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LOCAL STATE PRACTICES OF INFORMAL WASTE PICKER INTEGRATION:

THE CASE OF THE METSIMAHOLO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, SASOLBURG



MASTER of URBAN STUDIES
(School of Architecture and Planning)

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i. Declaration

I, Maria Jokudu Guya, declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree Master of Urban Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

_____

ii. Acknowledgements

For two decades and then some, the unwavering love, support and encouragement you give pushes me to keep doing my best, always. Thank you, I and E.

To the little, but not so little M. For being my confidant and cheerleader, thank you.

To all the friends, thank you for all the words of encouragement even when I thought I couldn't keep going. Most importantly thank you for being my "third brain".

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Philippians 4:13

iii. Abstract

Informal waste picker integration into formal waste management systems in South Africa is supported by the recognition of waste pickers as an important part of recycling in the National Waste Management Strategy (DEA, 2011a). Although informal waste pickers have gained government recognition, little research has focused on the challenges that municipalities and municipal officials face regarding their integration. While the responsibility for waste management is vested in local municipalities through the South African Constitution, policy instruments and tools that guide municipal practices are limited. This affects the practices of municipal officials in relation to the informal sector and the approaches taken to recognise the informal sector. The Metsimaholo Local Municipality which includes Sasolburg, an industrial town, presents a good case for the study of challenges faced by local municipalities.

The case of Sasolburg is unique, in comparison to other South African municipalities, because the local municipality was not the key driver of integration. Integration was initiated by informal waste pickers seeking municipal recognition for their role in waste reclaiming (Samson, 2009).

The literature threads I focus on include waste recycling systems in the global South and practices of local state officials. The aim of the research report was to understand the challenges that municipal officials face regarding the integration of informal waste pickers into the formal waste management system. The objective of the research was to understand the practices of state officials in the municipality. A key finding that emerged was that waste picker integration has been a challenge for officials because waste management in the MLM prioritises waste collection and disposal services with little guidance for the diversification of solid waste management to include waste pickers. In this context waste management officials' practice is guided by an understanding of waste picker integration as the contracting of waste picker cooperatives, which results in an absence of initiatives to integrate the majority of waste pickers who work independently on the streets and in the landfills.

Key Terms: Integration, Practical norms, Official norms, Solid waste management, Waste pickers.

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v. Abbreviations

CSIR – Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

DEA – Department of Environmental Affairs

FDDM – Fezile Dabi District Municipality

IDP – Integrated Development Plans

IWMP – Integrated Waste Management Plans

MLM – Metsimaholo Local Municipality

NEM: WA – National Environmental Management: Waste Act

NWMS – National Waste Management Strategy

PETCO - PET Recycling Company

SACN – South African Cities Network

SAWIC – South African Waste Information Centre

SAWPA – South African Waste Pickers Association

SWM – Solid Waste Management

WIS – Waste Information System

CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

Waste picker integration into municipal solid waste management systems and the recycling economy has gained government recognition in South Africa. The National Waste Management Strategy of 2011 (DEA, 2011a) presents waste pickers as an important stakeholder in recycling (Muswena and Oelofse, 2016). Although informal waste pickers are slowly gaining municipal support, little research has focused on the challenges that municipalities face regarding integration of the informal sector. While the NWMS vests the responsibility of integrating waste pickers into municipal waste management systems in local municipalities, few guiding policy instruments and tools for municipal practices are available. This affects the practices of municipal officials, how they relate with the informal sector and the approaches taken towards formal recognition. The uncertainty regarding integration stems in part from unclear legislative definitions and guidelines of what integration entails. This research report looks to the Metsimaholo Local Municipality in Sasolburg to explore the aforementioned issue. The sections below give background to the integration of waste pickers in Sasolburg, the problem statement and questions that underpin the research report.

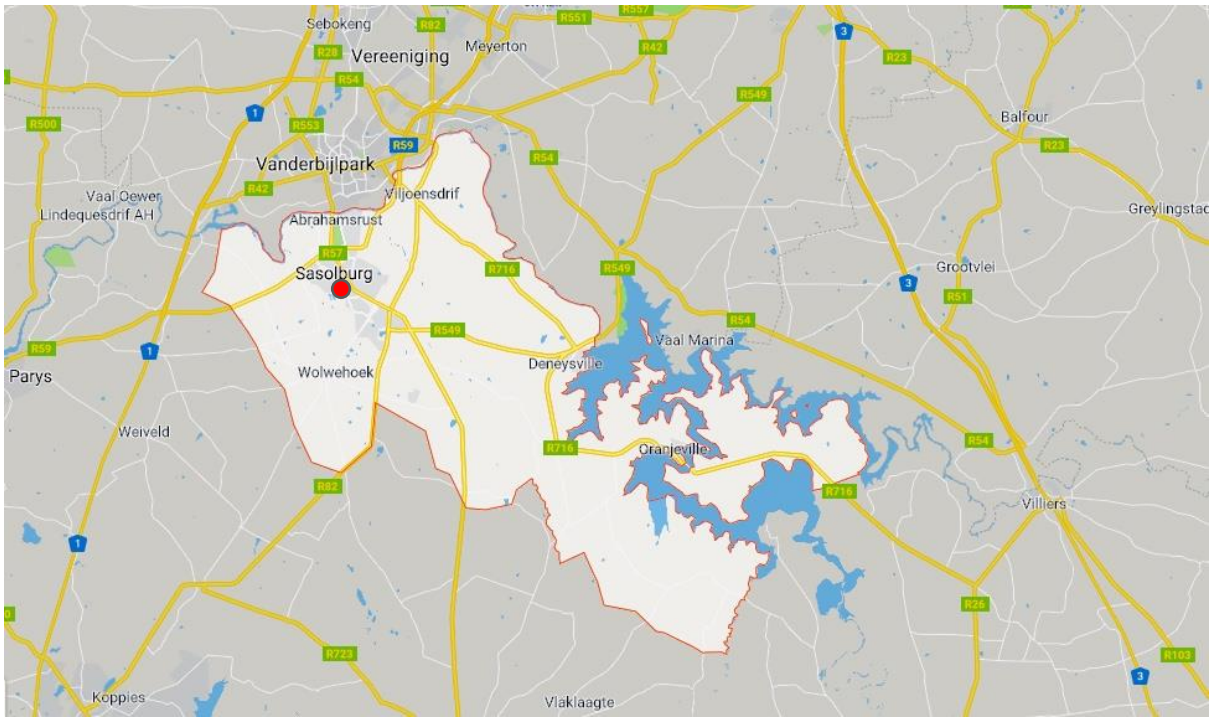
1.1. Background

Municipalities in South Africa have the responsibility to collect and dispose of waste (RSA, 1996). Legislative and policy guidance through the Waste Act of 2008 (RSA, 2008) and the National Waste Management Strategy of 2011 (DEA, 2011a) extend this role to include the recycling of waste material as a means of diverting waste away from landfill sites. Landfill sites across the country are filling up as the population and the amount of waste disposed of in landfill sites is exponentially growing. The result is that government is developing ways to reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfill sites but also as an opportunity to create jobs (Strydom and Phukubye, 2016; DEA, 2013). Furthermore, questions regarding the responsibility towards the private sector to manage the end-life of waste material has and is continually developing (Strydom and Phukubye, 2016).

A key missing link within the system of waste management around many parts of the developing world that has previously been neglected is the role played by the informal sector in diverting waste from landfill sites (Strydom and Phukubye, 2016).

Key debates that have emerged in South Africa, as well as globally, have been around the informal sector's recognition. Data from research institutions such as the Council for Scientific and industrial Research (CSIR) have shown that 80% of recycled material in South Africa is collected by informal waste pickers who are, typically, not remunerated for their services that lessen the load of waste management on municipalities (Phukubye and Strydom, 2016). As the recognition of waste pickers and their work is growing, government must address the role that they play in the municipal waste management system. The (CSIR) and Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), alongside various institutions such as the South African Cities Network (SACN) have conducted research on waste pickers and waste picker integration. They have hosted workshops in addition to creating a framework of guidelines for the integration of waste pickers (SACN, 2016).

Sasolburg is known as the first town in South Africa in which waste pickers, with the help of waste picker organisations and the private sector established a cooperative to provide a separation at source collection service the result of these efforts has been the Vaalpark Pilot project which was established in 2014. This research report is based on the case of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality, which Sasolburg falls under. Metsimaholo is part of the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, which has also played a role in waste picker integration in the municipality.



Sasolburg in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality

This research report focuses the municipal officials' experiences of waste picker integration. The Metsimaholo case is somewhat unique, as rather than initiating integration, the municipality was brought into the process by waste pickers and industry (Samson, 2009). Understanding the practices of municipal officials in integrating waste pickers into their municipal waste management systems is a field that has been under-researched.

1.2. Key Terms

The key terms used in this document include integration, waste pickers, and solid waste management. While most of these terms will be further defined in the Literature review, it is important to define some of them for the readability of the entire research report. A few of the terms need to be clarified as they are used in relation to the contexts they are set in, these being integration, registration and waste pickers.

a. Integration

The term integration refers to the inclusion of waste pickers into the municipality's waste management system. This term is not fully a concept but rather a policy term whose meaning is contested. It includes the support of waste pickers financially and with resources (Samson, 2018); it also includes the contracting of waste pickers as service providers (Chikarmane and Nayaran, 2008). This term is presented here preliminarily until further discussed in the literature review.

b. Registration

Registration of waste pickers is the process of creating a database of all waste pickers within a community as well as giving them identification documents to recognise their work. In cases such as Johannesburg, waste pickers have been registered under their municipality and been given tags with information that identifies them as waste pickers (Dladla, 2018). In this document, registration of waste pickers is not to be confused with the registration of waste pickers as a cooperative through the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC). Sasolburg does not have a database of registered waste pickers, but waste pickers are recognised through their affiliation with a registered cooperative. Registration in this research report refers to waste pickers who belong to a registered cooperative.

c. Waste pickers

In this document, waste pickers refer to citizens who collect waste for the purposes of recycling. The different types of waste pickers are distinguished between independent and cooperative based waste pickers. Additionally, I make a distinction

between registered waste pickers, non-registered waste pickers will be referred to as informal waste pickers given that these waste pickers do not belong to any formal body of registration and are unrecognised by their municipality.

1.3. Problem Statement

Waste picker integration is a process that is new to municipalities in South Africa, due to emerging claims and recent policy shifts. As such, officials are learning to engage formally with waste pickers. Two observed approaches have been identified that show how integration could happen in the South African Context. In the CSIR's Briefing Note for '*integrating the informal sector into the South African waste and recycling economy in the context of extended producer responsibility*' the following schools of thought are presented: informal waste picker integration through the support of waste picker cooperatives or formal integration "through companies contracted to undertake formal kerbside collection programmes" (Strydom and Phukubye, 2016: 3). Arguments in waste management journals also pose that integration can develop in multiple ways. Godfrey (2017) explains that integration can be institutional as well as practical. With the argument that most states tend to focus on the practicalities of integrating waste pickers, I problematize the issues that emerge in this specific context. Given the complexity of the integration (Sembiring and Nitivattananon, 2009) of waste pickers in the municipal waste management programme, the questions that are presented are around the role of solid waste management within the municipality.

The main problem that I have identified is that local governments have limited instruments to guide their practice. As such, officials engaging directly with waste pickers are finding pragmatic solutions to integrate waste pickers in the absence of legislative or policy guidance tailored to the local municipal experience. This research report seeks to understand how officials, specifically in the Metsimaholo Municipality, manage and navigate the challenges that emerge in integrating waste pickers in the context of little precedent.

1.4. Rationale

National government through the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) drives integration in South Africa (DEA, 2011a). Despite government's constitutional mandate to facilitate solid waste management though waste collection and disposal as well as environmental protection (RSA, 1996), there are various approaches to informal waste picker integration. The rationale behind the need to better understand

integration is driven by perspectives from departments and institutions such as DEA and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) that highlight the informal sector as key to solid waste management. The CSIR, for example, supports informal waste picker integration through empirical data that shows that the informal sector's efforts serve the interests of governments more than they do those of the informal sector given that waste pickers do not get remunerated for the services they offer (Strydom and Phukubye, 2016). Indeed, their study shows that informal waste pickers collect recyclables at a fraction of the cost that municipalities expend to collect waste, thus relieving pressure off local municipalities (*Ibid*.).

It is thus paramount that the state is involved in protecting this livelihood source. Section 24 of the Constitution highlights the need for government to encourage economic and social development in environmental issues (RSA, 1996). The local government's role in waste management extends beyond service provision to the protection of livelihoods (DEA, 2011a). This presents a tension for local municipalities that have to balance the social and economic scopes of solid waste management. Integration also means recognition and absorption of the informal sector through cooperatives and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) creation (Strydom and Phukubye, 2016).

My rationale for this study draws on the above and extends to the lack of research that explores how local municipalities face the challenge of integration. I focus on specifically understanding their perceptions of waste picker integration in their own municipality. As explained in the problem statement, the perspective of the municipality is under-researched when it comes to the role they play in integrating waste pickers. These perspectives tend to underestimate the efforts of municipal officials and the challenges they are faced with in processes such as service delivery. I conducted this research to offer insight into the challenges that this particular municipality faced. I extend this to how it managed, or not, to integrate the informal waste pickers. Given that very few municipalities in South Africa practice waste picker integration, this research report will be beneficial in highlighting approaches to engaging with waste pickers in the context of limited guidelines and instruments.

1.5. Aim and Objectives

The aim of the research is, mainly, to understand how the Metsimaholo Local Municipality and waste pickers have developed a working relationship over the years. The objectives of the research then become:

- To find out what the municipal officials' engagements with waste pickers were and how these had developed and changed over time.
- To find out how officials within the municipality navigated the challenges that emerged from waste picker functions in the community.
- To find out how intergovernmental engagements influenced officials' practices.
- Finally, to explore the notion of integration as understood by the local officials.

1.6. Research Questions

Through this research report, I aim to understand the practices of municipal officials as they relate to the interaction between local government and waste pickers with a focus on the challenges faced by municipal officials in integrating waste pickers. The main question I asked through the investigation is '**How have the local municipal officials navigated the challenges of integrating waste pickers into the formal waste management system**?'

The sub-questions that support the above main question include:

- What instruments and tools has the Metsimaholo Local Municipality adopted to facilitate the integration of waste pickers?
- What support and/or limitations has the Waste Management Department in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality experienced with regards to integrating waste pickers in solid waste management?
- How do the roles of the main non-state stakeholders overlap or conflict in managing waste and achieving integration within the Metsimaholo Local Municipality?
- How does the Waste Management Department in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality understand the 'integration' of informal waste pickers?

1.7. Document Summary

Chapter 1 has highlighted the background and purpose of the study as well as the areas of focus and interest. It has stressed the need to interrogate the challenges that officials face when interacting with various facets of society such as the informal and private sectors.

The chapter to follow (Literature Review) will engage with literature within the fields of solid waste management, integration and state practices, drawing on the relevance of existing work in framing waste picker integration. I thus finally conceptualise the research under these three themes as per the problem statement.

The third chapter discusses the methodology adopted in conducting the research; this chapter explores the methods and tools of data collection. It furthermore sets out the parameters of the research, highlights the challenges and limitations of the research and ultimately provides a scope for the analysis of the research.

The fourth chapter is a contextual chapter that chronologically lists the history of waste pickers and officials' interaction in Sasolburg's Metsimaholo Municipality. In the chapter, I provide context of the site of the study, a history of waste picking as well as the existing legislation on solid waste management as it pertains to waste picking.

The findings and analysis of data are broken down into two chapters in this report. Chapter 5 looks at the challenges that officials have encountered in attempting to integrate waste pickers. Chapter 6 focuses on the municipal - waste picker - private sector nexus. This chapter of findings explores the relationship of waste pickers; the chapter, furthermore, explores the approaches to integration observed in the municipality. Chapter 7 concludes the research report.

CHAPTER 2

2. Literature Review

In order to answer the main research question 'In what ways has the local state navigated around the challenges of integrating informal waste pickers into the formal waste management system?' I look to the concepts of solid waste management, state practice and the governance of waste as framing themes. Through these themes, the concepts of solid waste management, state practices and integration will be expanded on. The themes and concepts converge to develop a conceptual framing that not only highlights the practices of municipal officials at the local level of government, but how the integration of informal waste pickers is facilitated by local municipalities to diversify the way in which our municipalities manage solid waste.

2.1. Waste Governance and Recycling in the Global South

The challenges of waste governance and recycling in the global South differ from those faced in the global North. Urban challenges such as urbanisation and poor infrastructure are key contributors to the management of waste. A key feature of the global South has been the role played by waste pickers, typically in the informal sector; a role that eases waste management burdens on municipalities. This section of the literature review discusses literature on waste governance and recycling in the global south as compared to the global north. It does so in an attempt to rationalise the role of recycling and waste pickers as well as the challenges that local municipalities are faced with, displaying common challenges across the global South.

2.1.1. Waste Governance in the Global South Compared to the Global North

The differences between waste management in the global North and South are very prominent because waste management is strongly embedded in context (Annepu and Mitchell, undated). It is for this reason that many authors have explored the differences between the two, particularly given the greater presence of informal waste pickers and a much larger informal recycling sector in the global South (*Ibid*.; Chikarmane and Nayaran, 2008).

The challenges facing solid waste management systems around the world have shown various challenges. While the global North has been observed to have better solid waste management, a key lesson that can be drawn from them is the difficulty that comes with developing new solid waste management systems (Wilson et al. 2006). The idea of integrating waste pickers into municipal solid waste management systems is one that has been a challenge across the entire world. The global North is

viewed as the standard to achieve for urban development, and as such countries in the global South adopt strategies to achieve levels observed in the global North, in many cases trying to mimic their patterns of development. With the same regard, countries in the global South have drawn on OECD countries for integrated waste management models. The key issue here is that these models were developed in OECD countries in the 1980s, and countries of the global south are structurally different thus these former models cannot be applied to countries in the global South. Key structural differences include the fact that countries in the global north have revenue sources for service delivery through taxes, and these countries have lower levels of poverty thus most of their population can afford to pay for basic services. The section to follow delves into the challenges faced in the global South context.

2.1.2. Challenges for the Global South

The pressures facing municipalities in countries in the global South stem from a lack of prioritization of waste management in comparison to other municipal services compared to the global North where the opposite prevails (Simelane and Mohee, 2012). It is for this reason that budgets for solid waste management are typically smaller whereas a lot of funds have been directed towards developing, regulating and prioritising technology around waste management to improve service delivery (*Ibid*.). A further challenge of waste management in the global South is urbanisation. A study done in South Africa by the, then Department of Environment and Tourism, showed that the waste levels in the country were increasing because of urban growth, population growth and an expanding economy (*ibid*.).

Despite the lack of prioritization, solid waste has become a resource that has sustained many African livelihoods. As many Africans migrate to their urban centres and are faced with challenges in getting jobs, most resort to waste picking as a source of income (Ezeah, 2013; Simelane and Mohee, 2012). A common issue that has been observed in the South African context is the inability to keep up with the growing population and resultant pressure on the existing system (Simelane and Mohee, 2012). Unlike many other African countries where waste management suffers from both poor legislative capacity and poor capacity to implement plans, South Africa has a variety of legislative guidance for integrated waste management. The challenges faced are with regards to the poor coordination and alignment of the various legislation and initiatives, but mainly with the implementation of the legislation as well as monitoring (Mannie, undated). The lesson that can thus be drawn is that developing countries

should build on the existing recycling systems, this means integrating the informal recycling sector into municipal solid waste management systems (Wilson et al. 2006).

Given the challenges faced by municipalities, the benefits of integrating the informal sector into formal waste management systems should result in a multi-dimensional system as opposed to one that follows a linear or single-step process (Masood and Barlow, 2013). This allows local governments to draw on their contexts to better facilitate the integration of waste pickers and the creation of integrated municipal waste management systems. For integration to be facilitated by municipalities or local governments, they have to be well aware of the various actors and the different levels of involvement that each has within the system. This is made complicated by the fact that there are blurred lines between what the formal and the informal sector does to manage solid waste (Masood and Barlow, 2013; Gunsilius, Undated).

A key element to governance that emerges from bottom-up governance is decentralisation. This approach to governance sees decentralised government as a means to allowing local governments' autonomy and power in decision-making as well as allowing governments at large the opportunity to better respond to communities (Faguet, 2005). Faguet (2005). Writing in the context of democracies, highlights that governments are driven by political and market ideals. Governance is thus influenced by the political mandate that politicians choose to serve, while at the same time influenced by the markets that economically and financially impact decision-making (Faguet, 2005). This approach is one of the influences that factor into integration. The integration of waste pickers, which can take the form of partnerships, private-public partnerships or cooperatives, is also subject to the political and economic dialogues within the municipalities. The section to follow discuses, the integration of waste pickers into municipal solid waste management systems.

2.2. Integration: Towards a Concept

This section of the literature review discusses the integration of waste pickers. The section seeks to draw on literature that defines integration around the world, but more specifically in South Africa. I thus explore literature on the definition of integration as well as the conceptualisation of integration. I furthermore explore the different ways in which municipalities render waste management services and how these relate to integrating waste pickers by incorporating them into waste management systems.

2.2.1. Integration in Academia

Integration is a concept that is not new to waste management, but one whose use has fluctuated over the years. The use of the term integration can be traced to the 1970s when it was used in the context of solid waste management (Wilson et al, 2013). The term soon resurfaced in the 1990s and its use has gradually increased since (*Ibid*.) Despite this, integration is a term that is not yet well understood as a concept. Many find it difficult to define what integration entails and how the concept is applied (*Ibid*.; Sekhwela 2017). There are various authors and academics who have developed working definitions, yet this adds to the confusion surrounding the term while also bringing to the forefront the complexities of such as process. In this section I attempt to conceptualise integration and its use in literature.

The concepts that can be explored under integration are 'integrated waste management' and 'waste picker integration'. Integration is best understood through the work of Seadon whereas integrated waste management draws on work by authors such as Dias (2016). Waste picker integration is a process that can take on various forms.

The notion of integration can employ a variety of functions. It can mean various things to different states and sectors of society. As will be shown, integration can take on a variety of meanings but still, all these can be brought together to ultimately achieve a single goal. Integration can take the shape of simply providing an integrated system. It can also be a process of incorporating waste pickers into an existing waste management system.

2.2.2. Conceptual Understanding and Background

In this section, the different ways in which integration is understood around the world are considered. This section also includes the notion of integrated solid waste management systems outside of the integration of waste pickers.

The definition of the term *integrated* refers to a combined and composite system. Integration also refers to the act or process of merging more than one separate entity. It also refers to a system that is open to and inclusive of all systems or users. The most common uses of the terms, as has been identified by Wilson et al (2013) is the first two definitions, the third being an element I too explore through this research report.

Different municipalities have different understandings of integration and thus adopt it at different levels of the waste management hierarchy (*Ibid*.). Seadon (2006) sees

integration as a process that can only be achieved through government, business and communities working together (*Ibid*.). Furthermore, a market-oriented approach underlies this solution. This approach calls for an economically and socially acceptable system (Seadon, 2010).

In some contexts, the waste hierarchy is the basis of integration. An approach to integrated SWM is the privatisation of the service, which includes outsourcing waste collection and recycling or forming partnerships, thus integration needs to happen at all levels of the waste hierarchy (Seadon, 2006). Seadon (2006) suggests single- and mutli-medium approaches towards integration. The single-medium approach, which is more applicable to solid waste management, is an approach that focusses on the recycling and recovery aspect of solid waste management.

The context of New Zealand considers integrated waste management as a systems approach that focuses on achieving environmental sustainability (Seadon, 2010). This approach to waste management takes into account the value of recycled materials in the context of declining resources, thus sustainability drives the need to recover solid waste (*Ibid*.). In South Africa, integration is steered by the Section 10(1) of the Waste Act that requires all provincial municipalities to develop Integrated Waste Management Plans (IWMPs) (RSA, 2008) (Fiehn and Ball, 2005;); furthermore, all municipalities that carry out waste management services are expected to have a waste management officer (Section 10(3)). According to section Section 10(5) of the Waste Act 2008, waste management officers must co-ordinate their activities in the manner set out in the NWMS. IWMPs have to provide for the implementation of waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and recovery targets and initiatives (Section 12(1)(iv)).

2.2.3. Conceptualisations of Integration

Given the various conceptualisations and challenges in conceptualising integration as presented above, Samson (2018) provides a categorisation of how integration has been conceptualised by various academics globally. Samson (2018: 1) argues that "the concept of integration performs important political work". Her draft paper positions integration in the political climate that has shaped our understanding of integration through policies and government projects. She identifies four conceptualisations of integration, namely integration as charity, as the participatory inclusion of work, as multi-faceted and as a form of social transformation. These

conceptualisations are hinged on their influence regarding political influence but differ significantly.

The first approach, by charity, draws mainly on the work of Velis et al (2012). Conceptualising integration as charity refers to the ways in which local governments build projects whose aim is to offer waste pickers with equipment and skills training. This form of integration places a greater emphasis on waste pickers and the work that they do rather offering them ways in which they can be absorbed or assimilated into the existing municipal waste management systems. As such, this approach falls short in that it neglects the voice of waste pickers thus resulting in programmes mainly driven by local governments without waste picker input or recognition (Samson, 2018).

The second approach, participatory inclusion of work, differs from the first as a perspective in which integration focuses on improving the livelihoods of waste pickers. This approach is driven by the need for waste pickers to be active participants in integration, thus government places effort to support waste pickers in developing organisations through which waste pickers can be represented by waste pickers themselves. Integration as participatory inclusion is an approach that seeks to empower waste pickers by encouraging them to "form organisations and represent themselves" (Samson, 2018: page number).

The third conceptualisation is integration as a multi-faceted process. In this conceptualisation, integration a focus is places on various interventions that shape and affect the work that waste pickers do. These include social, economic, cultural and political interventions. This approach, like the previous one is hinged on participation and furthermore the added need to recognise waste pickers and break down negative stereotypes of waste pickers. This approach is about drawing awareness to the need to respect waste pickers and as such, the social and cultural interventions are emphasized.

Social transformation is the fourth conceptualisation that Samson (2018) identifies. This conceptualisation of integration is steered by waste picker organisations that seek to transform social perspectives of waste picker integration (Sasmson, 2018). Not only does this approach encourage citizens and governments to shift their perspectives of waste pickers to one that deems them as important contributors to waste management, but encourages waste pickers to view themselves as important contributors to the waste management system.

In contrast to Samson's conceptualisations of integration, the GIZ (2015) has identified key interventions that are adopted for waste picker integration in the global South. These include (amongst others):

1. Welfare based interventions which is about the social integration of waste pickers into their communities and waste management system by improving their livelihood status.
2. Rights-based interventions where the work or waste pickers is legitimised and waste pickers are thus treated fairly.
3. Technical integration refers to an approach based on formally recognising and integrating waste pickers into a municipal solid waste management system
4. Formal integration refers to the development of laws, regulations and policies that govern the waste picker environment.

The approaches that many states and municipalities have adopted have taken on the form of partnerships with waste pickers or waste picker cooperatives. Some ways in which municipalities can create relationship with waste pickers include the following means of out-sourcing service delivery. They include:

a. Formalisation

The approaches to formalisation often adopt neo-liberal perspectives such as turning informal waste pickers into formal businesses, which governments outsource or collaborate though partnerships (Baud and Post, 2013). Such can be the creation of cooperatives, the development of small businesses or the privatisation of the sector that leads to partnerships with waste pickers (*Ibid*.). While these approaches are helpful in defining the waste picker as a formal part of the waste system, they have posed challenges for many municipalities and informal waste pickers (*Ibid*.). The creation of cooperatives has been quite problematic because processes of formalisation are not easy and has only had an 8% success rate in South Africa (Muswema and Oelofse, 2016).

