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The Role of Communications in Key National, Regional, Provincial and Local Government Development Initiatives

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Abstract

This paper seeks to outline how the lack of a coherent communications input impacts on the implementation of local government development, by scanning existing legislation and seeking to draw upon the myriad of existing development strategies, in order to ascertain if, where and how communications have been incorporated into development strategies. The author examines a range of policy, legislation and implementation strategies central to the pursuit of development and growth which he demonstrates have neglected to incorporate communications as an element of development. He then explores possible strategies to incorporate communications within spatial planning and other implementation processes without which regions and provinces will not be able to pursue coherent, compatible, or even effective development policies.

Introduction

A plethora of development centred legislation exists at the national, regional, provincial and local government levels in South Africa. Largely, this legislation is well defined to promote development at the level of District and Regional Councils that impact on how local government in South Africa operates. The Constitution clearly states that the objectives for local government are to:

- Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities
- Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner
- Promote social and economic development
- Promote a safe and healthy environment and
- Encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government.

In essence, local government has been mandated to strive to achieve these objectives, ultimately aimed at poverty alleviation, within its financial and administrative capacity. Conspicuous by its absence is the lack of mention of communications, both as a means of integrating infrastructural development and facilitating business growth, as well as being a socio-development tool in it's own right. A report submitted to the Deputy President's Office, in 1998, raised several issues as being pivotal to local government development, in their stated objective of poverty alleviation. These issues were:

- access to post and telecommunication services are pivotal in addressing poverty
- access to posts and telecommunications can promote / generate social development and economic

growth

- the gap between the 'information elite' and the 'information poor' must be addressed along with other developmental initiatives and

- information and communications technology is an empowering tool that under-developed communities can use to address their needs.

In order to ensure that communications services are 'delivered', the tiers of government need greater cohesion to address backlogs in implementing post and telecommunication services policy made at national level, to guarantee that they are carried through to the provincial, local and district levels.

This paper seeks to outline how the lack of a coherent communications input impacts on the implementation of local government development, by scanning existing legislation and seeking to draw upon the myriad of existing development strategies, in order to ascertain if, where and how communications have been incorporated into development strategies.

The study reviewed the following documents:

- Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Strategy
- White Paper on Local Government
- Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs)
- The KwaZulu-NatalKwaZulu/Natal Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
- Provincial Spatial Development Strategy
- Provincial Integrated Rural Development Strategy
- Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP)
- The Development Facilitation Act (DFA)
- Draft Provincial Planning and Development Acts
- Other key legislation:

    - Land Reform

    - Water and Sanitation Policy

GEAR

A strategy for the rebuilding and restructuring of the economy is set out in the GEAR strategy. This strategy is viewed as the central pillar of government strategy building and is derived from the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP). It constructs an integrated *economic* strategy that boldly meets the challenge of addressing basic needs backlogs, developing human resources, increasing participation in modern society's democratic institutions and implementing the RDP in all its facets. At its

core lies the aim that '… economic growth, in itself, should produce options, enlarge peoples choices and make changes and adjustments easier to bear'.

The GEAR strategy proposes four key objectives. These are:

- a competitive fast growing economy which creates jobs for all work-seekers
- a redistribution of income and opportunities geared towards the poor
- a society in which sound health, education and other services are available to all and
- an environment in which homes are secure and places of work are productive.

Relevant Points of Departure

Sustained growth, on a higher level, requires a transformation towards a *competitive outward - orientated economy*. The GEAR strategy sets a target growth rate of 6% per annum, and job creation of 400 000 per annum by the year 2000, and focues capacity building on meeting the demands of international competition. Several inter-related developments are called for. Those developments applicable, or relevant to, local government includes:

- A brisk expansion in private sector capital formation
- An acceleration in public sector investment and
- An increase in infrastructural development and service delivery making intensive use of labour-based techniques.

The expansion envisaged above is substantial and entails a major transformation in the environment and behaviour of both the private and public sectors. Again, factors relevant to local government policy include:

- A stable environment for confidence and a profitable surge in private investment
- A restructured public sector to increase the efficiency of both capital expenditure and service delivery and
- Enhanced human resource development.

The elements of the integrated macro-economic strategy taken together with other national strategies represent a clear attempt by government to bridge the gap between the existing constrained environment and sustainable expansion within an increasingly competitive global economy. Furthermore, the strategy represents a clear framework for all sectors in society to mobilise collective energies to break through current constraints and catapult the economy to the higher levels of growth, development and employment needed to provide a better life for all South Africans.

When the GEAR strategy refers to an increase in infrastructural development and service delivery, it refers to water and sanitation, transportation, energy and the communications sectors. While specific mention is made to the other sectors, very little is proposed in terms of communications.

Paper on Local Government

This Paper strives to lay the basis for the establishment of a comprehensive national policy framework. Transformation of the existing local government system will be based on this paper. Implications of the Paper's framework on District and Regional Councils and their functions are highlighted in the analysis that follows. Two essential features of the new local government structures are the emphasis on inter-governmental relationships (and co-operative relations between spheres of government) and the incorporation of a creative and dynamic developmental role.

The developmental role for local government is to promote effective poverty alleviation, through the maximisation of economic growth and social development initiatives, while alleviating spatially entrenched socio-economic inequalities, in the current environment of limited resources. This incorporates four inter-linked approaches:

- Integrated planning, budgeting and management
- Managing the growth of human settlements
- Mobilising capacity for effective service delivery and
- Linking growth and development.

