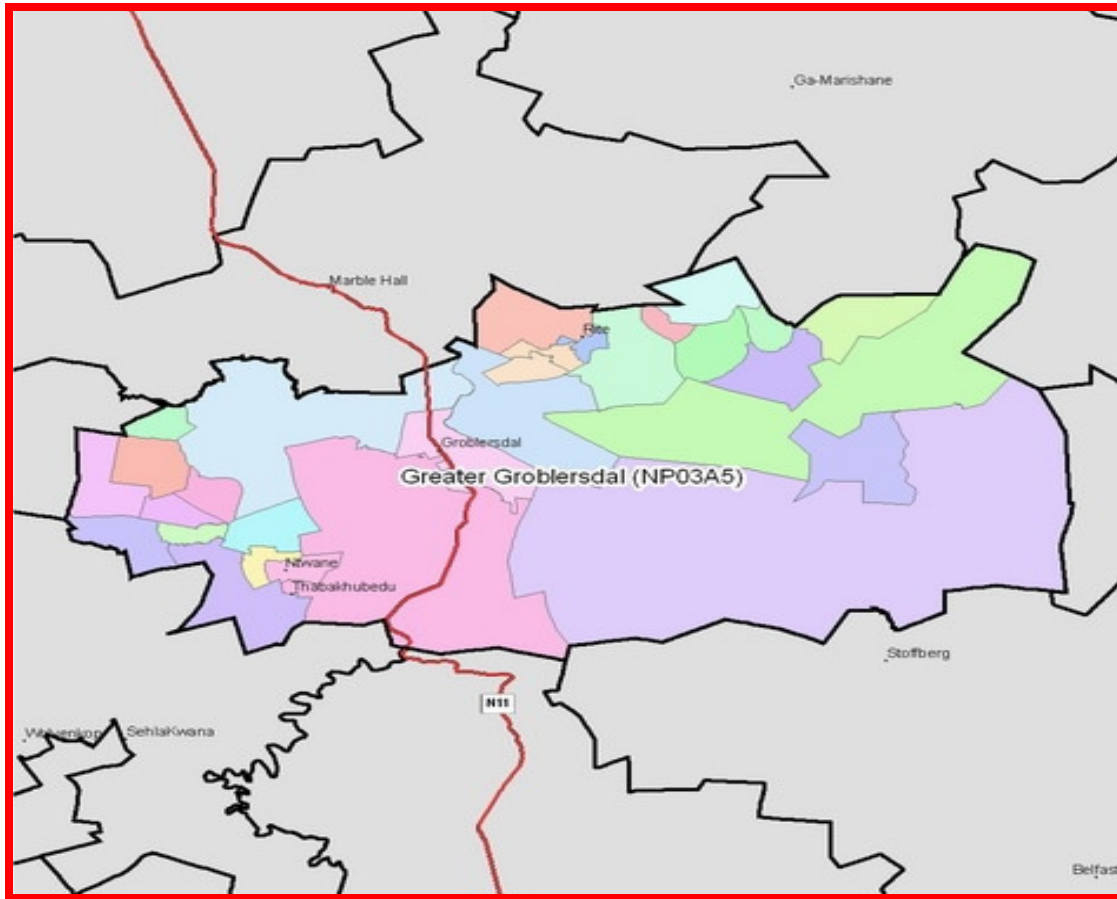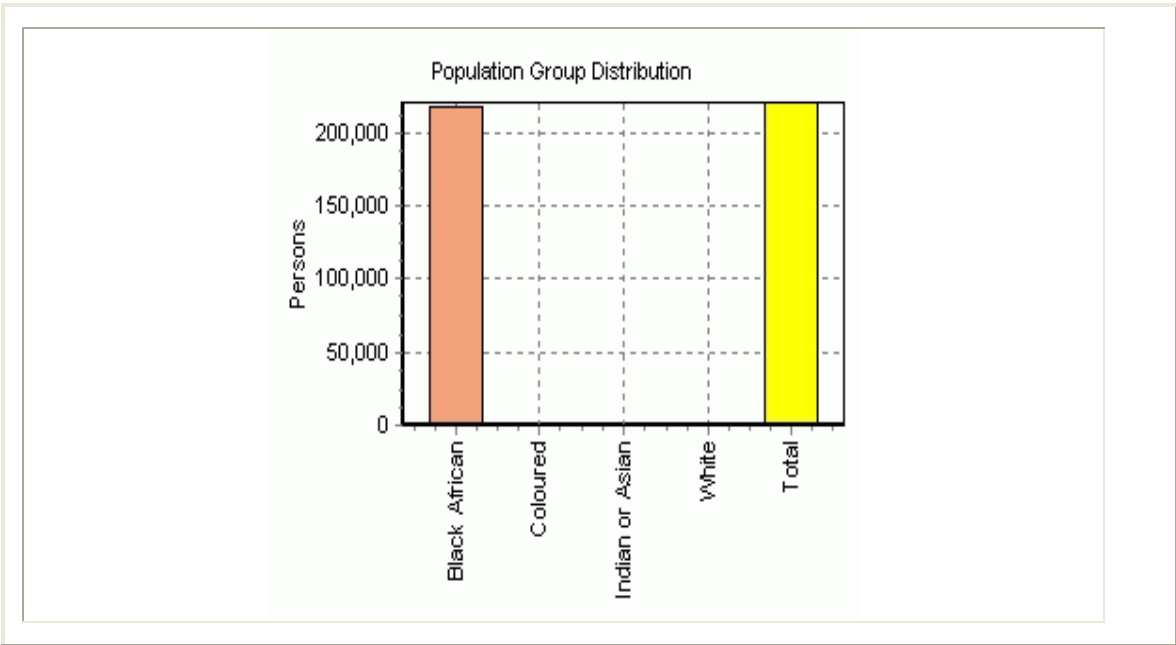

Figure 2: Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality's Area of Jurisdiction

Source: http://www:demarcation.org.za

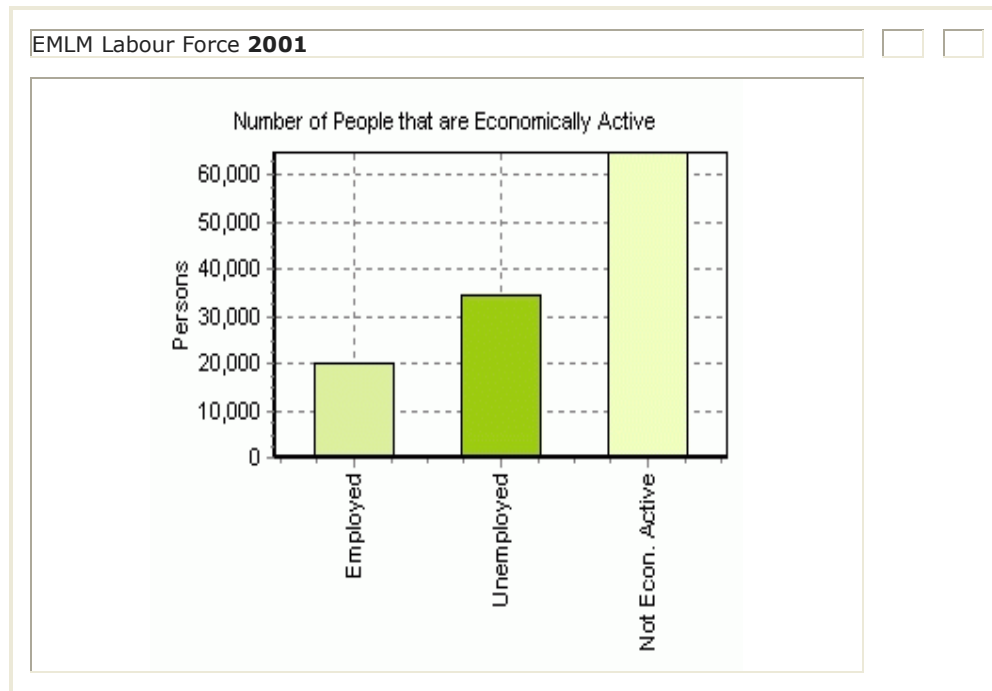## 4.2.2.1 EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Table 8: Population distribution

Population Group Distribution

Source: Census 2001

The table above illustrates the population distribution within the municipal area.. The total population is estimated at approximately 221 638: where Blacks constitute 99% of the total population, followed by Whites with 1%.
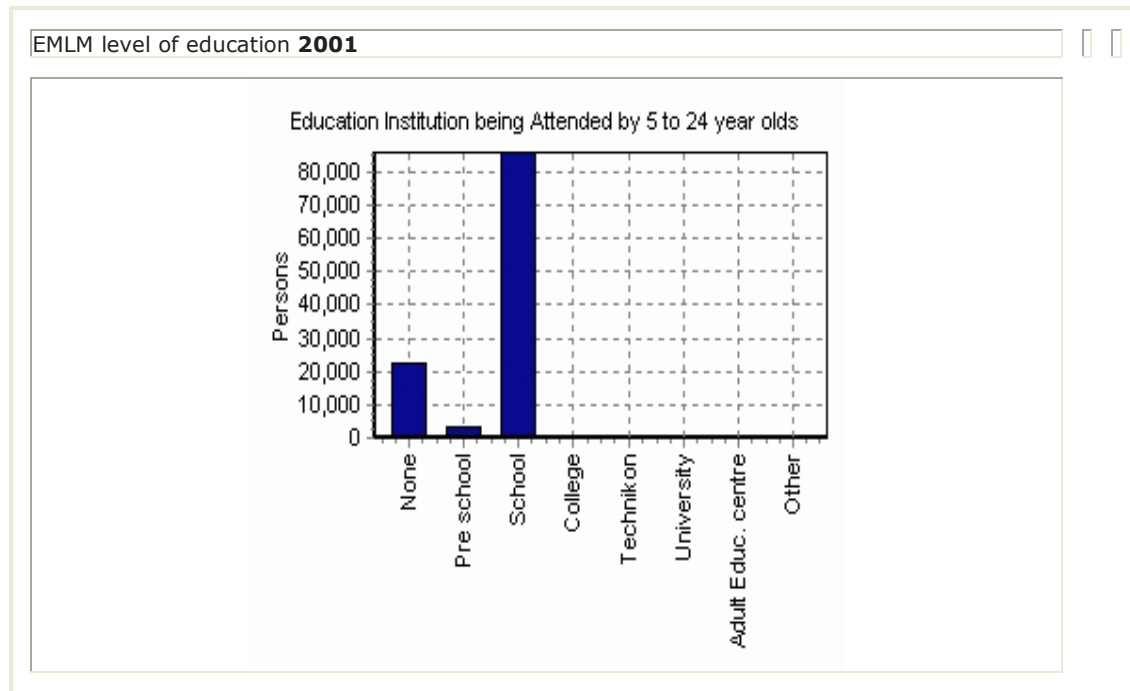
Table 9: Labour force