Debates around waste pickers integration through processes such as partnerships have brought up the danger of formalisation can be a hindrance to livelihood opportunities. Given government decisions to approach waste pickers as businesses and them having to take on the challenge at the local level, governments have to be able to support businesses (Muswema and Oelofse, 2016) through the provision of equipment and business training.

b. Partnerships

Different forms of service delivery include partnerships between the state, civil society and the private sector. This proposal will discuss the challenges of public-private partnerships as an example. A partnership essentially refers to a relationship between stakeholders in terms of the service provision of public goods, where all partners benefit equally. While this is the ideal, partnerships tend to be unequal and erratic in response to changing circumstances. One such type of partnership is a public-private partnership (PPP). PPPs emphasise strong contractual agreements between stakeholders to ensure equality, low costs and reduced political interference. Contracts also help avoid monopoly, and minimise corruption (Baud and Post, 2003).

Partnerships lead to greater effectiveness and sustainable development given the involvement of a variety of stakeholders but their success is affected by government capacity and this leads to contrasting results in the functioning of markets and the formed partnership. The socio-economic benefits of a recycling commodity chain has not yet been fully recognised. Furthermore, the ideal benefits of a partnership do not include the informal sector, which the formal sector systematically excludes given the lack of regulation characteristic of informality (Baud and Post, 2003).

Dias (2016) uses the Brazilian case as an example where key issues affecting officials' practices were getting different kinds of officials involved in waste departments and taking the social aspects of integration seriously. Examples of successful waste picker integration into the SWM sector come from countries such as Brazil and India where the grouping of informal waste pickers into cooperatives has allowed for waste pickers to be seen as legitimate by state entities. Thus, allowing them to negotiate for access to waste from landfills and put themselves in better positions to negotiate trading conditions with the private sector (Chen and Skinner, 2014). Waste pickers in this context chose a model of integration and used agency to gain government recognition of their cooperatives as their representative structures. The agency of waste pickers plays an important role in facilitating engagements between the two sectors (Chen and Skinner, 2014).

The literature has considered the legislative components of integration. Much of it is from the perspective of waste pickers and their role in solid waste management. Little reference is made to the municipal challenges and furthermore the officials tasked with integrating the waste pickers.

2.2.4. Examples of Waste Picker Integration

The dominant narrative of waste picking in municipalities at a global scale is the negative perception of waste picking, where it is commonly expected that municipal officials view the informal waste picking community as a "nuisance" (Klundert, 1995:10 in Ferreira, 2016). Thus, despite the growing acceptance of waste pickers, there are still various challenges faced when it comes to the integration of waste pickers that range from a lack of understanding of the waste sector, to the informal nature of waste picking activities as well as the overall poor perception of waste pickers as a social group in society (Ferreira, 2016). Waste picker integration has been practiced in different ways in different countries, each has had different lessons that can be learnt from when integrating waste pickers. Overall the different experiences from municipalities across the world have highlighted that there is no one way to practice waste picker integration. Below are examples of integration from the global South.

The waste picker community in Cairo are known as the Zabaleen, a group of recyclers who collect waste material from some streets in Cairo from households and businesses at no cost (*Ibid*.). This group of waste pickers has managed to collect waste even when the government chose to privatise waste collection; an effort that failed given that the private waste collectors were unable to collect waste from households as effectively as the Zabaleen did (*Ibid*.).

In Pune, India, the integration of waste pickers was a process that resulted in a shift in the perceptions held of waste pickers. Following municipal recognition, waste pickers were legitimised because their work was granted occupational status. They were thus no longer called scavengers and rather seen as service providers (Ferreira, 2016). This example of India represents a larger effort in the country to support waste pickers. India has national policies such as the National Environment Policy of 2006 and the National Action Plan for Climate Change from 2009 that recognises waste pickers (Dias, 2012).

The case of the Belo Horizonte Municipality is an example of the adoption of unique strategies to have the formal and informal waste sector working concurrently. Belo Horizonte municipality recognised waste picker cooperatives and the work done, thus deciding to integrate the waste pickers into the formal recycling system (Ferreira, 2016). As with the example of India, Brazil also has a National Solid Waste Policy which was passed in 2010. This policy lists mechanisms that should be put in place to offer

waste pickers support when it comes to integration into municipal solid waste management systems. Brazil has adopted the integration of waste pickers through cooperatives that provide waste collection services (Dias, 2012).

In the Philippines, the City of Iloilo has a local waste ordinance that asks residents to not only separate their waste into biodegradable and residual waste, but to transport the waste to their local materials recovery facility or collection points were waste is only collected on specific days of the week (Paul, Arce-Jaque, Ravena and Villamor, 2012). Given that separation at source is already mandated within this city, the integration of waste pickers was supported by the municipality, which initiated the new livelihoods association called the USWAG Calahunan Livelihood association Inc. in 2009. Given that the municipality had integrated them as a service provider, the association was created to establish the presence of the waste pickers within communities, as well as offer them skills and development training.

In the South African context, waste picker integration has been studied in the eThekwini Municipality where there were tensions between the formal recycling sector and waste pickers (Ferreira, 2016). The waste pickers in this context faced the same challenges experienced in contexts such as Belo Horizonte and Brazil which was the desire to be recognised by the formal waste and recycling sectors in their cities. Unlike waste picker integration in eThekwini, waste pickers in Belo Horizonte and Brazil were supported by waste picker unions that rallied to get their municipalities to recognise the service provided by waste pickers. In the eThekwini example, waste pickers were not supported by a union and thus the impetus to integrate waste pickers came from waste pickers themselves with rallied support from the municipality (Ferreira, 2016).

Dias, 2012, notes that while some countries and their municipalities or local governments have integrated waste pickers into the municipal solid waste management system, there have been cases such as in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and Bangkok in Thailand were local governments have refused to integrate waste pickers into their solid waste management system. Rather, they have only been allowed to sell collected recyclables to the private sector. Given the lack of regulations and laws that would govern the relationship between the vulnerable waste pickers and more powerful private sector, waste pickers in these contexts lose and are taken advantage off, for example, they are forced to sell recyclables to private companies at very low prices (Dias, 2012).

The above conceptualisations and approaches to waste picker integration highlight the complexities of such a process. Cohen (in Cohen et al, 2015: preface) writes "informal waste sector integration is extremely difficult work, because there are so many variables to account for and so many interests to balance." The differences in the ways in which waste picker integration is practiced across the world emphasises integration as being a process that is strongly influenced by context. A part of integration is the work done by municipal officials to support waste picker integration programmes and initiatives. In the section to follow, the practices of municipal officials are discussed in order to better understand processes of decision making and how contextual challenges and environments can affect practices and norms: how decisions are made in local government.

2.1. Practices of Officials

This section explores the norms and practices that influence how officials conduct municipal work. I draw mainly on Olivier De Sardan's conceptualisation of 'practices' to explore and understand practices of officials from a theoretical standpoint. Norms refer to the accepted and expected patterns of behaviour that individuals or groups practice or partake in. Typically informed by societal practices, norms are shaped by existing environments and long-standing standards of accepted practices.

Olivier De Sardan has a large body of theory that explores the influences of officials or bureaucrats in state institutions on practices. He focuses much of his work on the African context, stating that Africa presents as an ideal context to thoroughly dissect shifts in decision-making that influences bureaucratic practices, ultimately influencing the nature of state functions across the entire continent. Olivier De Sardan's work is premised on a typology of norms. He identifies social, professional, official and practical norms of which the latter two are of focus in this review.

In the publication "*Practical Norms: Informal regulations within public bureaucracies (in Africa and Beyond)*" Olivier De Sardan (2015) argues that bureaucrats are governed by a set of official norms that guide their practice, ultimately delineating their responsibilities in their various positions. Olivier De Sardan (2015) goes on to write that official norms can be further broken down into professional and social norms.

2.1.1. Official Norms

Official norms refer to formal rules that govern the work of government officials and bureaucrats (Olivier De Sardan, 2015). Official norms also refer to an umbrella of other

norms that informs the rights and responsibilities of government officials, which include legal and professional norms. While official norms are overarching, professional norms differ in that they inform the legal rules, rights, responsibilities and work culture of specific professions, while legal norms on the other hand focus on the legislative rules that govern all citizens (Olivier De Sardan, 2015).

2.1.2. Practical Norms

Olivier De Sardan (2008) identifies that there is a gap between established norms of professionals or officials and their actual practices. He thus creates an exploratory concept, "*practical norms*", to describe practices that are observed in this gap (Olivier De Sardan, 2008: 4). In addition to this he highlights that the emergence of practical norms is very clear in African contexts where modes of governance are poorly understood when they do not meet the standards of Western modes of governance. He thus points out that "real governance" which refers to the "everyday operation of [the] state" when it comes to service delivery needs critical studying and analysis as it is not well understood (Olivier De Sardan, 2008: abstract). Olivier De Sardan observed that bureaucrats and officials tend to divert from their official norms in order to fill in the gap of missing guidelines (Olivier De Sardan, 2008).

Titeca and de Herdt (2010: 574) draw on Olivier De Sardan's theoretical framework to explore "*practical solutions to local enforcement problems*" in a case of cross-border trading in Uganda. In this example official boarder regulations are disregarded at the border between Uganda and Sudan as well as the DRC by officials for safety, amongst other reasons as well. Drawing on a respondent's comment the reader is alerted that the people disregard existing trade rules for their own already established rules (Titeca and de Herdt, 2010).

Common practice here is bribing. People also smuggle commodities such as sugar back and forth across borders. The reasons for smuggling and bribing include the high boarder tax trades and complicated procedures to move goods across state lines (*Ibid*.). Fearful of their safety as villainised officials of the state, officials have found ways to humanise themselves to commuters (*Ibid*.). They have found ways to collect otherwise high taxes of commodities while allowing commuters to cross the border with their extra goods or commodities (*Ibid*.).

A practical norm identified in this paper regarding practices of boarder officials is that they have observed that a minimum amount is required to be reached every month

for taxes by higher authorities (Titeca and de Herdt, 2010). Once this threshold is reached, officials allow cross-border commuters to cross with a certain amount of commodities without paying taxes. This is an informal practice that officials have adopted because cross-border commuters have threatened their safety when not allowed to cross the border with an excess number of commodities. As Olivier De Sardan explains, officials adopt informal practices when they are forced to diverge from official norms (Olivier De Sardan, 2015; Olivier De Sardan, 2008). In this way, cross-border commuters see the work of boarder controllers as official despite this not being an official practice (Titeca and de Herdt, 2010).

2.1.3. Instruments

Policy instruments can be understood as "tools used by governments to pursue a desired outcome" and examples include economic tools and regulations (Cairney, 2015:1). Cairney (2015) notes that in the process of developing policy a variety of policy instruments are adopted to develop coherent strategies for the development of public policy. This aspect of policy making not only highlights the complexities that exist within policy development, implementation and execution, but in the measurement and categorisation of public policy. Lascoumes and Le Gale (2007) expand the definition to include the social and technical nature of public policy instruments. Policy instruments organise specific social relations between the state and those it is addressed to based on the meanings and representations it carries. It is essentially a tool of regulation. While instruments can be understood as social institutions, tools can also be understood as parts of techniques or statistical categories, an example being legal texts.

Lascoumes and Le Gales (2007) take this further by expanding on the effects of policy instruments on the manner in which states govern. In their paper on *Understanding public policy through its instruments*, they argue, "public policy instrumentation is a major issue in public policy as it reveals a fairly explicit theorisation of the relationship between the governing and the governed (*Ibid*.). Their second argument is that instruments at work are not neutral devices. This means that they produce specific effects independently of the objective pursued that structure public policy according to their own logic. Because public policy is subject to its institutional structure the instruments that are adopted do not always reveal the political stakes. Instruments can be technical or functional in their approach and as such they conceal the stakes.

Hence, the authors suggest using political sociology to bring to light the power relations attached to instruments and how they result in issues of legitimacy.

Policy instruments are essential in understanding how states govern and regulate society (Lascoumes and Le Gales, 2007). Le Gales is very helpful in helping understand that policy can be a tool and that it is used as an instrument to help achieve goals and objectives. It can still in this case be independent of the objectives set out. As such we then see policies as objects that can be used for manipulation or strengthening governance. They are a reflection of how officials practice through policy. To better understand the impact that instruments have on service delivery and governance, we can look to Howlett (2000). Howlett's text is about the hallowing of the state. They expresses that service delivery has followed the trends of the contemporary world- service delivery was traditionally provided by the state, it is now a feature that is more commonly privatised and outsourced to the private sector.

Howlett (2000) makes the distinction between substantive and procedural instruments. Substantive instruments are traditional and are characterised by their ability to affect service delivery directly. On the other hand, procedural instruments manage state-society interactions in order to assure general support for government aims and initiatives. They note that there has been a great focus in the past on substantive instruments that procedural instruments have taken the backseat. Given the contemporary nature of states procedural instruments are used and preferred because they allow for governments to curate policy in a manner that allows the state to develop relationships with NGOs, private institutions, etc. They essentially help government to use policy to produce a desired outcome or goal.

2.1.4. Conclusion to Literature Review

The above sections have discussed the dominant literature on the concepts of waste management, official's practices and integration. Waste management in the global South, as shown, is a challenge in the global south given limited resources, growing waste amounts and municipal challenges. The literature review has also shown that a key part of waste management in the South is the role played by informal waste pickers which typically goes unrecognised. Thus, the section on integration presents the various ways in which waste pickers could be integrated into municipal waste management systems. The first two sections present the dominant perspectives on the integration of waste pickers into solid waste management, but little literature considers

the role played by officials in integrating waste pickers outside of the literature that shows how municipalities are failing to integrate waste pickers. The section on officials' practices discusses the different practices that shape the work done by municipal officials. The section to follow brings together all the main concepts under a conceptual framework.

2.2. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework offers a synthesis of the above literature review to present the main concepts that framed the research report and process. The key concepts that frame the study include officials' practices, waste picker integration and municipal solid waste management. Part of tis conceptual framework will be an understanding of waste pickers to help present a landscape of the Sasolburg waste picking community. The purpose of this section is to expand on the relationship between the municipality and the waste pickers, through the lens of integration.

2.2.1. Relationships

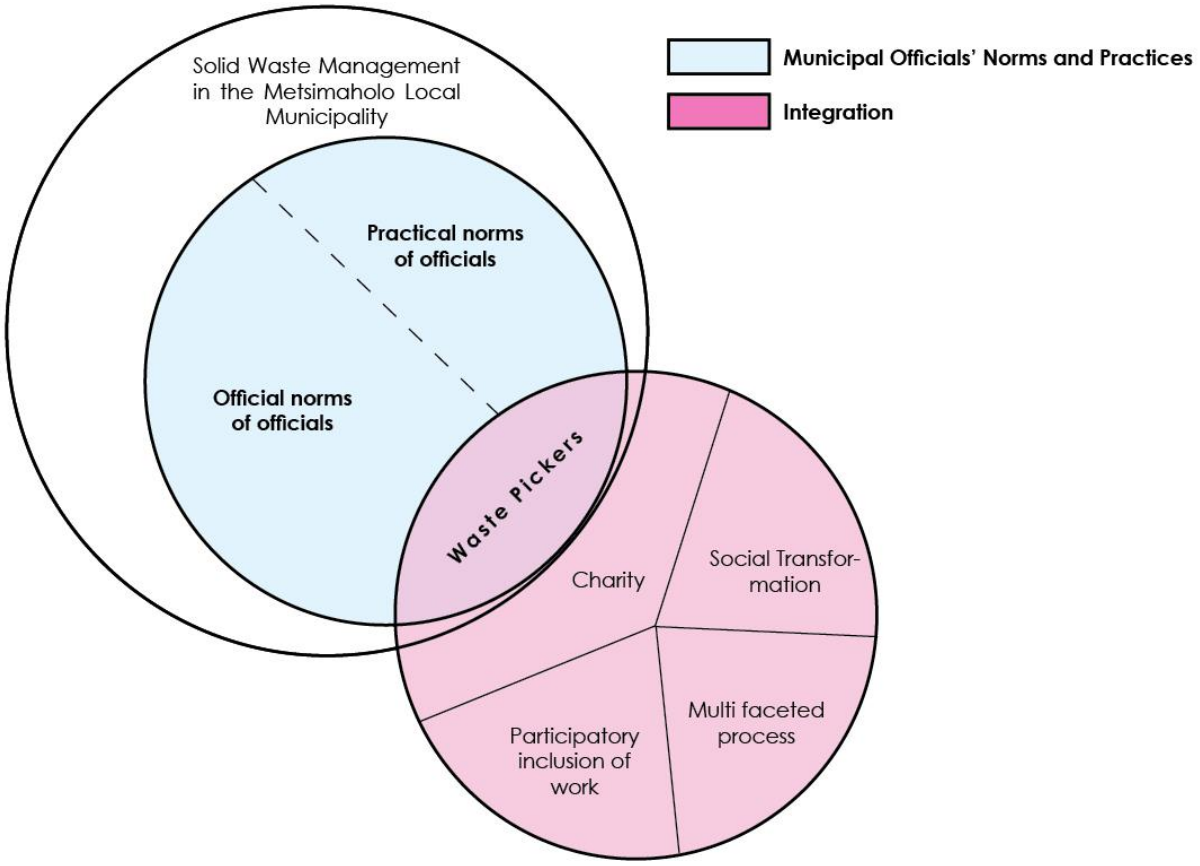
The diagram below represents the relationships between the key concepts that have shaped the study. The key concepts that hinge the study are intergation and municipal officials' norms and practices. The practices of officials are encircled with the conext of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality, representing the concept of solid waste management as officials' responsibility. The concept of officials norms and practices, represented by a blue circle, is divided into the official and practical norms of officials. The concept of intergation uses different forms of conceptualising integrtaion to differentiate the ways in which waste pickers can be intergated. The overlap between norms and practices and intergation is represnted by waste pickers.

The problem statement presented in this research report considers the challenge that officials face given limited legislative and policy instruments available to them to integrate waste pickers. The consideration of officials' practices in the literature review helps offer guidance regarding the different ways that officials do their work based on the official and professional mandate as compared to practical solutions that can be adopted in the absence of guidance.

This conceptual framework helps guide this research report by framing the study around the practices of municipal officials and how their decision making affects their approaches to waste picker integration.

The term ‘waste pickers’ refers to workers at the end of the value chain of recycling, urban citizens who collect waste materials and help redirect them towards recycling and recovery. In this document, set in the context of Sasolburg the term *Waste Pickers* is adopted; it refers to all collectors of waste material in the community that are not government affiliates. Through SAWPA, waste pickers in Sasolburg fought for their recognition as such, and thus refer to themselves as Waste Pickers (SAWPA Representative, Steering Committee Meeting 01 November 2018), regardless of whether they are based in a cooperative, on the streets and/or the landfill site. Throughout the document, ‘waste pickers’ is an umbrella term that refers to all the waste pickers. Waste pickers are then further differentiated by whether they are registered under a cooperative or not, with waste pickers who are not being referred to as independent waste pickers.

From the diagram I show how waste pickers are centrak ti the study. The pink circle represents the different ways in which waste pickers can be integrated into municiapl solid waste management systems, as conceptualised by Samson (2018). The blue circle represents municipal officials and the norms that inform their decision making, as conceptualised by Olivier De Sardan (2008). Given that this is a case study research report, the white circle represents the context which is the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. This diagram which frames the thinking around this study shows how waste picker integration is a process that is shaped by officials’ decision making and waste picker needs. The pages to follow express how the overlap of waste pickers and officials in practicing waste picker integration.



2.2.2. Conclusion

This conceptual framework has highlighted the key concepts that frame the research report. The problem statement in this study considers the under-researched strand of official's practices as they relate to integrating waste pickers in a context where literature focuses on the waste pickers and private sector perspectives as well as overall municipal solid waste management. The following chapter discusses the methodology that framed the research and the methods adopted to conduct fieldwork. It considers the case study as an approach to understanding officials' practices in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality.

CHAPTER 3

3. Methodology

The process of understanding the local state practices of informal waste picker integration in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality focused on the town of Sasolburg and the subsequent history that led to the adoption of bottom-up practices. This chapter looks at the methodology that shaped the study. I begin with a case study premise, followed by the methods of data collection, how I chose participants and the challenges that emerged through fieldwork.

3.1. Case Study Premise

The nature of this study called for a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. The choice to conduct research qualitatively was driven by the variety of stories that shaped the development of the Vaalpark Pilot Project. I adopted the case study method to framing the research project and drew on observation and interviews as tools for data collection.

3.1.1. Case Study Framing

The case study method is an ideal approach to investigating a matter in a specific context. Case studies are an approach to research based on the focus on a study on a specific area in order to understand processes such as decision making (Hays, 2004). Case studies are thus an approach to research focused on answering "focused questions" (Hays, 2004: 218). A key characteristic of case studies is that they are not used as tool for generalisation given the focus on specific contexts, unless otherwise conducted over a large sample size (*ibid*.).

An important part of this research report is its focus on the practices of officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. While case studies have been criticised for their lack of rigour and scientific grounding, they present as an ideal approach that grounds the research in a specific context in order to highlight and illuminate the narrative and unique lessons that emerge in that case (Hays, 2004 and Yin, 1994). Metsimaholo Local Municipality represents the local government of Sasolburg amongst various towns in the Northern Free State. This research was conducted in the town of Sasolburg which was chosen given that it was the host to one of four pilot waste picker integration projects in South Africa.

A key aspect to the research report is the contribution to the CSIR–DEA-DST project that researches waste picker integration in the South African context to develop guidelines for waste picker integration into municipal solid waste management

systems. The programme contributes to the development of evidence-based guidelines on waste picker integration forming part of the implementation of the NWMS (DEA, 2011a). This research report is one of three studies conducted in Sasolburg where, in addition, resident and waste picker perspectives were studied. An important part of framing the research report included the investigation of officials' practices, which was shaped through seminar sessions from the Practices of the State in Urban Governance (PSUG) programme. PSUG is a programme in the Centre for Urbanism and Built Environment Studies (CUBES) that focuses on research on politics as it relates to officials' practices amongst other themes.

Given that the broader CSIR-DEA-DST project explores both Johannesburg and Sasolburg, then furthermore Residents, waste pickers and the state within Sasolburg, the case study approach is ideal in concentrating the study to the local municipality. Through the case study, I illuminated questions around the challenges that the Metsimaholo Municipality of Sasolburg faced and how these affected the decisions that have been made over the years, thus highlighting the effects that these have had on integration.

The data collected in Sasolburg may not be used to generalise the approach of integration in South Africa, but this specific case does highlight a new approach for municipalities to learn from (Yin, 1994). The adoption of the Vaalpark pilot project makes this case unique and necessary to study. The section to follow expands on the framing of the research report in relation to other research projects that were conducted in Sasolburg.

3.2. Collaborations and Support

An important part of the research project that shaped the process of data collection and analysis was the support of fellow research students who form part of the broader DST-DEA-CSRI- research project. I was not alone in my ventures to Sasolburg. Two students, Zandile Ntuli and Lethabo Pholoto (2018), were also conducting their dissertations alongside me in the area with a focus on waste pickers and residents respectively. Our trips to Sasolburg were coordinated and synchronised. These two students had background on waste pickers, having previously done research in Johannesburg on similar projects. Their insights on waste pickers were essential in helping me develop a better picture of what waste pickers in a different context would look like. Furthermore, developing a narrative of the common challenges that

face waste pickers in order to discern what made Sasolburg's case of waste picker integration an interesting approach to dealing with institutional challenges.

During our trips, I was able to develop a counter perspective disassociated from that of the state. I would accompany them to the Vaalpark Recycling Centre where I would listen in on interviews and conversations with waste pickers and their experiences. I would get insights on waste pickers' perspectives and opinions on the municipality. This was very essential in the early stages of fieldwork because I was able to observe a different side to the narratives experienced and portrayed by municipal officials. This helped reduce the potential of bias towards the municipal officials. It also served as a ground for me to challenge the actions of the municipality regarding their practices. Our talks at the end of the working day in Sasolburg were quite essential as they also served as a space to test my ideas, to refine and develop them. They were helpful in providing ideas on how to overcome challenges regarding my engagements with the officials; it was a supportive and collaborative process, which I benefited from.

This collaborated effort not only meant that I was able to draw on perspectives from different disciplines. It also afforded me the opportunity to develop relationships with state officials in different environments, thus opening up spaces for conversations that would, otherwise, be censored in formal settings. During one of my site visits, I was able to meet a state official from the district municipality who was actively invested in integrating waste pickers. In this same setting, I also got to hear about the way the waste pickers felt about their integration into the municipal solid waste management system. As such, the volatility of politics looms over the waste pickers at all times. Even when the state is helping.

The experience of conducting research in Sasolburg was furthermore supported and contrasted to that of the Johannesburg context where a fellow Master of Urban Studies candidate, Nomathemba Dladla, was conducting the same project in the Johannesburg context – the main distinction between our projects being the different locations. Dladla's (2018) research report focused on the practices of municipal officials in Johannesburg's Pikitup. Engagements with my fellow classmate were as important as the engagements with the two students from the different disciplines. Again, I was able to develop my ideas and findings through engagements with her where notes from the two contexts were compared and interrogated. In this space

the process of engagement was livelier. Largely given the similarity in the project yet bonded by the challenges of engaging municipalities and the bureaucratic challenges it poses.

3.3. Data Collection

The main tools of data collection that I adopted include interviews and observation. The main source of data collection that I adopted has been one-on-one interviews. Interviews are recognised as one of the most efficient methods of data collection in qualitative research because through this method the researcher can sit down with the participant and draw on their in-depth perspectives, ideas, arguments and stories (McNamara, 1999). An important aspect of understanding municipal officials' practices includes dissecting the reasoning behind their decision-making processes. Interviews have the advantage of providing detailed responses, accurate screening, as well as capturing the interviewees emotions and non-verbal cues (DeFranzo, 2014). They also afford both the researcher and interviewee the opportunity to sit down and discuss matters within parameters that both candidates are comfortable. Interviews are usually conducted in the interviewees' environment thus allowing them to be comfortable (*Ibid*.). It is for these reasons that this approach was ideal for this particular study.

Given the qualitative nature of the study, I limited my sample size to 7 key interviews. While the interview method is ideal in obtaining in-depth data, it is also a time-consuming method because data has to be transcribed following the interview (DeFranzo, 2014). A small sample size is thus ideal to better analyse and focus data in extracting the important experiences that interviewees present. I conducted 7 formal interviews within Sasolburg, of which 4 were from officials in the Office of the Director of Social Services (Health and Cleansing) in the Waste Management Department to get in-depth feedback on the practices of the municipality. The remaining 3 were from an official in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, a Sasol Representative and a South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) representative. In addition, I conducted 4 informal interviews with waste pickers where I had short conversations during a period where I shadowed a municipal official. This form of interviews was essential in attaining the perspectives of waste pickers; they were not the focus of this report, but their insights were relevant in reducing the potential of biased perspectives from officials.