Managing the growth of local settlements is essential in order to address inherited spatial distortions. Two important tools when addressing the issue are: spatial integration and the effective management of growth. It is envisaged that these tools will promote mixed-use and mixed-income development and should adhere to principles identified in the Development Facilitation Act (DFA). Growth management calls for the co-ordination of sectoral intervention particularly in the transport, housing and land functions.

One of the roles of local government mentioned in this paper, is the promotion of more effective information flows within government and between the government and communities. It is thought that a more effective flow of information will enhance the implementation of government policies and programmes, a tool often neglected by development and planning initiatives. Telecommunications and postal services are vital for communication but very few government plans take into account the fact that many communities in South Africa do not have the basic infrastructure necessary to receive/access information.

The Paper calls for a focus on meeting basic needs and on improving the quality of life of the poor. This will involve some hard choices in the context of scarce resources and capacity. Local government will have to explore partnerships with other organs of the state, the private sector, NGOs, CBOs and other civil structures that can mobilise additional capacity and resources. Delivery options should be informed by clear criteria such as coverage, cost, quality and socio-economic objectives (e.g. job creation, equity and integration). Service delivery options, which are not mutually exclusive (and can be combined in a number of ways), include public delivery, public utilities, public-public partnerships, public-private partnerships and public-community partnerships. Local Government needs to develop capacity to manage alternative delivery mechanisms.

The Paper on local government acknowledges the advantages of public-public partnerships, which allows for 'horizontal co-operation between municipalities to exploit economies of scale.' Indeed, economies of scale are clearly evident in the telecommunication industry, especially in developing countries. Since there is a high demand for services in contrast to a relatively small telecommunications system, developing countries have two choices. They can either expand gradually, incurring relatively high unit and total costs or they can expand rapidly with relatively lower unit costs providing at a basic service

level. South Africa, according to the Telecommunications Act, would prefer to provide telecommunications services at a basic implementation level yet still attempt to meet the needs of the more sophisticated user (information technology users). The high costs associated with instituting a network are decreasing due to technological advances and economies of scale can be exploited to further lower the costs that will be incurred. The Paper states that local governments should allow for the various tiers of government to co-operate in order to improve co-ordination at the point of delivery. No specific mention is made of any particular service but telecommunication service delivery is an area that can be greatly enhanced by this type of co-operation. Unfortunately, no specific programmes of action are proposed.

The Paper does mention that public-public partnerships are common internationally in a variety of areas, including information services. The paper goes on to say that within South Africa municipalities are beginning to explore innovative partnership agreements, such as partnering with the Post Office for the collection of municipal revenue. Yet, it does not mention other means of allowing local government to improve on this initiative or suggest how disadvantaged communities can obtain this type of infrastructure. Although the Paper states that there are substantial benefits to be gained through these types of partnerships and says that municipalities should explore the options as individual organisations, it fails to realise that some areas are at a greater disadvantage as they are situated in poor communities and lack capacity. It also does not offer concrete information on how local government structures can go about implementing public-public partnerships. Nor is any specific mention made of communication infrastructure and service delivery, which could stand to benefit from this type of partnership.

The Paper does not view local economic development (LED) as separate but rather as an integral component, such that all the activities of local government need to promote economic growth. The linking of growth and development can be achieved through the promotion of investment and entrepreneurialism as well as the adoption of mechanisms to promote growth and redistribution (e.g. public works programmes, local procurement from small and disadvantaged businesses, etc).

New roles are defined for District and Regional Councils and these include:

- Promoting integrated regional development, which recognises the linkages between urban nodes / centres and surrounding rural areas

- Supporting the primary tier in rural areas and in particular providing capacity for rapid delivery in areas where rural municipalities lack capacity and

- Facilitating the redistribution of resources within the district through the allocation of Regional Service Council (RSC) levies and intergovernmental transfers.

A role could also be played in the provision of bulk and regional services. Integrated regional development and resource allocations need to take cognisance of the integral linkages (social, economic and cultural) between urban centres and their surrounding areas.

As far as fiscal sustainability is concerned a number of basic policy principles have been identified: Revenue, adequacy and certainty; Sustainability (i.e. affordable levels of service and relief for very poor); Effective and efficient resource use; Accountability, transparency and good governments; Equity and redistribution (use of intra-governmental transfers used primarily for subsidies to poorer households and cross-subsidisation); Development and investment (infrastructure with maximum possible degree of private sector investment); and Macroeconomic investment (support GEAR).

The majority of these goals cannot be achieved unless there is an effective information and

communication system that will aid their effective implementation. Development and investment, which calls for the maximum degree of public sector investment, will not take place in a void. Private investment cannot take place unless it is promoted by the availability of information and communication services. Development and planning initiatives need to acknowledge this lack of communication infrastructure, especially in poorer communities and address this lack in their development plans.

Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs)

The term 'Spatial Development Initiative', was coined by the National Departments of Transport and Trade and Industry to describe a programme of strategic initiatives by Government which are designed to unlock the inherent and under utilised economic development potential of certain specific spatial locations in South Africa. This initiative is firmly located within the new paradigm, adopted by the Government of South Africa, that aims to move away from a protected and isolated approach to economic development towards an approach in which international competitiveness, regional co-operation and a more diversified ownership base are paramount.

The objectives of the SDI programme are to:

- Generate sustainable economic growth and development in relatively underdeveloped areas, according to the locality's inherent economic potential
- Generate long-term and sustainable employment for the local inhabitants of the SDI area
- Maximise the extent to which private sector investment and lending can be mobilised into the SDI area
- Exploit the spin-off opportunities that arise from the relative in-crowding of private and public sector investments for the development of SMME's and the empowerment of the local communities and
- Exploit the SDI area's under-utilised locational and economic advantages for export-oriented growth.

