

THE INTRINSIC ROLE OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN THE DELIVERY OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS TO THE COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Development is at the centre of virtually all activities of the government of South Africa, particularly at the local sphere level, where there is a lack of developmental projects. Proper planning is needed to strategize and deliver developmental projects. The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is the main tool used to strategize and plan and it comprises of ideas of the stakeholders and role players on which projects should be embarked on by the newly elected local government officials. This paper examines the intrinsic role of the IDP and explains its significance in delivering basic municipal services to the needy in the local municipality. It finds that despite the shortfall in implementation due mainly to the lack of human capital, it is still the most potent tool to ensure accountability regarding planning and delivery.

Keywords: Development, Planning, Implementation, Capacity, Community

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, since the attainment of constitutional democracy in 1994, the government has been embarking on deliberate transformative strategies to reverse and redress apartheid and injustices of the past. The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is used to plan for future development of localities, communities and municipalities (Siyongwana, 2006). The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is used to plan future development of localities, communities and municipalities by changing the laws and policies of the apartheid era which marginalised black communities and entrenched poor services (Rambuda & Masenya, 2017). During the apartheid era “rural areas were left underdeveloped and largely unserved” (van Rensburg, 2014). The new approach to local government is developmental and aims to overcome poor planning of the past. Under the post-1994 apartheid regime, the use of IDP becomes imperative because it brings the municipalities and communities together to address problems and find the best solutions that will enhance development and ensure long-term development in the area where they operate. Isidore & Nkosiyezwe (2011) write concerning failure to implement IDP “The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and the Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003 empowered all the municipalities to embark on a developmental agenda that is guided by the Integrated Development Planning (IDP). The IDP process has ensured that the needs of the communities are prioritised and are budgeted for. Hence the approval of the budget is tied to the IDP. Once the IDP is approved by the Council, outcomes and impact must be seen on the ground and this is not happening in most municipalities.”

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a qualitative non-empirical research method by sourcing and applying contemporary legal data consisting of a detailed analysis of the IDP, legislation and scholarly writings relevant to the problem. A content analysis method was used to analyse the significance of

the IDP in accelerating and speeding up the delivery of developmental projects and basic municipal services to the previously denied Black majority South Africa.

CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVES

Section 152(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa explicitly provide and promotes a democratic and accountable government for local communities by insisting that there is high quality provision of sustainable basic services and amenities to all the communities in South Africa (Tshoose, 2015). The section also provides that there must be broad promotion and provision of social and economic developments in all communities in South Africa and that no community should be left behind. Similarly, while providing these socio economic goods and services, the Constitution also admonishes that it must be done responsibly and reasonably so that the environment is not harmed and injured as a result of the provision and delivery of socio-economic goods and services. More importantly, the involvement of the communities and community organizations in the matters of local government should be paramount and there must be broad consultation, participation and consent prior the undertaken of any developmental project. To achieve these objectives, the local government or municipalities map out the IDP to be used as the principal strategic planning instrument to guide and inform all planning, budgeting, management and decision-making processes (Sowman & Brown, 2006).

The Constitution also saddles the local government with the responsibility of ensuring that the basic needs of South Africans, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, are given priority (Series, 2007). To this end, section 53 of the Constitution provides that “a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and economic development of the community and participate in national and provincial development programmes.” This provision reiterates the need to fight poverty and underdevelopment within the local areas so that the indigents can benefit from democratic dividends. This is why the Constitution mandates in terms of section 155(6)(b) that municipalities must be established, *inter alia*, to promote the development of local government capacity so that they can perform their functions and manage their affairs. Capacity, in this regard, entails human capital and the needed resources to deliver the objectives set out in section 152(1). Section 152 (b) of the Constitution provides that the core objective of local government is to ensure the sustainable provision of services to all communities. According to Isidore & Nkosiyezwe (2011), “*the issue of capacity becomes a critical factor so that municipalities are able to implement what was planned in the IDP.*”

In majority of the municipalities, there are serious capacity challenges due mainly as a result of political deployees who have no requisite skills and expertise to implement the IDP. These political interferences and meddling in the affairs and administrative duties of the municipalities have caused a lot of damages and led to poor service delivery in the communities. Lack of capacity is an inimical to the delivery of services to the needy and the poor communities. Capacity challenges are therefore thwarting transformative agenda of the government. To this end, projects are poorly implemented and delivery had dismally failed. In most cases, it would seem that capacity challenges do not receive proper attention regarding managers’ and employees’ understanding of what needs to be implemented and how it should be done. To address this capacity gap, there is need to ensure that adequately skilled and well qualified people are deployed for purposes of implementing and delivery of the IDP as envisaged in the Constitution. The appointment of incompetent people to critical positions is disastrous. The outcomes of such appointments are seen in service delivery protests by the community members.