A weakness of the interview process is that it can be quite lengthy (DeFranzo, 2014) and subjective to interviewees, but can be supported by reference to publishing on past events either through the media or through recorded notes of meetings. The interview process holds merit as it one of the tools for data collection that allows the researcher to draw on the experiences of the interviewee as reflections on their decision-making (Seidman, 2013). Through the data collection process, I drew on publications held within the waste management department to learn about the history of practices and decision making within the WMD.

At the beginning of the fieldwork process I had the intention of shadowing officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality in order to better understand how they engage with each other, with other officials in both the local and district municipality as well as with waste pickers in Sasolburg. Shadowing is an observation-based data collection method where researchers draw data from observing participants in their work environments; through this method they make observations that are informed by the narratives told to them as participants conduct their daily tasks (McDonald and Simpson, 2014). It is beneficial as a data tool inspired by ethnographic approaches. Given that the premise of this study was to understand the practices of local municipal officials, shadowing would have opened the opportunity to engage with municipal officials in their work environment as they conducted their day-to-day activities, thus drawing more of their practices, which would typically be missed in the context of formal sit-down interviews.

I was unable to shadow a key official (manager) following multiple failed attempts to meet given that the official was busy and unfortunately unavailable to be shadowed in his work environment. Some of his responsibilities during the period of fieldwork included attending workshops and meetings out of the office that made shadowing impossible. Although I was unable to shadow officials, I used observation methods during various visits to Sasolburg and the municipal offices in order to learn about the experiences of officials, particularly junior officials.

The second tool I used for data collection is participant observation, which is an ethnographic tool (Crossman, 2017). This approach supports the interview process, which could become subjective to the interviewees position and experiences. As an observer, I developed a nuanced understanding of the dynamics of the waste management department and some external pressures that it faces.

As shown under section 3.2 a collaborative approach was drawn on during fieldwork and data collection. This opened the opportunity to observe the work done by waste pickers.

I thus attended one community meeting that the municipality held with waste picker cooperatives and Sasol (the company that currently plays an active role in providing support to cooperatives). Only one meeting was held during the research period in 2017 on the 9th of March 2017 at the Zamdela Community Centre. I was also able to attend one District Waste Management meeting in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality (FDDM). This meeting is held on a quarterly basis where all topics relating to waste management are discussed with all four local municipalities in the FDDM. To ensure that the observation process is fruitful, I adopted a combination of descriptive and focused observation (Kawulich, 2005). The use of descriptive observation methods will allow for some objectivity, but it is also important that a focused perspective is adopted to better understand the municipal officials' perspectives (*Ibid*.).

I conducted approximately 21 days of fieldwork in Sasolburg, during which I shadowed one municipal official for a week and observed the officials in the waste management department. During this week I had two visits to the Sasolburg landfill site, once to hold an informal interview with waste pickers and a second time to see changes made by an official to the landfill site operations. I was also given the opportunity to meet with a non-waste picker in Sasolburg who had started a waste picker cooperative and was seeking government's support to launch her cooperative in Deneysville, which is a town under the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. I was also driven around Sasolburg and Zamdela for an approximate total of 5 hours to observe waste collection and illegal dumping problem sites, which are a huge challenge for the WMD. The section to follow discusses the rationale behind participant selection.

3.3.1. Participant Selection

The choice of participants was determined by the structure of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality and key stakeholders that I had observed to be actively involved in the integration of the waste pickers. My initial focus was solely on the Metsimaholo Local Municipality's officials. After visits and enquiries into the structures and institutions involved in facilitating the integration of waste pickers at the Vaalpark Recycling Centre, it became necessary to expand the pool of participants to include

representatives from the private sector, and other organs of the state (this being the district municipality).

The choice to select different participants was furthermore motivated by the realisation that a municipal official from the district municipality was also involved and invested in the integration of waste pickers. This also presented the opportunity to have a different perspective to strengthen the validity of ideas expressed by officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality by comparing them to the ideas expressed by the other structure that were as actively involved in the process of integration in this community.

The rationale behind choosing different types of participants was to reduce bias by interviewing participants outside of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. The table below summarises the different types of participants:

Participant type	Participant role
Senior officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality	Are responsible for waste picker integration as municipal stakeholders. Their official role as custodians of waste call them to be involved in supporting waste pickers as they are involved in the overall waste picker integration process.
Senior official in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality	The district municipality played a key role in the early stages of the development of the pilot project. They remain a key support system for waste pickers and support the local municipality in brokering relationships with waste pickers.
Junior officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality	Junior officials, particularly supervisors, engage with waste pickers on a daily basis and thus have a clearer understanding of the day-to-day challenges that are faced by municipal workers and that affect municipal work.
Waste pickers	As a secondary subject in this research report, their perspective is important in order to reduce bias, as well as defend and critique the practices of municipal officials.

3.3.2. Ethical concerns

Several ethical considerations were taken into account, which included informing respondents about the purpose of my research, the publication of the final product and their confidentiality as well as the information they entrusted me with. A major ethical consideration included ensuring that I informed my respondents about their involvement in the study. It was important to inform my respondents that my research is for academic purposes, but it would contribute towards the DST-DEA-CSIR programme: Lessons from Waste Picker Integration Initiatives – Development of Evidence Based Guidelines to Integrate Waste Pickers into South African Municipal Waste Management Systems.

To address confidentiality, I ensured that interviewees were made aware, through a participation information sheet (Sarantakos, 2016), that the information disclosed during one-on-one interviews will be published on the Wits library system which is accessible to the general public. Furthermore, Allmark *et al*. (2009) suggest not being voyeuristic during interviews. I thus did not probe when respondents stated that they did not feel comfortable answering a question.

Although community meetings are generally open to the public, it was important to ensure that the community was made aware that I was conducting research based on the interaction between the municipality and informal waste pickers. Kawulich (2005) suggests that researchers take field notes explicitly and openly to emphasise their presence as a researcher. Thus, when it came to observing during community meetings, the officials I was shadowing always introduced me to others members prior to the start of the meeting. I was thus able to freely observe and take notes having given members of the meeting a brief background on my research report.

3.3.3. Challenges

The experience of interviewing municipal officials was both challenging and insightful. With the support of Dr Samson, I was able to gain access to municipal officials who have been involved in the development of the Vaalpark pilot project. Dr Samson's work in Sasolburg has led to the development of a network of waste pickers, officials and private sector members that were ready to offer support and participate in the study. My access to the Metsimaholo Municipality had been obtained through the DST-DEA-CSIR programme "Lessons from Waste Picker Integration Initiatives – Development of Evidence Based Guidelines to Integrate Waste Pickers into South African Municipal Waste Management Systems. Following the research report, a

report on the findings will be produced as a contribution to the above-mentioned programme. As such, officials were briefed on these details, as the research will be used for non-academic purposes. Because the participants were familiar with Dr Melanie Samson and the work she had done years prior, interviewees were always keen on providing information and understanding the relevance of the research report to the greater objective of developing waste picker integration guidelines.

Despite having gained access to participants within the municipality, challenges emerged regarding the shadowing of officials. Participants were willing to offer one-one-one interviews but it was challenging shadowing the main official that facilitates the integration of waste pickers in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. While conducting the research it became apparent that I would need to shadow local state officials in order to develop a better understanding of their practices. Given the conditions in the municipality such as the municipality being palced under administration and the limited amount of time I had, I was unable to shadow as many municipal officials as I had planned on shadowing. As the findings will highlight, recycling does not feature prominently in the department and as such, there are no daily interactions with waste pickers to be observed.

Another challenge that I faced in conducting fieldwork was gaining access to the relevant stakeholders outside the Waste Management Department despite having had formal consent from the municipality to conduct research. The limited time spent with officials and waste pickers helped in refining the information provided in the interviews, with participants having the opportunity to show me issues observed where possible.

3.4. Limitations and Scope (Delimitations) of the Study

Framing this research report included defining limitations and a scope for the project. These elements, as listed below, helped define a structure for the project in line with the objectives set out and the problem statement under investigation.

One of the main limitations of the research report came from the limited number of officials within the waste management department actively involved in waste picker integration. As such, the pool of participants within the department was limited to only one senior official.

In order to structure the report, a few delimitations were placed on the areas of study. The main interest regarding the initial study was a focus on the relationship between municipal officials in the Metsimaholo local Municipality and waste pickers in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. Given that the relationship between officials and waste pickers extends beyond the pilot project, I included the landfill site and Sasolburg streets in the study to highlight the various relationships at play. I furthermore extended the municipal context to include the Fezile Dabi District Municipality because they have a close working relationship with the waste pickers and the local municipality, thus making their insight relevant in drawing conclusions about the integration of waste pickers in Sasolburg.

3.5. Conclusion

This qualitative approach to a case study has been the basis of understanding waste picker integration in Sasolburg. The use of interviews has been valuable in better understanding the practices of local state officials. The next chapter expands on the methodology with a contextual background of the Metsimaholo local municipality, waste picking in Sasolburg and the legislative and policy guidelines that shape solid waste management in South Africa and Sasolburg today.

CHAPTER 4

4. Legislation on Waste Picking and the Metsimaholo Context

This chapter provides background on the legislative history of Waste management with regards to integration and informal waste picking at a national and provincial level, and provides context on Sasolburg and the Metsimaholo Local Municipality as a case study for integration of informal waste pickers. I begin with the legislative approaches that have been used in South Africa at the national and provincial levels. The second section expands these approaches and challenges to the case study that is the focus of this research report; the Metsimaholo Local municipality. The third section looks at the programmes that have been adopted in the municipality, as well as a history of waste management in Metsimaholo Local Municipality.

4.1. National Laws and Policies on Waste Picking in South Africa

The National Waste Management Strategy of 2011 and the National Environmental Management: Waste Act of 2008 are South Africa's main policy and legislative documents regarding waste management at the national level. This section breaks down these documents to highlight the available legislative guidance for solid waste management as it pertains to municipal engagements with waste pickers and recycling activities in local government.

4.1.1. The Constitution

The South African constitution, which is the supreme law of the country (Section 2), states that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or wellbeing (Section 24(a)). Under this section, spheres of government are encouraged to practice measures that prevent harmful practices such as pollution (section 24(a)(i)). The constitution also lists the objectives of local government which include providing services to communities in a sustainable manner (Section 152(1)(b)) and encouraging the involvement of communities and community-based organisations in the matters of local government (section 152(1)(e)). As such, any other acts and policy documents in the country should be in line with achieving this goal of a healthy environment.

When it comes to the functions of different spheres of government, section 155(6)(a) states that provincial government must provide for the monitoring and support of local government in the province and (b) promote the development of local government capacity to enable municipalities to perform their functions and manage their own affairs. Section 155 (7) further on states that the national government, subject to subsection 44, and the provincial governments have the legislative and executive

authority to see to the effective performance by municipalities of their functions in respect of matters listed in Schedules 4 and 5, by regulating the exercise by municipalities of their executive authority referred to in section 156(1). Schedule 4 (Functional Areas of Concurrent National and Provincial Legislative Competence) Part A lists the environment as a provincial and national responsibility.

When it comes to the powers and functions of municipalities, section 156 (1) states that municipalities have the executive authority in respect of and have the right to administer (a) the local government matters listed in Part B of schedule 4 and part B of schedule 5, and (2) any other matter assigned to it by the national and provincial legislation. Schedule 5 (Functional Areas of Exclusive Provincial Legislative Competence) part B lists cleansing, refuse removal, refuse dumps, and solid waste disposal as local government responsibilities.

The above constitutional functions clearly delineate the role played by local government as compared to national and provincial government when it comes to environmental responsibilities by government. These responsibilities underpin the practices of officials as well as legislation that are developed. In line with the above and the National Environmental Management: Waste Act of 2008, and the National Waste Management Strategy (DEA, 2011) state that efficient and effective service delivery should be the goal of all municipalities. The NWMS states that "waste services are the constitutional responsibility of local government, and municipalities are the primary interface between the public and government around waste management (DEA, 2011a: 24).

4.1.2. The Waste Act

The waste act was passed in 2008 as a response to the lack of legislation that governs waste management in South Africa (DEA, 2011b; DEA, 2008). A key focus of the Waste Act is the Waste hierarchy, which sets priorities for waste management in the country (DEA, 2008). The hierarchy gives priority to waste avoidance and reduction, leaving waste disposal as a last resort. The Act names the NWMS as an instrument that should be adopted by government to achieve its goals (DEA, 2008). As an extension of the Act, this strategic guideline needs to include guidelines for protecting, recycling and recovering waste (Section 1(a)). From this, the NWMS (20011) has 8 goals with targets for 2016. These are further explained in the section to follow. Another element that the

Waste Act discusses is the role played by the private sector in waste creation. It lists extended producer responsibility as one of the solutions to support waste reduction.

Extended Producer responsibility (EPR) is a policy concept that focuses on shifting the responsibility of managing waste material to users and producers (Nahman, 2009). The concept's objective is to shift the focus of waste management from disposal as a first resort to the 3 Rs (re-use, reduction and recycling)as the primary option adopted (Godfrey et al, 2017; Nahman, 2009). At the national level, this has been identified as one of the most effective means of improving waste management in line with the above mentioned policy and laws.

At the moment EPR has been encouraged through Industry Waste Management Plans as a voluntary process. The policy on the importance and implementation of EPR has strongly come through in documents such as the Waste Act of 2008, but the country still struggles in this regard given that landfilling is more ideal as the cheapest immediate solution to handling waste (DEA, 2011b; Nahman, 2009; Wilson, 1996). A main challenge of implementing EPR, and many other strategies for solid waste management is that communities do not know the benefits of proper solid waste management.

Lastly, the Waste Act makes it mandatory for all municipalities to have a Waste Management Officer in order to coordinate waste strategies in government. The Waste Act provides a holistic legislative document to guide waste management practices across all spheres of government with responsibilities for each in order to provide citizens with a healthy environment. The section to follow delves into the NWMS of 2011 and how it draws on the Waste Act as a supporting policy document.

4.1.3. The National Waste Management Strategy

In this section I discuss the role of the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) which is a supporting document to the Waste Act. NEM:WA (2008) is the first South African legislative document that provides an holistic approach to waste management (DEA, 2011b). Subsequent policy documents have begun to promote good practice in waste management. An example is the NWMS of 2011 which listed targeted goals for 2016 through guidance from the NEM:WA of 2008 (DEA, 2011b). A clear shift away from landfilling has been the dominant discussion in the legislative and policy documents presented by the South African government (Godfrey and

Oelofse, 2017). Landfilling is still a practice that the country is struggling with (*ibid*.) but goals such as those under the NWMS encourage alternatives to landfilling.

The NWMS was published in 2011 as a complementary policy document to the 2008 Waste Act. As a legislative requirement (DEA, 2011a), this policy document provides strategies for municipalities to achieve goals set out in the Waste Act. It addresses the main waste management challenges in the country such as pressure from increased waste quantities, the backlog and inequalities in waste service delivery, the poor quality of waste information systems, and the promotion of a sustainable waste hierarchy amongst other challenges. Furthermore, the strategy stands as the first document of the above mentioned to directly mention waste pickers as a key stakeholder in the achievement of the waste management goals for the country (Refer to quotes below).

> *"The objectives of this goal are to stimulate job creation and broaden participation by SMEs and marginalised communities in the waste sector. These objectives include creating decent work through formalising the role of* ***waste pickers*** *and expanding the role of SMEs and cooperatives in waste management. New jobs will also be created by investing in recycling infrastructure to facilitate re-use, recycling and recovery" DEA, 2011a: 27.*
>
> *"Goal 1 sets out the measures to increase the rate of recycling in South Africa. This will be achieved by the creation of a country-wide infrastructure that can significantly expand jobs in recycling. DEA will provide guidance to municipalities and industry on measures to improve the working conditions of* ***waste-pickers****, establishment of Material Recovery Facilities and expand the role of SMEs and cooperatives in domestic waste collection services" DEA, 2011a: 27.*

The NWMS (DEA, 2011a) lists 8 goals for an improved environment and improved service delivery. Some of the goals include promoting waste minimisation and the three Rs (reuse, recover, and recycle), achieving "efficient and effective delivery of waste services" (DEA, 2011a: 24), sustainability in the green economy which also includes job creation in the waste sector and making room for 2 600 SMEs and cooperatives in service delivery and recycling (DEA, 2011a: 06). They also include spreading awareness to citizens about the impacts of waste, with 80% of municipalities promoting awareness and achieving integrated waste management planning by

2016 (DEA, 2011a: 07). Under this goal all municipalities are expected to have Integrated Waste Management Plans (IWMP) which are aligned with their Integrated Development Plans (IDP).

Integrated Waste Management Plans, which have been made a requirement through the NEM:WA 2008 (DEA, 2011b), are plans that should be developed by local municipalities with the support of district municipalities (MLM, 2014). These plans list out municipal goals and strategies regarding the management of waste over a 5 year period. They are subject to reviews and approval by council. Baloyi in DEA (2011b: 25) states that IWMPs are an essential plan given that services are rendered at the municipal level of government.

Furthermore this goal requires municipalities to report their waste quantities to the South African Waste Information System (WIS). The WIS is a centre developed by the DEA for the capture of waste information in the country (SAWIC, 2019). The centre documents all data from municipalities and industry that is collected, disposed, and recycled. The South African WIS (2019) produces statistics and analysis of data in the waste sector that is also made available to the general public through their website.

The main goal of the NWMS (DEA, 2011a) related the integration of waste pickers is the third goal. Goal 3 which is to "grow the contribution of the waste sector to the green economy" (DEA, 2011a: 16), an extension of the second goal (ensure the effective and efficient delivery of waste services), focuses on how the green economy can be grown given the social and economic benefits that could ensue. The objective of the goal is to encourage and stimulate job creation. This objective aims to incorporate SMEs and cooperatives as a means of formalising informal waste pickers and the role they play in improving waste management and domestic waste service delivery (DEA, 2011a: 27; RSA, 2008). The strategy encouraged by this goal is for municipalities to adopt "labour intensive, community-based collection methods" especially in locations where municipalities have failed or struggle to offer conventional service delivery (DEA, 2011a: 24). While the act is not detailed as to how this strategy is to be achieved it refers readers to the DEA which has been tasked to offer guidance to both municipalities and industry as per the Waste Act of 2008 (RSA, 2008).

The NWMS (DEA, 2011a) is a detailed policy instrument that touches on the issues that face many municipalities in the country with regards to waste issues and the waste

pickers, still it lacks further details on dealing with the current issues that municipalities face on landfill sites, particularly in local municipalities as compared to metropolitan municipalities; rather, it looks towards solutions to integration through partnerships with waste pickers once they are formalised. Allan, a district waste management officer stated that South African legislation is clear, but the main challenge facing local municipal officials is that policies and legislation are typically written for larger municipalities (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December 2018).

The section to follow focuses on the Separation at Source programme adopted in Sasolburg as well as the historical context of how the programme was established.

4.2. Local Policies on Waste Picking in South Africa

The national policies that national government has produced to improve solid waste management in the country have focused on the improvement of service delivery and more importantly the need to diversify the service by encouraging waste minimisation and shifts towards more sustainable waste management options (RSA, 2008; DEA, 2011a). A key point that the policies and laws inform relevant stakeholders of is that sustainable waste management can only be achieved through an integrated waste management system. As such, the national documents refer to functions that local governments have to adhere to (*Ibid*.). The national government has made provisions for Waste Management Officers as the key to integrating the waste system and Integrated Waste Management Plans as documents to highlight areas of focus and performance (*ibid*.; DEA, 2011b). This section looks into the local documents available to local governments regarding integrated waste management.

Local policies on solid waste management in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality include key documents such as the Integrated Waste Management Plan, Guidelines for the Designation of Waste Management Officers and the Integrated Development Plan. These documents highlight the key challenges that face the municipality and suggest approaches to solving the challenges encountered. None of the documents discussed below focus on how government should integrate waste pickers but do give some reference to ways in which waste pickers can be involved in the integration processes.

4.2.1. Waste Management Officers

A key guideline available to all local municipalities as well as all spheres of government is the Guideline for the Designation of Waste Management Officers. This guiding document was developed by DEA (2008) as a tool for all municipalities to adopt in line with the National Environmental Management: Waste Act (NEM:WA) of 2008. Waste Management officers are critical in helping fulfil tasks, goals and guidelines listed under the NEM:WA 2008 (DEA, 2011b). As such, the Department of Environmental affairs produced this guideline as a means of facilitating coordinated governance through all three spheres of government (DEA, 2008).

The responsibilities that have been vested in the waste management officers at the local level include the development of policy and by-laws, financial planning and management, integrated waste management planning and reporting as well as waste services and infrastructure development. Waste management officers are expected to have enough knowledge of waste management, they need to be in middle to senior management and furthermore municipalities can only have one waste management officer as a means of sustaining accountability.

The guideline notes that the "weaknesses of most legislative frameworks is due to a lack of institutional capacity at government level to implement and reinforce legislation" (DEA, 2008: 3). The history of waste management legislation shows that there has been a gap in the implementation of regulation as well as the regulations and legislation on waste management. The document thus suggests that having waste management officers at all levels of government is necessary to facilitate coordination.

The research done by government has shown that the areas that need focus with regards to implementing the NWMS of 2011 and NEM:WA 2008 and more specifically with improving service delivery is the lack of capacity as observed in local government (DEA, 2008) . The document [Guideline for the Designations of Waste Management Officers (WMOs) as provided for in Section 10 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008)] furthermore highlights that improving service delivery towards sustainable practices is primarily weak in municipalities. The document (*ibid*.) says "the primary obstacle to a sustainable waste management service at the municipal level is the lack of 'in-house' capacity to run the service in an efficient and effective manner as well as the lack of knowledge to move the service from an 'end of pipe' scenario to a waste

minimisation approach" (DEA, 2008: 4). Thus, this function seeks to address capacity challenges.

A key task that waste management officers are tasked with regarding planning and reporting is ensuring that IWMPs are implemented and developed in accordance with the Municipal Systems Act and the NEM:WA (RSA, 2008). IWMPs need to encourage the participation of the private sector, SMEs and cooperatives alongside the basic functions of service delivery stipulated in section 46 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. Like other documents, the guideline does not expand on how waste pickers can be included and integrated apart from their inclusion through contracting. Although having one WMO can help achieve accountability the guideline lack in showing how waste management officers can attain support for such positions. As the findings will show, the task of integration needs the entire waste management department to be involved in order to better communication between officials and waste pickers.

4.2.2. Integrated Development Plan

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a locally developed plan that local municipalities adopt to facilitate integrated management and coordination of municipal plans while encouraging accountability by highlighting key areas of performance in municipalities (MLM, 2016). IDPs are essential in helping municipalities track their progress and development in 5 year intervals. The Metsimaholo Local Municipality IDP was developed for the years 2013 to 2017. The version of the document used during this research is the 2016/17 revised IDP.

During this time the IDP of 2016/17 identified Waste Management as one of its priority areas. The key performance area 11 has 6 points of focus including ensuring regular refuse removal, setting targets for the review and approval of the IWMP by council, setting a target for the development and implementation of the IWMP information system and the closure of the current landfill site as well as the establishment of a new landfill site. Through engagements with officials as well as a meeting with all local municipalities and the district municipality, I established that all targets were underway. Although council approved the IWMP, implementation was proving difficult given a lack of financial support, and the old landfill site was still in use pending the establishment of a new landfill site (Potso 2017, District Waste Management Forum Meeting, 24 August).

The IDP noted that the municipality had distributed recycling bins to all wards and involved recycling organisations as part of the their awareness campaigns (MLM, 2016). Thus, while the municipality did not run awareness campaigns, they supported the waste pickers in raising awareness of the recycling centre and the overall recycling initiative. A key point that the manager of the waste management department expressed was that officials are not always in a position to run awareness campaigns so they certainly depend of community members to volunteer and help raise awareness for initiatives that positively impact the town (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October 2017). In my visits to Sasolburg I observed that bins had been distributed in Vaalpark and Zamdela; although a Separation@Source programme was running in Vaalpark, there were not active efforts to continue raising awareness in the Zamdela Township at this time, as had been done in Vaalpark (refer to image below).

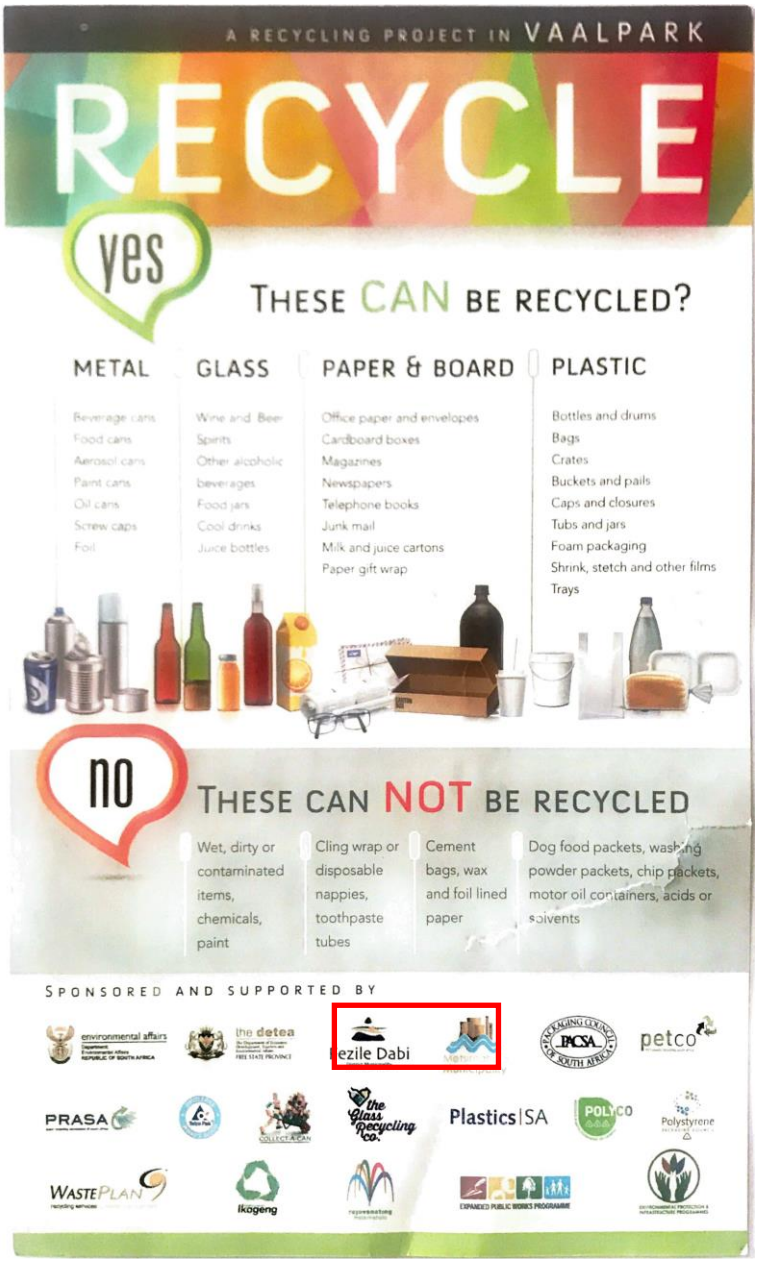


Figure 1: Sponsors and Supporters of the Vaalpark Recycling Centre on a Community Awareness Pamphlet (In red: FDDM and MLM)

4.2.3. Integrated Waste Management Plan

In 2008 a status quo and needs analysis study was produced by KV3 while drafting the IWMP (KV3 Engineers, 2008). The analysis observed that the municipality needed a comprehensive waste management strategy. It noted that the municipality had a shortage of personnel that was furthermore ineffective in addressing waste management challenges in the municipality; it also noted that the landfill site needed to be authorised in terms of section 20(1) of the Environmental Conservation Act (Act 50 of 2003). The document highlighted the need for more extensive waste minimisation and recycling strategies as well as the establishment of community

awareness programmes and a communication channel with all waste generators in the municipality. From this analysis study, an Integrated Waste Management Plan was developed by Ntiyiso Consulting with the help of the Fezile Dabi District Municipality.

