

MBIZANA

MUNICIPALITY

Local Governance Report

October 2017



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Definitions

Informal economy	This study endorses the view that there is no clear line distinguishing the formal from the informal economy as all enterprises (including informal enterprises) are linked into a single economy.
Informal enterprise	This study will use the term "informal enterprise" to refer to what StatsSA defines as the informal sector, consisting "of those businesses that are not registered in any way. They are generally small in nature, and are seldom run from business premises. Instead, they are generally run from homes, street pavements and other informal arrangements".
Peri-urban	A location adjoining an urban area; between the suburbs and the countryside.
Rural	The countryside, especially areas of predominant agricultural production.
Small business	In terms of the Small Business Amendment Act 2004 a "small enterprise" means a separate and distinct business entity, together with its branches or subsidiaries, if any, including co-operative enterprises, managed by one owner or more [which is] predominantly carried on in any [scheduled] sector and [which can be] classified as a micro, a very small, a small or a medium enterprise by satisfying the criteria [of the Schedule]. In the wholesale trade sector, a very small business is one with less than 20 full-time employees, a turnover below R6 million and total gross assets of less than R600,000.
Urban	Of, relating to, or located in a city.
Township	A term for urban areas that were set aside during the apartheid period for non-white population groups. In the Western Cape, the term is synonymous with black South African planned settlements and includes recently established low-cost housing settlements.
Piece jobs	Any type of employment in which a worker is paid a fixed-piece rate for each unit produced or action performed, regardless of time. Some industries where piece-rate pay jobs are common are agricultural work, cable installation, call centres, writing, editing, translation, truck driving, data entry, carpet cleaning, craftwork and manufacturing.
Social grant	<p>Social grants are in place to improve living standards and redistribute wealth to create a more equitable society. Sections 24 through 29 of the Bill of Rights in the South African constitution recognise the socio-economic rights of citizens, including the right to social security. The government is obliged to progressively realise these rights, meaning that "the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of the right." The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) administers social grants. SASSA is mandated by the South African Social Security Agency Act of 2004 to "ensure the provision of comprehensive social security services against vulnerability and poverty within the constitutional legislative framework".</p> <p>In South Africa, the Department of Social Development issues grants for: social relief of distress; grants-in-aid; child support; foster care; care dependency; war veterans; disability; and grants for older people.</p>
Social protection	This consists of policies and programmes designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to manage economic and social risks, such as unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability and old age.





1. Executive Summary

Efficient and effective governance at the local level is key to promoting a stable democracy, enabling economic growth and sustaining community development. Mindful of the special place that Mbizana holds in South Africa, positively as the birthplace of Oliver Reginald Tambo (ORT) and less so, given its last-placed ranking on the 2016 Government Performance Index, Good Governance Africa (GGA) committed to undertake a focused engagement in the municipality, starting in 2017. We did this to bootstrap local government performance by encouraging participatory democracy in homage to the centenary of ORT.

Using capi surveys, data was collected along a 32km transect, from Nkantolo village to Bizana town, in the local municipality of Mbizana. There were 974 respondents, all local residents. There was a good spread across age, employment, and education demographics, although there were significantly more female respondents. All were over the age of 18. Measures were taken to ensure confidentiality and transparency regarding the respondent data. Overall, the population was found to be financially precarious, with a low income (median personal income = R760 pm), and household sizes were found to be moderate (mode = 4), although this was influenced by outward migration. There was a heavy reliance on government grants to supplement income. Despite this, the majority of respondents own their homes.

Overall, residents saw the municipality and local government as overwhelmingly corrupt and ineffective. Two main factors affected this view; work access and police access. Any provision or facilitation of work access was found to be strongly related to increased positive perceptions of local government. This echoed the citizens' view that employment is by some way the most urgent and important issue they face. Providing some relief in this respect would win local government disproportionate favour. Police access, on the other hand, was found to strongly increase *negative* opinion of local government.

Access to services varied significantly within the community, with only moderate access to the most basic services. The major factors affecting access to services were found to be education level and employment status, and to an extent the rural/urban divide. A positive correlation exists between the respondents' level of education and access to services, most obviously police and refuse access, possibly because higher educated respondents live in urban areas. Employment was also found to affect access to services, especially access to health and police services. Age-wise, younger people tend to have better access to services than older people. Pensioners are most disadvantaged in this sense, with low levels of police and health access.

The qualitative aspect of the study gave voice to both visible leaders and citizens about their understanding of the lived experiences in Mbizana local municipality and their aspirations for the future. The leaders focused on broad overarching perspectives such as the need for adequate, relevant and reliable infrastructure if the municipality is to develop, especially in its urban centre. The challenge of having business owners who do not live in the town came out strongly in that it leads to a form of capital flight, making wealth from locals but going – in most cases – to spend it elsewhere, boosting the economies of other towns and provinces. Therefore, development in Mbizana must lead to business owners living in Bizana.

Another aspect raised by leaders was the problem of institutional challenges that lead to unresponsive governance, from issues of safety and security for businesses and residents to matters of perceived corruption and nepotism within the municipality. These institutional inadequacies undermine the process of development and should be urgently addressed. To the municipality's credit, some advances have been made in supply chain management, such that even audits have improved from an adverse audit opinion in 2012/13 to an unqualified (clean audit) opinion in 2015/16.

The citizens' responses in the survey and inputs during the focus groups indicated an urgent need for unemployment to be addressed. This ties up with the recent findings by Statistics South Africa that unemployment is the key driver of poverty.

Our findings make it clear that the economics of daily life and sustainable income opportunities are uppermost on the minds of the almost 1,000 citizens we engaged. They consistently ranked this as their first, second and third priority, and in our Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). At the feedback workshops the theme of employment and secure livelihoods arose as the proverbial elephant in the room. The other "usual suspects" of the development space such as health, education, sanitation, law and order, and land, also arose and require attention.