Therefore, the SDI's are aimed at unlocking the economic potential in specific spatial locations in order to create jobs, generate economic growth in the area and contribute to restructuring the ownership patterns in the South African economy, in line with the objectives set out in the Government's Macroeconomic Strategy (GEAR). Sectors, which may facilitate these objectives, include manufacturing, mining, tourism and agro-industry.

As with other government proposals, SDI initiatives call for private sector investment but this requires significant infrastructure such as roads, water and sanitation, housing and telecommunications. The planning initiatives do not include telecommunications infrastructure planning. SDI's are reliant on private sector investment. Although this is stated in the SDI objectives, a holistic approach to attracting this kind of investment is neglected.

The Provincial Growth And Development Strategies

In addition to the above policies, each province has a Provincial Growth and Development Strategy. Although they vary in accordance with provincial resources and requirements, common strands can be found throughout all provinces. The following is the Growth and Development Strategy as envisaged in KwaZulu/Natal.

At the core of this strategy is the ethos that through sustainable economic growth, grounded on the agricultural, industrial and tourism strengths of the province and on the development of new opportunities, the province will be fully integrated into the national and global economy. There will be high levels of employment, high levels of productivity, a living wage and proactive development initiatives. The province would have achieved a balance between growth and redistribution is KwaZulu/Natal.

The Vision for KwaZulu Natal mentions tourism as being one of the strengths the province has but fails to acknowledge particular resources that are required in order for tourism to flourish. Hotels, lodges, rural eco-tourism initiatives which have the potential to attract revenue for the province cannot operate without telephones. The benefits of internet access for these and other tourist attractions would only serve to enhance this growing market, yet this is not possible unless the basic communications infrastructure is built into all development initiatives.

No direct link is made between 'integration into the national and global economy' and the lack of telecommunications infrastructure. If the province seeks this kind of integration, it will require an extensive communications network that begins with basic telephony. The document fails to make crucial links between various aspects of its basic vision; for example, no specific mention of telecommunications is made. This indicates that crucial elements of an effective development strategy have been neglected.

The KwaZulu/Natal Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS), is a strategy which attempts to ensure that growth in the province occurs in a sustainable fashion. It aims to contribute towards the quality of life of all the people in KwaZulu/Natal, by ensuring that the human, natural and physical resources, of the province, are continuously enhanced. The PGDS consists of five programmes of intervention and two pre-conditions (programmes six and seven) for the optimum impact of these strategies. These include:

- Building a winning province
- Enabling local economic development
- Fuelling the powerhouse
- Addressing the needs of the poor
- Preparing people through the development and utilisation of human resources
- Formulation of an appropriate spatial framework and
- The development of institutions and implementation capacity.

Research suggests that, the process of strategy formulation have been based on the understanding that the province is an inter-related entity, capable of co-ordinated action and able to harness its resources for the benefit of all people living in the province. The strategy consists of two inter-related components, one which takes growth as its point of departure and one which places an emphasis on the distribution of the benefits of that growth. These two components are linked through:

- The ability of the government and the private sector to capitalise on economic growth and investment in such a way as to provide sustainable jobs and services
- The fulfilment of the conditions which need to be met to enable the province to prosper and

- The redistribution of goods and services to meet the needs of the population in such a way as to boost economic growth.

The PGDS supports initiatives recommending that the Regional Councils should be the basis for organising the deployment of provincial resources to ensure the necessary co-ordination between local and provincial government, on a regional scale, to commence the reprioritisation of resource allocation to effect implementation of the strategy. A step by step overall plan, that understands requirements within the province, necessary for all these goals and objectives to be met has not been undertaken in the PGDS document. This paper asserts that an integrated approach to development requires access to basic communications and telecommunications services.

Section two of the PGDS elucidates ways of 'building a winning province': development of transport infrastructure is mentioned along with the facilitation of trade and commerce, as well as travel and tourism but no comment is made regarding telecommunications infrastructure. The focus is transportation. As valuable as this is, telecommunications is arguably a more important requirement for the realisation of development goals. Communication and information networking benefits have been recognised in many studies yet the province of KZN has failed to make special provision for telecommunications services and infrastructure development.

In section three: enabling 'local economic development' telecommunications is noted in a table that deals with backlogs in services and facilities. Just over three-quarters of the population of KZN are without adequate access to telecommunications services yet this service is not mentioned again as being necessary for development objectives to be met. Telecommunications could be discussed under a number of sections such as the section on uneven spatial development. It is common knowledge that although a very extensive communications system exists in urban areas it is sadly lacking in rural and outer lying areas. If these areas are to be improved, as proposed , telecommunication service backlogs will need urgent attention. However, this is not acknowledged in the document.

The document identifies telecommunications as a higher order service which is to be implemented once basic services have been delivered, thus stating that telecommunications is a service secondary to roads, clinics and so on even though the benefits of an effective communications system is widely acknowledged. However, the KZN growth and development strategy, has not considered telecommunications despite the fact that these services are fundamental to implementing programmes and initiatives such as tourism and eco-tourism. Most importantly, access to telecommunications services would also attract private sector investment, creating the potential for extending the benefit to all communities in KwaZulu Natal, not just the few already well-serviced areas.