The Integrated Waste Management Plan highlights the need for integrated waste management planning which includes the need to achieve the nationally set legislative goals as listed in the previous section. One of these main goals is the reduction of waste that is disposed in the landfill site. As noted in the document the status quo of waste management in 2013 is that the municipality is faced with poor waste management strategies. An example is that the municipality still receives large volumes of domestic waste while the landfill site has been marked as full to capacity. The municipality is also still struggling with a landfill site that is not approved and dealing with growing levels of illegal dumping. In addition, the current landfill site is undergoing the process of being closed down and rehabilitated while a new one is established. A letter from the municipal manager, as presented as evidence in the waste management department KPIs folder, shows that potential sites for a new landfill site have been identified.

4.2.4. Concluding Remarks

The above-mentioned plans come together to help develop a sustainable solid waste management system in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. As the findings will show, these documents have proven to be difficult to implement but do serve as documents that offer some guidance towards the practices of the local officials and mainly the designated waste management officers. The structure of all these documents and their limited reference to the integration of waste pickers echoes the similar problems in national documents. Yet, while national documents fail to expand on the notion of integration as it pertains to the waste pickers, the local level of government is where the details can be expanded on. These policies therefore show a lack of prioritisation of waste pickers as service providers within their communities as compared to the acknowledgement of the need to support waste pickers. The section that follows provides an outline of the Metsimaholo local municipality and Sasolburg; it furthermore elaborates on the history of waste picking in Sasolburg as a difficult process that rose to success.

4.3. History of Waste Picking in Sasolburg

A key part of Sasolburg's waste picking history is that of a determined waste picking community that fought hard to gain municipal recognition for years. As Samson

(2009:17) noted, the formalisation of waste pickers in this community reflected exclusion and marginalisation, but what has been observed over the years (2008 to 2017) is a shift in the perceptions and treatment of waste pickers in Sasolburg. This section focuses on the context of the Metsimaholo Local municipality and the history of waste picking in this community. It discusses the key stakeholders involved in waste picker integration and the efforts that both municipal officials and waste pickers went through to begin the formalisation of waste picking in Sasolburg. The section thus begins with background on the Metsimaholo local municipality and key demographic information, followed by a chronological history of waste picker engagements since 2006.

4.3.1. History of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality and Sasolburg

The Metsimaholo Local Municipality is located in the northern most part of the Free State Province (refer to figure 2). It falls under the Fezile Dabi District Municipality as one of four local municipalities in the region (Sasolburg-Info.co.za, 2019). Sasolburg is the main urban area that centres both municipalities, given its classification as a sub-category B2 municipality; but this local municipality extends to Oranjesville and Deneysville as other main urban centres (Municiaplities.co.za, 2012-2018). The Town of Sasolburg was formally established in 1954 as an industrial town, the main industry being SASOL (South Africa Synthetic Oil Liquid) (Sasolburg-Info.co.za, 2019). The town only began to develop in May 1957 following the town's acquisition of official municipal status (Municiaplities.co.za, 2012-2018).

Metsimaholo was only established as a local municipality in 2000 following the amalgamation of the then Sasolburg, Deneysville and Orangeville Transitional Local Councils (Municiaplities.co.za, 2012-2018). Metsimaholo Local Municipality has a population of approximately 163 600 people (StatsSA, 2016). The main town of Sasolburg has a population of approximately 34 000 people and its neighbouring township, Zamdela, has a population 90 000 people. The municipality has a recorded growth rate of 2.51 based on the 2011 census by StatsSA (2016). As of 2016, 47 000 households are serviced and of these 1242 households have access to free basic services. Weekly refuse removal is at 78.3% (2016) as compared to 78.3% in 2011.

The Landfill site is located approximately 3 kilometres from the Sasolburg CBD. It was established in 1951 prior to the formal establishment of the urban centre and caters to Sasolburg itself, industry as well as Zamdela (Samson, 2009). The presence of waste pickers on this landfill site dates back to the 1980s (*ibid*.). The municipality still depends

on a concept permit that was issued in June 1990 which has long since expired (MLM, 2014; Samson 2009), as it awaits the establishment of a new landfill site given that the old one is full to capacity (MLM, 2016).



Figure 2: Contextual Map of Sasolburg

The main department under study in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality is the waste management department (WMD). The WMD falls under Health and Cleansing. Key respondent for the study included the manager of the WMD who also serves as the waste management officer for the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. Junior officials from the department included the clerk, supervisors, ground workers and the gate controller. The stakeholders map below shows the relationships of officials, municipal departments, waste pickers and the private sector. The WMD is enclosed in a green box.

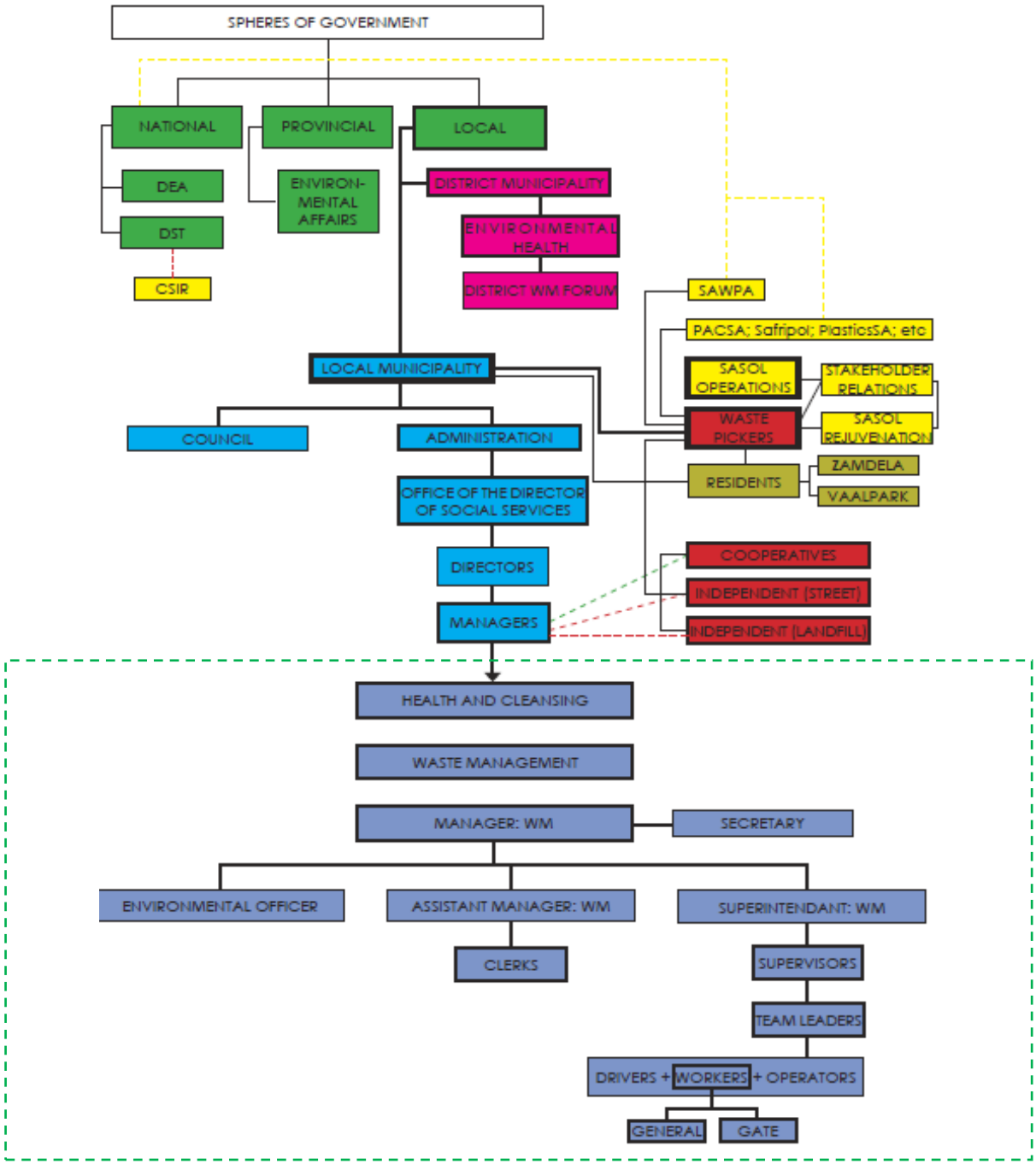


Figure 3: Stakeholders Map of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality)

4.3.2. History of informal waste picking in Sasolburg

The history of municipal - waste picker engagements in Sasolburg dates back to 2006 when waste pickers initially sought out recognition from their local municipality as formal waste service providers (Wiego, 2010). Informal waste pickers have been working on the landfill site for approximately 40 years (Samson, 2009). Waste pickers who were based on the Sasolburg Landfill site organised themselves into two closed corporations, that later became cooperatives, with the hope that the local municipality would contract them as a recycling company to manage the landfill site

(Wiego, 2010; Samson, 2009). They chose this model given their realisation that they could potentially earn more money by standing together in order to avoid being taken advantage of by middle men when selling their material (GroundWork, 2014). They failed to get a contract and the municipality further on fenced off the landfill site in efforts to ban the waste pickers from the landfill site and permanently keep them out (Samson, 2009). The first challenge that the closed corporations faced was losing the bid to manage the landfill site to an established company. This situation was challenging for the waste pickers given that this new company coerced the waste pickers into selling their material to them at ridiculously low prices that put the waste pickers in a worse position than they had been selling to the middleman (GroundWork, 2014; Wiego, 2010; Samson, 2009).

The cooperative continued to struggle because of their lack of power over the landfill site. They essentially still lacked recognition of the local municipality of their rights or presence on the landfill site (Wiego, 2010; Samson, 2009). The working conditions on the landfill site were very hostile given this lack of recognition. One event that transpired was killing a waste picker with a front-end loader that was driven by a local state official, the driver (Wiego, 2010). The issue of contracting out management services on the landfill to tenders and private companies continued to be a source of grievance for the waste pickers in Sasolburg, even in 2013 (*ibid*.). The municipality furthermore attempted to remove waste pickers who were living on the landfill site permanently (Samson, 2009) although waste pickers still live on the landfill site a decade since the municipality attempted to remove them.

4.3.3. Industry Involvement in Waste Picker Integration

This section presents the history of the development of the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. In 2014, following a trip to Brazil where SAWPA and industry representatives got to learn about being integrated into Solid Waste Management systems, Sasolburg was chosen as one of the first towns in the country that a pilot project was to be started (Vryenhoek, 2016; groundWork, 2017). Ikageng Ditamating, currently a registered cooperative, agreed to a Separation@Source pilot project with PACSA and PETCO (WIEGO AND SAMSON references). The project that came to be known as the Vaalpark Recycling Centre was launched in November 2018. The recycling centre began on municipal supplied property, which was formerly a garden refuse site. The centre received a lot of support during its establishment from approximately 23 sponsors and supporters (Vryenhoek, 2016). Three thousand households were

provided with two bins for recyclables and non-recyclables and the project was then expanded in 2016 to include more households in other communities in Sasolburg (*ibid*.). The municipality's IWMP adds to this in its projected plan, stating plans for separation at source in the township of Zamdela (MLM, 2014). The section to follow draws on Sasol to show the current landscape of cooperatives.

4.3.4. Sasol Operations

In 2016 Sasol Operations started an Offsets Project that sought to do community work in the Sasolburg community. Sasol's inability to reduce its emission rates led to the company committing to 4 offset projects that improved the environment in Sasolburg (Sasol Operations, 2015; Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October 2017). One of the offset programmes by Sasol has been the support of waste pickers to grow their cooperatives through support in skills development regarding cooperatives and the procurement of sites for the development of waste recovery centres around Sasolburg and Zamdela. While this is only one project that has been of support to the local municipality the support offered by Sasol Operations has been both beneficial and heavy on the local municipality. Sasol's political influence is strong in impacting decision making in the municipality (Potso 2017, introductory meeting in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality, 04 July). In an interview with Kabelo, he stated that Sasol has a good relationship with the municipality, but like all relationships they have their challenges (Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October). He then added that Sasol does have greater power over the municipality which does affect decision making (Kabelo 2018, interview, 26 December; Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October).

The role played by Sasol in integrating waste pickers involves offering them support in establishing their cooperatives. Sasol has offered the waste pickers skills support pertaining to how to run cooperatives (Kabelo 2018, interview, 26 December). Sasol also used to have monthly meetings with the waste pickers to check on their progress (Kabelo 2018, interview, 26 December). Kabelo mentioned that a key part of engaging with the waste pickers is participation (Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October). He tries to ensure that the relationship between Sasol and the waste pickers is mutual in that the waste pickers do benefit from the support they are given, but it is important to keep in mind that the priority of Sasol is to roll out the offsets programme (Kabelo 2018, interview, 26 December; Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October). During meetings with the waste pickers he tries to make sure that the municipal officials from both the district and local municipality are well informed about the support offered to the

waste pickers so that there is little miscommunication (Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October).

In 2001, Sasol started a trust called Rejuvenation which then became independent in 2007 as the Rejuvenation Community Trust (Rejuvenation.org.za, 2018). The rejuvenation trust focuses on the development of skills in Sasolburg (Rejuvenation.org.za, 2018). Rejuvenation is one of the supporters of the Vaalpark Recycling Centre and has two mentors who have over the years offered skills based support to the waste pickers at the centre (Peter and Ruan 2018, interview, 03 December). The mentors offer a hands-off approach to offering guidance to the waste pickers, which they do not call mentoring (Peter and Ruan 2018, interview, 03 December). Peter and Ruan said that they mainly help the waste pickers in the cooperative with skills such as book keeping and general suggestions on how they can better get along as cooperative members or what they can do around the site to improve the recycling centre (Peter and Ruan 2018, interview, 03 December). They added that the work independently of Sasol and the Municipality.

Peter expressed that while he had no engagements with the municipal officials, had noticed that the support given to cooperatives is based on the individual investment of officials in offering waste pickers priority support. There are thus key individuals that can clearly be identified as supporting the waste pickers as opposed to entire departments. Ruan, on the other hand, expressed that a key observation he had noticed regarding the recycling project was that support for the waste pickers reduced a bit too quickly as the waste pickers had not yet established themselves and were thus not strong enough as a cooperative to manage themselves (Ruan 2018, interview, 03 December). He thus believes the waste pickers still need much more support in terms of the skills to run their cooperatives than they currently have.



Figure 4: Vaalpark Recycling Centre

4.4. Conclusion

The above context has presented a history of waste picking in Sasolburg as well as presenting the key legislation and policies that shape waste management and waste picker integration in South Africa. The case of Sasolburg is one that is unique in the South African context because it presents an example of how waste pickers can gain recognition and support from waste pickers. The process of gaining municipal support in Sasolburg is one that has been dependent on the support of various stakeholders such as PETCO, Sasol and Rejuvenation amongst many other supporters and sponsors. The image below is a reflection of the support that the municipality currently offers waste picker cooperatives in Sasolburg.

The chapters that follow seek to understand how and why the local municipality is engaging waste pickers and the challenges that have faced municipal officials. It will explore how officials in this context view integration, how they understand it and how they managed the processes. The chapters also look at how the stakeholders have come together to offer support in making this project a success. It also looks at the challenges that come from having to integrate waste pickers in different contexts, hence the observation of three different approaches to engaging different waste pickers. Lastly, the chapters explore the practice of officials to better understand what fuels the municipality's relationship with the waste pickers and different key stakeholders involved. It also looks at the challenges that the officials face



Figure 5: Waste Picker, Municipal, and Industry Representatives at International Waste Picker Exchange in 2017. In the picture: FDDM, MLM, Brazillian, Indian and South African Waste Pickers, SAWPA and GroundWork representatives (in no particular order).

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CHAPTER 5

5. Officials Practices in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality (in progress)

The focus of this chapter is on the practices of officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. This chapter begins with an exploration of the available instruments supporting integration, with a focus on their effect on officials' ability to engage waste pickers. The second section explores the official norms that dominate officials' practices in waste management. The third and last section explores the pragmatic practices that officials have adopted in the absence of directive from available instruments such as legislative and policy documents, and key performance areas for the Waste Management Department. This chapter explores these challenges in the context of the Waste Management Department in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality.

5.1. Overview of Official's Engagements with Waste Pickers

There is no official plan that regulates officials' engagements with waste pickers in Sasolburg. Officials of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality have thus developed different ways to engage with different waste picker groups in Sasolburg that are shaped by the needs of waste pickers as well as the limitations of officials based on their official norms.

Waste pickers in Sasolburg fall under three distinct groups. They can be found working independently, collecting recyclables on the streets in town and in the neighbourhoods. They can also be found working independently on the landfill site, collecting recyclables from company trucks and residents as well as the municipal truck that disposes of waste on the landfill site. Lastly, waste pickers can also be found collecting recyclables as cooperatives. In addition to being based in cooperatives, the cooperatives formed a network called the waste pickers' forum under which three waste pickers represent their cooperatives. One of the reasons for the formation of the cooperative came from the municipality expressing that while they were ready to assist waste pickers, it became impractical to have different waste pickers presenting the very same challenges at different times.

The identification of these three different waste picker groups is key in understanding the practices of municipal officials. Each different waste picker group presented different challenges for municipal officials, which in turn led to differing practices to resolve challenges. Below is a list of the key respondents to interviews conducted and

the reasons they were chosen for the study. The names of all respondents were changed to protect their identity and for the purpose of confidentiality.

My participants included Potso, the manager of the waste management department in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. Potso is the main person that waste pickers go to when they need help from the municipality and thus represents the main source of support for waste pickers within the municipality. My second participant within the waste management department was Mosa, the clerk in the Metsimaholo Waste Management Department. He is one of the officials who shows a keen interest in the activities happening in the municipality beyond his official norms. I shadowed him on every visit I made to the municipality given that he was an acting landfill supervisor. Allan is the District Waste Management Officer in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality. I identified the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, which is ever-present in providing advice to the waste pickers and brokering materials while also engaging with Metsimaholo Local Municipality to help where the Local municipality is unable. Kabelo, is the community participation liaison person for Sasol. In an effort to get a perspective from industry on the integration of waste pickers, he was the ideal person given that he has direct interactions with the waste pickers and municipality.

John and Monte, are both supervisors of general workers in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. The supervisors were chosen because they engage with waste pickers on a daily basis and thus more familiar with the challenges faced by informal waste pickers and municipal workers outside of the relationship that the municipality has with cooperative-based waste pickers. Furthermore, these officials attend various meetings with the senior officials in the waste management department where they observe waste picker engagements. The section to follow begins to unpack the findings from the research conducted in Sasolburg.

5.2. Instruments Supporting Waste Picker Integration

This section lists the available instruments that officials are using to integrate waste pickers. The instruments discussed in this section include the Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP), the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), and the key performance indicators. In this section, I explore the ways in which the instruments either engage with the topic of waste picker integration or do not mention integration.

5.2.1. The IDP as Key Document of Reference

The instrument discussed in this section is the Integrated Development Plan which is a plan that is produced by municipalities and reviewed over 5-year periods. The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a plan developed for municipalities to help guide development and key projects that council and the administration of municipalities should follow. These plans list key priority areas in which development will be focused. This section discusses the usefulness of the IDP in waste picker integration.

The IDP highlights the key projects that have to be achieved by the municipality but there are no supporting documents that expand on these targets. The IDP is a useful instrument that can be used to gage the status quo on waste picker integration. Looking at the document holistically shows that there are ways in which the municipality offers support to waste pickers. The issue is that the integration of the various services provided in order to alert waste pickers of the options they have to grow or gain some level of recognition while also gaining skills in managing themselves in the ways that the municipality is headed regarding waste picker integration. A key observation of the document is that it lists only one recycling project as a community project under targeted KPIs (MLM, 2016: 211). The key supporting documents that serve as proof of the achievement of KPIs in Metsimaholo include evidence of awareness raised to school children about environmental care but do not show any progress regarding the work done with the Ikageng Ditamating cooperative, the Vaalpark Recycling Centre or any other cooperatives in Sasolburg.

The IDP states that there is a growth in the number of SMEs in Sasolburg, particularly in Zamdela, that have the potential to reduce unemployment in Sasolburg (MLM, 2015: 284). These businesses thus need support and as such the IDP identified the Small Business Development Agency (SEDA) which opened an office in Sasolburg, to offer support to the various small businesses emerging (MLM, 2015: 284-285). The next section discusses the key performance indicators which are a key element of the IDP as they help define the priorities of the municipality over a five-year period.

5.2.2. Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), are a municipal development strategy (MLM, 2016: 21) also listed in the IDP. They are developed in alignment with Provincial Priority Outputs and are beneficial in forming the basis for the development of a municipality's Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan as well as Annual

Performance Plans of Senior Management, in this case for the financial year 2016/17 (MLM, 2016: 21). The Metsimaholo Local Municipality's objective to return to a "back-to-basics" approach to service delivery gives emphasis to the need to improve the way services are rolled out particularly in disadvantaged areas (MLM, 2016: 15). As such, the Integrated Development Plan's (IDPs) (MLM, 2016: 32) KPA of this municipality is Service Delivery and Infrastructure Development.

The KPA: Service Delivery and Infrastructure Development has six programmes, these being water, sanitation, electricity, roads and storm water, waste management and community facilities (MLM, 2016: 22). Under this KPA is the programme 11: Waste Management. This programme delineates KPIs to meet the objective of "public and community amenities. The KPIs include the maintenance of cemeteries, sports grounds, community halls, swimming pools and parks (MLM, 2016: 32 and 33).

The third KPA: Community Development and Social Cohesion has five programmes that include clean communities, safe communities, healthy communities, arts and culture and disaster management (MLM, 2016: 22). KPIs under this KPA are under programme 12: Community Facilities. The objective of this programme is "to develop a clean and environmentally friendly town and communities (MLM, 2016: 34). KPIs thus include (1) 21 environmental cleanliness programmes implemented in 5 years; (2) 20 training and awareness programmes developed and implemented in 5 years; and (3) Removing 135 illegal dumps in 5 years (MLM, 2016: 34).

Priorities		**Objectives**	**KPIs**
KPA 1	Waste management	To provide affordable, effective, efficient, economical and accessible waste management to all communities	11.1. Refuse removal on a regular basis 11.2. IWMP reviewed and approved by council 11.3. Existing landfill site closed 11.4. New Landfill site established
KPA 3	Community Development and Social Cohesion clean communities, safe communities,	To develop and promote a clean and environmentally-friendly town and communities	13.1. Number of environmental cleanliness programmes implemented

	healthy communities, arts and culture and disaster management		13.2. Number of training and awareness programmes developed and implemented 13.3. Number of illegal dumps removed

Figure 6: Social Services- KPIs from Municipal Development Strategies Tables (MLM, 2016: 21 - 63)

The section to follow discusses the above key performance areas in relation to the IDP and practices of municipal officials.

a. The IDP and KPIs

The Metsimaholo Local Municipality's IDP (2016) discusses the IWMP in detail. It highlights the key priority areas and the targets set as well as how much the municipality has achieved with regards to implementation. The IDP lists 6 KPAs and 29 Programmes for KPIs. Waste management is a key area of focus for service delivery; of the 29 KPI programmes, Waste Management is the 11th programme listed. The IDP reflects the municipal efforts to achieve integrated waste management as per the NWMS and the NEM:WA (2008) (DEA, 2011a). The IDP and its listed KPIs, like the IWMP, list integrated waste management as a key task for the municipality to achieve, but do not make mention of how waste pickers can be integrated into the waste management system (MLM, 2015: 317).

The IWMP (MLM, 2014: 24) under Chapter 4, section 8.7: Waste Minimisation Initiatives (Recycling, Reuse, Composting, etc.), states that the municipality has no running formal waste minimisation activities and as such no incentives to encourage the private sector to recycle their solid waste. Contrary to this, the IDP lists the "*Vaalpark Recycling Unit [as an] established strategy for waste re-use, reduction and recycling*" (MLM, 2016: 211). Little mention is made of how the project will run and what it is meant to achieve either as integration or community awareness to encourage waste recovery or recycling at the household level. The IDP, published in 2016, draws on the IWMP which was published in 2014.

The key performance area under which the following KPIs are listed is *Community Development and Social Cohesion- Programme 13 (Clean Communities)*. The objective of this key performance area is to develop and promote a clean and environmentally friendly town and community. The first key performance indicator for

the year 2016/17 is the number of environmental cleanliness programmes implemented, the second is the number of training awareness programmes developed and implemented, the third is the number of illegal dumps removed. Under the first KPI (*Number of environmental cleanness programmes implemented*) the target was six wards spread out over 4 quarters. These being ward 21 (Zamdela township) in the first quarter, wards 6 and 7 (Zamdela: Extension 3, Block 1 and 2 and Coal Brook) in the second quarter, ward 1 (Zamdela east) in the third quarter, and wards 10 and 11 (Zamdela: Taylor Park, Maru Park, Saratoga and Somespost) in the fourth quarter. Their means of verification were quarterly reports and pictures corresponding with the date the programme was implemented. Illegal dumping and the use of wood for cooking have been identified as key environmental problems in the Zamdela Township (IDP, 2016/17). Under the second KPI (*Number of training awareness programmes developed and implemented*) are four targets per quarter, which include awareness at schools, awareness at workplaces, and awareness in the community, respectively. Their verification indicators are attendance registers. The document reports that all indicators have been achieved. The last KPI (*number of illegal dumps removed*) had 5 indicators, of which 1 area was targeted in quarters 1 to 3 and 2 areas targeted in the fourth quarter. The task was to eradicate illegal dumps as per identification. The status of this KPI has been recorded as achieved. The above KPIs emphasise that waste picker integration is not considered and therefore under-prioritised. Focus within the WMD is placed on cleansing and disposal services.

KPA 1, Programme 11 : Service Delivery and Infrastructure Development	
KPI 11.1	Refuse removed regularly in all targeted areas (*removal at least once a week*).
KPI 11.2	% of businesses receiving a daily refuse removal service
KPI 11.3	IWMP reviewed and approved by council
KPI 11.4	% of integrated waste management plan (IWMP) information system developed and implemented.
KPI 11.5	Existing landfill site closed
KPI 11.6	New landfill site established

Figure 7: KPI Programme 11 (MLM, 2016)

b. KPIs in Practice

In a follow up question to the KPIs, I asked how the KPIs were of any benefit to the waste pickers or the municipality itself, and whether these accrued financial funds for the integration of waste pickers. The manager of the WMD's response to this question was, firstly, that the municipal officials only engaged with waste pickers that are in cooperatives and, secondly, that all the help they have offered waste pickers did not require the municipality to obtain funding from its own budget (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). Help includes facilitating engagements with stakeholders such as Sasol Operations, which can offer infrastructural and skills support as well as the allocation of and access to spaces in which they can collect material on municipal owned property.

In addition to the above, Potso (2017) stated that there were conditions to the support offered, which was that the waste pickers are not allowed to build any permanent structures on the property (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). In an interview with Jordan (2017), a SAWPA representative it was mentioned that the municipal officials helped speed up the process of offering the cooperative in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre land by providing land that the waste pickers would not be allowed to build permanent structures (Jordan 2017, interview, 24 August).