The perceptions of citizens on governance are mainly those of dissatisfaction with all aspects of governance, a

clear indication of dreams deferred as people look up to government to unlock opportunities in their communities. These opportunities refer to economic activity and social institutions. There are services that are not in the purview of municipal governance (such as education) that locals expect the municipality to make a contribution towards. This indicates a need for greater cooperative governance across all spheres and departments of government to provide the most adequate, responsive and locally embedded programmes of service delivery. This, the citizens suggested, must be underpinned by values of transparency, public consultation and unyielding accountability. Only then will the alternative dream of "Imagine Mbizana" move more towards becoming a daily reality for its citizens.

Towards this end, GGA intends to further develop its work and involvement with the communities who live in Mbizana and the local government authorities. Besides our general mission of sharing fact-based knowledge to improve governance across the continent, we specifically wish to bridge the divide between citizens and the lived experiences of their communities and their representatives, or those in power in local government. We hope to achieve this by building political will and an openness to engage on the part of those in power; by building a sense of agency and empowerment for citizens through participatory platforms and through these initiatives to create a shared conversational space, enabling diverse stakeholders to dialogue and thereby facilitate functionality of governance and social cohesion for society at large.





2. OVERVIEW

If Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela is referred to as the Father of the Nation of the democratic South Africa, then Oliver Reginald Tambo is surely the prime contender for the title of Grandfather of the Nation. Tambo, the predecessor to Mandela as President of the African National Congress (ANC), lived most of his adult life in exile, where for more than 30 years he indefatigably pursued the cause of liberation for the people of South Africa before returning home.

In this, ORT's centenary year, GGA thought it fitting to pay tribute to this icon by pursuing his clarion call for "peace and prosperity for all South Africans". We thought it most appropriate to commence our engagement in Tambo's own birthplace of Nkantolo, a village in the local municipality of Mbizana, some 30km from the town of Bizana, Eastern Cape. We had substantial grounds for justifying this position, which are described in greater detail below.

2.1 Introduction

Aside from its two flagship publications, the quarterly *Africa in Fact* and the annual *Africa Survey*, GGA runs several dedicated research and advocacy programmes. All of our work is defined by the promotion of fact-based knowledge. In 2015, the first research output of our Programme on Local Governance and Grassroots Democracy, a nationally representative survey on Perceptions of National Government in South Africa, found that the majority of citizens surveyed had a very low opinion of government. Briefly stated, only 14.3% of participants believed the government to be fully accountable, another 39.7% partially accountable, with 24.3% perceiving them as less accountable than the old apartheid government and 21.6% reporting that government only represents the interests of a small political class.

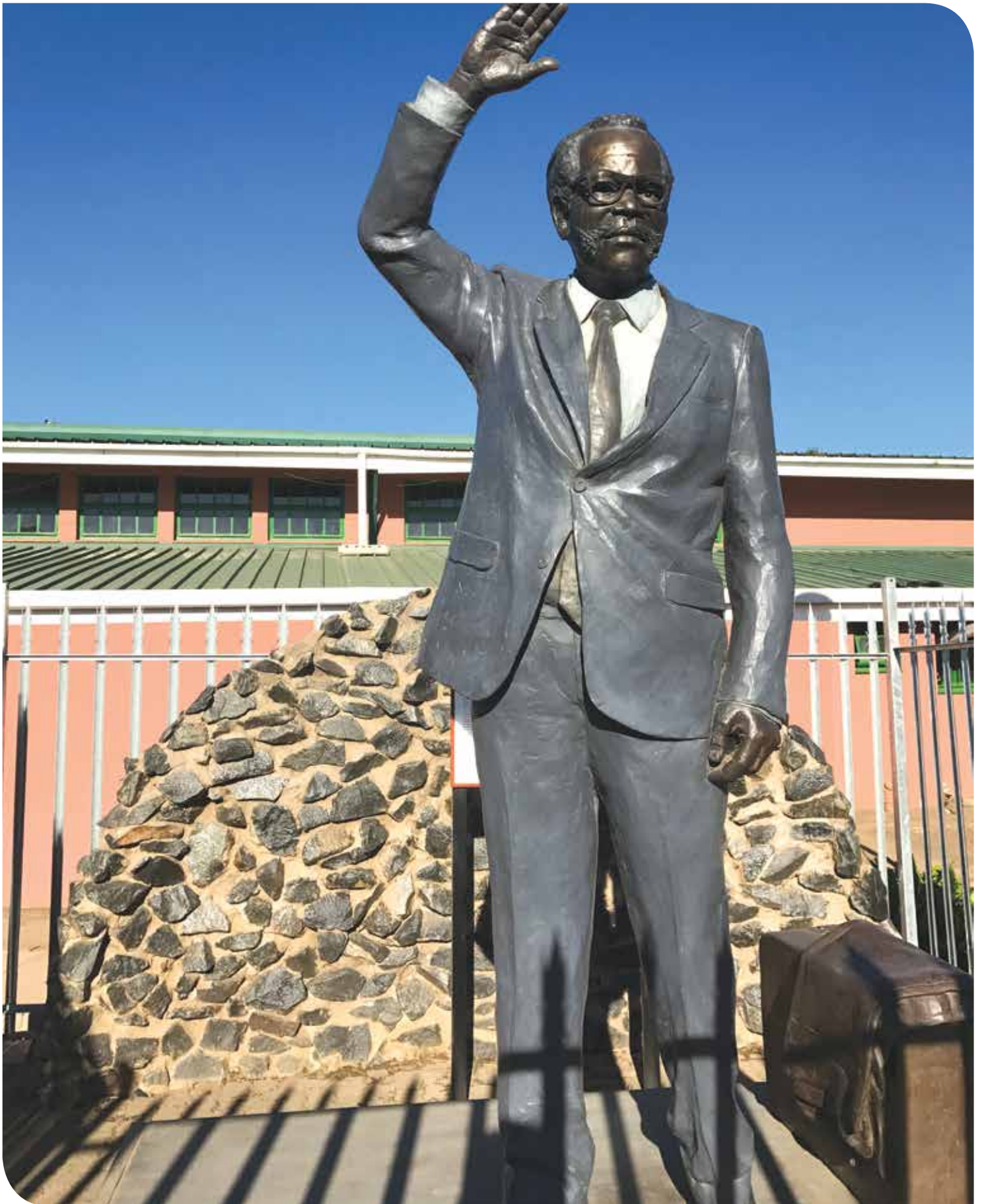
A whopping 78.7% of participants blamed incompetent and corrupt government officials for the poor state of the economy, with health and education receiving a 31.4% and 36.1% thumbs up respectively, while law and order scored only a 16.5% thumbs up. The only positive report was the innovation of social grants, recognised favourably across all race groups (61.2%) and especially for the black community (76.6%). Of concern, however, in a democracy little over two decades old, was that 56.2% of the respondents thought