Source Census 2001

The above table illustrates the labour force within the municipal area. The 2007 EMLM, reports that 63. % of the economically active population is unemployed, only 17% of the adult population are employed. The 2007 IDP: 20 also reported that the level of unemployment is more prevalent in the youth and the situation is worsened by the "lack of economic growth"

Table 10: level of Education

EMLM level of education **2001**

Education Institution being Attended by 5 to 24 year olds

Source: 2007 IDP

The above table illustrates the level of education within the municipality, which shows that the highest level of education attained by over 20 year olds and the numbers of 5-24 year olds attending education institutions are very low. The 2007 IDP does not have immediate solutions to this situation nor even shed some light on this matter.

According to the EMLM 2007 IDP, only 13, %.of households have water within their dwellings as houses, while 20% of households have no access to piped water. The 2007 IDP reported that 77% of the households in the EMLM make use of the pit latrines standards which are below RDP standards while 6% have no access to sanitation. It is reported in the 2007 IDP that 85% of all towns and villages are provided with electricity, whilst more than a quarter of households use coal for cooking (26.5 %), 34% for heating. The table below highlights the service backlogs faced by the municipality.

Table 11: Percentage of households without access to services 1996-2001

Service	Housing		Electricity		Refuse removal		Sanitation		Water	
	'96	'01	'96	'01	'96	'01	'96	'01	'96	'01
	27.1	19.3	30.6	16.3	87.6	90.3	7.8	7.4	44.2	39.5

Source EMLM IDP, 2007

The above table summarises the percentage of households without access to services in 1996 and 2001. The absences of these services are found mostly in the rural areas where the majority of the population is black.

4.2.3 Secondary data regarding public participation at Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality

Commenting on the way public participation has been handled in the development process the EMLM IDP has acknowledged that public participation 'was' merely consultation. 'This was mainly viewed as an "information sharing exercise" (EMLM, 2007: 1) and taking cognisance of acknowledgement that the municipality intends taking public participation much further beyond just an information sharing exercise. The municipality intends to "consult with communities in a manner that encourages an active input from the community members" (EMLM, 2007.). Before this acknowledgement by EMLM, public participation was described as an integral part of its development process. Greater Groblersdal Municipality-GGM (2004: 42) points out that "[m]unicipalities are required [by the Municipal Structures Act of 1998] to … ensure public participation in the decision-making". In reference to the Municipal Structures Act of 1998, GGM (2004: 46) points out that "a municipality, through appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures, involves local community" in the development process.

Subsequent IDPs have incorporated public participation in the development process. It is however worth noting that in spite of the adoption of public participation as one of the main guiding principles in the development process, EMLM still acknowledges that it "has so far been unable to secure sustainable community participation processes" (EMLM, 2006: 34). It is conceded that the current arrangement where public participation is said to be achieved

"through IDPs and the budgeting process, are inadequate" (EMLM, 2006). The fact that the municipality is faced with some resource constraints has spurred the municipality into action (EMLM, 2006). It has vowed to "analyse gaps in relation to structures and systems relevant to community participation in the municipal area" (EMLM, 2006: 34) so that the subsequent plans can comprehensively deal with public participation.

The main structures for public participation at local level are the ward committees and they have to be operational (DPLG and GTZ South Africa, 2006, EMLM, 2006 and GGM, 2004). It is therefore imperative that efforts are made towards making sure that these structures are operational to aid in public participation. In EMLM ward committees are said to be non-functional and it is observed that "most Ward Committees collapse just after being elected… [and as at 2006]…very few of the 29 Ward Committees in the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality Area… [could]…be classified as fully operational" (EMLM, 2006: 35). Based on this observation, EMLM then pointed out that it will be appropriate for the municipality to have its own public participation policy. This can be interpreted to be a response to the call made by the Municipal Systems Act of 1999 (DPLG, 2000). The Act calls for 'participatory governance' within municipalities where efforts of the community should be seen to complement what the government is doing in the development process (DPLG, 2000). EMLM is convinced that with formulation and implementation of the public participation policy, this will ensure "strong and continuous successful community participation" (EMLM, 2006: 35).

In addition to the ward committees, EMLM has a Mayoral Outreach Programme which is aimed at ensuring that "communities and beneficiaries ultimately take ownership of infrastructure and assets" (EMLM, 2006). It is however noted that there have been failures in realizing this and this is blamed on poor public participation (EMLM, 2006). With this in mind , the municipality in its 2006 IDP stated its objective as intending to work

"with existing organised groupings in the community, the Moshate (Magosi [Chiefs]), social movements like NGOs/CBOs [Non Governmental Organisations/ Community Based Organisations], youth and women formations, businesses, farmers (both subsistence and commercial), disabled and many other organized civil society groups" (EMLM: 35).

It is reported that besides the failure to involve the community in the development process, there is also the failure to provide them with the needed skills and knowledge to actively take part in the development process. This has led to calls to provide empowerment mechanisms, through which the community can actively take part in the development process. Understandably this was not helped by the presence of the Community Development Workers because they too were not well equipped (EMLM, 2006). Despite the elaborate display of what the EMLM intended doing in the period starting in 2006 and ending in 2010, EMLM (2007) does not in any way provide feedback on what has been done so far. Instead the plan provides information on what has to be done in the financial year 2007/2008. There is no documentation that provides a review on the plan save for some reviews that are covered by the 2007/2008 IDP but which are silent on public participation. It is worth pointing out that lack of public participation has been shown to have been a consistent problem for these municipalities for a very long time. Efforts have been made to improve but there is no feedback on what transpired.

4.3 SECONDARY DATA REGARDING DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE CASE STUDY MUNICIPALITIES

It has been shown that public participation in the development process in South Africa is faced with problems (Mathekga and Buccus, 2006). Despite the municipalities stating in their Integrated Development Plans that public participation is an integral component of the development process, fears are that this might not necessarily be the case in practical terms. (Mathekga and Buccus, 2006)) These problems need to be tackled head-on if satisfactory development is to be achieved. Picket (1988) argues that public participation is a platform through which the community is involved in the development process and thereby also giving vulnerable members of the society opportunities through which their voices could be heard. In support of this is Cleaver (1999: 43) argues that "development interventions that are a result of public participation have been found to serve the needs and aspirations of the intended beneficiaries much better than those that have been preconceived by government". In 2002 Atkinson negated that there was a dearth of data on the progress made by municipalities with regard to public participation (Atkinson, 2002). This is evidenced by the reliance on IDPs, which do not necessarily provide all the needed information and this does not yield a reliable picture.

The development processes in these municipalities are purported to be guided by the Integrated Development Planning whose ideals are crystallized in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (EMLM, 2007 and STLM, 2007). The IDP is informed by a number of policies and statutes which are guided by the overall national development framework that draws from the country's Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Section 152:1(e) of the Constitution calls for local government "to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government" (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 81). Municipalities are therefore encouraged to ensure that local governments achieve their mandate and this has to be achieved through the available resources that municipalities have (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Guiding the municipalities in their development process, are the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 and Municipal Systems Act of 1999 which draws from the Constitution. According to STLM (2004: 397), STLM "recognizes the importance of public participation" in the development process and public participation is also advocated for by STML (2007). The Municipal Structures Act of 1998 is a legislative instrument that provides for public participation in the development process at a local level. It promotes the creation of structures through which effective public participation can be realised (Department of Local and Provincial Government, 1998b). The instrument spells out what has to be done at local municipality level in order to facilitate development and delivery.

Section 4, Part 4 of the Act deals with Ward Committees. Section 72(3) points out that "[t]he object of a ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government….and make[s development] recommendations on any matters affecting its ward" (DPLG, 1998b: 52). The Act spells out the constituency of a ward committee and points out that the committee should consist of:

"(a) the councillor representing that ward in the council. Who must also be
the chairperson of the committee: and (b) not more than 10 other persons."
(DPLG, 1998b).

It is also pointed out that the local council should oversee the selection process and criteria for committee members to ensure that all interest groups are represented (DPLG, 1998b). It is indicated that ward committees are expected to:

- "raise issues of concern about the local ward to the ward councillor.

- have a say in decisions, planning and projects that the council or municipality undertakes which have an impact on the ward" (DPLG and GTZ South Africa, 2006: 5).

From the above it is evident that efforts must be made to ensure that public participation is realised and there should be functioning and operational ward committees for it to materialise.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Key documents from the two local municipalities studied, do acknowledge that public participation should be an integral part of their development processes yet they fail to indicate how it has influenced their development processes. It seems that since public participation is legislated by the national government, all municipalities would like to be seen to be doing this and the only way to prove it is to refer to public participation in their IDPs.

The review of the documents as described above lead me to the opinion that the development plans from these municipalities are laced with 'public participation' terminologies to appease the powers that be while in actual fact there is nothing happening. The next chapter will reveal the extend to which public participation is actually carried out in the development processes or if it is just talk that is indeed to appease proponents of public participation with no action. The next chapter reports on findings from the field. The primary data will be analysed to provide information that will answer the research questions. The primary data is also used to inform possible alternative solutions.