In events to follow a waste picker cooperative leader, Tlali, said that the municipality had not listened to their requests for sorting sites that looked like the Vaalpark recycling centre with the addition of possible permanent structures (Tlali 2018, interview, 27 November). During an interview with Tlali he said that the offsets project they have running with Sasol had been stalled because the municipal officials had not obtained permission for the waste pickers to build on the sites identified for their sorting spaces (Tlali 2018, interview, 27 November). While this is a case of miscommunication, officials in the WMD have a number of issues to consider when it comes to offering resources to waste pickers. A key point he addressed in this conversation was the risk element of offering assistance to the waste pickers. The municipality was in the process of engaging with Sasol to develop a contingency plan should the waste pickers disband. The concerns on the side of the municipality include planning how to use the property after, while Sasol's concerns relate to the financial investments into the project. These were presented as standard requirements in order to gain permission to hand over municipal land to the waste picker cooperatives.

*Excerpt A: "There is a KPI but I don't know what that KPI will say [for you] because we are talking about your research *opens file with a list of the KPIs.* It will be talking about KPI 13, (13.1) The number of environmental cleanliness programmes, because recycling is an environmental programme, (13.2) Number of training awareness programme. Those also will be your KPIs; And (13.3) the number of illegal dumping removed, because it also involves the waste pickers. What this says, the explanation of those targets, is that 13 wards were identified because that is where environmental programmes need to be implemented. That was ward 1, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 21. The means of verifying these was to submit quarterly reports where workers would go out as they do cleaning. They would take photos with dates or make a programme and submit it. The training and awareness programme, they would do the same. They do your awareness at schools, at work places, at community meetings as well as these businesses. The means of verifying is the attendance register of that particular place. The last one of illegal dumping, a programme is drawn up to identify illegal dumping in the township, maybe next to a school, next to a clinic, and also the pictures are taken, and also these are verified by the means of photos and so on" – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.*



Figure 8: Evidence to verify achievement of KPIs

I asked Potso the Manager of Waste Management, during our interview, what KPIs the department had been allocated. He responded that he did not know what value the adopted KPIs would have in relation to this project. Although he said that these KPIs do not relate to waste picker integration, he went on to say that the second (13.1) and third (13.2) KPIs, as listed above would relate to recycling as an environmental programme as well as training and awareness. He then said that the third KPI regarding the removal of illegal dumping areas involves the waste pickers. In

explaining the three relevant KPIs, he discussed the technical process of verifying that the KPIs had been achieved, all through photos with date stamps. Potso did not offer any examples of actual evidence but was mainly responding to my question to explain the official process required when responding to these KPIs.

> *Excerpt B: "We assist them with going to Sasol- these offset projects. We assist them with going to Sasol, we have assisted them, the waste pickers, with the five areas where they can erect… the collection point or the drop off zones are going to be set up. You see these are some of the letters where these people are going to use for recycling drop-off zones. The municipality has assisted them with this… for free… But there are conditions, that they do not build a permanent structure, they don't build whatever, whatever. We are at the stage now where some kind of a carport… they need to design inside the drop-off, the sorting, the selling... So maybe the meeting is sometime next week where we are going to look at the risk element of it because Sasol is putting two million to assist all these five areas, and they are going to purchase trolleys for them so that they can transport that thing to the drop-off zone… or to the main recycling plant… all those things." Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.*

Potso's (2017) response to the relevance of waste pickers reveals that waste picker integration has not yet been prioritised as a key performance area for waste management. Additionally, the response he provides shows that he sees alternative ways to which waste pickers can be incorporated and prioritised. Potso (2017) highlights that under the existing KPIs, waste pickers and the work that they do can be listed as a target under KPI 13.1: The number of Environmental Cleanliness programmes and KPI: 13.2 that is the number of training awareness programmes (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). He says it is "*because your recycling is an environmental programme*" He adds that KPI 13.3 which regards the number of illegal dumping sites to be removed is inclusive of waste pickers (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). Although the above requires a revision of the key performance indicators, he indicates spaces within the existing waste management system that waste picker integration can be incorporated (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October).

5.2.3. KPI Relevance for Integration Process

The KPIs available to the Waste Management Department under the IDP do not target the integration of waste pickers but are rather independent of them. Although the Vaalpark Recycling Centre project is listed as a community programme in the

2016/2017 Draft IDP Review it is not explained whether this programme addresses the need for recycling in Sasolburg or the need to integrate Waste Pickers (MLM, 2016). The absence of KPIs directly related to the waste pickers, as the section will show, reflects the limited efforts to integrate waste pickers in Sasolburg. In this section, I analyse the KPIs in order to elaborate on how they affect the work done by officials in integrating the waste pickers as well as how the KPIs respond to some of the existing policy on recycling and waste pickers as compared to the needs of waste pickers in this community.

a. Recycling as a Priority

The Vaalpark Recycling Centre project is listed as a strategy to reduce reuse and recycle waste material. As the only community project listed under the KPI: Community and Awareness Programmes (13.2) (MLM, 2016: 34), it is clear that the municipality does not run awareness programmes to encourage residents to practice separation of waste independent of the waste picker cooperative programme.

The IWMP on the other hand does suggest that the municipality conduct separation at source and extend this to the Zamdela area (MLM, 2014). In conjunction with the Recycling Project having been rolled out and based in Vaalpark, the rest of Sasolburg is not aware of any recycling initiatives. Pholoto (2018) writes that some residents in Vaalpark were not aware of separation at source in their neighbourhood either. Black bins were provided to approximately 3000 households in Zamdela with the intention of starting a Separation at Source programme in the townships. The provision of the bins was also politically driven as this was done during a local election season (Jordan 2017, Interview, 24 August). The bins were provided but no awareness was done to explain what the purpose of the bins was. John, a supervisor in the waste management department and resident of Zamdela said that the bins were provide but no one was told what they were for and as such people do not use then bins mainly for waste collection. They have in many cases repurposed the bins (John 2017, interview, 11 September).

While the process of separation at source has not been completed as is listed as programme target under the IWMP of 2014 (MLM, 2014), the lack of awareness in Zamdela reflects the nature of the use of the waste bins for washing and water storage amongst other uses. Because the IDP and the IWMP do not mention role of the waste pickers on the landfill site, the identified KPIs do not support the integration of waste pickers or reflect them and recycling as a priority. The KPIs under which awareness on

recycling, or waste picker recognition, can be discussed do not quantify or elaborate on the number of waste minimisation projects to be achieved or the number of recycling awareness campaigns to be held.

b. Awareness and Community Programmes

The third KPI (Community Development and Social Cohesion) is needed because of the importance of a clean environment. The issue that officials presented with regards to illegal dumping is that a significant portion of identified hotspots are generated by waste pickers who do not have designated formal sorting spaces (Mosa 2017, Personal Communication, 21). This target to get rid of illegal dumping sites stirs conflict between waste pickers and officials whose relationship is strained by poor communication. Waste pickers do not have spaces around the town where they can sort material, apart from the few who have a relationship with the waste pickers based in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. The officials, on the other hand, struggle with the material that remains from sorting because reporting the site to the department means that the waste pickers will be displaced when caught sorting or leaving behind material. The work done by Sasol, alongside the municipality and various other stakeholders, will help combat such issues as their project progresses; the challenges that will potentially emerge will be between waste pickers and which waste pickers are allowed access to the sorting stations provided.

Even though the recycling centre is regarded as a community project, its effects on recycling and the community are limited to the role played by the waste pickers in a cooperative. This benefits waste pickers in the cooperative and those associated but it is still an approach that does not represent the Sasolburg waste picker community, which includes non-organised waste pickers. His response, thus, highlighted that the engagements with waste pickers is mainly drawn from experience and needs through previous engagements with all stakeholders.

c. The Limitations of KPIs:

Potso's responses to my questions about the KPIs' relevance to recycling awareness and waste picker integration were a reflection that the KPIs do not respond to the need to integrate waste pickers. In line with a question I had asked about the role of the department to waste pickers has shown that the waste pickers are supported from a practical norms point of view.

The KPIs are thus limiting as an instrument when it comes to waste picker integration in this community. The NWMS offers cooperative partnerships as a means of absorbing

waste pickers. With the growing success of the Vaal park Recycling Project, the officials have identified this process as an ideal model for engagements, thus facilitating integration. As the sections to follow will address, this process brings to light a neglect of non-organised waste pickers, while also expanding on why this model offers a healthy approach to integration.

While the documents that are available to the municipality have systematically shifted towards integrated waste management, little or insufficient mention of waste pickers is made. The documents reference waste pickers but lack in expanding on how they can be engaged with beyond being employed by the municipality as contractors, particularly given the strong stance by Potso that the municipality will only engage and offer support to waste pickers.

5.3. Official Norms

This section focuses on the official norms that define the work done by officials. The section discusses the responsibilities of manager of the WMD as it pertains to their job description, thus developing an understanding of the responsibility of the waste management department in the integration of waste pickers.

5.3.1. Who Should Practice Integration?

Waste Picker integration was initially driven by an official from the LED department in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. Once this official resigned the responsibility of engaging with waste pickers fell in the hands of Potso given that he was the only official in the Municipality who had developed a relationship with the waste pickers.

A key issue with the lack of KPIs and guidelines to help officials in their engagements with waste pickers is official clarity over the departments that are responsible for facilitating integration. The waste pickers depend on the Waste management Department as their main point of access for municipal support, yet Potso (2017) is adamant that the recycling project should lie in the hands of the LED department given that the benefit of this project is job creation as opposed to waste collection and disposal (see quote below). Still the project now is in this department's hands given that the person who was responsible for integration in the LED has left the department: "*it's not our competence. It's an LED competency to do that [to lead the project of* Separation at Source*]*" (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). For practical reasons and functioning of the state, this department has taken on the task but they

are aware that this is not their official mandate. The excerpt below highlights participant 1's sentiments about the department's role in Separation at Source.

> *"The project is still in the hands of the LED, although LED now, that person has left and there are no other ventures, except for one offset that is currently being led by us, although we are very much aware that we are not supposed to be doing that. It's a recyclable and a non-recyclable, its also similar to that one, its just an extension now to the township where its not much of a high activity of recycling. Its sort of a drop-off and a collection zone for … to feed into the main recycling plant." – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.*

> *"Like I said, waste management they are only the custodian of the waste management. Other ventures and offshoots are for local economic development in so far as ensuring that they create jobs, they boom up the economy of the township". – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.*

5.3.2. Elusive official norms: The Lack of Clear Policies to Guide Practice

Waste Management in this department used to be combined with other municipal tasks, including housing, primary health care and environmental health, which have now been devolved to district government and other departments in local government (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). Thus, the department manager remains with waste management on his profile. The shifts in profile emerged from the constitution's distribution of tasks (RSA, 1996). In the quote below, Potso refers to the constitution to show the schedule that vests waste management responsibilities in local municipalities.

> *"Waste management, in terms of the schedules… schedule B of the constitution… (Stands up to get a copy of the constitution)… that is the function of the local municipality. And environmental health had to go because in terms of the pieces of legislation, in terms of the municipal legislation it had to go there as a municipal service." – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October*

> *"Private and individuals came up with initiatives which the municipality adopted and converted that into programmes. There were no guidelines as to how recycling should be done… and so on." – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October*

Potso sees his official role in the municipality as one that mainly focuses on the management of waste. His response shows that he is clear on his role within the

municipality and the tasks that he is responsible for. Potso's clarity of his role filters into his view about whether the task of integrating waste pickers is the responsibility of his department. Potso implied that his department's responsibility is the collection and disposal of waste given that they are the custodians of waste thus they are acting out of their official norms when integrating waste pickers by offering them resource and infrastructural support (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October).

While Potso is clear on his role within the municipal system and overall local government system, the interface between the administrative side of local government and the council affects the work done by the officials. Projects within local government are typically successful when there is buy-in from the council, which is why waste picker recognition was achieved in Sasolburg (see quote below). Thus, structures such as the municipal council have the power to override municipal officials in their decision making.

> *"It's the same as we said, using the example of Maritzburg, the officials agreed to work with SAWPA in their proposal but the politicians, when they saw that here comes a project, when there was already funding, they wanted to decide who should be in the project. They mess with the whole structure… and they have more power than the officials because they sometimes decide. They are the decision-makers. So, everything stops. It wasn't officials, it was politicians. Even in Mkhanyakulu, there was a project funded by ILO. They built a material recovery facility, they put people in a cooperative- but it was not a waste picker led cooperative, it was just a recycling cooperative. When the politics of the area changed, when the new party took over, it wanted to have control over everything. They stopped the project because they said it was politically related. So there is another party now that fights back the relationship of any past party that has been in power. To the extent that it stopped a number of projects that came with the former party…." - Jordan 2017, interview, 24 August.*

The role played by politicians, as has been shown can derail the efforts of officials in the prioritisation of projects. This becomes a problem when a new council is elected, and the political mandate shifts away from what it was. In the case of Sasolburg where the new administration no longer prioritised waste management as they had in the previous administration, waste picker integration has not been prioritised but has still

remained as a key challenge to resolve given pressure from national government to find alternative means of solid waste management.

5.3.3. Coordination with sister departments and Municipalities

A key responsibility for municipalities both from constitutional and legislative responsibilities is that inter- and intra-governmental relationships should be catered to. Municipal officials in the Metsimaholo local municipality have good relationships with the various sections of government that they engage with, yet there are a few challenges that affect the output of work produced.

An example of the above regarding coordination is the procurement of electricity for the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. Peter, an off-hand mentor to the waste pickers from Rejuvenation Metsimaholo recounted the story of how the waste pickers are struggling to get electricity. The key stakeholders involved in this procurement process were the local and district municipality, the waste pickers and Petco. An agreement was reached that Fezile Dabi District Municipality would help the waste pickers to purchase a bailing machine; On the other hand, the Metsimaholo local municipality were tasked and had agreed to electrify the Vaalpark Recycling centre (Peter 2018, Interview, 03 December). The purchasing of the bailing machine was done before the site was electrified. As a result, there was no consultation about the requirements of a bailing machine as per the available equipment(*ibid*.). Peter said that having done his own research, "the first quote was around R40 000. 00. And we were looking at where to get it [funding], and we were saying maybe from rejuvenation we can do that. Next thing it went up to R140 000" (Peter 2018, Interview, 03 December). The local municipality is now faced with the challenge of procuring funds to meet existing infrastructural support when they did not anticipate such an amount upon commitment. This challenge is one that emerged because local government, in an effort to show the waste pickers support, went ahead and offered resources without holistically considering the risks and challenges that may arise. This is an issue that could be attributed to the urgency to integrate waste pickers, the fact that this is the first time the municipality is undertaking such a task, and/or the limited capacity to prioritise waste picker integration.

A key challenge facing local municipalities is the lack of capacity for officials within local departments. Officials are burdened with various responsibilities from monitoring and evaluation as well as meeting departmental KPIs. Unfortunately, this means the

added responsibility of integration is one that is under-prioritised, thus explaining the perceived disinterest of local municipal officials.

> *"I also monitor the landfill sites. I do the audits on behalf of the municipality because those are done by the province. In our province, they don't have capacity at the moment, We thus assist with that. Like as you know our landfill sites are also not performing very well. We must also audit them and see to it that "what is it that needs to be done to being everything to compliance". So things like that, like monitoring, auditing… and after that we would send some information to the province to say that this is what is happening in terms of the landfill sites: "they are not manged properly due to these reasons." We also need to check the local municipalities to find out why they are not able to manage the landfill sites properly and why they need assistance because local municipalities, particularly in our province, I don't know why it is, but when you look into other province like Limpopo their landfill sites are in good conditions. Not all of them are 100% but at least 80 to 90 % I can say that there is something happening there. But when you look into what is happening in this province, particularly in our district, its like we are at zero… so that needs to be done. They need to make contact that we can also know where to assist." – Allan 2017, interview, 27 September.*

Some of the ways in which the district municipality is helpful is in developing legislative documents that the local municipality has not managed to do so.

> *"One of the ways to assist is also to develop some documents that are needed, because like I said I look into what the waste act wants- to say "do the local municipalities have integrated waste management plans, do they have bi-laws"… If they don't have those things and we have capacity, financially, to assist them, we do that. We develop such documents and give to them to implement." Allan 2017, interview, 27 September.*

Allan, additionally expressed that the issue of capacity is one that is challenging. In reflecting on the process of the development of the IWMP of 2014 he expressed that the document is one that could benefit from being produced by officials who understand their waste management departments but given the structures, priorities and KPIs of municipalities and officials, this is a task that is outsourced.

5.4. Practical Norms

This section focuses on the practical norms that officials have adopted in the absence of official norms that govern practices. This section thus presents the challenges that officials in the waste management department face when engaging with waste pickers. The findings regarding officials' practices in informal waste picker integration will be separated into practices when engaging with different waste pickers as categorised in section 5.1. of this chapter, these being landfill-, street- and cooperative- based waste pickers.

5.4.1. Practical Norms in the Space of a Lack of KPIs

Given the lack of KPIs that directly support the waste pickers' role in improving solid waste management for the municipality, officials are less resourced to offer wide-ranging support to waste pickers particularly when it comes to resource and infrastructure funding. Potso said that the absence of a municipal council slowed down the process of connecting the Vaalpark Recycling Centre with electricity because there was no budget to fund this project (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). Despite this, the officials had been in conversation with the private sector to obtain funds to continue with the project (LED Manager, interview, 28 November). Without the KPIs or similar targets stated, the officials do not see the integration of the waste pickers as their role as it is an LED competence (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October). Thus, they do not feel the need to have policy support to guide them at this level, beyond their role being that they are custodians of waste.

An official (manager of the LED) who was interviewed regarding the engagements with the Vaalpark recycling centre stated that he had only worked on the project for just under a year (LED Manager, interview, 28 November). He added that he had a good working relationship with Potso but that the challenges with electricity installation in Vaalpark had to do with a lack of funds. He said that the electricity department had quoted approximately R150 000 to install electricity on the site, to which Paul and Ruan had explained was triple the initial amount quoted due to a lack of coordination between the department providing electricity and that purchasing the bailing machine, as previously mentioned and quoted in section 5.3.3 (Paul and Ruan 2018, interview, 03 December). Paul said: "*I did a bit of a calculation with the guys that bought the compactor. Fezile Dabi bought the compactor but obviously it wasn't inspected … it wasn't spec that runs on 3-phase, and that's the issue*…". Waste pickers have been unable to gain the capital to install electricity. Allan

mentioned that he believed that money should not deter the waste pickers, stating that if they really wanted to get electricity on the site, they could save up for it, they could contact private companies to fund them as well (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December). He furthermore said that he would like to follow up with the waste pickers about the advice he had given them regarding alternative funding sources but due to political instability within the district municipality, he was unable but yet to do so.

The manager of the waste management department and the LED manager do have a good working relationship, but the WMD manager, Potso feels that his role in waste picker integration is supportive of the waste pickers. Integration is not a practice that is Potso's responsibility based on his professional and official norms. Thus, from a practical norms perspective he sees the support that his department offers the waste pickers as "charity" work, drawing from Samson's (2018) categorisation of waste picker integration.

5.4.2. Addressing the Lack of Capacity

A key problem within the Metsimaholo Local Municipality is the lack of capacity to carry out integration, which stems from the lack of prioritisation of waste management issues. Allan said that a big issue with the municipality and council is that they do not prioritise waste management because councillors prioritise projects during their term in office based on the interests that had them appointed (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December). He added that projects suffer when new councils are appointed given their short 5 year term (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December 2018). According to WMO guidelines, one WMO has to be appointed under each municipality because few WMOs encourages accountability and facilitates integrated governance. This benefit is very important but the Sasolburg case shows that 1 WMO, or having only one person responsible for waste issues is ineffective. Allan stated that his designation as a WMO takes up most of his time. Potso said that over the years some of his appointed functions have been relieved to other departments or the district municipality, yet he is still overwhelmed with work. He went on to mention that they depend on the community to be active in projects regarding the environment. This not only speaks to the lack of capacity but the municipality's inability to prioritise recycling. The lack of prioritisation of recycling means that integrating waste pickers cannot be put at the forefront.

As Pholoto (2018) observed in her research, the municipality has not done much with regards to raising awareness for S@S, a programme which the municipality lists as its

community programme for waste minimisation awareness in the 2016/2017 IDP (MLM, 2016/17).

5.4.3. Creating Effective tools for communication: The Waste Picker Cooperatives Forum

The officials' approach to communicating informs us that there is no working framework for integration that officials can refer to, to integrate waste pickers, other than employing waste pickers who are registered through cooperatives to offer the municipality a service. The aim of officials is thus to formalise the waste pickers. In the absence of KPIs and directive to integrate waste pickers, to engage them or to include them in solid waste management, officials have adopted their own ways of officially engaging with waste pickers. Now that the integration of waste pickers is not prioritised in the same way that it was during the previous council (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December), officials have continued to involve waste pickers in events such as meetings and keeping their doors open to communicate with waste pickers (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December; Potso 2017, interview, 11 October).

The approach taken by the municipality to insist on the integration of waste pickers that are registered and recognisable in order to offer municipal support, has led to the creation of a Waste Pickers Forum. Potso said that he had a problem with waste pickers coming into his office with the same issues and demands frequently as this made it difficult for him to get his work done. After relaying this to the waste pickers they independently created a waste pickers forum which has become the voice for cooperatives in Sasolburg. This forum is where all waste pickers cooperatives can collectively discuss challenges and successes that can then be presented to the municipality and other relevant stakeholders, thus improving their chances of attaining support and recognition. Given the autonomy waste pickers are afforded, they are in better positions to mobilise themselves and not solely depend on municipal support to succeed, particularly given the effect that political issues can have on the support the municipality can offer.

The registration of waste pickers could additionally be used as a tool to improve the relationship between the municipality and residents in Sasolburg. The relationship between residents and officials is compromised (refer to quote below) by the lack of registration of waste pickers. The presence of waste pickers has mainly been relayed to communities by the waste pickers but there needs to be official communication from the municipality to the community in Sasolburg.

"No, no, no, no. We have not because, like I said (in a different conversation), these waste pickers are not registered. We tried to register them, we tried for them to have nametags and so on but because today they are here, tomorrow they are no longer there, it's difficult to say: "these are the waste pickers". And it is also to put the municipality in a very precarious position if you are to say that "residents please know that there are waste pickers there" because there is an element of crime and the residents will want to approach that to the municipality to say "no you allowed the waste pickers to collect now the waste pickers… so the municipality will not take that risk." Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.

5.4.4. The prioritisation of Waste Pickers

The approach taken by officials in this municipality favours one type of waste picker in the Sasolburg community, cooperative based waste pickers, thus marginalising the majority of waste pickers who are based on the streets and the landfill site. This process does not ultimately result in an overall integration of waste pickers into the municipal solid waste management system.

A key point that was iterated throughout my shadowing was that given the political climate, one cannot always know what political party will hold power in council, thus what priority waste pickers will be given. Political support has been very important in pushing for waste picker integration. As Jordan said, Metsimaholo became supportive of waste pickers because council was readily available to offer support to the waste pickers (Jordan 2017, interview, 25 August 2017).

The cooperative model, as the only approach to waste picker integration is ineffective for the officials. This singular perspective limits the pool of integration to cooperative registered waste pickers, without fully addressing other challenges to integration such as offering all waste pickers support, fully recognising the variety of waste pickers and the role they play,

5.4.5. Passion for integration

A key observation that I made was that local municipal officials offer support to waste pickers more so of their own merit rather than official mandates. Officials in the district municipality have been observed to support waste pickers because they saw a need rather than this being their priority. The result of this has been that they work in siloes. Allan noted that his interest was also inspired by that of an official who came before

him (see quote below), a sentiment also expressed by a Rejuvenation Metsimaholo employee, Ruan.

> *"One of the things is also to incorporate the recyclers and the waste pickers into what the municipality does because one of the things I have noticed, before I became designated, I saw that there was a lady … designated before. She was doing a good job at the time… what I fell in love with at the time when she was still here was that we would do many things and one of the priorities was "how do we incorporate the recyclers in what we are doing and how do we formalise them because unfortunately they cannot be assisted by anyone (directly in isolation?)… you see, but how do you incorporate them and make them part of daily activities that are happening in the municipalities? The only way that we saw at that time was that, these people, they must be registered one way or the other. But how can they be registered. So, we started asking around. We realised that there is this thing called cooperative." - Allan 2017, interview, 27 September.*

The passion for waste picker integration within the Metsimaholo Local Municipality is not as pronounced and obvious. The officials see themselves as a support system and as such do not have to be hands on unless their services are elicited by the waste pickers and there is clear directive for the tasks to be carried out. Additionally, the municipal officials recognise that the task of integration is one that is and has been driven by the waste pickers. There is thus the challenge of understanding and learning how to navigate integration that is driven from the bottom-up. Currently officials practice integration as enabling waste pickers in order to successfully run their cooperatives

> *"We just enable them, we make the situation to be conducive for them to drive. We allow them to use the landfill site for free, we allow them to store their waste there and everything. For free." – Posto 2017, Interview, 11 October.*

The municipality is proud of the role played in helping support the waste pickers. They do not take full ownership of the project but their pride reflects their efforts to support waste pickers.

> *"no, it is done outside the municipality. Like I indicated, some… it did yield some results. Some of the discussions, in that cooperatives were formed for those that*

wanted to listen and they were assisted all the way up until they stood on their two legs, we made land available for free. We assisted them in procuring your trolleys, your pick-backs, your sorting at source, your receiving of material, what else, even a bakkie that is coming here to the municipality to collect card boxes and papers from the municipality and employ other people. It was a good partnership that we did with Sasol and Petco and other stakeholders. Today we are having one of the… only South African recycling plants at Vaalpark in the entire country that is successful." - Posto 2017, Interview, 11 October

The official's support and passion for integrating waste pickers stems from their recognition that the waste pickers have been resilient despite the obstacles and challenges faced in gaining municipal recognition. Furthermore, the municipal officials recognise the benefit of waste pickers' work in Sasolburg.

5.4.6. The Promotion of Cooperatives

The main buzzword drifting through the municipal department is: *cooperative*. Much of the information released through government documents and other municipalities in the country and internationally, as shown in the context chapter, suggests the cooperative model as one of the most ideal methods for waste picker integration. Given that the Ikageng Ditamating cooperative has been developed as a pilot project for waste picker cooperatives, it has been modelled as an ideal way of integrating waste pickers; furthermore, its success has encouraged this model to be pioneered across the town.

Officials now encourage all waste pickers to join cooperatives. Potso, the manager of the waste management department, mentioned that they as officials could and would only engage with recognised waste pickers, these being waste pickers who are in cooperatives or associated with the recognised Waste Pickers Forum (See quote below) (Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October).

"… Look, the relationship between us and the non-organised waste pickers is not good. Its not there actually. Nothing! The only waste pickers that are in close relationship with the municipality are the ones of Ikageng Ditamating… We assisted them with requesting quotations for electricity." – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October

The supervisors of general workers in the department shared the same sentiments, stating that they actively referred street waste pickers to join cooperatives despite having very little information about cooperatives (John and Monte 2017, interview, 11 September). Their point of view came from the fact that they had been engaged in a few cooperative-municipality meetings where the work of waste pickers was discussed. They also felt that waste pickers would get better municipal support if they joined cooperatives because they had witnessed that other waste pickers had been given support in the same way that waste pickers in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre receive support in various ways (John and Monte 2017, interview, 11 September).