Provincial Spatial Development Strategy

Further to the Provincial Growth and Development Strategies are Provincial Spatial Growth and Development Frameworks (PSGDF), which in KwaZulu/Natal are based upon four main objectives, to:

- Formulate policy for overall spatial distribution of development
- Appropriate co-ordination and response to PG&DS
- Set frameworks for (and co-ordinate) lower-level planning and
- Plan for areas of interaction between Regional Council and Local Authority areas.

The major spatial elements of the PSGDF are described in the figure below. These elements are inter-

related and seek to identify opportunities for economic growth and to pay attention to development needs. The role of spatial strategies (PG&DS) is to:

- Set policy in terms of the overall spatial distribution of development
- Respond to spatial implications and synergies arising from the development strategy and other policies (and ensure proper co-ordination)
- Set frameworks for planning at lower levels (includes co-ordination, facilitation and appropriate support) and
- Plan for areas above the level of a single authority (Regional Council and Local Council).

Figure 1: Spatial Elements of Provincial Spatial Growth and Development Framework

DEVELOPMENT CORRIDORS / SDI'S
- Coastal N2 (PtS – Dbn - RCB... Maputo)
- Inland N3 (Dbn - Pmb... Gauteng)
- Concentration of economic growth opportunities; &
- Shadow corridor" focus for service

TOWNS: SECONDARY CITIES, REGIONAL CENTRES & SMALLER TOWNS

- Focus on LED, comparative advantages & links to agricultural hinterland

SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

- Hierarchy of centres to co-ordinate the spatial provision of public administrative and economic services to outlying rural areas

REGIONAL PLANS

- To cover entire KZN & co-ordinate initiatives within each region;
- Incorporate spatial frameworks for the provision of services; &
- Seek opportunities for small towns & their rural hinterlands.

PLANNING LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- To provide a statutory basis for development planning at a Provincial scale.

Provincial Integrated Rural Development Strategy

Some provinces have created a Provincial Integrated Rural Development Strategy, which generally encompass three main elements to their vision: to create an inclusive rural economy, to integrate the provision of services and to facilitate popular participation. In KwaZulu/Natal for instance, two challenges have been identified as central to rural development. The first is to achieve a more equitable balance between urban and rural development and the second is to resolve the contradictions between

civil and customary power.

The first challenge mentioned indicates that there is a discrepancy between development in urban and rural areas, this is evident in the telecommunications sector, urban areas have a sophisticated well equipped telecommunications system while rural areas are still under provided for. If the IRD is seeking to address this discrepancy this is one of the areas that requires specific attention yet there is no plan in place to tackle this inequality.

Any formulation of a rural development policy needs to consider certain key factors. These include the multiple livelihoods of the rural people of the province, population shifts and settlement trends and the impact of past policies. The Integrated Rural Development (IRD) strategy has identified three main pre-conditions for significant rural development:

- Rationalising and decentralising the formal delivery system
- Developing local capacity, accommodating customary systems of power and incorporating traditional perspectives and
- Accommodating traditional authority in terms of tenure.

The key role-players are depicted below:

Provincial Govt. Depts:	**National Govt. Depts:**	**Others:**
• Dept Economic Affairs & Tourism • Dept Traditional & Environment Affairs • Dept of Transport • Dept of Finance • DLGH (incl. TRPC)	• Dept Constitutional Development; • Dept Trade & Industry • Dept of Water Affairs & Forestry	• Regional Councils • KZN Regional Economic Forum • Kwanaloga • Key Stakeholder Groups (Consultation)

Five deliverables of the IRD have been identified: Land Reform; Agricultural Production Opportunities; Tourism Opportunities; Entrepreneurial Opportunities and Rural Financial Services. These deliverables are achieved through the adoption of local approaches to economic development and to the alleviation of poverty. The mechanisms incorporated are described in the table below:

Mechanisms for the Implementation of Rural Development

Local Approaches to Economic Development	Local Approaches to the Alleviation of Poverty
• The developmental role of small towns • Local economic development • The developmental role of the private sector • The developmental role of non-governmental organisations	• Social spending and basic services • Employment creation through Public Works Programmes • Effective social transfers • Poverty alleviating development projects • Developmental welfare programmes

The five deliverables identified above in many cases are reliant on a telecommunications system that meets the needs of the population. For instance, tourism opportunities will not be sustainable unless supported by a well-developed infrastructure that goes beyond roads, water and sanitation and electricity. Overseas tourists or even out-of-province tourists require not only access to telephones but to post and Internet communication facilities in order to remain in contact with family as well as businesses while they are travelling. Tourist attractions would also need to promote their businesses over the Internet. Unless they have access to information and communication facilities e-tourism will not be possible, yet this is overlooked in the IRD strategy.

The IRD identifies three main difficulties of delivery of services through District or Regional Councils: their system of representation and associated management difficulties, the continued impasse around the role of traditional leaders in relation to local government and the capacity of Regional Councils. The importance of developing future capacity within local government (rather than in centrally based line departments) is highlighted. All facets of government need to be educated on the advantage of information and communications services and the impact this potentially has on overall growth and development. If there is a better understanding of the benefits of the telecommunications sector as a key component of development and planning, a more holistic approach to development planning can be adopted. The IRD fails to make this known.

Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP)

A National Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) has been implemented in all nine provinces. In some cases, it exists as two sub-programmes, for example, in KwaZulu/Natal.

KwaZulu/Natal Department of Works

The Provincial Department of Works undertook one component of the programme. In the view of the consultants appointed by the National Department of Public Works to evaluate the CBPWP-KZN, it has, to an acceptable extent, reached its objectives of empowering communities and delivering sustainable assets using community based management and labour intensive methods of construction.