CHAPTER 5:

RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

It has been shown from Chapter 2 and the two case study areas in Chapter 4 what the requirements for an effective public participation in developmental processes and service delivery are. The South African government is committed to public participation and this is evident in the number of policies and legislation meant to provide opportunities for to ensure that it is realised. This chapter presents the main findings from the data collection exercise. These findings are the views and understanding of different key informants and focus groups regarding public participation. It mainly draws from primary data obtained through key informant interviews which included politicians, professionals and focus groups.

The various key informants from different sectors were useful in shedding more light on public participation. Drawing responses from different view points was useful in that their contrasting views gave more depth on the role of local government and the community in terms of participation. This data collection method helps in analysing data objectively, instead of focussing on one side of the problem; you get the chance to capture information from professionals, politicians and also from ordinary man in the street, who are the recipients of government services.

 The structure of the chapter follows the themes of the interview schedules and the data collected and it is also aligned to the research objectives. Each Local Municipality's responses are analysed separately before differences and similarities are discussed at later sections of the chapter. The main objective of this research as stated in chapter 1 is to determine the role of community participation in effective and efficient local governance and this will be realised by answering the following research questions:

  OBJECTIVE 1:   How does public participation improve the level and quality of public service delivery in both municipalities?

OBJECTIVE 2:   Why is it important for authorities to consult with communities before providing them with services at both municipalities?

OBJECTIVE 3: What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation at local government levels?

5.2 ELIAS MOTSWALEDI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

This section deals with data findings for the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality.

5.2.1 OBJECTIVE 1: How does public participation improve the level and quality of public service delivery in Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality?

This objective sought to determine the impact of public participation in the level and quality of public service at the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality. Preliminary findings from existing literature point out that public participation serves to promote prudent and optimal utilization of limited public resources to avoid wastage. These sentiments and observations were shared and echoed by The Mayor and Municipal Manager who added that through public participation, Local Municipalities are able to offer only those specific services that are needed by the local communities. In this way, service delivery is demand and community specific and therefore benefits the local communities. The Democratic Alliance (DA) official interviewed also mentioned that through public participation, Local Municipalities do not have to impose services on local communities but rather that "…the local communities are the ones responsible for drawing their own shopping lists in so far as their developmental and service needs are concerned." According to the DA official, services provided by Local Municipalities are therefore needed specific and surely benefit the intended beneficiary communities.

For his part, the Local Chief observed that public participation enables local communities to feel that they are part of the community development processes through the consultations involved. He advised that the Local Municipality has therefore been able to adopt labour intensive programmes in project and service delivery and hence created jobs for local communities instead of using conventional machinery (e.g. road building). A Community Development Worker in Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality mentioned that

"[w]hen people are informed about issues it is easy for them to know what is expected of them at maybe IDP meetings instead of going there to listen to imposed decisions by the

council. Our people are not informed enough about government programmes and therefore public participation offers them the rare privilege to learn about these programmes whilst at the same time contributing to their own communities' development."

In the words of a ward councillor, "public participation enables people to advise their local municipalities on what services, projects and programmes they want as a priority and these include the likes of water because currently people are struggling to access water". The Councillor also highlighted that schools start late because kids have to go and fetch water from the river before going to school. His final observation was that government must also remunerate or pay ward committee members because these people currently do not have jobs, and can be easily discouraged if they think and feel that their contribution is not appreciated. According to the focus group interviewed, public participation serves to enable the Local Municipality to render services that the local communities want instead of the Municipality prescribing to these local communities what the communities do not need. This has resulted in the local communities owning up and protecting those properties, projects and programmes whose decision-making processes have accommodated them and where they have actually been involved in and actively taken part.

5.2.2 **OBJECTIVE 2**: **Why is it important for authorities to consult with communities before providing them with services at Elias Motswaledi local municipality?**

Through this objective the research found out how important public participation is, in service delivery. The Mayor and Municipal Manager observed that public participation is important in order for the Local Municipalities to know the needs of the local communities they serve. This view was also evident in the review of existing literature especially the reviews of implemented projects. The Mayor and Municipal Manager also added that ward committees should serve for a period equal to that of Council so that the two could align their work plans and programmes for the period they serve for the benefit of the local communities. The Democratic Alliance officer interviewed mentioned that public participation is important, not only for budgetary purposes but for the comprehensive Integrated Development Planning processes and this view is also shared by the Local Chief, who also posited that public participation in service delivery at local government level also

ensures that local communities take ownership of the services, programmes and projects in their respective areas.

According to a community development worker, it is important for local municipalities to involve local communities in service deliver processes so that the councils do not loose contact with people and their development needs. This is also important is so far as effective community assessments are concerned and also to enable planners to make objective consultations with local communities. The ward councillor found it important for local communities to actively and effectively involve local people in the development of their communities in that these people are able to tell the municipality exactly what they want and how to prioritise of such service delivery. The ward councillor said "[l]ike now we were a cross-border municipality and the province took the people to Limpopo province and they are still angry because they think Limpopo is corrupt and very far from where their services are."

During the focus group discussion it emerged that through public participation local municipalities are able to provide objectively the services that a specific community need. Members of the focus group dismissed the role played by politicians in local community development and they accused them of being "…less interested in our needs [as] they [only] think of roads because they buy beautiful cars, and as soon as we elect them they go and stay in town." Their main gripe was that it is impossible for local politicians to know what they want as a community when they do not reside in these communities. In fact one member rhetorically asked, "…how can you know what the people want when you are staying very far from them?"

5.2.3 <u>OBJECTIVE 3</u>: What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation at local government Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality?

In this section the research presents findings that highlight the major contributing factors for good, quality and poor public participation at local government level. According to existing literature on governance and the responses by both The Mayor and Municipal Manager with lack of community media and complimentary communication infrastructure such as telephones, most ward committees are inadequately equipped and hence not capacitated to fulfil their mandate of playing any significant role in their local communities' development.

According to the Democratic Alliance official most politicians are not well versed in issues of community development and there they are afraid to face communities (during consultation exercises) because of this apparent lack of knowledge and skills (by councillors). He mentioned that they are afraid to be confronted with questions, about their lack of skills and capacity and this has resulted in projects "being just put on paper but never implemented". The Democratic Alliance official mentioned that public participation is the vehicle for development and improvement of the people's lives (as contained in the Municipal Systems Act), and therefore this must be properly implemented by including every member of the community without party alignment.

The Local Chief, on the other hand, observed that service delivery is too slow and they, as local traditional leaders are discouraged. He mentioned that for effective public participation, members of a local community must be invited irrespective of their political affiliation, so that everyone can contribute to discussions about their local communities' development and services and not just be the recipients of unwanted services, like what is currently happening, He gave an example that people do not have access to water and that the problem is not really about who pays for such water as planners and politicians would like people to believe. He attributed this to the lack of proper coordination of programmes and implementation by the relevant role players especially the technocrats and politicians. The contribution by the community development worker is that "fear, lack of information about meeting schedules and the current slow service delivery" are some of the contributing factors for any effective public participation at local level. The inability of the municipality to create jobs for its people and the unfortunate scenario where available jobs are reserved for "comrades" or friends, apparent lack of skills to implement policies are some of the major contributing factors that determine whether public participation will be effective or not. Another factor that the community development worker identified was that Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality has employed wrong people who do not possess proper qualifications in technical positions. The community development worker cited the IDP/LED Manager as a clear case example and volunteered information to the effect that the incumbent is a former primary school teacher and therefore not qualified for his current positions.

According to the Ward Councillor, public participation at Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality has been negatively affected because meetings are held late at night and hence these meetings attract only a few local people if not none at all. In most instances the only

people who attend these meetings are those with vested interests in particular projects or services and who are likely to benefit from such or those who feel threatened by such services. The actual beneficiaries (the local communities) often do not make it to these meetings and their interests, although prime to the projects and services, are compromised. On factors for good public participation the response was that "I cannot say much about [any] good [public participation] because we do not have [developmental] meetings. Ward committee members just do not come to meetings because they are not paid for the time, personal resources and labour that they invest in their local community development by virtue of them being members of ward committees.

According to the focus group members, poor public participation is due to the fact that people do not get notices informing them about meetings. Just like the ward councillor, the group members also observed that the time that these meetings are convened (in the evening) is not safe, especially for women, to attend meetings. They raised a concern that the Local Municipality, however, is unperturbed by the non-attendance of local communities to these meetings and they would go on and call their ANC members, even when it is evident that the majority of the local people are not in attendance. The members also observed that for effective public participation, it is imperative for Council to employ qualified people and that Council must stop employing teachers (who instead leave learners alone to do extra work, and earn an extra income).

5.3   STEVE TSHWETHE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

This section of the findings' chapter concerns itself with findings that are specific to the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality.

5.3.1   <u>OBJECTIVE 1</u>:   How does public participation improve the level and quality of public service delivery in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality?

In order to determine the impact of public participation on the level and quality of public service, two officials in the office of the Speaker pointed out that people must know what is happening in their wards and that whatever projects are proposed for their local communities must be advocated by the ward councillor through the involvement of the local residents. The two officers posited that the mechanisms adopted by council ensure that the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality has a continuous and effective contact with the local community, and that

"[this] is why our municipality has won the Vuna awards in three [consecutive] years; We just hope that we will have dedicated people like the ones we are having now to continue this great legacy."

The Democratic Alliance official mentioned that by knowing what the local people need, it has becomes easy for Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality to direct the resources where they are needed the most. It was mentioned, by the Democratic Alliance official that most of the people in this ward were getting food parcels, assistance with their ID applications and many other critical great rapport built between the Council and its local community. livelihoods strategies due to the This view is supported by the community development worker who observed that it is important for Steve Tshwethe Local municipality to know exactly what the local people need and also not to loose touch with the people on the ground.