Mosa, on the other hand sees the cooperative model the same way that the supervisors do. He recognises that all the waste pickers on the landfill site only want municipal support that is independent of them joining cooperatives (Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August). He recognises that the waste pickers want to be integrated with support. Officials in Sasolburg are insistent on waste pickers becoming a recognisable body in order for them to be identifiable. The lack of identifiable bodies other than in the form of cooperatives makes it difficult for them to relate to and engage with waste pickers.

Following research done by the district municipality, it seemed that the cooperative approach was the most practical solution. The intentions of the district municipality were to emancipate the waste picker.

> *"So the question is: What is this thing called cooperatives, and how do you start with that? Now you must ask around, we only spoke to few people because I think, at that time, it was that maybe the cooperatives are this that that only people doing building, the ladies that want to do something with their hands, but we never thought of it as something where people can group themselves and make money, make something to do with recycling or waste at that time. When we were still doing the work we were doing, we found that the only way for government to also assist these people is to also encourage them to form cooperatives. – Allan 2017, interview, 27 September.*

A challenge with offering support is that it sometimes isn't the best suited solution for a group. The integration of waste pickers in Sasolburg can be seen as an on-going project that is still I the pilot phase given that various aspects of the initial plan have not been fully realised. As such officials would need a review of the work that they

have done in order to determine whether the imposition of a cooperative model has been successful or not.

5.4.7. Learning from other Municipalities

The process of integrating waste pickers is taking different shapes in different parts of the country and officials in Sasolburg feel that there are lessons that can be drawn from these other cases, particularly when it comes to integrating waste pickers on the landfill site. Allan and Mosa both stated that managing the landfill site in its current state is difficult given that the activities taking place after having tried to regulate activities in the past (refer to quote below)(Allan 2017, interview, 27 September). Allan added that: "*[my] school of thought is that a huge part of institutionalising waste management is the need to incorporate and integrate waste pickers into the municipality's daily functions*" (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December). This way they would have direct access to the waste pickers. He said that he got this idea from seeing the good relationship that Pik-it-up has with waste pickers in Johannesburg (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December).

During the District Waste Management Forum meeting in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, officials agreed that information on landfill management needed to be collected. An official mentioned any research done on the landfill site needed to be reported back to the forum with findings and recommendations so that all the officials dealing with waste are better informed of the challenges on the landfill site and how the forum can offer support.

> *"You know what we are going to do before the new landfill site is going to be established. We are going to attend other landfill sites from Pretoria, Ekurhuleni, we are going to attend those municipalities to check with them how they manage their landfill sites and then how do they make sure that people who are recycling are registered. Then how do they assist them in terms of registrations, and then scavengers, what it that they are doing with illegal things that are happening. People who are drinking beer, smoking Nyaupe, selling beer… Our challenges… You know what is happening with other landfill sites Jokudu… other landfill sites they are running smooth operations, they know how to manage it. You know what is our challenge in Sasolburg? Sasolburg is having more industry. Now people from disadvantaged towns they are coming here. If they can't find jobs they are at the landfill site. People think when they come here they will get jobs". – Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August.*

In the absence of clear guidelines on how waste pickers should be integrated, officials are seeking support from other municipalities as precedent for engaging with waste pickers on the landfill site. In the case of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality, the dominance of conversation on a lack of solutions to managing waste pickers on the landfill site highlights their frustrations over a lack of power and control of the activities on the landfill site. Beyond officials' preconceived ideas of what an ideal landfill site should look like, they are dealing with the symptom of waste pickers on landfill sites as opposed to dealing with the challenge of integrating landfill site waste pickers.

5.5. Conclusion: Analysis and comparison of practices

The key findings that emerge are that: Officials continue to offer support to the waste pickers because they have developed a relationship with the waste pickers and are starting to understand the role played by waste pickers in the management of waste in Sasolburg. Officials promote the creation of cooperatives as this informal practice is a step towards waste pickers being integrated through partnerships between cooperatives and the municipality.

There are conflicts in the instruments that affect the engagements between officials and waste pickers. They furthermore challenge officials in ways that limit their engagements with the waste pickers or result in contradictory approaches to reprimanding or supporting different waste pickers. The sub-sections below highlight the discrepancies and lack of commitment from the municipality to address the legislated requirements of the municipality to improve their waste management system. These discrepancies help explain some of the challenges officials face when engaging with waste pickers in different backgrounds. A key finding that emerges is that the instruments do not speak in any way to integration and furthermore lack in improving the solid waste management system. The key performance indicator that relates to the closure of the landfill site overlooks the effect that this will have on waste picking.

Officials in the municipality mentioned that they did not see integration as the responsibility of the waste management department. As noted above, Potso insisted that the role of the department is that they are custodians of waste, and as such they manage collect and dispose of waste. He said that the waste pickers were the responsibility of the waste LED Department, and as he had told me in one of our first introductory meetings, the person who headed the project had left the municipality,

so the waste pickers were now his responsibility only because his department is more familiar with the waste pickers. He then went on to say that the support that waste pickers have received from the municipality is free.

Despite their reluctance to take ownership of the task of waste picker integration municipal officials are active in integrating waste pickers where they can. The Metsimaholo Local Municipality has not developed a long-term plan for waste pickers that does not include contracting them to collect waste in public facilities. As such, these waste pickers are not getting compensation for the main service they are offering the municipality, which is recycling and recovering material.

CHAPTER 6

6. Waste Picker Integration in Sasolburg: Challenges and Successes

The role played by the municipality and supporting officials has been of interest in understanding how waste picker integration in Sasolburg has progressed. This chapter focuses on the approach taken in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality to integrate waste pickers into the municipal solid waste management system. Thus, highlighting the challenges, adjustments and successes of officials.

The previous chapter on the practices of waste pickers highlighted that the main challenges that the officials faced was waste picker integration given the limited policy instruments available to them. Beyond the inter- and intra-governmental challenges, I have observed that the municipality has developed different approaches to engaging with different waste pickers. This chapter focuses on the three approaches, *cooperative-based waste picker* interactions, independent *street-based waste picker* interactions and *landfill-based waste picker* interactions to show that different forms of engagements with waste pickers has resulted in different approaches to their integration.

The main findings that thus emerge are that officials are still learning how to integrate waste pickers given the lack of guidelines for such a process. The process of integration has been exclusionary to a large majority of waste pickers because the focus on integration within the municipality has been on the adoption of cooperatives as an approach to integration. Lastly, officials are still learning better ways to engage with the waste pickers; they are making efforts towards improved communication that fosters a healthy relationship between the local municipality and the community.

6.1. Defining Integration in the Local Municipality

Legislative and policy documents in South Africa encourage the integration of waste pickers into solid waste management systems by suggesting that municipalities are encouraged to contract waste pickers in cooperatives or Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) of 2014 suggests that the municipality develop cooperatives to assist with recycling between 2015 and 2019 with a R 200 000 budget (MLM, 2014: 35). While this is a form of recognition of the waste pickers the approach to integration, drawing on Samson's (2018) conceptualisation as charity, shifts perspectives towards the integration of cooperatives into the municipal waste management system. The recommendation listed in the IWMP (MLM, 2014) differs from the approach of the Waste Management

Department's Manager, Potso. Potso explicitly stated that there is not much more that the municipality can do for the waste pickers given that they have been offered support at no cost (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October).

In this section, I draw on the definitions that four officials expressed to provide a landscape of integration in Sasolburg. This section argues that the lack of a singular definition does not exist in either literature or practice. This lack of a singular definition has led to officials individually adopting their own ways of engaging with waste pickers integration, furthermore practicing integration differently. Additionally, the lack of a universal definition for integration is observed inter-governmentally thus influencing the official's approaches to integration both negatively and positively. I draw on their approaches to engaging with waste pickers to highlight the different conceptualisations of integration taking place. The various approaches affect how officials engage with waste pickers, leading to various expectations from both stakeholders. The aim of this section is thus to highlight how different definitions of integration have encouraged three approaches to the integration of waste pickers in Sasolburg.

6.1.1. How Officials Define Integration

Eight officials were interviewed from both the Metsimaholo Local Municipality (MLM) and the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, 7 and 1 respectively. Of the 7 Officials from the MLM, 2 were senior officials and the rest were junior workers in the Waste Management Department. The respondents all had their own understanding of integration while others did not have a definition for integration.

Potso (2017), a senior official understood integration to be a process of engagement with registered waste pickers through cooperatives. He views 'integration' as the current "*buzzword*" (Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October). He implied that whatever the definition of integration, it did not matter because the only engagements that the municipality will have is with waste pickers who are registered under cooperatives. He thus understands integration to be a process that engages a formalised entity that the municipality can recognise to offer support.

> *"The municipality cannot do anything more than it has done in so far as integrating these waste pickers. The municipality played its role in ensuring that these waste pickers are incorporated and have formed their cooperatives, because that's now the buzzword." Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October.*

Potso (2017) makes a clear distinction between offering support to waste pickers that have registered their businesses as compared to those that are not registered. He said: "If they are registered as a cooperative the municipality will help them a lot. Not only waste pickers, but all others" (Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October). He added that the municipality has done a lot for waste pickers in Sasolburg, particularly those that started cooperatives in various sectors. Their role has been to support the cooperatives in Sasolburg with material resources and business support with the aim of creating conducive environments for their businesses to thrive (See quote below)(Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October). The IDP states that SEDA (Small Enterprise Development Agency) opened an office in 2015, which was open to supporting waste pickers, particularly in the Zamdela Township with skills support to effectively run their businesses (MLM, 2015).

> *"… The municipality's role is to ensure that it makes the environment conducive for these people to drive. We can assist them with the registration [of their cooperatives], we can assist them with the training, if possible we can assist them with the resources such as your PPE, or your safety materials and even write letters to service providers recommending and requesting on behalf of those cooperatives. The municipality is just playing that oversight role in assisting." Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October.*

Allan, a senior official from the district municipality's Environmental Health Department said that, to him, integration is about offering the waste pickers support (Allan 2017, personal communication, 27 September). Compared to Potso (2017) who first defines integration as a process that requires the establishment of a formal relationship, Allan (2017) understands integration to be a process of communication in order to facilitate support by government to waste pickers irrespective of their level of formalisation. A key notion that Allan (2017) explained in conversation was that government has a responsibility towards members of society who cannot help themselves. Additionally he understood integration to be best implemented through engagements with waste pickers who have joined cooperatives in order for them to be incorporated as registered entities. This means formalisation.

> *"… one of the priorities was how do we incorporate the recyclers in what we are doing and how do we formalise them because unfortunately they cannot be assisted by anyone…" Allan, Interview, 24 September.*

Allan's approach to integration includes understanding that he can personally relate to the waste pickers, thus forming relationships with them. Despite his support for waste pickers on both an official and personal capacity, Allan (2017 and 2018) agrees with Potso (2017) that the role of the municipality, in integrating waste pickers, is to provide support and facilitate independence. Engagements with waste pickers depend on the waste pickers' willingness to work towards making their businesses more successful. Allan makes the example of engaging the local municipality in his work so that they develop a relationship with the waste pickers, ultimately allowing him to be less active in his involvement (Allan 2018, Interview, 04 December). Allan was unable to visit waste pickers as frequently as he previously did.

The junior officials in the waste management department had not heard about integration as had the 2 senior officials. The clerk did not know what integration is although he had recently been making an effort to attend various meetings within the department. Interestingly, he mentioned that he and other supervisors do attend meetings and events with the senior officials where they have heard a little bit about the Vaalpark pilot project and other projects with waste pickers. Their involvement has meant that there are certain assumptions that the officials have come to discard regarding the waste pickers.

> *"You know who we are communicating with… We only communicate with people who are registered. Those people in Vaalpark they are registered. They are getting assistance and resources from the stakeholders like Sasol Firm. They are the ones that we talk to." – Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August.*
>
> *"It's easier with the ones that are registered because you know who you are talking to. Its easier to talk to people who are registered and then we know where to find them." – John 2017, interview, 11 September.*

A clear point that emerges from the above definitions is that senior officials have a more developed understanding of the process of integration as compared to junior officials who have not directly worked on integration projects. Furthermore, every official practices integration in their own way. Officials only practice the full spectrum of integration as they define it with the waste pickers in the Vaalpark recycling centre. They are not as personally invested with those that are on the streets, the landfill and other cooperatives.

6.1.2. Challenges and Benefits of Differing Perspectives

The definitions presented above highlight the inconsistencies of integration in practice and legislation. Potso (2017) and Allan (2018) said the municipality put in a lot of effort to integrate the waste pickers but the waste pickers have expressed that their main interest has been being allowed to stay on the landfill site at no cost. While this is a form of integration, the officials did not identify it as such because their understanding of integration hinges on the notion that waste pickers need to be formalised to be formally recognised by the municipal system. While officials have allowed waste pickers to occupy landfill space which is prohibited (Lauren and Mosa 2018, interview, 28 November), waste pickers have expressed that they have no qualms with the municipality. The section to follow explores the three emergent approaches to integration by officials in Sasolburg. It will expand on the many ways in which officials engage with the waste pickers to highlight that integration is a diverse process and concept.

The challenges that these differing perspectives of integration presented highlight that the informal waste sector is poorly understood by officials. The interviewed SAWPA representative who represents and engages with waste pickers across the country stated:

> *"You don't find many having projects related to waste recycling or to waste recovery. So there is a lack of knowledge about the industry at the economic development department as well as the waste management department, so they bring challenges. But that doesn't say when you engage with them they will not realise. We have engaged with many municipalities who didn't see waste having value… who didn't see waste recovery and recycling as priority or as a solution to waste management problems." – Jordan, 2017.*

It is through communication, participation and engagements with the waste pickers that municipal officials have started to understand the role of waste pickers and how they contribute to the municipal solid waste management system. As shown in the above quote, Municipal officials, in Metsimaholo included, officials have realised the value of engaging with waste pickers and the need to integrate them. The challenge that is now observed is in defining how waste pickers can be integrated into a system that does not yet recognise their value. This in turn is a challenge for officials who have official norms to adhere to. The lack of a singular definition and process for integration

as a practice does not ease the role of municipal officials. The section that follows discussed the different approaches that municipal officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality have adopted in attempts to integrate waste pickers.

6.2. Approaches to Integration: Sasolburg's Adaptations

The above sections have shown that integration is a complex concept that is not yet well understood by the officials beyond what is stated through legislation and policy documents. Furthermore, that officials have their own understandings of what integration is. While this is the case, officials in Sasolburg have developed ways to engage with the waste pickers in what could be understood as integration. Three distinct approaches to integrating waste pickers can be observed in Sasolburg's Metsimaholo Local Municipality. These three approaches include the *Integration through Cooperatives, Integration through the Landfill Site and Integration through Street Waste Pickers*. Each of these approaches has emerged through the differing relationships that officials, and the municipality at large, have with the waste pickers. The sections below expand on these relationships to investigate how integration can be facilitated at the local context.

The need for various approaches, as will be shown, emerged from the changing relationship that officials and waste pickers have had since 2008 when waste pickers decided to seek recognition by government for the work that they do. What this section of the chapter will highlight is the transitions that officials have experienced. As such, the aim of this section is to present the challenges that officials face on a daily basis when interacting with waste pickers. The section will also highlight the tensions and harmony between officials and waste pickers during integration.

6.2.1. Approach 1: Integration through Cooperatives

The main approach taken by officials to integrate waste pickers in Sasolburg has been integration through cooperatives. This approach has been deemed as ideal because it creates a structure of formalisation that not only helps identify waste pickers but legitimises the need for municipal assistance. This approach to integration is similar to the Brazilian and Indian experiences of integration through cooperatives (Dias and Alves, 2008). As previously mentioned, Brazil was the first country to formally integrate waste picker cooperatives as well as produce legislation (Dias and Alves, 2008). The Indian experience, as well, developed as integration of waste pickers through cooperatives driven by non-government organisation (Chikarmane and Nayaran,

2008). In both cases, waste picker cooperatives render the municipality a service at a fee by collecting waste from residences through S@S programmes. The cooperative approach in Sasolburg diverts from the Brazilian and the Indian experiences of waste picker integration in that there is no remuneration for the services rendered by Sasolburg's waste picker cooperatives to the Vaalpark suburb. The cooperative approach also draws on international cooperative models such as that of Brazil where municipalities contract waste collection services to cooperatives (Dias and Alves, 2008).

In this sub-section I breakdown the reasons behind this approach and the effect is has had on the relationship between the officials and the waste pickers.

a. Legislative Support and Guidance for the Integration of Cooperatives

As mentioned in chapter 4, the legislation available to guide officials in integrating waste pickers at the local level of government is limited and poorly explained. Despite this, officials are expected to follow legislation. The available legislative documents advocate for integration through the cooperative approach. As such, officials in Sasolburg have adopted this approach as the main method of integrating waste pickers. From the Waste Act of 2008, the NWMS of 2011 and the WMO Guidelines, policy and legislation in South Africa encourages municipalities to contract recycling services, in the same breath encouraging that jobs should be given to the unemployed such as reclaimers. In our interview (24 September 2017) Allan brought to attention the fact that focus needs to expand from the effectiveness of available legislation towards training officials to better understand, interpret and implement legislation. He expanded to say that the issue was mainly that departments do not work together to fulfil what is written in legislation (see excerpt A below). Allan added that the legislation available gives clear guidance for municipalities. On the other hand, he brought up the fact that legislation is also politically driven by national government. Projects suggested by national government are prioritised over the needs of local municipalities.

Excerpt A:

"This is why I'm saying it is very vital for departments to work together and assist each other, not only working in terms of data or numbers. Because that is what is killing a lot of things at the moment. In South Africa we work with numbers, we don't work with real things. And that is actually the problem. How many

cooperatives do we have within the municipality alone?. Let us talk about Metsimaholo, we have how many cooperatives? About 8 cooperatives. Are they doing exactly what they have to do?" – Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.

Excerpt B:

"… there is something that is also stated inside the NWMS to say these things [integration] have to be done to reduce waste because this thing will assist us in this way [in better managing waste]. It [the IWMP] explains: Why you would need cooperatives? We know exactly why they state that. The fact that that was added there, automatically shows that there were certain departments that were actually approached like DTI and the Small Business Units within the province to say this is what we want to do and this is what we have achieved." – Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.

These comments by Allan indicate that the challenge with legislation is not that it does not offer some form of guidance, but that the information provided does not offer solutions for other challenges that officials face outside of the creation of a cooperative. In a follow up interview, Allan expressed that another challenge with the implementation of legislation is that it is typically based on urban areas, thus while the documents are clear in their instruction their applicability to the local context is limited. Officials thus have to find alternative solutions to the integration of officials that suits the challenges that waste pickers would face within their municipalities.

b. The Relationship between Municipal Officials and Cooperative Based Waste Pickers

The relationship between municipal officials and cooperative based waste pickers is great from the perspective of officials. Given that the cooperative based approach has been deemed as the ideal approach to engaging with waste pickers, officials have open lines of communication with the waste pickers.

Potso, the manager of the WMD said that: "we only engage with the registered waste pickers." His junior officials expressed the same sentiments. Mosa said the same thing, stating "we only speak to those in cooperatives" (Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August). Allan, who expressed that he engages with all waste pickers in Sasolburg only has a great relationship with the waste pickers at the Vaalpark Recycling Centre.

While the cooperative model has been idealised, the relationship between officials and cooperative members differs. When officials refer to waste pickers, they mainly refer to those in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. It is thus clear that officials have, thus

far built a great relationship with the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. This case has shown that through great partnerships and open communication lines that transcend officials' responsibilities, integration is possible.

On the other hand, the relationship between officials and other cooperatives is less developed. Officials rely on the forum that they encouraged the waste pickers to join in order to improve communication. Allan expressed that the reason local government in Sasolburg chose to adopt and support the cooperative model was because the research that past employees had conducted emphasised that cooperatives were the best approach to integrating waste pickers in their municipality (see quote below).

> *"I think the structures that government has requires them to… because government is not really keen to assist anyone with actually working in isolation for themselves, and another is also the idea of unemployment. If we look into what is happening in our country at the moment, the unemployment rate is very high. Forming these small groups doesn't say that "people, when you form cooperatives it demands this is your job, but it means there are funds somewhere that can be utilised by you."" Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.*

> *"… how do you incorporate them and make them part of daily activities that are happening in the municipalities? The only way that we saw at that time was that, these people, they must be registered one way or the other. But how can they be registered?" Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.*

As an unfortunate turn of events, the forum mainly lobbies for the Vaalpark Recycling Centre. Waste Pickers have expressed that they feel that the forum is not very effective, stating that the only reason they are in them cooperative is to sell material together. A waste picker expressed that the officials do not care about them. Tlali stated that the main relationship with officials is with the Vaalpark Recycling Centre and not them. They do not receive the same support (Tlali 2018, interview, 27 November). They furthermore feel neglected because officials are supposedly not doing enough to help them get their sorting sites.

c. Municipality-Waste Picker Partnerships

A clear observed partnership that the Metsimaholo Local Municipality would like to have with waste pickers is that of a partnership between registered cooperatives and

themselves. A key term that emerges when engaging with officials is "registration". For the municipality whose practices are informed by KPAs and KPIs, as well as monitoring and evaluation processes, officials try to ensure that they can account for all their practices (practical or official norms).

The local officials note that the adoption of partnerships would be beneficial because the municipality is willing to help but it has to be able to record how it helps community groups in order to access budgeted resources. It is not easy to bargain for a budget that supports activities in the informal sector, noted Potso (Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October) (refer to quote 1 below). His point is echoed by that of Allan (2017) who reminded me that the state is all about numbers (refer to quote 2 below). The state has quotas and KPIs to meet which sometimes do not correlate with those presented by the realities in communities. As such, the municipality is forced to focus on priority matters as stipulated by these instruments in order to continue obtaining funds to function (Allan 2017, Personal communication, 27 September). This becomes a challenge for local official who know where the greatest community needs lie, but are hindered by instruments such as KPIs.

Quote 1:

"… if they register that helps if they want to put a request… First of all they want to see whether they are registered, whether they have got a registration number. Are they registered as an NPO, as a cooperative… can they make money? They will check their history and check whatever. So those that are operating illegally are risking- they are risking themselves because, 1. They are unknown, 2. The criminal element creeps in easily with them as opposed to the ones that are organised… some of the benefits are that if you want a health and safety for them, we invite our safety officer of the municipality, he arranges training, he arranges a workshop, they are being taught with the… moneys… health and safety and so on, labour relations, you invite the labour department, talk to them, they don't refuse because they can't (inaudible at 39.12- Phone ringing). They assist with everything, even if you ask for… if they want to have a function. If they want a catering whatever, you just phone and say these are the people that are. If there is a catering, if there is an event they want to host and there is no venue, there is no food, we make request on their behalf and we get positive responses." - Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.

Quote 2:

This is why I'm saying it is very vital for departments to work together and assist each other, not only working in terms of data or numbers. Because that is what is killing a lot of things at the moment. In South Africa we work with numbers, we don't work with real things. And that is actually the problem. How many cooperatives do we have within the municipality alone? Let us talk about Metsimaholo, we have how many cooperatives? About 8 cooperatives. Are they doing exactly what they have to do? They are not. They are not…" – Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.

Quote 3:

"But after registering, you must be given resources to utilise so that you can fulfil the purpose of why you were registering that cooperative. Is that happening? It's not happening. That's why I'm saying to you, it goes back to numbers. You have registered this thing but are you giving people exactly what you said you were going to give them?" – Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.

The challenge presented above highlights that the municipality's insistence on a partnership is driven by their responsibility to account for the support that they offer user groups, in this case it is the waste pickers. Additionally, this serves as a tool for municipalities to evaluate the work that they do. In quote 3 we can see that the importance of engaging with registered cooperatives is that the municipality can evaluate the number of cooperatives it adopts as well as how they have performed in addressing issues. Allan expresses that he has observed that while cooperatives are getting registered and recognised, local municipalities have mainly focused on increasing the number of cooperatives without addressing the real-life problems faced by these user groups. Through such processes officials can evaluate the work that they do, despite the negative results achieved from an insistence of adopting a cooperative-based approach.

d. Stakeholder Accountability

The development of the cooperative model, as shown in the context chapter, draws on support from various stakeholders, including the district municipality, Sasol Operations and PETCO. Through the development of the project, the waste pickers have remained the central stakeholders and drivers of the project. This approach has encouraged every stakeholder to be an active participant in the project life. While all

the stakeholders have their own mandates to achieve, they have made it a priority to all be invested in the growth of the project. As previously shown, Sasol Operations actively makes an effort to have meetings with all parties present so that minimal information is lost or misinterpreted, the district municipality official said that he makes an effort to frequently visit the recycling centre to have one-on-one engagements with the waste pickers, and the waste management manager said that he avails himself to the waste pickers for any problems that they face. This co-support offered to the waste pickers encourages accountability between stakeholders, but as Kabelo, the Sasol representative (2017) noted, it is very important to keep up with every stakeholder. He said:

> *"I think the most optimal channel [of engagement and participation] is to have multi-party engagements set up. Reason being that the waste pickers, even though they keep record of those meetings through their secretary, are not in a position to share amongst themselves and they do not share with the other stakeholders what we've discussed in the absence of the other stakeholders. So for our meetings to be effective, I have decided that I will not meet with the waste pickers in the absence of the stakeholders in the state because then we will be pulling this way, that way; so it will just be an inefficient exercise. Rather have multi-party stakeholder meetings. If we have operational stuff like going out to identify sites or stuff like that, by all means – but meetings of record and decision making I prefer that we have the state as a stakeholder in the meeting so that we at least share common knowledge and we go along at the same pace, at the same time." – Kabelo 2017, interview, 04 October.*



Figure 9: Director welcoming all waste pickers to the International Waste Pickers Exchange, 23 August 2017

Officials have also made the effort to support events such as the waste pickers' international exchange. The International waste pickers exchange was an event driven by SAWPA representative, Jordan who approached the waste management department to help in hosting an international exchange with waste pickers from Brazil, India and Sasolburg itself. During this event waste pickers shared information and experiences in their various contexts. The Metsimaholo Municipality agreed to host the international exchange in a community hall in Zamdela. During this event, the waste manger, acting director, and supervisors were all present. This high turn-out of officials showed that effort is being made to ensure that all officials that engage with waste pickers are kept well informed and knowledgeable about the developments taking place regarding waste picker integration.

6.2.2. Approach 2: Integration of Independent Street Waste Pickers

The integration of waste pickers that are based on the streets of Sasolburg is different from those that are based in cooperatives. The officials in Sasolburg have struggled with engaging waste pickers on the streets for two main reasons. The first reason being the inaccessibility of waste pickers whose mobility affects the process of building a relationship with the waste pickers. The second reason is that officials are unable to establish control of waste picker activities such as illegal dumping and illegal occupation of municipal land. In this section I focus on how the municipality's relationship with waste pickers has been influenced by the rejection of these waste pickers as an informal group. I thus argue that independent street waste pickers do not get the same support as cooperative based waste pickers due to their informal nature.

a. Engagements with Independent Street Based Waste Pickers

The Metsimaholo Local Municipality does not have a good relationship with the independent street reclaimers (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October 2017). The approach taken by officials in Metsimaholo includes communicating with the waste pickers only when there are issues arising. In the past, officials have had challenges with independent street waste pickers. Previously these waste pickers would collect material from residential bins within the residential areas ahead of the municipal collection truck. They became a challenge for general workers when they would leave material scattered around refuse bags, leaving them untied (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 21 August; John and Monte 2017, Interview, 11 August; General Worker 2017, field notes, 21 August). According to Mosa, independent waste

pickers do not have dedicated sites to sort their material and as such take advantage of open spaces known as green belts throughout Sasolburg (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 21 August). It is interesting note that Mosa sees this as "taking advantage of open spaces". The two images below show, firstly, the remnants of sorted waste near the main road connecting Sasolburg to Zamdela; and secondly, independent street waste pickers in a green belt running away after seeing a municipal car approaching.