Independent Development Trust

The Independent Development Trust (IDT) through the Community Employment Programme (CEP) successfully facilitated a programme in the Province of KwaZulu/Natal starting in January 1995.

Programme Description

The CBPWP-KZN and the CEP-KZN will, in the coming financial year, adopt the following objectives, as proposed by the National Department of Public Works:

- To contribute towards sustainable poverty alleviation in rural areas through integrated rural development and
- To enhance social and economic equity by focusing on human development, with particular emphasis on rural women.

The objectives adopted in the bid to achieve these goals will be as follows (not listed in order of priority):

- To create temporary employment in rural areas through the creation of needed community assets of high quality

- To give priority, where possible, to needed assets which can lead to sustainable income generation

- To improve and increase sustainable employment and income generation opportunities for the rural poor, especially for rural women

- To give priority to projects which will enhance productivity (particularly of women) within the community, by creating assets which will free people from household activities which have a high cost in time spent

- To ensure appropriate capacity building and training within the community so that they are empowered to control the process from the planning phase through to managing the asset after its completion

- To ensure that technical and managerial skills transferred during the project will improve the recipients marketability within the economy

- To create (where possible) linkages between the project community and other community projects within the area to achieve synergistic benefits and a greater impact and

- To enhance linkages between the project community and other institutions (CBOs, NGOs and Government).

Evaluation

Evaluations by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Community and Social Enquiry (CASE) and by a team, led by Data Research Africa (DRA), have suggested that in common with the CBPWP's being carried out in other provinces, the programme in KwaZulu/Natal would benefit by:

- Tightening its objectives to achieve better focus

- Shifting the type of assets funded towards sustainable job creation and poverty alleviation

- Supporting a clustering of projects to facilitate complementarily of the assets created and enhancement of multiplier effects and

- Improving targeting.

Budget Allocation

To ensure an equitable budget distribution across the province, a District Budget Allocation Analysis has been developed for CBPWP-KZN, to assist in determining a budget allocation for each district. Before being used, this analysis will now be revisited in the context of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy to ensure that it fits within the parameters of the Provincial strategy. In particular the allocation analysis will consider the following elements of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy:

- Within Programme 2, the element of Basic Service Delivery is addressed. Pilot projects are called for to fast track Local Economic Development. These would be identified by the Department of Economic Affairs, but where they could be implemented as part of the CBPWP, this needs to be

facilitated.

- Programme 4 addresses, among other things, the need for a Rural Service Centre Programme to rationalise the delivery of services and assistance. This involves targeting existing development nodes or establishing new ones, through regional planning initiatives. In advance of such initiatives, the allocation of project funding can begin to play this role. The same programme deals also with a strategy for Eco and Cultural Tourism, which is an area where complementarity should be sought in the budget allocation process. It also deals with Public Works programmes.

- Programme 6 deals with the formulation of an appropriate spatial framework, which is a key element of the funding allocation process. The allocation will serve only as a guideline to assist in the process of budget allocation between qualifying projects.

This budget allocation process will take place independently in the CBPWP-KZN and the CEP-KZN, each of which will have its own allocation mechanisms. In the case of the CBPWP-KZN, these will be tabled at a Review Committee meeting for comment, before being submitted to the National Department of Public Works for approval, prior to implementation. The CEP-KZN will table its mechanisms within the IDT's national structures before submitting them to the National Department.

Project Identification

Certain projects have already been put forward for evaluation and although the revised procedures will require the resubmission of the applications, where projects appear to conform to the new priorities, the project applicants will be assisted in resubmitting the applications. In addition, an advertisement will be placed in appropriate media to invite further project applications. The local authorities and the provincial Growth and Development Strategy structures will be informed of the call for applications. Applications will be sorted according to size, type and location within a district. They will then be evaluated within each district using the Project Prioritisation Analysis which has been developed and which, prior to implementation, will now be amended to include the factors set out below.

These factors have been arranged into two groups. In the first, rough categories of project activity have been set out and a very rough indicative figure has been attached to each of the categories of projects listed, as an indication of the level of budget allocation considered appropriate. These should not be seen as firm budget figures. Secondly, supporting characteristics, which will increase the probability of a project receiving funding, have been listed.

Project Categories

Preference will be given to projects that can be shown to lead to an improvement of accessibility and terms of trade (about 30%). Such projects would include: roads, local markets and storage facilities, or others which, like these, would serve the functions of bringing about closer market integration, or better producer prices for agricultural commodities.

Improvement in accessibility is one of the project categories nominated yet improved accessibility would also require a communications network and yet telecommunications is not specifically mentioned. The CBPWP could identify telecommunications infrastructure development as a project worth implementing as a means of creating jobs, imparting skills and addressing the backlog in delivery identified in the KwaZulu Natal Growth and Development Strategy.

Preference will be given to projects which produce assets which are directly productive (about 25%). These would include: tree planting, micro-irrigation schemes, cattle and sheep dips, watering points,

dams, fencing and other agricultural facilities. Preference will also be given to projects that effect labour saving, particularly for women (about 25%). These would include a potable water supply and sanitation projects and crèches.

Communicating by telephone would save not only money and time - the latter particularly affecting women in rural areas, due to the distances they have travel to reach a public phone, which is operational. It would also save costly trips to visit family, as social communication and connections can be maintained through telephonic communication. However, such communication is not even considered under the section that deals with projects that are labour saving.