people had given up hope that the government would listen to them. These findings were so disturbing that we decided to increase our focus and zoom in on performance at local levels of governance.

Thus, our 2016 Government Performance Index (GPI) provided national and provincial rankings for all local and metropolitan municipalities in South Africa. The GPI used publically available data from, among others, Statistics South Africa, the Auditor-General's Reports, National Treasury and the Extended Public Works Programme to score 15 indicators, representing the three governance clusters of: a) administration (comprising municipal capacity, financial soundness and compliance), b) economic development (poverty, individual income, work opportunities, unemployment rate) and c) service delivery (water, sanitation, education, electricity, informal to formal housing, refuse removal, health facilities, police coverage).

Mbizana local municipality ranked lowest on the GPI, coming in at 234 out of 234 municipalities, meaning that its aggregate performance based on the publically available data was lowest in the country. This surprised us, especially given the significance of the municipality as the birthplace of not only ORT, but also of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. Somewhat unsurprisingly, all of the 20 lowest-performing municipalities were located in former apartheid homelands, intentionally designed to suppress development and flourishing.

Ultimately, these findings strengthened our conviction that something must be done urgently to bootstrap the promotion of good governance in municipalities most vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Enter Mbizana and our decision to provide a service both to its citizens



(the “governed”) and its administrative officials (the “governors”) in the interests of ameliorating conditions there. We wished to assist with the transformation of Mbizana municipality into a beacon of light and hope for citizens in other municipalities by affording it attention as a case of best practice in progress.

In between the GPI and the Mbizana mapping, South Africans went to the polls in local government elections on August 3, 2016. What we had drawn attention to in 2015, in the form of dissatisfied perceptions of government and declining support, came to pass, with the national ruling party dramatically losing support from 62% in the 2011 local government elections to 54% last year (an 8% drop). Curious to understand the voting behaviour of the population, we again commissioned a nationally representative survey – this time on voter sentiment.

When asked who governs South Africa at the moment, only 14.5% of our participants responded with “the people”. The president (at 48%), foreign powers (10.4%) and local powers (5.3%) together accounted for 63.7%, while parliament accounted for only 20%. Somewhat paradoxically, given that they felt excluded from governance, the vast majority of voters surveyed recognised that their votes carry power (76%), compared with the 24% who believe otherwise. Over two thirds of the sample registered unhappiness with government at local, national or both tiers, flagging an urgent need for improvement.

Across the governance clusters previously identified in our GPI, administration was of least concern, economic development more so, while improved service delivery still came across as paramount. The spread of why people voted the way they did was varied; 38% believed their party could do the job, 33% out of loyalty, 20% because they rely on income grants and pensions, among other reasons. We argued that South Africans appear to be deploying their votes – or withholding them – strategically in a promising show of democratic maturation.

More than three quarters of our sample believed that the best model of governance is a democracy “in which people govern directly or through representation”. It is, therefore, alarming that of those people surveyed, less than 10% of them thought the authorities should be approached through legitimate channels, with another 10% giving up hope and 28% believing in holding peaceful protests. The majority (52%) felt that attention is drawn to grievances by violent protests.

To combat the scourge of bad governance and overcome the consequential social malaise witnessed around the country by increasingly frustrated citizens, GGA decided to engage the issues head on by giving voices to the people’s needs and concerns at local government level. Given the convergence of the negative and positive, namely of poor governance performance and ORT’s centenary respectively, our exercise in promoting good governance by strengthening grassroots democracy could not be more appropriate and timely than in the local municipality of Mbizana in 2017.

2.2 Methodology

Given our desire to maximise impact with the time and resources available, we opted for a mixed methodology that combined both quantitative and qualitative methods within the broader context of a participatory action research paradigm. The mixed methodology is renowned for yielding optimal benefit under the testing fieldwork conditions encountered in real-world research.

Exploratory Phase: March–April 2017

Members of the GGA team first conducted an exploratory visit to the proposed field site in Mbizana in March 2017. We visited the town of Bizana and the more general area around the local municipality, as well as driving along the R61 until the junction to Nkantolo, at which point we turned towards ORT’s home village and surveyed the surrounding area. After demographics and potential waypoints along the transect were noted, and following intense consultation, we chose five waypoints from Nkantolo (zero point), to Ludeke Mission, the R61 junction, peri-urban (+/- 2km from the town centre) and urban sites.