The ward councillor at Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality mentioned that through public participation local people are empowered to have a say in things that directly affect them and that this eliminate unwanted conflicts. He contended that the local councillors might not be adequately equipped in developmental issues but that through the training offered by the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality the councillors have been able to perform their duties of rendering services to the community. The councillor argued that ward committee members need to have attained a certain level of education in order to be able to deal with issues of governance, as it has showed that sometimes it has been difficult to address people like educated members of the local communities like teachers, nurses and others if due to lack of these skills. The focus group members mentioned that public participation has a direct impact on the level and quality of public service in that services offered will be relevant to local people's needs and wants and will be adequately budgeted for.

5.3.2   <u>OBJECTIVE 2</u>: Why is it important for authorities to consult with the people before providing them with services in Steve Tshwethe local municipality?

On the importance of public participation in local government level of service delivery, the two officers from the Speaker's office mentioned that such participation is necessary to enable the local community to tell Local Authorities what their needs are. For example, the community was able to help council (Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality) with the formulation of by-laws such as the behaviour of taverns (patrons) during exam times, noise

pollution and many other things that council (especially technocrats) might not be aware of. It is therefore clear that public participation improves the quality of regulations.

Public comments often point out ambiguities in language, omissions, unintended consequences, and other problems that may have been overlooked. Public participation also puts agencies and regulatory boards in the best position to make the right choices. By seeking input from people with different perspectives on a regulation at or before the by-law stage (and before drafting the regulation), the agency will be more fully aware of the issues, the evidence to support the various approaches that might be taken, and to ultimately make the best choices.

The involvement of local communities (through public participation) also helps to allay people's concerns. It is best to avoid a situation where significant opposition and controversy are generated upon the publication of a regulatory action. By communicating with concerned parties before publication, you will not only be able to gauge reaction, but help to avoid problems from developing. The exercise also helps to build support for the regulatory action. Regulants' and other interested parties' belief that they have been heard in the regulatory process translates into support, as well as compliance with the regulatory action once it is implemented. It plays a significant role educating regulants in advance of implementation. This will also help to minimize surprise on the part of the regulated community. It ultimately builds good will and actively seeking input from the public and responding in a meaningful fashion will reap valuable dividends in the form of greater trust and an enhanced reputation in the regulated community and beyond.

 The Steve Tshwethe Local Council therefore has adopted a resolution, that promotes collective duty sharing and community development workers serve as secretaries at meetings called by ward councillors. The Democratic Alliance official, on the other hand, observed that public participation enables Local Authorities to stay in touch with their local communities and also to deliver on the mandate from the people, and therefore avoid imposing unwanted services to the local communities.

The community development worker observed the importance of public participation in service delivery from the point of view that government's policies and programmes must be tested in all context because what works in the big cities would not necessarily work in small towns and rural areas. There is, therefore, an inherent need to educate local communities

about how government performs; for example the ward committee system must be inculcated across all communities, not only through campaigns during election times. The mayoral outreach programmes must reach the target areas and this has the effect of making such communities to also feel that they are part of the democracy, and not just mere voters, whose role is only limited to casting the ballot during voting days.

The ward councillor interviewed mentioned that without public participation, they, as local politicians, would not really know what their electorates want and need and by constantly interacting with local communities, they are able to know if they whether they satisfy the needs of the people and people are able to appraise the councillors' performances and provide feedback on where the councillors are supposed to improve for efficient and effective delivery. This is exactly a sentiment shared by the focus group members who mentioned that public participation is necessary for Local Municipalities to be able to know if the council is delivering on what the communities needs and to get feedback on the progress for particular programmes and projects and whether the services are what communities needed and whether the communities are happy about such projects. One focus group member mentioned that "[o]nce a month the Ward councillor and the community development worker come and tell us about developments in [our] wards or if companies want people for employment or offer bursaries to school leavers."

5.3.3   <u>OBJECTIVE 3</u>: What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of public participation at Steve Tshwethe local municipality?

The two officials from the Speaker's office mentioned that the major contributing factors for either good or poor public participation are different across each ward. In fact they mentioned that wards in affluent urban centres seldom have meetings, because their needs differ quite significantly from those of people in the townships and rural areas. In these affluent urban centres the local residents' concern is high levels of crime and high rates, whereas in the township and rural areas development priorities range from housing, jobs, inability to pay for services and many others. In other ways townships have a culture of meetings, whereas in towns they believe and depend in newspapers, television and other modern forms of information dissemination and hence their wards are not as effective as those wards in townships and rural areas. However, these officials also observed that ward committee

members must be remunerated because their responsibilities and the job performed by community development workers is nearly the same and that the introduction of community development workers actually demoralised them and hence they are discouraged and have over time compromised on service delivery.

According to the Democratic Alliance official there are specific determinants of public participation in the townships and rural areas hence their needs will be different from those residents in affluent urban centres. The argument here is that where there are fewer needs it is difficult for participation to take place as local residents find nothing that really compels them to attend public meetings. They reckon they can handle their developmental issues on their own (i.e. individually as households).

The Community Development Worker has mentioned that slow service delivery in some places has been the main contributing factor to poor public participation and that good quality participation is brought about by the interaction of the community and the quality and sustainability of those services provided and/or rendered to them. Just like the two officials from the Speaker's office, the ward councillor also believes that poor public participation results because of different needs per wards. He gave a similar example that in affluent urban centres residents are only concerned with matters of safety, security and crime, whereas in township and rural areas issues of concern range from housing, jobs, water and grants. The ward councillor also observed that it is easy to organise people in the townships than in affluent urban centres. On the contrasting side, an effective and good public participation makes the local communities people to develop trust in their local councillors and hence elections of particular political personnel is so much dependent on service delivery initiated by the different councillors. Effective public participation also enables local communities to be aware of the difficulties faced by their Local Municipality in terms of allocation of resources to the wards.

A similar observation was made by members of the focus group discussions who posited that when government does not deliver on their promises then local communities would decide to stay away from any meeting or form of participation in their development but that good public participation is usually shown through less demonstration about lack of service delivery. Continuous contact with the councillors and the Community Development Workers also play a significant in shaping up for good public participation.

5.4   CONCLUSION

The major finding from the study is that local communities are aware of the ward committee system. The key informants and the focus groups gave informative and interesting views about the role of the government and the community regarding effective public participation. However some respondents from the civil society organizations felt that due to the limited 'visibility' and impact of these structures on ward /community development people barely recognize them. Respondents agreed that ward committees do hold meetings; however they reported low levels of attendance in such meetings. Further major findings are provided in the table below.

Objectives	Steve Tshwethe local municipality	Elias Motswaledi local municipality
One: How does public participation improve the level and quality of public service delivery in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality?	- Great rapport is built between the council and its local community. . - To keep in touch with the people on the ground. - Local people are empowered. -Training offered to ward councillors by the council - Services provided will be responsive to peoples' needs and be adequately budgeted for.	- Public participation promote prudent utilization of limited resources - Public participation offers only specific services that are needed by communities. - Services are not imposed on communities but communities determine their needs. - Communities learn more about programmes that they identify with. - To keep in touch with the people on the ground.
Two: Why is it important for authorities to consult with the people before providing them with services in the local municipality?	- Communities tell Local Authorities what their needs are - Helping the council with formulation of by-laws e.g. noise pollution during exam times - public participation improves the quality of service delivery - educating regulate in advance of implementation - Public participation builds good will and trust between council and communities - council is able to give feed back on programmes.	- For council to know the needs of the communities they serve - Term of office for ward committees and community development workers should be the same for effective and efficient service delivery. - Public participation gives communities a sense of ownership in projects in their communities.
Three: What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of public participation?	- There are different needs across each ward. -Ward committee members must be remunerated for their work for encouragement -slow service delivery a factor for poor public participation - Good public participation is shown by fewer demonstrations on service delivery.	- Lack of community media and communication infrastructure such as telephones was identified as a factor of poor participation - Lack of capacity by ward committees to promote public participation. - Slow pace of service delivery -inability of the municipality to create jobs -Employment of people without relevant skills and relevant qualifications -Time for meeting are scheduled at night and are party- aligned.

Table 3: Summary of research findings

CHAPTER 6:

RESEARCH FINDINGS ANALYSIS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an analysis of the main research findings. The content that is analysed mainly draws from secondary data as well as primary data obtained through interviews. The structure of the chapter is in subheadings' (6.2 to 6.4 below); and these reflect the research objectives as outlined in Chapter 1 of this document in respect of the comparison between the two Local Municipalities under study.

6.2   IN RESPECT OF OBJECTIVE 1: HOW DOES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IMPROVE THE LEVEL AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY?

It was found out in the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality that the involvement of the local community in major decision making processes towards public service delivery promotes sustainable, prudent and optimal use of scarce resources as the Local Municipality is able to provide services based on a needs-based analysis. This is also evident in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality. However, it needs to be noted that the level and impact of public participation in the two Local Municipalities is not the same as it can be observed through the continuous recognition of the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality in the Vuna Awards initiative of the Department of Provincial and Local Government. Whilst the interviewees in both case study areas conceded the importance of public participation and its potential impact on the level and quality of public service delivery, it can be observed and argued that the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality keeps its 'local community participation promises'. The Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality, on the other hand, pays lip service to public participation. Despite these two municipalities stating in their Integrated Development Plans that public participation is an integral component of the development process (EMLM, 2006 & 2007 and STLM, 2005, 2006 & 2007), fears are that there are challenges that are likely to hamper their implementation (Mathekga and Buccus, 2006). The interviewees were also aware of the need to involve local people in public service delivery, but it still remained clear that unlike the Steve Tshwethe Local

Municipality, the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality is still lagging behind in so far as the implementation of the public participation processes is concerned.

It also comes out from the findings that the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality has made significant strides in keeping constant and continuous contact with the local residents, something that is not happening at Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality. This has, as a result, brought upon a cordial and conducive working relationship between the Local Municipality and the local residents. It is also evident that in Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality public participation has really not done well and this came to light during the interview as respondents complained about the lack of water in their area. The local community in Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality is also not keen to play any significant role in the development of their community as they tend to think the government is not appreciating the ward committee members' contribution by not paying them for their efforts.