Given the history of inter- and intra- community conflict in KwaZulu/Natal, assets promoting social integration could have a major impact on improving the socio-economic environment. Preference will be given to projects which promote or improve social cohesion (about 10%). These would include community multi-purpose centres and sports facilities. Social cohesion is also required between families that live great distances apart, as many people work in urban centres far from their spouses and children. Telecommunications can serve to promote closer links between families and develop stronger social networks but again this has not been considered in this strategy.

Although the education sector was perhaps too strongly supported in the last round of funding, the backlog of education facilities in the rural areas remains huge. Some children are presently attending classes in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. Consequently some priority will again be attached to education projects (about 10%). These would include classroom building & upgrading, fencing and ablution facilities. Another area of concern with regard to education is the lack of telephones in schools, which will constantly hinder the transfer of information to already disadvantaged schoolchildren. A basic telephone service will go a long way in keeping a school linked to the greater community. The CBPWP fails to make links between the services it identifies and the lack of telecommunication facilities.

Supporting characteristics that will improve the likelihood of a project receiving funding include:

- Projects situated in tribal authority areas with no previous support from the CBPWP will be given consideration to encourage an equitable spread of benefits.

- Projects which fall within areas particularly poor or lacking in development or facilities will be given priority.

- Projects which complement CBPWP-funded projects (or other sources and therefore form components of sustainable integrated development process) will be given a preference. For instance, if a water supply project in an area is shown to have freed considerable time for local women and a project is proposed that will enable the women to use the time productively, through the creation of a directly productive asset, the project would be favoured.

In order to receive funding, project applications will have to meet the following requirements:

Community Management Institution

A properly constituted community institution will have to be in place to manage the project. The project officer or facilitation officer responsible for the project area will assess this institution. The institution will have to show how its mandate from the community has been established, what its report-back procedures are and how it proposes to ensure community participation in the project. It will also be expected to show what provision has been made for building the capacity of its committee members. It will be expected, under normal circumstances, to include a line item for training and capacity building of

the community institution. This will be geared towards the sustainable management of the asset that is to be created and towards project implementation to a lesser extent. This institution will also be expected to have good relations with the relevant local authority and with any other body that will need to be involved in the management or maintenance of the assets created.

Project Planning

The application will be required to show how the project intends to fulfil the requirements of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and outline the impact it will have on the overall development of the region. It will also be required to provide detail on the project planing process to ensure that all the necessary approvals are in place, that the project has the requisite support from all relevant parties and that it is economically viable (where applicable). In particular the application will be required to show what planning has taken place to ensure the long-term sustainable management and maintenance of the asset.

A wealth of literature exists that supports the proposition that telecommunications and other communication services can act as a catalyst for economic growth and development, as well as a means of improving the implementation of projects and programmes. These services are identified in KZN's Growth and Development Strategy as being one of the major areas of backlogs in the province. Telecommunications would therefore be a major contributor to the overall development of the region. Communities, which are lacking in this area of infrastructure, can easily argue for the implementation of a programme that could provide this service.

Project Management

The applicant will be required to detail its modus operandi with particular reference to:

- Accountability to the community and to the managing agent and
- The type of reports and frequency of reporting to both the community and the managing agent.

These elements will be specified in an agreement between the applicant and the managing agent.

Labour Intensive Construction

The project application will be expected to set out the mechanisms through which labour will be hired and managed. It will be expected to supply a detailed budget setting out the line items for labour costs and other costs. Taking direct costs only into account (excluding training, capacity building and consultants' fees) no budget providing for less than 50% of direct costs to be spent on labour will be approved. This element will be carefully monitored and if it is not complied with, the community committee will be held to account.

Education and Training

The project application must provide a detailed plan for training and capacity building. This should include the training of the committee or others for the long-term management of the asset, as well as skills training on the project. Any skills training undertaken on the project must be certified so that it will lead to sustainable skill development. The application will be expected to identify the training providers who will provide the training and provide a budget proposal from them. In this respect, the Provincial DOW and the IDT will make a list of service providers available. This will be co-ordinated with the Training and Education Database, contemplated in Programme 5 of the Provincial Growth and

Development Strategy. In implementing this requirement due regard will be paid to the implementation of all elements of this programme, as well as to the relevant aspects of Programme 7, which, as well as providing for the co-ordination structures to manage the implementation of the strategy, also deals with capacity building.

Employment of Most Needy

The application must clearly set out the basis on which people will be selected for employment and on which they will be chosen for training. In each case, the selection procedures must be clear enough to be subjected to audit. In addition, each application must specify a quota for the employment of women, which will be strictly adhered to. Should such a quota be applied to youth as well, this would be seen as an additional factor in the project's favour.

Each application must specify the number of people who will be employed, that have not been resident in the project for over a year. It should be noted that no one who has been formally employed during the preceding three months is eligible to be employed on any CBPWP-KZN project.

The Development Facilitation Act

The Development Facilitation Act (DFA) provides principles for land development and mechanisms to facilitate development. It does not replace existing legislation and development procedures, but provides an alternative, faster route for development to be implemented.

Central to the Act is the formulation of Land Development Objectives (LDOs) for each local authority area. These LDOs are to guide service delivery and ensure economic efficiency and effectiveness at a local government level. LDOs should include:

- Objectives relating to access to services including water, health and education
- Objectives relating to growth and the form of that growth, including the integration of environmental issues, transportation planning, the density and integration of settlements and co-ordination of planning and development
- Strategies for the optimal involvement of all sectors of society and the economy, accessing funding for development and the establishment of appropriate structure for the administration and delivery of development and
- Quantified targets to be achieved.