Phase 1: May–June 2017

GGA commissioned Dr Leif Petersen, Director of the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (SLF), members of his team, and Ms Camilla Thorogood to assist in translating the Citizen Survey and Informal Business questionnaires into tools to be administered, using CommCare on mobile phones carried by trained GGA fieldworkers. The two questionnaires were translated into isiXhosa and back-translated into English to ensure accurate translation, and the use of geographically accurate grammar and phraseology was encouraged.

Fieldwork was undertaken in the Mbizana local municipality in June 2017. Capi surveys were conducted, using CommCare, an online survey tool with a downloadable app for smartphones or tablets. The sample frame ran along the transect which was anchored along the R61, between Nkantolo and Bizana. This included the town of Bizana and its peri-urban surrounds, as well a number of villages.

Data collection was undertaken by a carefully selected and trained team of fieldworkers who live in the region and who were selected from a municipal database of unemployed youth. They were put into teams and allocated areas closest to their homes. This facilitated their understanding of the area, and increased the trust of community members in their presence and work.

They were remunerated for their work and also at the end of their field research were able to keep the smart phones issued to them. Twenty fieldworkers were used over the five waypoints, with two female and two male fieldworkers per waypoint, located close to their home communities. In addition, the fieldwork team was diverse in age, linguistic skills, and gender. Interviews were restricted to respondents 18 years and older who fieldworkers encountered at their homes, as opposed to mere passersby.

Over time, the fieldworkers were able to capture a reasonable representation of citizen responses in the villages within their transect area. A WhatsApp group was established for all the fieldworkers, enabling them to communicate with each other and the project leaders. For each interview, fieldworkers were requested to drop a location pin identifying the interview coordinates.

Each day, the fieldwork team set out on foot with smartphones, with installed CommCare software containing the survey questionnaire. Cameras and sound recorders were also taken along.

A number of steps were taken to ensure the ethical integrity of the research. Respondent confidentiality was assured by making responses anonymous; the respondents were informed of the objectives of the research; and interviews were conducted after securing consent. The great majority of the identified research participants agreed to take part in the study, although a small minority refused to be interviewed.

The survey took approximately 20-30 minutes to complete, and included both closed and open-ended items. Overall, the items covered socio-economic and demographic characteristics, home and land ownership, service provision, and local municipality/ governance issues.

While the GGA Citizen Survey team was collecting data at the various waypoints, a second team under the charge of the SLF was conducting small-business surveys along the 32km transect (see *Africa in Fact*, issue 43 for details). Meanwhile, a third team comprising the GGA executive director and the lead researcher, Lukhona Mnguni, conducted qualitative interviews with local leaders representing the municipality, traditional authorities, education, religion and the private sector, among others.

The Phase one quantitative data was analysed, and a working report was produced based on a preliminary analysis of the findings. This report, in conjunction with the small-business survey report and the analysis of the qualitative interviews with leaders, was used to produce a two-page feedback document that was produced in isiXhosa and English and circulated at the two participant feedback workshops held at Ludeke Mission and the LoveLife Centre in Bizana.

Independently of the feedback sessions, a GGA quantitative data specialist, Dr Vaughan Dutton of Oxford University, conducted a “blind” statistical analysis, merging and cleaning all survey and qualitative data, while quality checks were carried out to identify outliers and logical inconsistencies. Quantitative data were analysed using R (R Core Team). The points of intersection between this study and the feedback obtained from the FGDs is uncanny.

Phase 2: August 2017

The GGA team, comprising the executive director, the lead researcher, a GGA social worker, one GGA researcher and an intern, visited the Mbizana municipality in August 2017 to provide feedback to the participants and the stakeholders.

Despite our best efforts, attempts to contact the municipal office were unsuccessful. After receiving no response for several weeks, we visited the mayor’s office. We were encouraged by the fact that the mayor had permitted a mayoral forum to be held on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at which all major stakeholders would be present. Imagine



our surprise, therefore, when the mayor cancelled at the last minute, apparently put out by the fact that she had not received a personalised briefing on the project.

Nevertheless, the two participant feedback workshops went well. Both were attended by around 60 people, whose behaviour was notably different in the presence – or absence – of cadres aligned to the governing party, who were visible due to their party regalia. Phase two comprised an analysis of the material written up by members of GGA during the FGDs and included recommendations on the way forward to an “Imagine Mbizana” reality, where, in keeping with Oliver Tambo’s vision, all would thrive.

Final Report

The above mixed methodology, with a phased roll-out, was beneficial insofar as it enabled our research team to target, with precision, the context of the lived reality of our study participants, along with gaps and sticking points. It also permitted us to better tailor our engagement with local government and the communities concerned. The final report comprises all of the sources referred to above, in addition to the inputs and notes captured by individual members of the GGA team. The quantitative and qualitative analyses were, at times, highly complementary, and the narrative-style data served to vindicate the numbers. At other times, collecting data on the ground and attention to divergences between the approaches led to fascinating new insights, which are described in this report.

2.3. Background to the study site

The Eastern Cape is the poorest province in South Africa, with a large part of its population living in rural conditions and often isolated from access to basic services. Mbizana municipality is located at the very north-eastern corner of the Eastern Cape. It is a largely rural area of approximately 2,806 km², bordering on KwaZulu-Natal to the east, and the Indian Ocean to the south. Mbizana is dotted with small villages and intersected by the R61 highway, which connects

the N2 national highway with the coastal boundary. The municipal seat is located in the small town of Bizana, of approximately 8,000 residents, and approximately 200km from Durban and 500km from East London. In 2011, Mbizana was ranked as the 26th most populous local municipality with a population size of 281,905. The predominant ethnic group are AmaMpondo.

2.4. Introduction to Citizen Survey

Fieldwork was undertaken in the Mbizana local municipality in June 2017. Capi surveys were conducted, using CommCare, an online survey tool with a downloadable app for smartphones or tablets.