It is clear that public participation plays a significant and critical role in improving the level and quality of public service delivery as shown by the divergent findings from the two Local Municipalities under study. Whilst the level and quality of public service delivery has been commendable in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality (to the extent of dominating the Vuna Awards), the opposite has been observed in Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality (where the local community is complaining about lack of public services such as water).

6.3   IN RESPECT OF OBJECTIVE 2: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR AUTHORITIES TO CONSULT WITH RESIDENTS BEFORE PROVIDING SERVICES?

Public participation at local government level of service delivery enables the local community to articulate the community's needs to Council and also provides a platform for local residents to take part in making laws that directly affect them. In Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality, for example, the community was able to contribute ideas to council during the formulation of by-laws on taverns and how the taverns' noise affect them and their school-going children. These ideas made up the core of the by-laws as the by-laws are now area specific and address the issues as raised by the local community. This has also enabled the local community to take ownership of the projects and programmes proposed for their benefit. Public participation acknowledges that local communities have a past and culture and

that historic legacy coupled with the local communities' experience and knowledge of their settlement is critical in order to understand the unique problems in any community (Cleaver, 1999). It is through public participation that Local Authorities can draw up programmes that are relevant to particular and specific communities and at the same time avoid projects that are speculative and might not necessarily work out for a particular community. It is also through public participation that local communities are able to own projects in their communities (Cleaver, 1999). This is also consistent with the opinion held by Beer (1997: 21) that public participation comes along with community capacity building which creates a "development milieu … in which the human being [in any particular community] becomes the subject of his/her own development rather than the object of other people's worlds … and other people's priorities and whims." Local communities are therefore able to identify with their development projects as they (the communities) would have contributed significantly in drawing up such (Sewell and Coppock, 1977). The same can not be said about Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality where the local community is still up in arms with the Municipality about transferring them from a cross-border Municipality to Limpopo Province, which the local community accuses of corruption.

It was also revealed by respondents at Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality that councillors were not in touch with reality as they have neither engaged nor consulted local communities in development processes. As a result these councillors are proposing irrelevant projects, in so far as the community is concerned, and not necessarily projects that will benefit the local community. An example was made that the councillors are only concerned about themselves as was seen in the way they were advocating for good roads in the area as opposed to projects that the local community needs. These roads, it was highlighted, only serve the councillors with their fancy cars. On the contrary in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality it was mentioned that public participation has enabled the Local Council to stay in touch with their local community and also to deliver on the mandate from the people, and therefore Council has avoided imposing unwanted and irrelevant services to the local community. This argument is consistent with the observation by Cleaver (1999) that development interventions that come from consultations with local communities, through public participation, have more often been found to serve the needs and aspirations of specific communities much better than those that have been preconceived by government.

6.4   IN RESPECT OF OBJECTIVE 3: WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR BOTH POOR AND GOOD QUALITY LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

It was observed that respondents across the two Local Municipalities were in agreement over the need to educate local communities about the critical role they play in their communities' development. Clapper (1996) observed that governments invest a lot of resources (finances, time and manpower) in educating people about the benefits of citizen participation but the same investment by governments is not shared by the local communities as some members still stay away from participation. In the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality lack of community media, complimentary communication infrastructure and inadequately equipped Ward Committees are all major contributing factors to the poor quality levels of public participation at local level. In the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality on the other hand it has been observed that lack of remuneration of ward committee members has demoralized them and hence they are discouraged and have over time compromised on service delivery. This situation is worsened by the engagement of community development workers in a similar capacity with ward committees and with them enjoying monetary benefits. Some committee members felt that it is difficult for them to fulfil their functions because the ward councillor has almost 'delegated' those functions to these recruited and handsomely rewarded community development workers.

Ward committees complain that these community development workers were recruited at their expense as there is no difference in what the community development workers and ward committees do. It was also observed in the Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality poor levels of public participation are inadequate notices inviting local communities to developmental meetings. Where the local community is aware of the scheduled meetings the times of such meeting do not enable any positive attendance as the meetings are inconveniently held at night. The Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality was also accused of holding these meetings along party lines and therefore compromising on local people's interests. This is strengthened by Lance Joel, the current executive director of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) who is of the opinion that problems at most municipalities is worsened by the fact that some municipalities wanted to fill vacancies along political-affiliation lines (Ntuli, D., 2007).Ward committees should ideally be apolitical bodies serving and comprising

a wide range of interest groups. This means that they should be concerned with community development issues and not be used as a platform for party political pursuits. Nevertheless responses from the local community indicate that party political affiliation was one of the reasons why there was a discordant relationship between the ward councillors and most ward committee members.

The feeling among the respondents at Elias Motswaledi was that the municipality did not sufficiently provide wider publicity and sustained education campaign on the ward committee system in order to raise its attention and interest in the public domain. Although the municipality felt that the communities had shown interest in the process by attending and voting at the meetings, the impression from the interviewed local people was such that there was a growing level of political apathy among the electorate due to the feeling that the elected representatives sometimes do not address their needs. On the other hand, in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality, which has exhibited a good quality and level of public participation, the respondents mentioned that public participation in the Local Municipality would dissipate if after their involvement and consultation in developmental issues, the Local Municipality fails to deliver on its promises. The fact that the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality (in so far as engaging the local community in major decision making processes in development) has meant that the Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality has made greater strides and inroads than Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality has in participatory development.

It was also highlighted in Elias Motswaledi that the local residents especially ward committees are underutilised as community representatives because often the ward councillor has convened meetings just to inform the ward committees about budgetary allocations for the Local Municipality and also prescribed priorities for the community without prior consultation with the concerned community members. While it is evident that ward committees are advisory bodies to the ward councillor there seems to be an overlap on their responsibilities such that the two bodies operate as parallel structures and this sometimes has lead to a power struggle that has the effect of polarising the local community and hence negatively impacting on the level and quality of public participation and as a result on public service delivery. While the councillor is the legitimate democratically elected representative of the ward and therefore has the mandate to provide the necessary link between the community and the council, ward committees, on the other hand are also popularly elected by

the people and closer to the grassroots communities than the councillor. Ward committees also enjoy legitimacy, but their role is limited to playing advocacy roles for the local people. Ward committees have proved to be more direct representatives of the local communities than councillors.

6.5 CONCLUSION

In concluding this section, it can be highlighted that the two Local Municipalities exhibited contrasting levels of public participation in local government. While in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality a positive quality level of public participation is evident, the opposite is true for Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality. The Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality has, to a certain extent lost the trust of the local community through its continued reliance on retired teachers (educators) in developmental work and also through carrying out its development duties along political party lines. This has resulted in people registering their displeasure by staying away from the consultation meetings and it did not help a little bit when these meetings were convened at night when it was not both safe and convenient for most community members to attend. However, in Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality the constant contact by Council with its local community has enabled the community to appreciate whatever constraints and challenges the Council faces in its endeavour to meet the local community's needs. Instead of the local community staying away, they have taken a keen interest in their community development and have also volunteered ways of assisting their Local Municipality respond to challenges. The results have been positive public service delivery through effective and representative public participation.

CHAPTER 7:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 identified major findings and the analysis of data from the investigation. The experiences from the two Local Municipalities provided contrasting evidence of the level and quality of public participation in the individual Local Municipalities. Although there is generally a consensus on the respondents' opinion of the merits and the necessity for public participation, there are major challenges that the two Local Municipalities are experiencing (albeit at different levels) hence the contrasting developmental results.

One of the major challenges in successful public participatory systems at local level has to do with local communities' perception about the processes and what they intend to achieve. In order for participation to be successful local communities must embrace it as a genuine and honest consultation process that seeks to incorporate the communities input into the development process. The Steve Tshwete municipality appointed two special people from the Speaker's office to specifically promote public participation, and this yielded positive results in that they manage to restore the working relation between the ward committees and community development workers. The other notable challenge would be to instil back and restore local communities pride in the involvement of local governance. There is a need for guaranteed local community participation and local communities must not be seen as only rubberstamping decisions that have been pre-arrived at without their consultation or participation (Mathekga and Buccus 2006.).

The South African policy and legislative landscape categorically supports public participation and regards it as a fundamental democratic right for all citizens. The inclusion of the vulnerable members of the community including women, the youth, the aged, the disabled etc. is one of the hallmarks of true democracy and is a critical success factor in facilitating community ownership of development projects. At the same time, if these groups of people regard their participation in municipal structures as only a way of endorsing and rubberstamping decisions from the authorities, then participation becomes a superficial statutory process. This type of 'participation' does not contribute to community

empowerment and would not enable effective and efficient implementation of the development process.

While ward committees are generally regarded as a vehicle for the promotion of public participation in local government development processes, the performance of Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality does not really fulfil the minimum requirements for true participatory governance. According to Arnstein's ladder of participation this municipality participation is still at "a non-participatory level". It is evident that the local community Elias Motswaledi have actually lost trust with their elected representatives, especially the politicians, and therefore see no importance in 'wasting' their time and resources by engaging in these consultations as prior engagements have not been able to yield any desirable results.

7.2   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND POSSIBLE BENEFITS

7.2.1   The influence of the ward committee system in public participation

During the interviews, the most important factor that was identified as the main hindrance to effective public participation was the harsh relationship between the politicians (especially in Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality) and the ward committee members. Other factors that have also had a significant negative effect on the effectiveness or lack thereof of public participation in service delivery at local level service delivery include the term of office served by ward committees, availability of financial support; skills capacity, different needs per ward and the slow pace of service delivery.

The inception of ward committees since 2001/2002 has shown that the government is serious about its participatory- approach to development. These committees, when functioning well serves as advisory bodies to the councillors, are closer to the people on the ground and play an important role in facilitating communication and mobilisation between the ward councillor and the community. Ward committees together with other stake holders can make a desirable contribution in service delivery can hold government accountable for the services they render to its communities. If properly implemented this system enables effective public participation and also helps bridge the gap between the elected representative and the communities.