In order words, the local municipalities must enhance social development in communities by delivering quality basic municipal services to the communities. Legislation have been enacted to

reinforce the Constitution in the quest to deliver and achieve the constitutional obligation and these pieces of legislation resonate perfectly with the spirit of the Constitution.

LEGISLATIVE IMPERATIVES

Against the above background, the municipality is mandated to adopt integrated development plans, in terms of section 25 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000. In section (1) of the same Act, each municipal council must, within a prescribed period after its election to office must adopt a single, inclusive and strategic plan for the development of the municipality. In the Local Municipality of Umhlabuyalingana's 2017 report, an IDP is broadly described

“as a super plan for an area that gives an overall framework for development.” It aims to co-ordinate the work of local and other spheres of government in a coherent plan to improve the quality of life for all the people living in an area. It should take into account the existing conditions and problems and resources available for development. The plan should look at economic and social development for the area as a whole. It must set a framework for how land should be used, what infrastructure and services are needed and how the environment should be protected.”

Therefore, the IDP seeks to correct apartheid planning injustices and give impetus to constitutional and legislative imperatives which ensured inclusivity and shared dignity and value of human beings (Sibanda, 2018). To this end, there has been a dismantling of all racially divided business and residential areas and promoting inclusivity where blacks and whites are integrated live together and conduct business within the same space and environment (Anthony, 2007). There is plan to ensure that the poor, who are mainly the black majority, are built residential accommodation very close to where they work or do business thereby removing the stress of travelling long distances to those places. It also includes upgrading and improving informal settlements and townships to ensure that they too have access to and are provided with basic local municipal services (Ziblim et al., 2013).

The key purpose of the IDP is to ensure harmonization of developmental projects envisaged by the local government and put all of them in implementable plans which after delivered are measurable and achievable. Therefore, the IDP seeks to perform these three key tasks namely; the initiation of service delivery by ensuring that municipalities have an economic and social developmental plan to cater to their communities, the people and society (Mojapelo, 2007). It also seeks to redress the past apartheid laws and injustices that delivered poor services to the black communities in South Africa. More importantly, it seeks to promote social equality, inclusiveness and broad opportunities for the previously disadvantaged black people for them to also have access to a high quality standard of living through the promotion and delivery of quality socio-economic goods and services to them (Harrison, 2006). All these are strategies to facilitate and accelerate developmental projects in the communities and local municipalities. The IDP identifies salient developmental projects such as the construction of hospitals, schools and recreational centers within the locality and puts both human and financial resources together to actualize and deliver them. Because it is a written document, the IDP creates a process of transparency as a roadmap to show what would be delivered and the government can be held accountable for delivery or failure to deliver (Mathe, 2011).

More importantly, the intrinsic roles being played in the development of the local areas are well articulated in terms of Section B of the White Paper on Local Government (1998) which broadly stipulates that the IDP enables a municipality to know and assess the current reality prevalent in the municipal area such as the reality pertaining to the economic, social and environmental trends, available resources, skills and capacities. Undoubtedly, different interest groups are in various communities with diverse needs, the IDP enables the municipality to do this:

ensure that all constitutional and legislative imperatives are prioritized for purposes of implementation and delivery to the people; ensure that the contents stipulated in the IDP are achieved and met. Similarly, all goals and targets are met, achieved and delivery are closely monitored through monitoring tools or instruments to know whether officials are performing according to plans. This ensures an effective budget that will use limited resources to meet and achieve strategic objectives.

Therefore, it is imperative for all municipalities to produce IDP, take up the responsibility for its co-ordination and ensure that stakeholders and role players within the community are included in the implementation to ensure broad impact and benefits. What this signifies is that the IDP is a vital tool to drive and deliver development. The local municipality officials and the government are closely monitored and tick the boxes to ascertain implementation. When anything is left undone, the municipal officials are held to account. The IDP provides an alignment between the municipal budget and project implementation to advance a strategic way in which service delivery can be measured in order to ascertain delivery. Human capital and resources are needed to drive and deliver the IDP. It should be stressed that no matter how good an IDP is, it might fail if there are no qualified human resources to drive and implement it (Lee et al., 2010). For the IDP to achieve the desired outcomes and objectives, funding and human resources are critically imperative. To achieve this, all developmental projects should be implemented in terms of the IDP. Similarly, the annual council budget should be used to implement the IDP. More importantly, the IDP should be the road map for all government departments and they must ensure that their development activities are in line with the IDP. Usually, the IDP has to be drawn up in consultation with forums, role-players and stakeholders and the final IDP document has to be approved by the council.

Usually, the lifespan of an IDP is 5 years as it is linked directly to the term of office for local councilors (Valeta & Walton, 2008). However, the IDP can be reviewed after every local government election by the new council by either adopting the existing IDP or developing a new IDP that takes into consideration existing plans. If possible, the IDP should be reviewed every year and necessary changes made to improve and strengthen it. Effective management of the IDP resides with the executive committee or executive mayors of the municipality, however, this responsibility may be assigned to the municipal manager. The practice is that most municipalities usually appoint an IDP coordinator who reports directly to the municipal manager and the executive committee or the executive mayor, to oversee the process.

AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

At the international level, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, the United Nations treaty established that service delivery is a component of the realization of the Human Rights. In terms of Article 21(2) of the UNDHR, everyone has the right of equal access to public service. More importantly, Article 25(1) expressly provides that:

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, and housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

This is what Section 73 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 envisaged and it provides that “a municipality must give priority to the basic needs of the local community using internal or external measures; promote the development of the local community; and ensure that all members of the local community have access to at least the minimum level of basic municipal services.”

INTRINSIC ROLE OF THE IDP

The intrinsic role of the IDP is to deliver basic developmental municipal projects to the needy in the local community in South Africa and as such, municipalities should have IDP for the following reasons: the IDP will ensure effective use of scarce resources whereby the local municipality will focus on the most important needs of the people in the local communities taking into account the resources available at local level. This will make the local municipality find the most cost-effective ways of providing quality services to the people and community. A typical example of this is where money is allocated to a project mainly to ensure that whenever disaster manifests, it will not impact people and their property. Such as ensuring that there are ample drainage systems to drain flood whenever there is heavy rain downpour.

The IDP is an enabler because it helps to speed up delivery of basic municipal services to the needy by identifying the least serviced and most impoverished areas and points to where municipal funds should be spent. Usually, the relevant stakeholders would have been part of the process and this makes implementation easier because the relevant stakeholders have been part of the process. It also provides “deadlock-breaking mechanisms to ensure that projects and programmes are efficiently implemented. The IDP helps to develop realistic project proposals based on the availability of resources” (Tshishonga, 2016). The IDP is a viable tool that can be used by the municipal government to attract additional funds from various sources whether from private or public sectors. A clear development plan presents a roadmap upon which private investors will evaluate and assess the content for purposes of investing in developmental projects enumerated in the plan (Gardener, 2014). The significance of this is that because the IDP was based on broad consultation and participation by all stake holders, it showcases that the process for the development of the plans were transparent and as such this strengthens the aspect of democracy which mandates the active participation of all the important stakeholders, decisions are made in a democratic and transparent manner (Khawula, 2016). It fosters inclusive growth, ensures equality and eliminates and overcome discrimination embedded in the legacy of the apartheid (Nonyukela, 2018). An example is the use of the municipal resources to integrate rural and urban areas and extend services to the poor and previously neglected communities. It also fosters co-operative government by creating co-ordination between local, provincial and national governments (Asmah-Andoh, 2009). It brings together all the spheres of government for the main purpose of tackling and delivering the development needed in a local area (Mubangizi & Gray, 2011). For example, if the National Department of Health plans to build a clinic in an area, it has to check that the municipality can provide services like water and sanitation for the effective functioning of the clinic.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

It is imperative that a municipality undertakes development-oriented planning to ensure that it achieves the objectives of the local government set out in section 152 of the Constitution. The municipality gives effect to its developmental duties as required by section 153 of the Constitution. In terms of Section 28(1) of the MSA, each municipal council must adopt a process set out in writing to guide the planning, drafting, adoption and review of its IDP. The IDP is recognised as the driver of development especially at the local municipalities. It is therefore a viable tool to ensure that what was planned is delivered to the needy in the community. Mayors and municipal officials can be held accountable based on the content of IDP. The IDP is not a solo effort. It requires the overall engagement of the forum, the municipality, the role players, the role players and those that will be affected by the IDP. The IDP is a roadmap usually planned ahead for 5 years, but may be reviewed either as a result of new administration or new development occurrence that needs to be integrated into an existing IDP. The IDP has full support from the perspectives of the Constitution,

legislation, policy, international instruments. There are other principles, initiatives, strategies that also enable the delivery of the IDP. It is imperative that for purposes of effective and efficient implementation of the IDP, there is need for institutional capacity to ensure that the plan becomes releasable and deliverable. This is said against the backdrop that incompetent people have always been deployed to implement the IDP. Hence, even if the plan is clear and very formidable, lack of expertise and competent persons to ensure that what was planned was physically delivered and broadly benefited the community, the plan will become a paper tiger and dysfunctional due mainly to the human resource lacuna and capacity challenges.

CONCLUSION

The IDP becomes a strategic potent tool if utilised efficiently and effectively. The outcome would be that what had been planned for and broadly agreed upon are being prioritised for implementation and delivery by the municipality. Failure to accomplish the content of any IDP impacts the developmental agenda meant to alleviate the sufferings of the community. It is therefore imperative to ensure that the IDP is fully implemented so that the standard of living of the people in the community improves. More importantly, ensuring the implementation and delivery of the IDP are constitutionally and legislatively mandated failure which would be tantamount to violation of the law.

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