2.5 Demographics

The total sample, after cleaning, consisted of 974 respondents. Almost half (47%) were born in Bizana, and a further 27% were born in the environs of Bizana, meaning that almost 75% were born either in Bizana or in the vicinity. The respondents represent a largely sedentary population, with limited migration in and out of the area. The families to which these respondents belong have, however, experienced a fair amount of migration out of the region, most notably to KwaZulu-Natal (53%), the rest of the Eastern Cape (19%), and Gauteng (13%). There were typically one, two or three family members who had moved.

The reasons for migration appeared to be related to respondents’ age, and location. It appears that middle-aged respondents experienced less migration of family members, or whose family members had gone and come back – for example, parents with young children, who worked away from home to earn better money and returned as pensioners when their children were much older. In addition, families living in “the countryside” experienced slightly more migration. The inference to be drawn for the reasons for this are, however, beyond the ability of this dataset.



Demographics

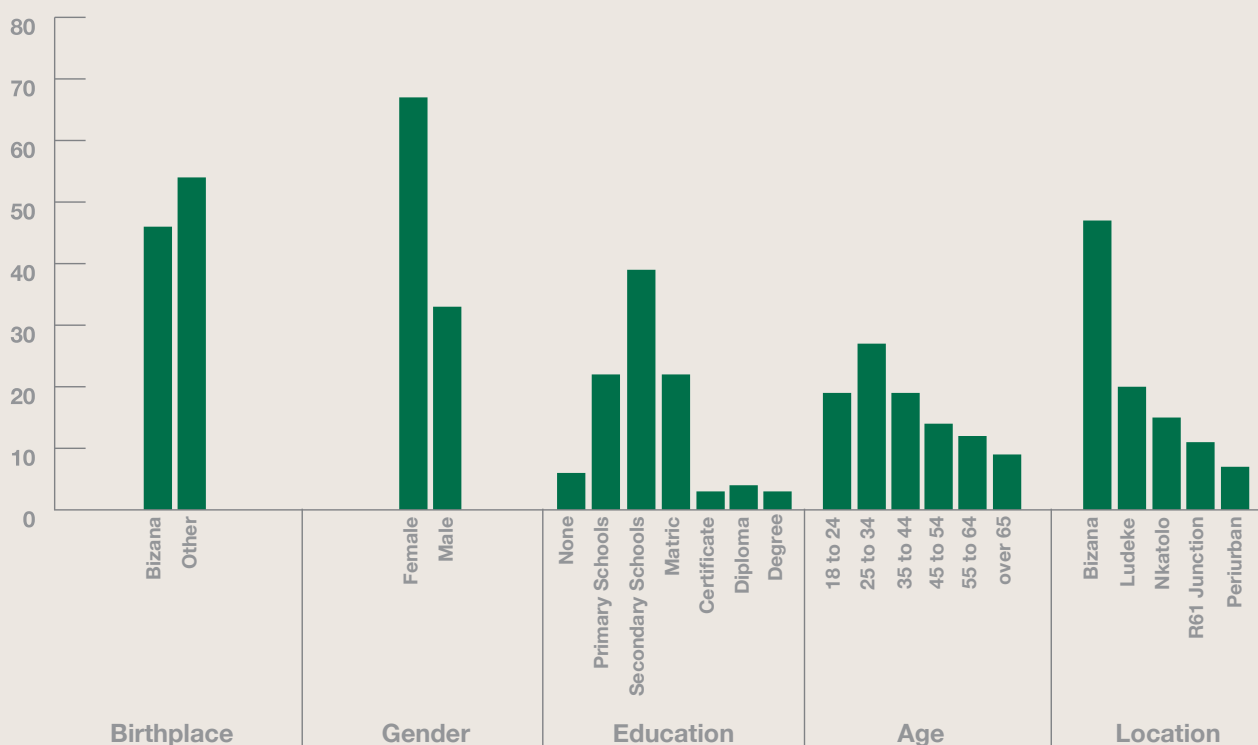
96%
of respondents owned their home

57%
don't own land

58%
had one or more family member migrate away

Typical household size was 4

Figure 1: Demographics of respondents



The majority of respondents were female, possibly due to the time of day when interviews were conducted, or a similar reason. This may also mean it's possible there is a high concentration of female-headed households in the area, with these women mainly being single parents, grandmothers and some students. A simple breakdown of home ownership indicates no significant difference (using Chi Squared) between genders, reinforcing this supposition.¹

although this only extended as far as a secondary education, with gradations in education occurring largely within the primary to secondary school range. The impact of migration may be significant in this respect, as better-educated individuals typically migrate away from rural areas.

The majority of respondents were located in Bizana, which is unsurprising as the highest proportion of the population lives in this urban area.

Table 1: Gender by home ownership

	Family owns home	Respondent owns home	Total
Female	30.8	34	67.4
Male	15.8	15.1	32.6

X-squared = 3.8, df = 4, p-value = 0.44²

The vast majority of respondents had some education,

¹ Chi Squared analysis is a statistical way of testing for a significant difference between groups, when dealing with count data. It works by calculating the difference between the count that we observed and the count that would have been expected if no real difference exists.

² The important result here is the p-value. If it is lower than 0.05, then we can say that there is a significant difference between groups. In this case, p-value = 0.44, which is greater than p = 0.05, and therefore we can say that there is no difference between our groups.





3. Research Findings

Our research was conducted in two phases and the findings are presented below as Phase 1 and Phase 2.

3.1. Phase 1

The findings for our Citizen Survey and leadership interviews are presented in sections 3.1.1. and 3.1.2. below. For our GGA Small Business Survey please refer to issue 43 of our in-house journal, *Africa in Fact*, dedicated to the informal economy. Please refer specifically to pages 48-62.