Figure 10: Unattended sorting site

The approach to integrating waste pickers on the streets includes communicating with waste pickers only when there are issues with the waste pickers. Therefore, the officials have failed to establish a good relationship with the waste pickers. As Potso (2017) said: "*The relationship between us and the non-organised waste pickers is not good. It's not there actually. Nothing!*" It also includes encouraging waste pickers to join cooperatives because officials have established that they cannot offer waste pickers support individually. Independent street waste pickers are not registered with

any cooperatives although a few that are based in Vaalpark sort and sell some of their material at the Vaalpark Recycling Centre (Pholoto, 2018).

b. Officials' Challenges with Independent Waste Pickers: Mobility

The local officials report that they struggle to access the waste pickers at the street level because they are mobile. Their mobility leads them to constantly move around in search of material, thus it is difficult to identify or pin down their location (See excerpt A below) (John and Monte 2017, interview, 11 September; Potso 2017, interview, 11 October; Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August). Officials note that they speak to different waste pickers and they too sometimes forget who they spoke to, thus they keep repeating the same information to waste pickers who are not interested in the approaches taken by the municipality to support, engage or reprimand them (see excerpt A and C below). Furthermore, the lack of enforceable by-laws means that the officials do not have the right to stop waste pickers from sorting in the spaces that they do irrespective of whether they support the work being done by the waste pickers. Their business may be lucrative, but they prefer that to being stressed about security through cooperatives. The waste pickers do not really understand what a cooperative is. As such, they are challenged by the idea making them reluctant to join (Independent street waste picker 2017, informal interview, 12 September).

I observed that the independent waste pickers were uncomfortable with the presence of officials because they explained that they did not want to join a cooperative because they find that their current model of working suits them. Pretty and Tlali, cooperative leaders, expressed that they call their businesses cooperatives but like street waste pickers they collect and sort materials individually, then only come together to sell materials and to have a body that represents them under the Waste Picker Forum (Tlali 2018, interview, 27 November; Pholoto and Sekhwela 2018, field notes, 29 November). On the other hand, the officials struggled with finding means to disseminate information to all the waste pickers who change all the time and are never found in the exact same places (see excerpt A below). Potso (2017) said that: "*We have, we held meetings, we invited all relevant stakeholders, police, department of labour… We draw up plans of action but we are not winning. We are not winning because they are not consistent. We even talk to the buyers to employ them.*" While his statement covers the relationship of the municipality with all waste pickers, Potso (2017) highlighted that in the absence of independent street waste

pickers efforts are being made to improve their safety, the challenge being the inconsistency of the waste pickers.

Excerpt A:

"Let me just elaborate on what I'm saying. You meet a new person almost every day. When you try to talk to them they'll say: "no we didn't know about this…" Then the next day you get a new person and again… "I didn't know about this"… So you keep starting from point A every day. Even they know they have seen you before but they just think: "okay, he doesn't recognise me because he's talking to many people in a day so he cannot remember I was here yesterday." Sometimes they see you and they run away; because some of these guys do not want to join the cooperatives. Because they feel these guys in the cooperatives are cheating them of money, hence you'll see, when you travel around the factory area, the industrial area; there is a place where these guys are taking things, it is their place of separation and it is illegal." – John 2017, interview, 11 September.

Excerpt B:

"The waste pickers know when we collect waste, they know our areas. Like today, it is Monday, they know where we are going to collect. So already, we are going meet them there. But we also catch them because take the stuff from the plastics from the house owners, and just litter everywhere. They know they must leave the plastic the way they found it, they must take their stuff but they must not tear the plastics and leave everything down there… - John 2017, interview, 11 September.

Excerpt C:

"We tried to register them, we tried for them to have nametags and so on but because today they are here, tomorrow they are no longer there, it is difficult to say "these are the waste pickers" …". – Potso 2017, interview, 11 October.

The main issue that officials feel underlies the challenges with independent street waste pickers is their informal nature. As shown above, officials have made efforts to encourage these waste pickers to join cooperatives in order to get support. More importantly, officials have made it clear that they will not engage with non-registered waste pickers. The reluctance expressed by waste pickers shows that independent street waste pickers try to avoid municipal engagements in fear that they will be reprimanded with the law for illegally sorting material. While fearful of the scrutiny of

the municipality, waste pickers will continue running making it harder for officials to build a relationship and integrate them into the waste management system. For officials, efforts such as engaging various departments to improve the safety of the street waste pickers remain in vain because they have not yet established a relationship of trust and communication. The municipality still lacks a database of independent street waste pickers.

c. Officials' Challenges with Independent Street Waste Pickers: Enforcing the Law

The waste management department in the Metsimaholo Municipality does not have enforceable by-laws to regulate illegal and unwanted waste activities in Sasolburg. According to Potso and Allan, draft by-laws exist but they have not been approved by council. Allan (2018) said that the approval of the by-laws has mainly been held back because it is not a priority to council. He added that a major challenge with the local council is that projects are largely driven through the personal investment of councillors who can gain from rallying for a project. Both Potso (2017) and Allan (2018) expressed that the council present during the beginning of the pilot project showed an interest in the waste picker project which explained why greater progress was made in the earlier stages of the project. I observed that the turbulent nature of municipal politics in the council (refer to chapter 4) have affected processes such as approving the by-laws and furthermore investing in the waste pickers and waste picker projects. They are no longer prioritised.

The lack of by-laws currently affects the relationship that officials have with waste pickers who sort their material on municipal land illegally as the remains of their sorted material constitutes illegally dumped waste. During a tour around Sasolburg, Mosa (2017) showed me abandoned sorting spaces. He explained that waste pickers leave their unwanted material after sorting, which municipal general workers then have to collect. Officials in Sasolburg take pride in the cleanliness of the town so litter and illegal dumping has been a concern for them. During their quarterly District Waste forum meeting officials brought out their previous awards for Sasolburg's cleanliness, maintaining that they would like to restore their town to its former glory (Manager 2017, District Waste Forum Meeting, 24 August). Officials said that they struggle with illegal dumping.

An observation that I made while shadowing the acting landfill supervisor was that waste pickers would sort their material in places where dumping is prohibited. As such, they were illegally dumping when they left behind the remains of recyclables and that

waste material needs to be removed. The challenge that the municipality then faces is that it does not have by-laws to allow them to stop waste pickers from sorting in greenbelts (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 25 August). On the other hand, some waste pickers were seen to be rummaging through waste that has been illegally dumped by residents. In these cases, there is an advantage to the municipality to having waste pickers and the municipality needs to find a way to remunerate waste pickers who are able to clear the waste that they are unable to collect.



Figure 11: Informal sorting site on vacant municipal land hidden behind a major road entering Sasolburg

The lack of by-laws has left officials vulnerable to the challenges of engaging with informal groups. Given that the municipality takes pride in keeping their town clean, some of the sorting spaces used by waste pickers remain undesirable. This causes friction in municipal-waste picker engagements as officials do not have a solution to controlling where waste pickers can sort and enforcing the law when it comes to illegal dumping. Understandably, waste pickers fear officials as their livelihood sources are threatened. This forces them to hide, making it more difficult for the municipality to engage with them in order to find solutions that serve both. Integration in this context is thus failing. The next section explores the relationship between officials and independent waste pickers in relation to already discussed challenges.

d. The Relationship between Municipal Officials and Independent Waste Pickers

The officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality have a poor relationship with independent street waste pickers. The officials in the municipality say that they have a good relationship with the waste pickers. Given the changing perspectives of waste pickers, as mentioned in the previous section, officials have made efforts to have a good relationship with waste pickers. Officials say that one of the main challenges

that they have with this specific group of waste pickers has been that waste pickers would tear refuse bags after searching for waste material. After engaging the waste pickers and asking them to close the bags without leaving waste on the ground, waste pickers have been cooperating. A general worker said that the waste pickers collect waste before they come by and one rarely finds open bags or waste on the ground (Ground Worker, personal communication, August 2017). The general worker added that in the past this was a very big issue because it slowed them down when doing collection on the truck but this has since been resolved and they no longer have any problems with the waste pickers. Potso (2017) added that while this is not an issue, it was difficult resolving this challenge because they would speak to one waste picker or a group of waste pickers but the message would fall on deaf ears. A supervisor said that this was difficult to relay to waste pickers because you would speak to one of them and they would pretend as if you had never told them to stop leaving bags scattered. They, as officials had no way of identifying waste pickers.

> *"When we meet them [independent street waste pickers] we try to encourage them that they must, if they find the plastics or whatever they must close it. Some of them they cooperate but some of them they don't." – John 2017, interview, 11 September.*
>
> *"It's easier with the ones that are registered because you know who you are talking to. Its easier to talk to people who are registered and then we know where to find them." – Monte 2017, interview, 11 September.*

I observed that the officials have little control over the waste pickers roaming the streets. During my tour of Sasolburg with Mosa (2017), in a municipal vehicle, I witnessed street-based waste pickers running away from their materials with their trolley. Mosa (2017) said that the waste pickers were running away because they knew that what they are doing is prohibited. He added that: "*if [we] had by-laws, Jokudu, this would not be happening*" (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 25 August). The adoption of by-laws for the waste management department has not been a priority for council. According to Mosa (2017), the waste pickers run because they do not want to be chased away by officials, especially after being told to stop leaving waste in public spaces (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 25 August). My engagements with other waste pickers and the general Sasolburg context revealed that waste pickers are fearful of having their materials confiscated by the officials.

The municipality is not efficient in using available resources to bridge the relationship gap with street-based waste pickers. While it is true that they have not been effective in engaging waste pickers, much more can be done to attract waste pickers. There are no awareness programmes outside separation at source that let waste pickers know what the municipality can do for waste pickers. For this reason, waste pickers who are unwelcoming of the cooperative model are systematically distanced.

6.2.3. Approach 3: Integration of Waste Pickers on the Landfill Site

The approach to integration at the landfill site differs significantly from the model used in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre as well as with independent street waste pickers. Landfill based waste pickers work independently; A cooperative was once formed but waste pickers chose to revert to working independently because the cooperative model was not sustainable for them (Waste pickers 2018, personal communication, 28 November; Pholoto and Sekhwela 2018, personal communication, 29 November 2018.) While the process of integrating waste pickers through the Separation@Source programme was started with waste pickers from the landfill site the presence of a huge number of waste pickers has remained. The challenges that the municipality faced with the presence of waste pickers at the landfill site have not diminished and some local officials feel that the presence of the waste pickers at the landfill site as well as in the streets has led to more challenges. Some officials believe that the municipality poorly manages the landfill site and has little control over the activities taking place (Lauren and Mosa 2018, interview, 29 November). Although they are aware of these pressing issues such as the absence of guards and the unwillingness of waste pickers to fully cooperate with officials' requests hinder officials from addressing the issues that emerge on a daily basis.

a. Engagements with Landfill Site Based Waste pickers

The history of officials' engagements with landfill site-based waste pickers in Sasolburg represents the beginning of integrating waste pickers in Sasolburg. Officials have not been pleased with the presence of waste pickers on the landfill site. Despite these challenges waste pickers put in efforts to organise themselves into cooperatives that sorted and sold waste on the landfill site (refer to Chapter 4 for context).

The engagements with waste pickers on the Sasolburg landfill site mainly include holding meeting when issues arise or visiting the landfill site when there are conflicts that need mediation. Waste pickers often call officials when they find items in refuse bags that should not be there. One incident that Mosa (2017) explained was that a

foetus had been found in the bags, leading the municipality to investigate where it had come from (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 21 August). What is clear is that the waste pickers, as they continue to state, simply want to be allowed access to waste material.

Thus far, officials have allowed the waste pickers to stay on the landfill site despite this being an inhabitable space. The challenge for the municipality and the district municipality is that some waste pickers still live on the landfill site. This is an issue given that living on the landfill site poses safety and health hazards for the waste pickers. Trudy, a gate controller said that her job is mainly to count the number of trucks that enter the landfill site and record the number of loads they bring as well as the estimated tonnage of the truck during working hours (Trudy 2018, Interview, 29 November). She only enters the landfill site once a month just to have a look at what is happening.

Mosa (2018) said that the gate to the landfill site has been stolen, therefore they cannot lock the landfill site (Mosa 2018, interview, 29 November). Lauren and Mosa (2018) said that once the gate controller leaves, the landfill site fully belongs to the waste pickers. They added that what we see when we enter the landfill site is a road that is cleared every single morning by the municipal front-end loader because waste is dumped on the road every night. In the evenings waste pickers competing for materials block the entrance to the landfill site; in addition to that trucks that want to avoid paying for municipal services perpetuate the situation by dumping waste along the road as they are approached by waste pickers. Officials cannot do anything about this or control the landfill site because these activities happen after hours and no personnel is employed to control trucks. Neither are there by-laws to regulate activity.

Many of these challenges affect how both junior and senior officials perceive the waste pickers. Waste pickers are seen as a nuisance that the municipality has to deal with daily, yet as long as they are not stopping municipal work they are left to their own vices.

The approach taken by the municipality to engage waste pickers, and furthermore integrate them, has currently taken on a hands-off approach. As the sections to follow will explore, officials have failed to establish rules and regulations on the landfill site. With a lack of security and uncontrolled activities taking place after hours, the landfill

site stands as a liability that the municipality is failing or rather choosing to not control beyond what they currently do. The constant mention of the establishment of a new landfill site is treated by the officials as hope to correct what they perceive as past mistakes.

b. Controlling activities on the landfill site

Integrating waste pickers on the Sasolburg landfill site has largely focused on the municipality gaining control of the landfill site. The officials noted that their task is to offer service delivery, thus they always put residents first, and issues such as damaged vehicles on municipal property are a serious problem. Not only do the residents then view the waste pickers negatively, the municipality is "forced" to do the same because it has to keep residents happy and well serviced. They are forced because from a social point of view they are obligated to favour the residents who pay service fees to have their waste collected and to dispose of materials that the refuse removal truck cannot collect. The perception that the municipality has of waste pickers is slowly changing, but that of the residents is yet to change outside of the Vaalpark Recycling Centre Project. Only residents based in the vaalpark communtity who partake in recycling are aware of the service offered by waste pickers.



Figure 12: The Deneysville Landfill Site: Waste Pickers sort outside the landfill site as opposed to inside

Given that the Sasolburg Landfill site has been rendered full and unusable, a new one will be established. Considering plans to manage the new Sasolburg landfill site differently, Allan (2017) stated that they will be looking into other municipalities in Gauteng as well as Limpopo for guidelines on how to better manage their landfill site:

> *"We also need to check the local municipalities to find out why they are not able to manage the landfill sites properly and why they need assistance*

because local municipalities, particularly in our province, I don't know why it is, but when you look into other province like Limpopo their landfill sites are in good conditions. Not all of them are 100% but at least 80 to 90 % I can say that there is something happening there. But when you look into what is happening in this province, particularly in our district, it is like we are at zero…" - Allan 2017, interview, 24 September.

For Allan (2017), the importance of looking to other municipalities is based on the fact that other municipalities have shown progress in better managing the challenges that their landfills face. In our follow up interview, he (Allan, 2018) made the critical point that it is important to not dwell too much on how metropolitan municipalities manage challenges. He said that a key problem with legislation is that it is largely based on urban contexts which makes it difficult for local municipalities to adopt policies and guidelines (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December). This in line with his 2017 remarks on broadening their scope to other provinces shows that officials are trying to find solutions through trial and error.

c. Engaging at a different level

In attempts to integrate waste pickers, Mosa (2017) made changes to the ways that the waste pickers use the space on the landfill site. As he was acting as a landfill supervisor he noted that one of the reasons why the landfill site was in a state of chaos was because no one had made the effort to engage with the waste pickers in a manner that they could relate to (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 12 September). Mosa (2017) expressed that one of the reasons could have been that the main landfill site supervisor is white; because of this he is not able to speak to the waste pickers in a way that they can relate to (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 12 September). During his time as a landfill supervisor, Mosa (2017) brought the waste pickers together to talk about the way they were using the landfill site, after presenting his idea to Potso– his superior and manager. During my tour around Sasolburg, Mosa (2017) showed me that he had manged to rearrange the space on the landfill site so that the municipal truck was able to drive through the landfill site and dispose of waste all the way to the end of the site as opposed to the entrance area (Mosa 2017, personal communication, 12 September).

The municipality did not have an effective means of dumping waste, and like many other landfill sites across the country, the municipality does not sort or recover waste after collection. This municipality is faced with the challenge of minimising waste while

in the process of establishing a new landfill site. They furthermore do not recognise the waste pickers' material recovery efforts as a service, but rather that they are doing waste pickers a favour by allowing them to stay and sort waste on the landfill site. Samson (2018) identified three characterisations of waste picker integration. One of the characterisations she identifies is the concept of a "charity model" (refer to literature review). Like this case in Sasolburg, the charity model conceptualised by Samson (2018) identifies a strong focus on the work done by waste pickers as opposed to integrating waste pickers into the municipal waste management system. Samson adds "waste pickers are passive targets of local government programs" (Samson, 2018: 2). Like this conceptualisation, Potso (2017) was adamant that the local municipality had done enough for the waste picker through resource support "for free" (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October).

> *"We allow them to use the landfill site for free, we allow them to store their waste there and everything. For free" Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October.*
>
> *"Some of the discussions, in that cooperatives were formed for those that wanted to listen and they were assisted all the way up until they stood on their two legs, we made land available for free." Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October.*
>
> *"The municipality has assisted them with this… for free… But there are conditions, that they do not build a permanent structure, they don't build whatever, whatever." Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October.*

The IWMP (MLM, 2014: 30) includes waste minimisation strategies that recommend that a 2-bin system is started for Separation at Source and that the municipality could "consider recycling cooperatives to ensure minimisation of waste into the landfill site." The suggestion of the IWMP (MLM, 2014) alongside guidance from the NWMS have put emphasis on the adoption of cooperative models as the means of integration. The result has been that independent waste pickers are neglected when it comes to integration into the municipal solid waste management system. While officials and waste pickers have found a way to co-exist on the landfill site, the work of these waste pickers remains officially unrecognised.

The integration of waste pickers is also challenged in this context by the existing narratives that define what a well-functioning landfill site should be like. The officials of the Metsimaholo local municipality feel that their landfill site is not up to par with other landfill sites. As both Allan and Posto have mentioned, the municipality is looking into

other municipalities to draw lessons on how to manage the landfill site before it is established. The intentions of their research are good but they do not explain how waste pickers will fit into the new management plans.

d. The Relationship between Independent Landfill Site Waste Pickers and Officials

The relationship between officials and independent landfill waste pickers highlights the shift in power over the years. In the past, officials exerted their power by ill-treating waste pickers on the landfill site. Over time, officials have had a shift in perspective of the waste pickers. But their relationship remains turbulent as daily challenges affect municipal work on the landfill site. This section explores the relationship between the officials and waste pickers and how they have managed to co-exist on the landfill site.

Literature has shown that in the last couple of decades waste pickers have started getting recognition for their work, and are being integrated into municipal solid waste management systems all around the world through approaches such as the cooperative approach in Brazil (Dias and Alves, 2008). Part of this change has also involved a shift in the perceptions of waste pickers, including how officials refer to waste pickers and how they support waste pickers. The relationship between officials and the waste pickers on the Sasolburg landfill site can be seen as an evolving relationship. Potso (2017) says that the Metsimaholo Local Municipality has been supportive to the waste pickers and have done what they can for the waste pickers (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October; Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August). The officials have also said that much of what they have done has been done "*for free*" (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October) therefore there is not more that they can do.

As previously mentioned, the manager of the waste management department as well as the clerk mentioned that the municipality cannot offer any support and does not have a relationship with any of the waste pickers other than those that are under cooperatives (Potso 2017, interview, 11 October; Mosa 2017, interview, 25 August). Interestingly, the officials engage with the waste pickers on the landfill site frequently. During a tour of the landfill site, waste pickers would greet the acting supervisor, Mosa, and would talk to him showing that they were very familiar with him. Other officials such as Allan, from the district municipality said that they too visit the landfill site frequently and speak to the waste pickers about their challenges. For Allan (2017 and 2018) the waste pickers feel rejected and that "*no one cares about them*" thus he

makes the effort to visit not only the landfill site but all waste pickers in order to build relationships and trust, particularly because "*they [waste pickers] do not trust easily*" (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December.) He added that they do not trust easily because municipalities offer promises but not deliver, thus the waste pickers become sceptical when officials present themselves.

The landfill supervisor in the waste management department said that her relationship with the waste pickers is good (Lauren 2018, interview, 28 November.) She said this this had only been her first month as a landfill supervisor but from her observations their relationship has been stable. Lauren (2018) visits the landfill site at least once a day to check on the municipal workers. In her rounds to the landfill site she meets and sees the waste pickers but does not interact with them unless something is wrong. She gave an example of an incident that had happened two weeks prior; A fire started by the waste pickers had gotten out of control and the fire department had to be called in to try and control the situation. Waste pickers have been told countless times to stop starting fires on the landfill site because they pose a danger to the waste pickers themselves, particularly when the fire becomes uncontrollable like it had (Lauren and Mosa 2018, interview, 28 November.) Mosa (2018) added that the waste pickers are a problem because they do not listen. He said: "*they own it! [the landfill site.]*" he explained that the waste pickers get called to talk and be warned about the dangers of some of the activities they partake in but the waste pickers always agree to do as told, yet within days of a meeting they find waste pickers having reverted back to old behaviours. The image below shows the landfill site covered in smoke, a sign that waste pickers continue to burn material on the landfill site.



Figure 13: The landfill site covered under a cloud of smoke from burning materials

The municipal officials have, evidently, made efforts to offer support to the waste pickers on the landfill site. They have expressed that they have had plans to offer resources in the past but the key issue that remains is the lack of management of the landfill site. As presented above, officials have allowed the waste pickers to continue activities when landfill site. The IWMP (MLM, 2014: 24) emphasises that the municipality must deal with informal waste pickers burning material on the landfill site through an improved legislative approach. Guidance by the IWMP (MLM, 2014: 24) advices that: "the burning of waste might have serious implications both in terms of human health and the environment at large." The lack of enforceable by-laws limits officials from further controlling some activities on the landfill site. The officials of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality do not have the tools to manage the waste pickers on the landfill site, they have thus become complacent to the activities taking place, only intervening when necessary.

6.3. Consolidating the Three Approaches

The three approaches to waste pickers integration presented in the sections above (sections 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4) highlight the different ways that municipal officials in local government have engaged with waste pickers in Sasolburg. With three different waste picker groups, circumstantial reasons have resulted in differing engagements that are informed by relationships and challenges. For the integration of waste pickers in cooperatives, integration has been a progressive initiative. As shown through the literature, there is no singular approach to waste picker integration, thus differing understandings by officials in this context reflects that the concept of integration is one that can be applied differently in different contexts. Furthermore, it is a task for municipal officials that can only be improved through communication between officials and waste pickers.

This chapter has shown that challenges emerge from breakdowns in communication between officials and waste picker groups. Key similarities that can be observed in the integration of waste pickers in Sasolburg are that municipal officials are struggling with defining the role that they should play in integrating waste pickers. While there are different approaches that can be adopted, it is important for officials to have a common understanding of integration inter- and intra- governmentally as well as with waste pickers in order to ensure that integration benefits waste pickers without causing a strain on the municipality or the practices of officials.

6.4. Understanding the Waste Sector

According to the District official, the officials of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality do not all have a good understanding of the waste sector, and as highlighted above furthermore lack a common understanding of integration (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December). Waste pickers are not prioritised, as Allan (2018) said: "they do not know that they are sitting on a resource." He noted that the officials view the waste sector as a livelihood strategy for people who lack jobs. As such they do not value the benefits that the waste pickers offer the waste management system and environment in Sasolburg. The quote below is an expression from an official who believes that the municipality is not making the progress that they would expect with regards to waste picker integration. The officials in this municipality are following the protocols for engagements with stakeholders. They set up meetings and invite any other relevant stakeholders. They engage the waste pickers as officially as they can and insist on the waste pickers recording meeting minutes. The officials thus feel that following the correct procedures for engagement should result in progress. The lack of progress, they feel, comes from the fact that the waste pickers are inconsistent in their responses and demands from the municipality. Additionally, the lack of consistency is about balancing the needs of the different waste picker groups who all expect different types of support from the officials. As seen, the cooperatives would like to be seen as service providers but also expect resource and infrastructure support from the municipality; the street based waste pickers want to continue as they have been working but would appreciate sorting sites that are conveniently located; and, lastly, the landfill site based waste pickers only expect access to the landfill site.

> *"we have, we have. We have spoken to the recyclers… we held meetings, we invited all relevant stakeholders, police, department of labour, Sasol Industries and all other stakeholders that are relevant. We speak, discuss, we elect committees, we draw up plans of action, but we are not winning. We are not winning because they are not consistent. We even talk to the buyers to employ them. When they started they used to be employed by the recycling company to go work for them, but they saw that ugh working for these guys is wasting our time, so they would rather sell direct to anybody who comes there and apparently it has subsided because residents noticed that these people, as much as they are a nuisance… they are trying to earn a living honestly. Because even if they have opened the bag, they've taken whatever, they'll*

put back whatever needs to be put back and tie the bag and go back to the next one. So that challenge is not much now. After having drummed it up to their ears." Potso 2017, Interview, 11 October.

The above quote shows that municipal officials have expectations of the waste pickers that the waste pickers are not yet at. They are frustrated at the challenges they experience with the waste pickers despite having a basic understanding of the role that they play. Waste pickers need support in learning how to function as business. They get support from various entities such as Sasol Rejuvenation and Sasol for mentorship. Municipal officials on the other hand forget this important facet of the waste picking and recycling sector in their town. As such their lack of understanding of the waste sector means that they are not effectively addressing the key challenges that impact on and influence their relationship with the waste pickers. The section to follow consolidates the key findings that have emerged in this chapter.

6.5. Addressing the Lack of Capacity

A key problem within the Metsimaholo Local Municipality is the lack of capacity to carry out integration, which stems from the lack of prioritisation of waste management issues. Allan said that a big issue with the municipality and council is that they do not prioritise waste management because councillors prioritise projects during their term in office based on the interests that had them appointed (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December). He added that projects suffer when new councils are appointed given their short 5 year term (Allan 2018, interview, 04 December 2018). According to WMO guidelines, one WMO has to be appointed under each municipality because few WMOs encourages accountability and facilitates integrated governance.

This benefit is very important but the Sasolburg case shows that 1 WMO, or having only one person responsible for waste issues is ineffective. Allan stated that his designation as a WMO takes up most of his time. Potso said that over the years some of his appointed functions have been relieved to other departments or the district municipality, yet he is still overwhelmed with work. He went on to mention that they depend on the community to be active in projects regarding the environment. This not only speaks to the lack of capacity but the municipality's inability to prioritise recycling. The lack of prioritisation of recycling means that integrating waste pickers cannot be put at the forefront.