The Act also provides for provincial planning and development legislation to be prepared. This act does not classify telecommunications as a service need in the province but it could comfortably fall in line with access to other services such as water, health and education. Not only is telecommunications lacking in many areas but it is also a vehicle to a more effective service delivery network that can speed up the implementation of projects and programmes, in the province. Electronic networking or communication and information networks, referred to as the 'Information Infrastructure', are as important to the development of a country as roads and water supply but the Development Facilitation Act does not state this under any section

Draft Provincial Planning And Development ActS

The draft KwaZulu/Natal Planning and Development Act was published for public comment in the

government gazette, in December 1997. The proposed Act was scheduled for release in early 1998. The proposed Act provides a unitary planning and development processes for the province and details the implementation of the DFA within the Province.

The proposed Act makes provision for the preparation of Development Plans at various levels of government - provincial, metropolitan, regional and local level. Special case areas may also be identified and specific development plans prepared for these areas. These development plans are to ensure co-ordinated, harmonious and sustainable development of the area to which they apply. The proposed Act indicates that development plans are to contain a co-ordinated policy framework, a programme and budget for the phased implementation of the plan, planning controls and performance criteria as prescribed, environmental management components as prescribed and any other provisions as may be prescribed. Any development plan prepared in terms of the proposed Act will constitute Land Development Objectives (LDOs), as defined in the Development Facilitation Act. These objectives, as stated earlier, do not identify telecommunications as an area that needs to be addressed and therefore, telecommunications is not considered in land development plans. Telecommunications services could benefit several of the LDOs listed. A more effective telecommunications system would serve to promote investment, which in turn would provide more capital in order to provide services and speed up the implementation of projects and development plans.

Other Key Legislation

Key legislation, that has a degree of impact on the operations of regional development, includes those regarding land reform, water and sanitation policy and transport and telecommunications. Two of these are discussed briefly below.

Land Reform

Regarding land reform, redistribution and restitution, Regional Councils are to become the principal partners to the national Department of Land Affairs for land reform projects in the remaining areas. This means that the Regional Council is responsible for co-ordination and management of consultants and the implementation of land reform programmes. The Department of Local Government and Housing will only become involved and lend technical and professional assistance, at the request of the Regional Councils.

In the 1997 White Paper on South African Land Policy, the only necessary condition for accessing housing subsidies is security of tenure. The IRD promotes a land tenure policy, which proposes a range of more secure tenure options that will promote the provision of rural housing.

Water and Sanitation Policy Summary

The *Water Services Act* provides an overall regulatory framework for the water services of the country, defining the distribution of responsibilities in service provision over the variety of institutions involved in the 'water chain' from the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) through to the end consumer/producer. It contains a section on standards, guidelines and tariff structures into which the National Water Supply Regulations fit. It defines the role of Water Services Authorities in enabling service provision to consumers and producers in their area of jurisdiction and the duties of the ministry in providing support, monitoring and controlling functions to these institutions.

The Act also provides a framework for co-operation between water service authorities and water service providers. This is important as it is envisaged that South Africa will enter a period of extensive private sector participation in the water services sector, in an attempt to speed up the delivery process. The Act

provides for significant ministerial discretion in terms of conditions of contract between service authorities and service providers.

The Act provides for ministerial discretion on a number of matters including information that must be included in contracts. In terms of contracts between service authorities and service providers, these must ensure:

- That water services are provided on an efficient, equitable and sustainable basis
- That the terms of the contract are fair and equitable to the water services authority, the water services provider and the consumer and
- Compliance with the Water Services Act.

The Act also requires water development plans to be formulated by all water authorities and defines the roles of numerous actors in the 'water chain' including, water service authorities, intermediaries and providers, water boards and water committees.

Both services mentioned in this section operate in all areas of KZN yet the need is greatest in remote rural areas where the provision of basic and higher order services is inadequate. Service providers work under harsh, ill-equipped conditions, whereas they could in fact benefit from a more extensive telecommunications service. Service providers could make initial contact by telephone before arriving in an area and greatly reduce current operational costs by having long– and short-distance communications access. The importance of communication cannot be underplayed and should receive more attention in all legislation and development plans, as it is essentially the key component of effective and efficient implementation. However, it is missing from many key documents addressing the challenges of social and economic development.

Outline Strategies For Growth & Development

In the process of putting together the outline strategies, it was assumed that the region itself is an inter-related entity, capable of co-ordinated action and able to harness its resources for the benefit of all people living in it. In so doing, the point has been made repeatedly that the region should develop a shared, non-racial culture which encourages reconciliation and non-violence through problem solving. Whilst this may be a 'laudable' vision for the region the central overriding issue remains that a balance between growth and redistribution is vital.

The outline strategies of the Regional Development Plan are informed by four central principles. These principles then inform the formulation of the strategies that feed directly into the programmes themselves. The principles include:

a. Releasing the potential of the region through economic growth
b. Social reconstruction, particularly through the delivery of services and opportunities
c. Directing investment through targeting interventions in particular locations and
d. Institutional support and development.

The Telecommunications Act states that telecommunications can play a pivotal role in the growth and development of a sound economy. The focus is thus on the extension of affordable and accessible

universal service that will enhance social and economic activities in historically disadvantaged communities through the provision of necessary infrastructure, as well as by generating employment in the telecommunications sector itself. However, no specific targeting of telecommunications as a key service is made in these documents.