3.1.1. Citizen Survey - Quantitative analysis

Respondent groups

To gain more insight into the nature of the respondents, we conducted a k-modes cluster analysis. This analytical tool groups respondents according to their pattern of responses, thereby identifying sub-groups (or typical respondent profiles) that might be difficult to otherwise discern. This tool is useful because it allows for a more three-dimensional understanding of who responded than is the case in a simple description of demographics. The method requires that the number of groups should be specified by the analysts (it is not something arising naturally from the data). We requested three groupings.

Table 2: Three respondent groupings arising from cluster analysis

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Government grant	Government grant	Government grant
Support from family	Individual owns home	Individual owns home
Family owns home	Individual doesn't own land	Matric
Individual doesn't own land	No education	Bizana
Secondary school	Primary education	35 to 44
Bizana	Ludeke	Job seeker
18 to 24	Nkantolo	Odd jobs
Odd jobs	45 to 54	
	55 to 64	
	Crop cultivation	

From this table, it is possible to describe the three groups:

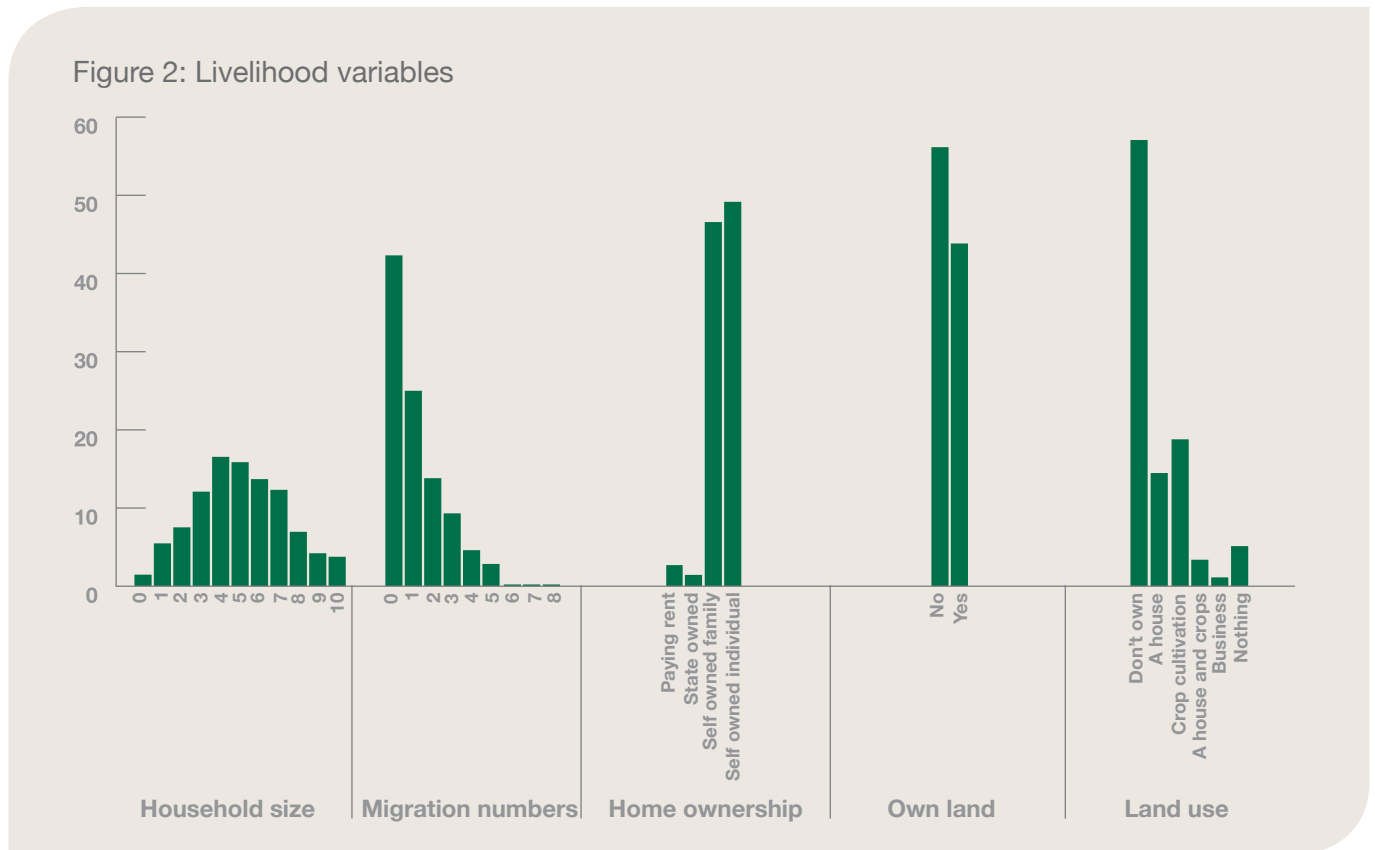
- **Group 1** is made up of young 18 to 24-year-olds, living in the family home, who do not own any land. They are secondary school educated, and do not have a matric. They rely on family support, odd jobs and a government grant.
- **Group 2** is made up of 45 to 64-year-olds, who own their homes but do not own land. They are poorly educated (up to primary level), and predominantly live in Ludeke and Nkantolo. They engage in crop cultivation.
- **Group 3** is made up of middle-aged 35 to 44-year-olds, who own their home. They have completed secondary education, and predominantly live in Bizana. They are job-seekers, or engage in odd jobs.

These groups provide three profiles of Mbizana respondents that will be followed up later in the paper.



Livelihoods

This section provides a more detailed analysis of respondent livelihoods. Household sizes are close to normally distributed, with a mean of 5, and a mode of 4. There were observed outliers that had over 10 people in one household and just over a third (37%) of the households had between six and nine people.