The Municipal Structures Act has been identified as an important structure through which the communities must be involved in local government. This Act provides for the establishment of ward committees which serve as mediators between the people and government. Through this Act, the national government gives indicative processes that have to be followed and implemented by development and planning structures within local municipalities. The two local Municipalities of Elias Motswaledi and Steve Tshwethe achieved different levels of success. As the literature has already shown participatory planning and development as represented by ward committees has limitations in South Africa. Sandercock (2000) argues for the adoption of a planning theory that recognizes that communities comprise people with different cultural backgrounds and that all these people's needs to be considered and catered for in the city development plans. It is worth pointing out that public participation has been criticised by some scholars since it delays implementation of projects and that is expensive in terms of resources such as time and money.

7.2.2 The role of a planner in promoting public participation

One of the key challenges in the planning context is the rich and diversity of people that planners and development professionals have to accommodate in establishing sustainable, accommodating and profitable development. The proliferation and varied needs of the people as end-users and, developers, authorities arise from the differences in cultures, races, socio-economic circumstances, traditions, economic and educational systems and backgrounds, power and authority structures. These all affect and influence the different built environments and their inherent dynamics. At the same time these environments impact on the people and the way they think, behave and interact with other people and institutions (Hajer and Wagener, 2003). Planning in South Africa emphasises collaborative planning between all stakeholders involved, thereby putting communities at the centre of planning (Innes and Booher, 2003). Planners should strive to embrace the private sector, the non-governmental organisations and role players in the planning and development arena. However in some instances planners are not fully understood and appreciated by the communities they serve. One strategy would be to promote the idea of co-operative efforts to promote public education on the benefits of public participation and how it can improve the quality of the lives of ordinary people.

South Africa has a history of oppression, conflict and mistrust, and planners have an important role to play in mediating between politicians and communities. In executing their duties, planners must treat each situation as being unique. This is echoed by Sandercock cited in Watson (2002) that there is need to appreciate and acknowledge the benefits brought about by diversity. It is therefore appropriate for planners to advocate on behalf of the marginalised communities. Some citizens, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, do not always have relevant information and access to play a meaningful role as role-players in community matters, planners, have to educate and capacitate these people to the extend that they fully understand how they can take part in developmental processes, as this was shown through Arnstein's ladder of participation. Political commitment to public participation from all democratically elected members is a key to effective and efficient public participation.

Another great opportunity associated with this argument is that local communities posses extensive knowledge of their surroundings, and thereby involving them in major decision making ensures that development planning professionals are able to tap into this useful knowledge during these mutually-defined planning processes. There are many instances in many countries today where projects have failed or cost more than was necessary because the implementing agencies did not know the unique conditions of the local environments within which they were working. At the same time potential conflicts resulting from, for an example, cultural implantation and foreignness of projects are being avoided when development is mutually defined and shaped both by the community and implementing agencies (Clapper, 1996)

7.2.3   Open and honest communication to promote public participation

Local communities must be empowered to make meaningful contributions to development processes within their local communities. People need to be made aware of the national and local government statutes that guide development and how different role players in development are accommodated within development planning processes.

It was shown in the Steve Tshwethe local municipality that communication creates trust between communities and the council. Poor working relations between the councillors, community development workers, and the community is a recipe for disaster as was evident in the Elias Motswaledi local municipality. Steve Tshwethe provided a perfect example how

honesty, trust and transparency builds a solid and fruitful relationship between development agents. The local community in Steve Tshwethe was able to appreciate the challenges faced by the Local Municipality with regard to certain 'failures' by the Council. One of the lessons from the Municipality of Porto Alegre the open and transparent way of involving communities in matters of local government, and that resulted in mutual trust between City officials and community members

Poor working relationship between the councillor and the ward committee impedes any possible chance to achieve any developmental goals for the local municipality as was evidenced in Elias Motswaledi. Although ward committees are also elected by the local people like the ward councillor they are sometimes exploited by the ward councillors who can choose to sideline them especially if they threatened. This was the case in Elias Motswaledi where the ward councillor preferred his ANC comrades over the ward committee. It is crucial for municipalities to focus on ensuring effective governance at local level than on pushing political agendas. Politicians must refrain from such acts and instead commit themselves to ensure effective public participation and bettering the lives of the people they serve.

Ward committees, ward councillors and community development workers must by all means strive for a healthy working relationship for the better promotion of good participation. Ward committees generally can not make any decisions in the absence of the Chairperson who is the ward councillor. The municipalities have to find ways of empowering and capacitating ward committees to ensure that they are not just "appendages of the political parties that control the municipality or the ward" (Planact: 2003:25).

Although Arnstein's typology shows the extreme levels of participation, municipalities like the Elias Motswaledi must endeavour to attain the level of community empowerment and not pay lip service to participation as was reported in their 2005 -2007 IDP'S. If public participation and community empowerment are to remain important objectives within the framework of service delivery at local government level, policymakers and programme designers must creatively explore institutional arrangements including ward committees, civil society organisations, community development workers and different strategies for increasing local capacities.

Bremmer (2002:42) argues that the "transition form pre-transitional stage of local government led to political tensions. The latter author further pointed out that there is a lack of political commitment on the part of local councillors, while they being responsible for service delivery. Political will and practical support in the form of clear implementation guidelines and funding from these three spheres of government and community stakeholders we aspire to better the lives of the people we serve. Conflicts of interest by different role layers in municipalities, competition over resources and consensus building are part of the people-centred development planning process as was evident in the Municipality of Porto Alegre. In implementing these processes, the municipalities will certainly encounter challenge, however all actors must commit to realising these objectives.

7.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

It is accepted by many development agents and role players in service delivery (at local level) that it makes good sense for local communities to have a say in decisions that affect their lives and their quality of such lives. Evidence from the data collected in the two study areas of Steve Tshwethe and Elias Motswaledi Local Municipalities indicate that there are limitations on how this can achieved. It can be argued that whilst good and effective public participation is possible, successful examples are rare. This section of the report offers recommendations on how public participation in South African Local Municipalities can be improved after considering the cases of Steve Tshwethe and Elias Motswaledi Local Municipalities.

7.3.1   Funding

It is important to set aside a specific and related budget to enable local people to play a significant role in decision making processes affecting service delivery in their respective communities. It has clearly been observed from the two cases and existing literature that it has just been assumed that development budgets for Local Councils are inclusive of costs for public participation and where the contrary shows to be the case planners decide to compromise by deciding on the level of public participation they will allow in projects. In most cases like in Elias Motswaledi such participation is selective and exclusive and does not necessarily represent the interest of the general local communities but rather a few elites or members of a particular political grouping. It is on this basis that this report recommends that the cost of public participation in service delivery at local level be factored into the

comprehensive project funding (or budget) as a percentage of such funding. Experience has shown in the case of Steve Tshwethe Local Municipality that appointing dedicated, passionate people to implement public participation policies and legislation create a healthy environment between all the stake holders including the community.

7.3.2   Skills development capacity to promote public participation

The UN-Habitat (2003) indicated that to encounter corruption, poor administration and management, it is vital to 'build the capacity of the municipal authorities'. There is a need for commitment, integration and coordination between the three spheres of government to ensure good governance. It emerged from this study that lack of expertise by planners, politicians and the local communities was one of the major contributing factors for poor public participation. While many planners (technocrats) are highly trained in planning principles, it has sometimes been observed that their training leaves out the most important aspect of being accommodative to different people's views and needs. It is necessary to factor into planning syllabi the aspects of public participation in development to enable these planners to embrace the concept.

Steve Tshwethe local municipality gave its full weight by deploying two officials to deal specifically with the promotion of public participation. Politicians, in this case ward councillors, also do not posses the necessary expertise to carry out effective consultations and provide an enabling environment for all the constituents, regardless of their political affiliation to actively participate in their community development. This was evident in Elias Motwsaledi local municipality where the area councillor preferred to work with his political comrades at the expense of the general local community.

Lastly, whilst the local people are invited to these important ward meetings to take part in their community development, they are not empowered to make any contribution. For a start, the local municipality could make the local people aware on the national and local legislations that guides development (nationally and at local level) and how such legislations provides for their (local communities) participation in local governance. It will also be important for the Local Municipalities to educate the communities about development processes so that they could appreciate the length of time and challenges it takes before a particular project gets of the ground.

 The municipality of Porto Alegre has clearly indicated that although there were challenges in their attempt to solve their problems, further discussions were useful in ironing out those

differences. In many cases, local communities lose hope at the amount of time it takes between the planning stages and actual implementation stage for a particular project that they believe their views and suggestions were only in vain. It is therefore necessary that the communities should be empowered to appreciate what it takes between the time when the project is conceived and when the actual development takes place on the ground.

7.3.3 Legal impetus of public participation

While there is an existing policy framework that seems to compel development agents to engage local people in their community development, there is a general lack of law that ensures such public participation is actually carried. As a result most Local Authorities or their agents pay lip service to the concept of public participation as they are well aware that there is no legal institution where they have to account for such participation. Instead of encouraging or urging development agencies to actively involve local communities in development, it is recommended that the government must put in place some legal instruments that would ensure that public participation is part of any development and any incidence of lack of public participation should render such development illegal. The current practice provides flaws for Local Authorities to take compromise on public participation in the basis of cost implications and time taken to consult across a community. In cases where it is found out that proper public participation was not carried, there should be institutions in place whether the aggrieved community and other stakeholders could seek reprieve. For effective public participation to take place, key output and key performance indicators must be encouraged. This will help communities to make follow-ups and monitor the implementation of projects and also to track progress against those projects.

7.4 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research succeeded in identifying constraints in successful and effective public participation in service delivery at local level and also made recommendations on addressing some of the constraints. However, there are still opportunities for future research in addressing some of the identified problems and that future research could look into the following:

- The possible ways of addressing the discordant relationships between different stakeholders, development and the local communities in matters of community development.