In order to respond to these principles while adhering to the criteria it is necessary to:

a. Identify short- to medium-term programmes of service delivery aimed at providing for basic needs. These programmes should utilise existing institutional frameworks, infrastructure and skills capacity and

b. Identify longer-term programmes that can build the required institutional support, infrastructure and human resources to enable effective sustainable, community-based development.

The development challenges confronting South Africa require the actors and decision-makers to address the utilisation and maintenance of existing infrastructure while at the same time designing mechanisms for bridging the gap between the 'have's' and the 'have-nots'. It will become inevitable that addressing the infrastructure backlogs will be a necessary prerequisite for bridging the existing gap. Telecommunications is an area where this gap is strikingly evident yet is seldom incorporated into development strategies.

Strategies aimed at releasing the potential of the KwaZulu/Natal region through fostering economic growth can be grouped into four broad categories designed to:

- Promote employment intensive manufacturing industries
- Broaden rural livelihoods through targeted agricultural strategy
- Strengthen trade, commerce and services with particular emphasis on developing tourism as a lead sector, strengthening Pietermaritzburg as a 'secondary city' and stimulating inter and intra regional trade and commerce and
- Support the development of SMME's.

However, there are a number of issues that no short-term strategies can adequately address. These issues have to be addressed incrementally over a period. It is precisely because of the size and complexity of many development problems that priorities have to be defined. These enable the construction of a framework for more co-ordinated layering of interventions. These interventions lead to the upliftment of underdeveloped sectors in the region and the sub-regions.

Strategies aimed at supporting economic growth through gradual social reconstruction, notably in the delivery of services and opportunity can be grouped into four broad categories to:

- Accelerate the delivery of housing and associated services and facilities
- Broaden access to education, health and welfare services
- Support human resource development and
- Initiate job creation and service delivery through well managed public works programmes.

Telecommunications would fall into the first section (above), as it is a service associated with housing. The Telecommunications Act addresses the need for universal access meaning that everyone is entitled to have access to a telephone, within a reasonable distance from his or her home. Many communities are still without equitable or universal access but development initiatives fail to implement strategies to address this issue.

A distinction must be made between those issues that the various regions (provinces, local government, SDI's, etc) can influence and those issues whose parameters are largely defined by external actors to the regions. The strategies in this report focus on the former, where the chances of success are greater but have, where necessary, taken cognisance of critical inputs required by external actors. The elements which regional plans need to support, include the following:

- Those which aim to operationalise provincial strategies
- Those which stimulate regional development, notably calibrated development in manufacturing, trade and tourism within the ambit of national macroeconomic strategy
- Those which address poverty by improving the lot of underdeveloped areas
- Those which aim to release land and broaden access to finance, notably mortgage finance, for low income housing
- Those which support education (and human resource development) programs to improve skill levels and meet aspirations and
- Those which seek to redress the inequalities and inadequate access to welfare services, notably social pensions and homecare.

Strategies aimed at directing investment to supporting both economic growth and social reconstruction strategies through targeting interventions in particular locations can be grouped into four broad categories, to:

- Strengthen both internal and external linkages through the development of a 'lattice' of nodes and corridors throughout the region
- Plan for a spatial framework which supports the effective delivery of housing, services and facilities for the people of the region
- Promote the development of small towns and their rural hinterlands and
- Support integrated environmental management processes with a particular emphasis on identifying areas for restoration and/or protection.

The strengthening of internal and external linkages, via the development of a network of corridors throughout the regions and into neighbouring countries, is not only reliant on roads and railways as a means of creating links. Telecommunications is a vital component in linking various nodes into a coherent region that is able to compete nationally and globally. Linkages are heavily dependant on a communications network that fosters growth and redresses past imbalances yet a number of key legislature fail to effectively guide the development of an effective communication system, despite current thinking acknowledging telecommunications as an enabler of economic and social development.

The promotion of small towns cannot happen without a telecommunications infrastructure. Development of a town requires private sector investment which, relies heavily not only on telecommunications but on all forms of communication services. Development planning strategies must consider this.

What has emerged from the outline strategy's report, is that strategies are interlinked in a complex manner. Consequently, it is vital that they are not perceived as a distinct remedy to identify development ills but rather as an interlocking set of mutually supporting strategies in which the critical linkages between different strategies are understood. Further, the trade-offs, both in terms of 'cause and effect' consequences and what is possible in particular locations at particular points in time, are also central to any process of managed change.

Growth and development plans need to support initiatives recommending that the new Regional Councils should also be the basis for organising the deployment of provincial resources. This would help ensure the necessary co-ordination between local government and province at a regional scale. A common spatial framework and an adequately resourced public sector will be central to the successful implementation of the outline strategies detailed in this report. The spatial framework is detailed in the following section.

Conclusion

This paper clearly illustrates the lack of communications as a both an input to and as a facilitating medium to development in South Africa. Information lies at the core of good governance, economic and social development. The manner by which it flows and the means by which it is accessed will determine the levels of both development and growth success. For local government, it is critical that the capacity to ensure that information flows take place is built up as a priority. Routine functioning and information transfer built into the activities of departments would assist this. It is also important that an effective government information system is established which translates and disseminates information and retains a specific focus on the poor. For the economic sector, the communications infrastructure underscores whether growth will occur or not. The foregoing argument has illustrated that all the legislation aimed at the pursuit of development and growth have neglected to incorporate communications as an element of development in their strategies. Consequently, regions and provinces will not be able to pursue coherent, compatible, or even effective development policies.