The reason for differing household sizes is unclear; analytically, the only significant differentiating variable is gender. Males tended to belong to smaller households than females. This may indicate the unwillingness of those who have migrated away to leave their children with men, as it was observed that young parents leave children with their grandmothers. We checked for significance of this difference using a t-test:³

Table 3: T test of gender by household size

T test	
mean in group female	mean in group male
5.3	4.5
p-value < 0.01	

The majority of respondents own their properties, although overall there is no significant difference whether ownership was by family or individual. Conducting a chi-squared test indicates that there is a significant difference in personal land ownership, with many more respondents not owning any land. This possibly reflects the urban bias in the sample.

X-squared = 14.53, df = 1, p-value < 0.01

This is reinforced by the high proportion of respondents who, when asked about land use, respond that they don't own land. Those that do, indicate that they use their land for building a house or cultivating crops.

³ A t-test is similar to the chi-square, in that it tests for significant difference between groups. The only difference is that a t-test makes use of continuous rather than count data, as it needs to calculate means. As with the chi-squared, the important result is the p-value. If it below 0.05, then we can say that there is indeed a difference between groups. In this case, we see a p-value of <0.01, indicating that there is a difference between males and females.

Income

Figure 3: Income variables



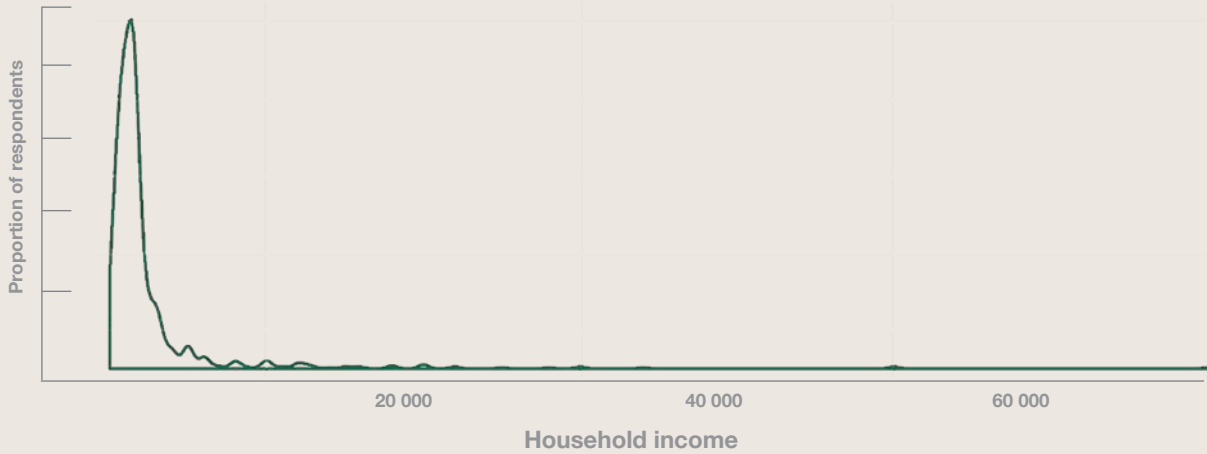
Income analysis indicates that a staggering number of respondents are unemployed, despite a high rate of home ownership. While we do not possess sufficient data to identify the reasons behind this, it suggests informal sources of income, remittances received from a diaspora, or inherited homes. While the rural nature of the area suggests it is possible to earn an informal income, the high number of respondents who subsist on government grants indicates that this is not the case. What is revealed, therefore, is a financially insecure population.

Some respondents generate some form of income by doing odd jobs, while a smaller proportion relies on family support. Household income was reported at a mean of R2,396, significantly higher than the respondents' personal incomes at a mean of R1,422 per month. As is often the case, this figure disguises the extremely skewed nature of incomes in the area, with a small minority earning much more than others, and lifting the mean. To illustrate this, we created a density plot of income.⁴

⁴ The density plot, as shown here, indicates the proportion of responses falling in each region of the x axis. It allows a visual representation of the data distribution.



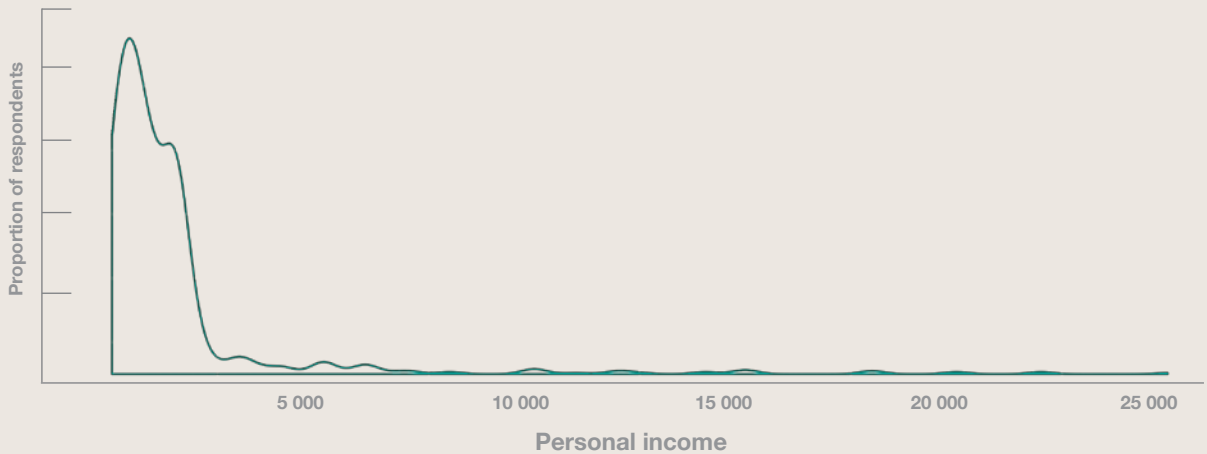
Figure 4: Household income density plot



The inter-quartile range on household incomes was R1,240⁵, showing that there is a great variation in income even if extreme values are excluded.