> *"As I have said, the challenge with local government is the lack of capacity or skills when it comes to the recycling industry. There are some skills of waste management but the industry, in waste management, they don't see that. Also, politics can change everything at local government. You can work with this administration this time, next time it's a different administration, so everything is different. Those are the challenges, but also, as we have said, corruption. Implementation is at that level. So, when it comes to implementation, it is local government that implements." – Jordan 2017, Interview, 24 August.*

As Pholoto (2018) observed in her research, the municipality has not done much with regards to raising awareness for S@S, a programme which the municipality lists as its community programme for waste minimisation awareness in the 2016/2017 IDP (MLM, 2016/17). Capacity limitations are a hindrance to waste picker integration in Sasolburg because this task has not been prioritised by officials.

6.2. Conclusion

The municipality's reluctance to integrate waste pickers comes from their need to ensure that waste pickers are capable of taking on their responsibility as a service provider. A clear distinction is observed in the 3 approaches I mention because the different groups have given the perception of how they are capable. Waste pickers in cooperatives can offer the services but much work can be done with the landfill and the streets. The issue that remains is the willingness of officials to support other waste pickers and prepare for when they are ready to come to the municipality, thus continuing with the bottom-up approach. The officials in Metsimaholo still struggle with the informal aspects of supporting waste picker integration despite their willingness to offer support and limited understanding of the waste sector. Many of the changes that are currently taking place highlight a change in the common narrative of waste pickers. It is in Sasolburg where waste pickers and reclaimers are viewed as an integral part of the waste management system.

This chapter has analysed the concept of integration and the pragmatic approach that the municipality has adopted to facilitating legislative duties. The chapter has also challenged the notion that the Sasolburg case is a model for successful integration by addressing some of the persistent challenges that officials face. The

chapter that follows brings together the findings from chapter 4, 5 and 6 to conclude the research report.

CHAPTER 7

7. Conclusion

This chapter addresses the main and sub questions asked. It also concludes the study with recommendations for further research. The problem statement presented at the beginning of this research report highlighted the lack of guiding instruments for municipal officials in waste picker integration. It identified that officials adopt practical norms in the absence of official norms in order to address challenges faced.

The findings from the Metsimaholo Local Municipality presented a case that brought to light the key challenges that local municipal officials are faced with. Chapters 5 and 6 highlighted the efforts, shortcomings and innovative solutions from local municipal officials where there was limited guidance in engaging waste pickers, particularly given that waste picker integration was not the status-quo at the early stages of this integration process.

The sections below bring fourth the main findings that emerged from the case of waste picker integration in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality.

7.1. Research Overview

This research report has studied the officials in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality and their engagements with three groups of waste pickers in Sasolburg: Cooperative-based waste pickers, independent street-based waste pickers, and independent landfill site-based waste pickers. Each of these different forms of engagements showed the relationships that officials have with waste pickers as well as the challenges that they face, which in turn shape their relationships and ability to engage with waste pickers.

The officials' relationship with cooperative based waste pickers is the only recognised relationship within the waste management department. Officials engaged with the cooperative based waste pickers effectively after having asked them to create a waste pickers forum that serves as a representative of all the waste pickers and the challenges they face. The relationship between officials and waste pickers at the Vaalpark Recycling Centre is given priority over other waste picker cooperatives. Based on the plans presented in Sasol's offsets programme, the Vaalpark Recycling Centre is intended to be the core of the cooperative community as it will serve as the main centre where waste pickers will gather and sell recyclables. As a result, the recycling centre has received more attention and members of other cooperatives

feel neglected by the municipal officials because their cooperatives have not yet been fully prioritised despite this being an on-going project.

Potso insisted that the municipality does not have a relationship with the independent waste pickers. The officials face challenges engaging street-based waste pickers because they generally hide from the municipality in fear of being reprimanded for occupying municipal property without permission. The relationship with landfill-based waste pickers differs with the street-based waste pickers in that officials are aware that the presence of the waste pickers on the landfill site has been beneficial to helping reduce the amount of waste that remains on the landfill site. However, they do not engage with the waste pickers unless their activities affect municipal waste disposal. Waste pickers on the landfill site only want to be allowed to stay on the landfill site, but the municipal officials are faced with the challenge of allowing waste pickers to stay on the landfill site despite the environmental and health threats. One of these challenges is that waste pickers burn waste material on the landfill site which is a threat to the waste pickers should a fire become uncontrollable.

The report also brought to light the limited capacity and limited prioritisation of waste management, which could be observed as a response to the responsibility to collect and dispose of waste through service delivery. Potso's official and professional norms do not prioritise the integration of waste pickers as the KPIs and IDP in the department place a greater focus on service delivery with little reference to the diversification of solid waste management practices.

The report discussed the instruments available to officials for the integration of waste pickers, these being their key performance indicators, their integrated waste management plan and their integrated development plan. The report showed that officials have to grapple with balancing their key responsibilities while engaging with waste pickers. In reality, the officials in the waste management department see waste picker integration as the responsibility of the LED department. As such, they consider the efforts they put into engaging with waste pickers outside of issues that affect the department's ability to provide a service, as a favour to the waste pickers.

The key findings that emerged from the research included that:

- Municipal officials lack guidance in the integration of waste pickers both in terms of support through prioritised programmes and through municipal indicators and policy documents.
- Waste management is not prioritised in the municipality. The integrated development plan recognised the need for a community awareness programme regarding the waste pickers which is in line with the recommendations presented in the IWMP of 2014 (MLM, 2014). The key performance indicators on the other hand do not list any projects that support the integration of waste pickers or their integration into the solid waste management system. As such officials place their efforts in achieving their indicators in key performance areas, thus reflecting that the need to diversify waste disposal methods or integrate waste pickers is not a priority.
- Municipal officials only see integration as the contracting of registered waste pickers once they are registered as a cooperative. They differentiate offering support to waste pickers with incorporating them into the municipal solid waste management system. Legislative and policy documents encourage the integration of waste pickers through the development of cooperatives, particularly the NWMS of 2011. This model of integration offers officials a means of formalising their engagements with waste pickers particularly given that municipal officials typically avoid engaging with the informal sector given political complexity that comes with these engagements. The insistence on only integrating cooperatives of registered waste pickers results in the neglect of independent waste pickers. It also reinforces the lack of considerations to develop other forms of registration of waste pickers to facilitate a more inclusive approach to integration.
- The officials in the WMD engage with all the three groups of waste pickers in different ways. They have focused on integrating the waste pickers in the Vaalpark Recycling centre in order to portray to other waste pickers a model that can be supported by the municipality as a form of waste picker integration. They have developed an understanding with waste pickers based on the landfill site that allows them to continue recovering waste as long as their activities do not disrupt those of the municipality. Lastly, they have struggled to develop a relationship with independent street-based waste pickers. While they learn different ways to possibly integrate this group of waste

pickers, they currently only engage when conflicts such as illegal dumping and the unauthorised occupation of municipal property.

- Municipal officials are willing to offer waste pickers support but the current municipal system does not effectively allow them to do so. Interventions and projects within the municipality are driven by national and provincial government initiatives which are not informed by the realities faced at the local government level. Thus, there is misalignment between key performance areas at the local level and policy and initiatives from national government such as the NWMS of 2011.

All these can be expanded on in relation to the questions posed at the beginning of the research report. The sections to follow discuss the findings in relation to the key questions asked.

7.2. Return to sub questions

The main sub-questions that I asked at the beginning of the research included an investigation into the instruments that the municipality adopted to facilitate integration, the support and/limitations that the WMD officials experienced in their engagements with waste pickers, the overlaps and conflicts in integrating waste pickers in relation to other key stakeholders in Sasolburg, and officials' understanding of waste picker integration. Below are responses to key findings as they relate to the sub-questions presented.

1. *How does the local municipal officials' department of waste management in the Metsimaholo Local Municipality understand the 'integration' of informal waste pickers?*

The term integration is one that was not familiar to all the participants interviewed for this research report. The engagement of officials with waste pickers was considered given that a key part of integrating waste pickers involves engagements with them. Different participants in the waste management department expressed their understandings of integration or the ways in which they engage with waste pickers.

Potso, the manager of the waste management department expressed that cooperatives and integration are "buzzwords" in waste management thus implying that the integration of waste pickers is a topic that cannot be ignored. It is thus a key issue that officials must engage irrespective of whether they support the integration

of waste pickers or not. Potso was adamant that the role of the waste management department is and has been the management of waste and service delivery. In addition, he said that the LED department was initially responsible for the integration of waste pickers. He added that the support that they offer waste pickers is "free" and a service to the waste pickers given that they do not see waste picker integration as their sole responsibility.

Drawing on the CSIR waste picker integration brief where it was suggested that EPR programmes could help reduce the pressure on already struggling South African Municipalities in solid waste management (Godfrey and Phukubye, 2016), officials in this department have shown that they have many responsibilities that take priority over waste picker integration.

As shown in the literature, integration is understood and applied differently in different contexts. The GIZ (2015) drew on Gunsilius, Chaturvedi and Scheinburg (2011) to highlight classifications of interventions for waste picker integration, these being welfare based, rights based, formalisation and technical interventions to name a few. These categorisations highlight that there is no one way to practice integration, but that different approaches can be adopted to suit different contexts. In this case of waste picker integration in Sasolburg, I identified three typologies to waste picker integration. These being how officials engaged with landfill, street, and cooperative based waste pickers. The importance of these differing typologies lies in helping to understand how municipal officials understand waste picker integration based on the ways in which they practice.

The lack of a single definition emerging from the case study reflects that this municipality has not yet found its own way of facilitating integration that is widely accepted by both the municipality and waste pickers in Sasolburg. The development of the pilot project and the municipal buy-in to support waste picker integration reflects the municipal officials' willingness to find an approach that supports waste pickers, particularly given that integration is a relatively new task that has not been adapted into their key performance indicators. Considering the above, the findings have shown that municipal officials have leaned towards integration through cooperatives as a common definition and understanding of integration within Sasolburg.

Waste picker integration, as practiced by municipal officials, is mainly about developing one model for the integration of all waste pickers so that there is a singular approach that can be presented to waste pickers who would like to be a part of the municipal solid waste management system. The focus on the Vaalpark recycling centre and the insistence on it being a successful project stems from the fact that there is policy and planning backing for the integration of waste pickers through cooperatives. As shown in the findings, municipal officials encourage independent waste pickers to join cooperatives, while some officials see the organisation of waste pickers on the landfill site as a cooperative. This shows that the greater vision in this municipality is integration through cooperatives, thus measuring integration by the number of cooperatives within Sasolburg as well as the number that are supported by the municipality through province's support for cooperatives or through Sasol's offset projects.

2. *How do the roles of the main non-state stakeholders overlap or conflict in managing waste and achieving integration?*

The overlap of non-state stakeholders with the local municipality have had both positive and negative impacts on either the practices of officials or the engagements with waste pickers.

The involvement of Sasol helps highlight that the task of integration should not burden the officials given that the stakeholders are all responsible for different aspects of integration which run independently of each other. The tasks taken by Sasol such as training waste pickers to run cooperatives can be held independent of the municipality provided that the municipality is consulted and well informed of the tasks taking place. This allows officials to focus on other aspects of the integration of waste pickers that are independent of tasks such as offering business knowledge to the waste pickers.

Gunsilius (2012) noted that organisation by waste pickers is key to waste picker integration. Indeed, it was waste pickers in Metsimaholo, with the support of PETCO and PACSA, who drove integration. Waste pickers sought clear support from the municipal officials in their local municipality which has in turn allowed officials to improve how they engage with the waste pickers by expressing that they deem

integration to be the formation of cooperatives that can later be contracted by the municipality to collect waste as service providers.

In various cases, the role played by non-state stakeholders helps in improving and brokering the relationship between officials and waste pickers. The waste pickers, through Sasol, have mentors to help guide them in the day-to-day practices of running a cooperative. Additionally, there is support from Sasol Rejuvenation where, as shown in the findings, Ruan and Peter have played a hands-off mentoring role. A key point they presented was that the support offered by initial sponsors to the Vaalpark pilot project was prematurely discontinued. Waste pickers still need a lot of support in learning and building their cooperative. Yet, the Vaalpark recycling centre is seen as a cooperative that should function more independently than it does. Communication between the municipal officials and waste pickers is thus important for integration to take place.

3. *What policy instruments and tools has the Metsimaholo Local Municipality adopted to facilitate the integration of informal waste pickers?*

The municipal officials do not actively use locally defined instruments and tools for the integration of waste pickers in as much as they draw from their practical norms alongside their official norms to facilitate integration or engagements with waste pickers.

As shown through the findings, the instruments discussed throughout this document (these being the WMD's Key Performance Areas, the IWMP as well as the IDP) make mention of the waste pickers but do not discuss plans in place to integrate waste pickers. The IDP showed that the waste management department considers engagements with the waste pickers through a key performance area: as a community awareness programme. The IWMP on the other hand acknowledges the presence of waste pickers on the landfill site and the need to create programmes to manage the activities happening on the landfill site such as developing by-laws (MLM, 2014). The IWMP also suggests the municipality draw on the waste pickers for their recycling services to help reduce the amount of waste that ends up in the landfill site (*ibid*.).

The literature showed that many municipalities in the global South and South Africa are struggling to manage waste sustainably (Ezeah, 2013). In addition to raising waste

tonnages due to urbanisation, there has also been poor waste management which results from the poor management of municipal funding amongst various reasons. The need to integrate waste pickers thus emerges with benefits for municipalities such as an improved service delivery and a reduction of costs in waste collection and disposal amongst many other economic and environmental benefits (Ezeah, 2013). Considering the observed findings and literature the municipality brought to light the disconnect between dominant discussions through literature, emergent findings from ground-level research on municipalities and the challenges that they face in terms of integrating waste pickers. The available instruments reinforce the lack of prioritisation of waste pickers or recycling and separation at source within the department. While the literature presented in chapter 2 showed that integration is beneficial to municipal waste management systems, in this case officials' practices showed that the task of integrating waste pickers is challenging because their instruments to govern waste management in the department are mainly focused on achieving improved service delivery. While documents such as the IWMP of 2014 encouraged diversification of waste management, the department has not yet shifted its priorities to reduce waste that ends up in the landfill site. As the findings showed, the department is currently focused on the task of establishing a new landfill site given that the current one is full and it is important that a new one is quickly established in order to carry on servicing the town. The WMDs KPIs focus on service delivery and the improvement of the waste management (MLM, 2017; MLM, 2016; and MLM, 2015). Greater importance in the municipality is placed on the creation of a new landfill site over the diversification of waste collection and disposal.

4. *What support and/or limitations have local state officials in the municipality experienced with regards to integrating informal waste pickers in SWM?*

A limitation identified by the officials in integrating waste pickers can be related to their stating that the IWMP had not been implement due to a lack of funding. With a lack of funding, suggestions from the IWMP such as Separation at Source and Integration through the contracting of cooperatives is not possible. This is further reinforced by the prioritisation of service delivery which entails collection and disposal of waste over the recycling of waste or integration of waste pickers. Literature has shown that municipalities have not diversified their waste management systems in the

global south. Waste pickers have found a niche within the existing solid waste management system.

Much of the support that municipal officials have received with the integration of waste pickers within the municipality has come from intergovernmental support. The provincial government has stepped in to help grow cooperatives within the municipality, outside of the pilot project. The Fezile Dabi district municipality has also been a key support system to the Metsimaholo municipality because they have the role of offering support to the waste pickers that is inclusive of advice and offering resources and infrastructure where needed. Additionally, the district municipality has worked on ensuring that local government plays a role creating relationships with the waste pickers.

7.3. Main question

This section discusses the findings that emerged in response to the main question posed at the beginning of the research report. The main question posed for this research report was:

'**How has the local state navigated the challenges of integrating informal waste pickers into the formal waste management system**?'

Overall, there has been a shift in the officials' perspectives of waste pickers. Senior officials have often involved junior officials in processes, events and meetings regarding waste pickers. While their understanding could be deepened, officials in junior positions are aware of the role played by waste pickers.

Senior officials in the Fezile Dabi District municipality have placed efforts in building relationships with the waste pickers that have in turn helped the relationship between the waste pickers and the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. In the cases where the local municipality has been unable to offer support, the district municipality has been supportive. Both municipal structures have thus benefited

As shown in chapter 5, officials KPIs do not include waste pickers' work. Legislative documents poorly reflect the role of recycling which in turn reflects an undefined role for officials in managing waste pickers.

At the municipal and local government level officials have stated that they took long to implement the IWMP due to limited funding. This too affect the amount of support officials could offer. Interdepartmentally.

The role played by local municipalities as a sphere of local government, with regards to waste picker integration, was poorly defined in Sasolburg. The officials in the Metsimaholo Municipality defined integration as a process that was quite removed from their KPAs and KPIs within the waste management department. Having engaged with a new member of the LED department it was evident that the municipality's role in waste picker engagements was not owned by the municipality.

As presented, my findings show that the municipal officials do in fact understand the waste picking community after having interacted with them for a few years. The challenges faced by the officials include that the task of integrating waste pickers has not been prioritised. In turn, the identified approach to integrating waste pickers by the local government and the provincial government which is to form cooperatives is not an approach that all waste pickers have accepted. This approach does not include waste pickers who prefer to work independently.

As a sphere of local government officials have targets to reach. They thus prioritize these over issues.

A challenge I have observed is that the notion of successful integration from the state perspective differs from that of the waste pickers. Waste pickers views have shown that they would like to be viewed, effectively, as service providers. Municipal officials on the other hand have understood successful integration to be the existence of successful cooperatives. Additionally, the existence of successful cooperatives also ensures that municipal officials can integrate waste pickers by contracting them when the municipality needs waste picking services.

There is a breakdown in the fact that waste pickers in the cooperative based in the Vaalpark Recycling Centre tend to view the role of officials as "running" the cooperative as opposed to offering support. The mentors reflection that waste pickers can improve their means of communication with the waste pickers supports the fact that both the municipal officials and waste pickers would benefit from understanding each other.

Because WMD officials believe that LED should be responsible for integration, they feel overburdened by the responsibility of engaging with the waste pickers in matters that do not relate directly to waste. His responses insinuated that when it comes to

offering cooperative based waste picker support, they are doing the waste pickers a favour.

Officials' official norms do not recognise the importance of integrating waste pickers as a key task given that the municipality faces the greater challenge of ensuring that service delivery is achieved. This task is hindered by the fact that the municipality's landfill site has been classified as full. Much effort is placed into the procurement of a new landfill site with little mention on how the municipality can reduce waste in the town. The key performance indicators do not fully align with recommendations in the departments IWMP which offers solutions to waste minimisation. While officials recognise that waste pickers are doing the town a service by collecting recyclable waste, their KPAs and KPIs do not align, thus resulting in the lack of prioritisation of waste reduction and S@S initiatives which in turn mean the lack of prioritisation of waste picker integration into the municipal waste management system.

A key point brought up in CSIR Briefing Note (Godfrey et al., 2016) is that while the participants they interviewed suggested that municipalities take on the responsibility of the entire waste management system,

EPR policies that require producers to be responsible for the products they produce could take on much of the collection of recyclables. This change could then mean that less of a burden is placed on municipalities which are failing to manage waste countrywide.

The ways in which officials regard the waste pickers is slowly changing. The restructuring of the waste management department through the adoption of practical solutions to manage challenges and crises has strongly contributed to the changing mind-sets. Officials across all ranks of the Waste management department are being introduced into the integration processes. It is important for the officials who come into contact with the waste pickers on a daily basis to have some understanding of the strategic direction taken by senior officials bout waste picking so that the municipality as a whole relays the same information to waste pickers and uses the same means of managing illicit behaviour that harms the environment such as littering and illegal dumping of unrecyclable material. This is a key challenge that faces this municipality given that they do not want to be seen as against waste picking but have a responsibility still to keep the streets clean.

The key debates presented by Olivier De Sardan (2015) push us to better understand the reasoning behind decision making in local governments. Officials, as has been presented, are faced with various bureaucratic processes that take priority in the work that they do. While this research report does not discuss the challenges of bureaucratic governance, it is relevant to point out that challenges in the governance of our cities and the reporting burdens that face officials can at times hinder their ability to do work that has an impact on society. Through the research it was evident that the district municipality has been more involved in the support of waste pickers than the local municipality. The structural nature of government expects district municipalities to offer support to waste pickers, but the responsibility of integration has currently been placed in the hands of the local municipality.

7.4. Areas of Further Research

This research report focused on the practices of officials in the waste management department with regards to their integration of informal waste pickers in Sasolburg. Given the above conclusion and analysis of findings, further research can be done in the Sasolburg region regarding the practices of municipal officials, particularly in relation to their engagements with different departments in the municipality and prominent stakeholders in the Sasolburg community.

A key limitation to this research was the lack of a municipal council. Given that the municipality was under administration, the perspectives presented only represent the views of the administrative branch of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality. Another limitation of the study was the availability of officials in the department for shadowing. The missed opportunity to shadow municipal officials limited the observation of their practices and daily engagements with waste picker integration and waste picker related challenges. Despite the limitations, engagements with junior officials in the department helped broaden the findings on challenges that affect the waste management department as a whole. Below are a couple of recommendations for further research that relate to both waste picker integration and the practices of municipal officials.

a. Understanding the Relationship between officials and the Private Sector

Through fieldwork, officials expressed the challenges that emerge from engagements with the private sector. Potso, the manager of the WMD expressed that the involvement of Sasol is a challenge because of the power that the company holds, particularly because they have money to offer resources and infrastructure that the

municipality deems valuable yet unable to provide for the community of Sasolburg. This is particularly important given that Sasolburg prides itself as a beautiful and clean town which its residents and the municipality used to show great pride in (Potso and the Manager of the Environmental Health Department, District Waste Management Forum Meeting, 24 August). The Sasol representative, Kabelo, also expressed that Sasol does have greater power over the municipality, stating that while they do have a good working relationship with the municipalities in Sasolburg, they do hold greater power over the municipality which allows them to drive projects of their choice (Kabelo interview, 26 November 2018). I thus recommend further research regarding the impact of private sector involvement on officials' practices within municipalities.

b. The LED Department

This research report focused mainly on the WMD and the officials who directly engage with waste pickers on a frequent basis. Waste picker integration in Sasolburg began as the responsibility of the LED. As the findings showed, a key hindrance to the integration of waste pickers has been that individuals as opposed to entire departments are typically the drivers of engagements with waste pickers. This was furthermore reinforced by the fact that, in the WMD, performance indicators did not include the waste pickers. The role of the LED was important in the early stages of the development of the Vaalpark Pilot Projects. The perspectives of the officials in the waste management department brought to light that the role of the WMD is service delivery. It is thus apparent that officials in this department may not be fully knowledgeable in offering support to waste pickers regarding the growth and improvement of their cooperatives as businesses. While the LED is currently involved in communications and efforts to help the Vaalpark Recycling Centre get connected to the electrical grid, their role as a department is based on the support of cooperatives. Drawing on Samson's (2018) categorisation of integration as a charity where waste pickers are offered resource support, the involvement of the LED could be beneficial to waste picker integration. Further research could thus be done on the involvement of the LED in the integration of the waste pickers that are cooperative based.

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9. Interviews

9.1. Interviews

Note: All names have been changed to keep the confidentiality of participants.

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9.2. Interview Guide

a. Interview Guide for Officials

Interview Guide - Local State Practices of Informal Waste Picker Integration: The case of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality, Sasolburg.

General Questions (Introduction):

1. Can you provide me with a little background on yourself?
2. What is your position in the municipality?
3. How long have you worked in this municipality?
4. What do you do with regards to waste management and recycling?

History and Context (Municipality):

5. What is the role of the municipality in waste management and recycling in Sasolburg?
6. How does the municipality understand "integration" (If need be explain how I understand integration)?
7. How has the municipality transitioned with the integration of the informal sector into municipal solid waste management? What is the municipality's integrated waste management strategy?
8. How does the municipality interact with informal waste pickers?
9. How has the municipality's interaction with informal waste pickers changed over the years?
10. How would you describe the relationship now?
11. Has the municipality tried to integrate the waste sector?
12. How does the municipality view the waste pickers?
13. What is the municipality's relationship with informal waste pickers?
14. What is the municipality's relationship with the private sector (and more specifically with Sasol) on issues related to recycling and waste picking?
15. What policies or approaches were adapted to facilitate integration?
16. What challenges have been faced in trying to achieve integration from the side of the municipality?

Intergovernmental relationships:

17. Which other departments are involved in waste management and integration?

18. How does this municipality engage with the district municipality (local government), provincial government and national government on issues related to waste pickers and integration?
19. What support do you receive from the different aspects of this municipality as well as district, provincial, and national government?

Practice and experience (Officials)

20. What is your role and what activities do you undertake related to waste picking and recycling? (Norms and roles)
21. What are the different ways that waste pickers have been integrated into the municipal waste management system and recycling economy in the city?
22. How would you describe your relationship between informal waste pickers and the municipality? (for those who interact with informal waste pickers)
23. How do you think the waste pickers view the municipality, and you?
24. How do you think residents view the state when it comes to service delivery?
25. How would you describe the relationship between the municipality and the private sector?
26. What challenges have you faced in interacting with these different stakeholders?
27. What tools have you found helpful for waste picker integration, which ones have been more successful and aspects of these have allowed them to be more effective?
28. How do you adopt policies and guidelines when practicing?
29. Are there instances where the policy does not address the situation, how do you achieve what needs to be done?

Reflection:

30. Is there anything you would do differently in facilitating integration? What do you think is needed to improve the process, especially for you as an official.
31. Are the any concluding remarks that you would like to add, or any points you would like to expand on?
32. Is there anything you would like to know regarding the research? Would you be able to go through the final transcript before I submit the research to the university?

b. Interview Guide for Private Sector Representatives

Theme 1:

- Sasol's background- brief history of the company and how it came to engaging with waste pickers and the community.
- The programmes adopted how these have changed over time.

Theme 2:

- Sasol's engagements with waste pickers.
- How engagements have changed, and the reasons behind changes if any. The challenges and how these were overcome.
- Any future projects that may be pending and how they fit into solid waste management.

Theme 3:

- How Sasol engages with the local and district municipalities. Whether there are engagements with National and provincial government and how the dynamics shift with different sectors.
- How the state is viewed
- Ease of access to the state and the challenges around engaging and maintaining a relationship.
- The shifts in the relationship with local government. The support provided by the company to the municipality in solid waste management.

Theme 4:

- A comment on the Sasol- Local Government - waste picker nexus : how the relationship between these key stakeholders can be improved to not only benefit Sasol but possibly build a lasting and working relationship in Sasolburg.
- The notion of integration and what it means for Sasol.
- The opportunities and challenges presented by such as process.

Closing:

- Any ideas or opinions you would like to put forth regarding waste picker integration and Sasol's role in supporting waste pickers.

9.3. Ethical Clearance

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING
HUMAN RESERCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE
PROTOCOL NUMBER: SOAP047/06/2017

PROJECT TITLE:	Local State Practices in Informal Waste Picker Integration: The case of the Metsimaholo Local Municipality, Sasolburg
INVESTIGATOR/S:	Maria Jokudu Guya (Student no #706899)
SCHOOL:	Architecture and Planning
DEGREE PROGRAMME:	Master of Urban Studies (MUS)
DATE CONSIDERED:	14 September 2017
EXPIRY DATE:	14 September 2018

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE: APPROVED

CHAIRPERSON _____
(Professor Daniel Irurah)

DATE: 15 - 09 - 2017

cc: Supervisor/s: Claire Benit-Gbaffou/Melanie Samson

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATORS
I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to endure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

15 SEPTEMBER 2017

Signature **Date**