- How to enhance interest in local communities to take part in decision making processes for their community development.

- The impact of political interference in service delivery at local level.

- Ways of addressing the tension between community development workers (CDWs) and Ward committees for the benefit of the local community.

REFERENCE LIST

Abbott, J. 1994. "*The Theory and Practice of Community Participation in Provision of Urban Infrastructure*" .Johannesburg: university of the Witwatersrand, Department of Civil Engineering. PhD Thesis

Arnstein, S. 1969. A ladder of citizen participation. Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35 (4):216-224

Bremner, L., 2000. *Post-apartheid urban geography: a case of Greater Johannesburg's Rapid Land Release Programme*. Development Southern Africa, 4(3), 23-45

Brown, K. Sunday Independent April, 10 2005

Clapper, V. 1997 'Positioning Citizen Participation in Democratic Local Government', and' Advantages and Disadvantages of Citizen Participation', in K. Bekker (ed.) *Citizen Participation in Local Government,* pp. 51-78. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik

Cleaver, F., 1999. Managing Participation: The case of Rural Water Supply. In Analoui, F., 1999. *The Realities of Managing Development Projects.* Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Aldershot

Conyers, D. and Hills, P., 1994. *An Introduction to Development Planning in the Third World.* John Wiley and Sons, New York.

De Beer, F. 1997 'Participation and Community Capacity-building', in S. Liebenberg and P. Stewart (eds) Participatory Development Management and the RDP, pp. 21-33. Kenwyn: Juta

Department of Provincial and Local Government *Municipal Systems Act No 32 of 2000* Government Printers, Pretoria

(Department of Provincial and Local Government 1998a) *Municipal Structures Act* of 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), Government Printers, Pretoria.

Department of Provincial and Local Government (1998b), *White Paper on Local Government*, Pretoria.

Department of Provincial and Local Government & GTZ South Africa, 2006. *Having Your Say-A Handbook for Ward Committees*

Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2006. *Project Consolidate: Making a difference to ordinary people's lives.* Republic of South Africa.

De Vos, A.S. 2000.Combined quantitative and qualitative approach. In: De Vos, A.S. *Research at grass roots: A primer for the caring professions.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality (EMLM), 2006. *Integrated Development Plan* 2006/2010.

Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality, 2007. *Draft Integrated Development Plan* 2007/2008.

Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality, 2007. *Public Participation Programme on Integrated Development Plan-Budget and Service Delivery & Budget Implementation Plan* for 2007/2008.

Finch, J., 1986. Research and Policy: *The Use of Qualitative Methods in Social and Educational Research*. The Falmer Press, London and Philadelphia.

Flyvberg, B. & T. Richardson; (2002); Planning and Foucault*: In Search of the Dark Side of Planning Theory*; http://flyvberg.plan.aav.dk/DarkSide2.pdf (2007-04-13)

Gauci, E. Building Community participation in Local Democracy**-***The white horse Experience.* http/www.une.edu.au/clg/lgcon/papers/gauci.htm. accessed 25.05.2005

Gupta, M.D., Gauri, V. and Khemani, S., 2004. Decentralized delivery of public health services in Nigeria: Survey evidence from the states of Lagos and Kogi. *Africa Region Human Development.* Development Research Group, The World Bank.

Hajer, M and Wagener, H. 2003 *"Introduction"' in Deliberative policy analysis: Understanding governance in the network society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Heymans, C and Totemeyer, G. 1998. *Government by the People: The Politics of Local Government in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta

http/www.safrica.info accessed 2007.05.21

Harrison, P. 2005 "Renegotiating Legitimacy: *Third Way Politics, the New Institutionalism, and Recent Shifts in the Theory of Planning"*, forthcoming journal article.
http://www.khanya-aicdd.org 2007.04.14

Innes, J. and D. Booher (2003) *"Collaborative policymaking: governance through dialogue",in Hajer,M and H. Wagener (2003) in Deliberative policy analysis: Understanding governance in the network society* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mail & Guardian, Protests *on service delivery* 6 – 12 July 2007, Johannesburg

Mathekga, R. and Buccus, I., 2006. The Challenge of Local Government Structures in South Africa: Securing Community Participation. In *Critical Dialogue: Public Participation in review* 2 (2).

Municipality of Porto Alegre. 2000. Democracy and Popular Participation in Public Sphere: *the Experience of the Participatory Budget in Porto Alegre, Brazil*

Ntuli, D., 2007. Service delivery takes priority. In *Sunday Times*, 14 January 2007 p16.

Nyamukachi, P. M. 2004. *Options for urban Service Delivery in South Africa with Special Reference to the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality*. (Unpublished M Admin Dissertation, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. University of Pretoria). Pretoria.

Oldfield, S., 2002. 'Embedded Autonomy' and the Challenges of Developmental Local Government. In Parnell, S., Pieterse, E., Swilling, M. and Wooldridge, D., 2002 (Eds.).

Democratizing local government: The South African experiment. UCT Press, Cape Town. Parnell, S. and Pieterse, E., 2002. Developmental Local Level. In Parnell, S., Pieterse, E.,

Swilling, M. and Wooldridge, D., 2002 (Eds.). *Democratizing Local Government: The South African experiment.* UCT Press, Cape Town.

Patton, M.Q., 1987. *How to use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation. Centre for the Study of Evaluation*, University of California. SAGE Publications. The International Professional Publishers, London.

Philips, A 1993. *Democracy and Difference. Pennyslavia* State University Press

Planact, 2006. Handbook-Communities Count: *Empowering Ward Committees and Local Leaders in Democratic Governance*. Planact.

Republic of South Africa, 1996, *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*. Act No. 108 of 1996.

Sandercock, L., 1998. *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for multicultural cities.* Chichester, Wiley.

Sewell & Coppock, 1977.Citizen Participation in the Planning Process: An Essentially Contested Concept? Day *Journal of Planning Literature.*1997; 11: 421-434

Sihlongonyane, M. and Karam, A. 2003. *The impact of the national housing capital subsidy scheme on an apartheid city*: The case of Johannesburg. Paper prepared for the Conference of the South African History Study Group. Free State University, Bloemfontein

Steve Tshwete Local Municipality 2005, *Integrated Development Plan* 2005.

Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2006, *Integrated Development Plan* 2006.

Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, 2007. *Integrated Development Plan* 2007/2008.

Stoker, G., 2002. International Trends in Local Government Transformation. In Parnell, S., Pieterse, E., Swilling, M. and Wooldridge, D., 2002 (Eds.). *Democratizing Local Government: The South African experiment.* UCT Press, Cape Town.

Steytler, N, and J Mettler 2000. *Making Law – A Guide for Councillors*. Bellville:

Villiers, S., 2001. A People's Government. The People's Voice*: A Review of Public Participation in the Law and Policy-making in South Africa.* The Parliamentary Support Programme, Cape Town.

Watson, V., 2000. *The Usefulness of Normative Theories in the Context of Sub-Saharan Africa,* Planning Theory 1(1), 27-52

White S. C, 1996. '*Depoliticising development: the uses and abuses of participation'*, Development in Practice, 6:1, 6-15

Yin, R.K., 2003. *Application of Case Study Research*. Sage, Newbury Park

20 JUNE 2007

Dear Participant

Invitation to participate in a focus group

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study to be conducted in Groblersdal in order to understand the level of community involvement regarding services rendered to you. This is an academic study whose final intention is to inform strategy in Groblersdal regarding community participation. The outcome of this study is a dissertation that would serve as a partial fulfilment of a Masters Degree in Development Planning, for the student, Mrs.Sebote Thabitha Matladi.

I am recruiting you to participate because I gather you have the insight and expertise needed for this study. The interviews will take place at the municipal hall in Grolersdal.The focus group session would last for 45 minutes.

The participants will get feedback regarding the study before the end of 2007.Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. In the focus group there would be six participants from Groblersdal, the student researcher, and two assistants. The interview will be guided by a schedule which will serve to guide the discussions. Should you not want to participate you can withdraw anytime.

Should you have any questions you can contact either my supervisor at 082 447 2293 or Sebote Matladi at 0826653276

Thank you very much for your help.

Mrs Sebote Matladi (Student Researcher)

Dr. Liz Thomas (Supervisor)

Dear Participant

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study conducted in Groblersdal in order to understand the level of community involvement regarding services rendered to them. This is an academic study whose final intention is to inform working o policy regarding public participation. The outcome of this study is a dissertation that would serve as a partial fulfilment of a Masters Degree in Development Planning, for the researcher, Mrs Sebote Thabitha Matladi.

The participants will get feedback regarding the study before the end of 2007. Participation is entirely voluntary. It will involve you in an interview with the student researcher. The interview will be guided by a schedule of points for discussions. Should you not want to participate you can withdraw anytime.

Please note that this study is being conducted with the approval the Planning Department of Wits University.

Should you have any questions you can contact either my supervisor at 082 447 2293 or Sebote Matladi at 0826653276

Thank you very much for your help.

Mrs Sebote Matladi (Student Researcher)

Dr. Liz Thomas (Supervisor)

20 JUNE 2007

Dear Participant

Invitation to participate in a focus group

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study to be conducted in Middelburg in order to understand the level of community involvement regarding services rendered to you. This is an academic study whose final intention is to inform strategy in Middelburg regarding community participation. The outcome of this study is a dissertation that would serve as a partial fulfilment of a Masters Degree in Development Planning, for the student, Mrs.Sebote Thabitha Matladi.

I am recruiting you to participate because I gather you have the insight and expertise needed for this study. The interviews will take place at the municipal hall in Middelburg.The focus group session would last for 45 minutes.

The participants will get feedback regarding the study before the end of 2007.Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. In the focus group there would be six participants from Middelburg, the student researcher, and two assistants. The interview will be guided by a schedule which will serve to guide the discussions. Should you not want to participate you can withdraw anytime.

Should you have any questions you can contact either my supervisor at 082 447 2293 or Sebote Matladi at 0826653276

Thank you very much for your help.

Mrs Sebote Matladi (Student Researcher)
(Dr. Liz Thomas

Dear Participant

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study conducted in Middelburg in order to understand the level of community involvement regarding services rendered to them. This is an academic study whose final intention is to inform working o policy regarding public participation. The outcome of this study is a dissertation that would serve as a partial fulfilment of a Masters Degree in Development Planning, for the researcher, Mrs Sebote Thabitha Matladi.

The participants will get feedback regarding the study before the end of 2007. Participation is entirely voluntary. It will involve you in an interview with the student researcher. The interview will be guided by a schedule of points for discussions. Should you not want to participate you can withdraw anytime.

Please note that this study is being conducted with the approval the Planning Department of Wits University.

Should you have any questions you can contact either my supervisor at 082 447 2293 or Sebote Matladi at 0826653276

Thank you very much for your help.

Mrs Sebote Matladi (Student Researcher)

Dr. Liz Thomas (Supervisor)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

TO BE FILLED BY INTERVIEWER immediately before the interview starts

Initials of Interviewer:…………..Date…………………..

Location of the Interview:……………………….Time………..

Gender of Interviewee (m/f)………

Introduction, Hello my name is Sebote Thabitha Matladi. I am a Master student at Wits University, and I am undertaking a research about public participation in local government decision making.

Thanks for agreeing to speak to me. Please be assured that this is a confidential interview and if you feel uncomfortable, we can stop anytime.

Can you do the interview in English,…………. (yes/no) or would you prefer another language (what?) ……………….

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS (POLITICIANS AND MANAGERS)

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS IN THE MUNICIPALITY

1. Who is responsible for the administration of the ward committee system?

2. What form of help is being offered by the municipality to the WC's?

3. When was the ward committees launched?

4. When were community development workers (CDW's) deployed? How many are they?

5. What are the functions of ward committees?

6 What are the functions of community development workers?

7. What is the term of office for both WC's and CDW's?

8. In your view, is this term of office adequate for WCs and community development workers to perform the roles and functions mentioned in question (5, 6) above?

Explain

CAPACITY BUILDING PROCESS

9. How is the working relationship between ward committees and community development workers?

10. What other forms of public participatory processes apart from the above (5, 6) are in place in local government?

11. What is the level of interaction between ward committees and communities (including structures mentioned above) (e.g. how often do they meet?

12. Can you give your own view of the popularity of WCs and CDW's amongst community members? Are people making use of the processes to participate in their local community development?

13. How does public participation improve the level and quality of service delivery?

14. Why is it important for the authorities to consult with the community before providing services?

15. What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation in local governance?

16. In your opinion are WCs equipped to perform their duties? Explain.

17. What sort of training or capacity building is offered to members of WCs and how often is such training conducted?

18 Does council budget for the functioning and support of the ward committee system and how much?

19. Are these funds spent?

20. Do you think ward committee members have to be remunerated? Motivate

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WARD COUNCILLORS

21. When was the ward committee launched in this ward (month and year)?

22. What are the functions of ward committee members?

23. What is your term of office?

24. Do you think this time gives you enough chance to adequately perform your roles? (Explain)

25. Are elected members representational of the population (youth, women anddisabled etc)?

26. What is the current membership (number and representation)?

27. How do the ward committee and the community development workers link?

28. In your view are the ward committee members accountable to their constituency? (Explain).

29 .How often do you interaction with the committee?

30. Apart from the above duties (2) are you directly involved in any public developmental programmes like (job creation, poverty alleviation, water supply HIV) intended for empowerment through community participation? If no why, if yes, are they inclusive of the population (women, aged, youth, and disable)?

31. How does public participation improve the level and quality of service delivery?

32. Why is it important for the authorities to consult with the community before providing services?

33. What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation in local governance?

34. What main challenges have you encountered in the functioning of the committee?

35. How have you addressed them?

36. Do you ever incur personal costs in performing your duties?

37. In your opinion is WC equipped to perform their duties as stated above? Elaborate.

38. What support is the council providing for the ward committees? (Explain).

39. How can the ward committee system be improved to be more effective?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

40. When was community development workers deployed in this ward?

41. How many are they?

42. What are the functions of CDW members?

43. What is your term of office?

44. Do you think this time gives you enough chance to adequately perform your roles? (Explain)

45. How far have different interest groups (women, the aged, youth, farmers, business, civil society organisation) been incorporated into the committee?

46. Do you ever incur personal costs in performing your duties?

47. Do you think ward committee members have to be remunerated? Motivate

48. In your opinion are WCs equipped to perform their duties as stated above? Elaborate.

49. How does public participation improve the level and quality of service delivery?

50. Why is it important for the authorities to consult with the community before providing services?

51. What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation in local governance?

52. What major challenges have you faced in performing your duties?

53. How can the ward committee system be improved to be more effective?

54. Apart from ward committees are you directly involved in any public developmental programmes like (job creation, poverty alleviation, and water supply. HIV) intended for empowerment through community participation? If no why, if yes, are they inclusive of the population (women, aged, youth, and disable)?

55. Do you have any influence over those programmes?

56. Do you believe there is room for improvement? Explain?

57. What contribution would you make to ensure inclusive participation in service delivery**?**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ONE-ON ONE (DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES, KGOSHI.)

58. Are you aware of the ward committee system in this ward?

59. .How beneficial is this ward committee system to the community?

60. How often do you interact with the ward committee? Explain.

61. Is the ward committee system an effective form of representation? Explain

APPENDIX 002

62. Do you think the term of office is adequate for WCs and community development workers to perform their roles and functions?

Explain

63. Do you think ward committee members have to be remunerated? Motivate

64. Do you think the ward committee and CDWs cooperate in bringing development in this ward? Elaborate.

65. How does public participation improve the level and quality of service delivery?

66. Why is it important for the authorities to consult with the community before providing services?

67. What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation in local governance?

68. If you were to improve the ward committee system for the better, how would you do it?

69. Are you aware of programmes (like job creation, poverty alleviation, water supply HIV) intended for empowerment through community participation? If no why, if yes, are they inclusive of the population (women, aged, youth, and disable)?

70. Do you have any influence over those programmes?

71. Do you believe there is room for improvement? Explain?

72. What contribution would you make to ensure inclusive participation in service delivery**?**

QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS (FOCUS GROUP)

73. In your view, what do you think are the priority issues that the local municipality should be dealing with? Write them down in terms of priority.

74. Are you aware of the ward committee system in this ward?

75. Is this system (ward committee system) beneficial to the community?

76. How often do you interact with the ward committee? Explain

77. Do you understand how public participation operates in relation to service delivery?

78. Do you know who to contact or where to go in order to access information on public participation?

79. What is your level of participation in the IDP processes/ service delivery?

APPENDIX 002

80. How is the working relation between the Ward councillors and Community Development Workers?

81 Do you think ward committee members have to be remunerated? Motivate

82 .How does public participation improve the level and quality of service delivery?

83. Why is it important for the authorities to consult with the community before providing services?

84. What are the major contributing factors for both poor and good quality levels of participation in local governance?

85. Are you aware of programmes (like job creation, poverty alleviation, water supply HIV) intended for empowerment through community participation? If no why, if yes, are they inclusive of the population (women, aged, youth, and disable)?

86 .Do you have any influence over those programmes?

87 .Do you believe there is room for improvement? Explain?

88. What contribution would you make to ensure inclusive participation in service delivery?

89. Do you think the ward committee and CDW's cooperate in bringing development in this ward? Elaborate.

90. Do you think the term time given to ward committee members is enough to adequately perform their duties? (Explain)

Consent form for participating in one-on-one interviews

Name of Participant _____

Date: _____

I (signature at the bottom), agree to participate in the study conducted by Mrs Sebote Thabitha Matladi, a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, undertaking a research about public participation in local government decision making.

My participation in this study is hereby acknowledged as voluntary, and I concede that the researcher assured me full confidentiality, and therefore will protect my individual identity. I am also aware that I can withdraw from participating at anytime during the session. Raw information collected in this study will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given away to any person that might use it against participants. No individual names will be linked to any information whether the results of this study are published or not. On this note:

- ▪ I consent to the use of tape recorders during the focus group interviews:
  YES___ NO___
- ▪ I consent to the use of direct quotes in the final document, in so far as my identity is
  <u>NOT</u> linked to them: YES___ NO ___

Raw information from the study would be seen by Mrs Sebote Thabitha Matladi, and the research supervisor Dr. Liz Thomas at the University of The Witwatersrand. Participants who have concerns regarding the study can contact Dr. Liz Thomas at (011) 242 9919 or email her at <u>lizweinjapan@yahoo.co.uk</u>

Signature of Participant: _____   Date: _____

Researcher s Signature: _____   Date: _____

Consent form for participating in focus Group interviews

Name of participant: _____

Date: _____

I, the undersigned, agree to participate in the study conducted by Mrs Sebote Thabitha Matladi, a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, undertaking an academic research about public participation in local government decision making.

My participation in this study is voluntary, and I concede that the researcher assured me full confidentiality and therefore will protect my individual identity. I am also aware that I can withdraw from participating at anytime during the session. Raw information collected in this study will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given away to any person that might use it against participants. No individual names will be linked to any information if the results of this study are published. On this note:

- I consent to the use of tape recorders during the focus group interviews: YES ___ NO___
- I consent to the use of direct quotes in the final document, in so far as my identity is not linked to them: YES___ NO ___

Raw information from the study would be seen by, Tabitha Matladi, who will be facilitating the focus group interviews and the research supervisor Dr. Liz Thomas at the University of The Witwatersrand. Participants who have concerns regarding the study can contact Dr. Liz Thomas at (011) 242 9919 or email her at lizweinjapan@yahoo.co.uk

Signature of Participant: _____   **Date**: _____

Researcher s Signature: _____   **Date:** _____