A similar skew was observed when considering personal income. The mean personal income of R1,422 can be seen to have been artificially inflated by a few high earners.

Figure 5: Personal income density plot



⁵ The inter-quartile range offers a range between the 1st and 3rd quarters of the data. This is useful as it excludes outliers and offers a more realistic range for data that is very skewed.

As with household income, we calculated the median and inter-quartile range. The former was observed to be R760, and the inter-quartile range R1,140.

There is some variation in livelihood source when set against age. The most interesting point is, however, that there is a high proportion of young people who rely on government grants for their livelihood. This serves to confirm the significance of social grants as illustrated in our previous work (see *Perceptions of National Government*, 2016).

Table 4: Age category by source of income

	Depend on family	Government grant	Odd jobs
18 to 24	4.8	6.9	2.9
25 to 34	3.8	16.3	9.7
35 to 44	1.1	9.9	7.3
45 to 54	0.6	8.1	5.1
55 to 64	1	7.3	2.1
Over 64	0	7.2	0.2
Total	11.3	55.7	27.3

The high reliance on government grants, and “passive” forms of remuneration may, in part, be due to residents finding themselves in an economic structure that systematically

neutralises their efforts to progress and innovate. Residents are, in this sense, captives of institutional and state realities that position the area in a state of poverty. A significant majority of respondents indicated that their environment was unfavourable for business (although some indicated that it was favourable). The only single indicator of this variation in this perception related to land use, in which business owners saw the environment as more favourable, whereas those who used land for a house saw it as less favourable.

Table 5: Land use by favourability of environment for business

Land use	Favourable	Unfavourable
A house	8.7	16.1
A house and crops	3.8	6.9
A business	1.9	0.5
Crop cultivation	18.3	14.9
Don't own	63.5	57.9
Nothing	3.8	3.7
Total	100	100



Income

47%

depend on government grant

23%

work

10%

sales/business

5%

remittances

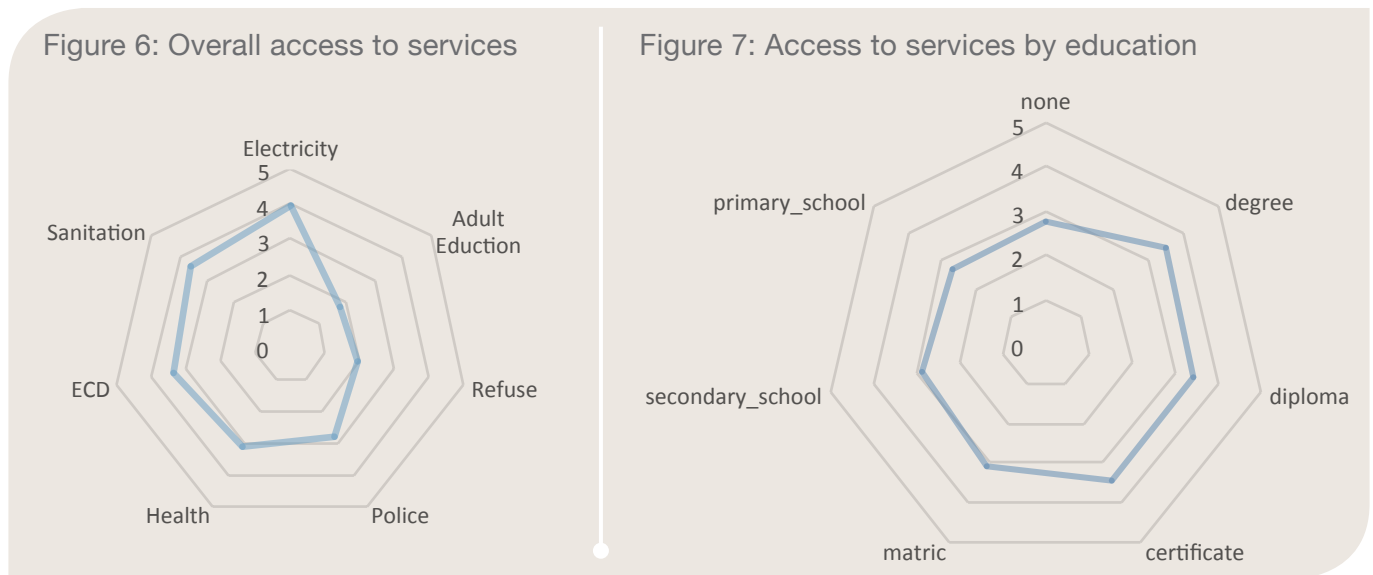


Access to services

A range of external factors exert an influence on the struggling community as the previous section identified. Most obvious of these are the various services which the community might expect from their local government and municipality. These include access to electricity, sanitation, early childhood support, health facilities, police, refuse services, and a degree of adult-education possibilities. Not all of these services are provided by the municipality: sanitation, for example, refers to “access to a working toilet”, which may include waterborne (municipal) and non-waterborne (private) sanitation. The same might be said of refuse. Other services are more obviously municipal or local government-based, or stand-alone departments, such as the South African Police Service.

Figure 6 indicates that access to these services varies significantly within the community, with only moderate access to the most basic services, whether provided by the municipality, the community or self-enabled. We broke down this overall plot by key demographics to identify demographic variations in access. Significant differences in access to services was found with regards to education level and employment status.

Education reveals a significant positive correlation between level of education and overall access to services, increasing overall access from 3 to 3.5. Residents might increase their access to services by improving their education from secondary to tertiary level.

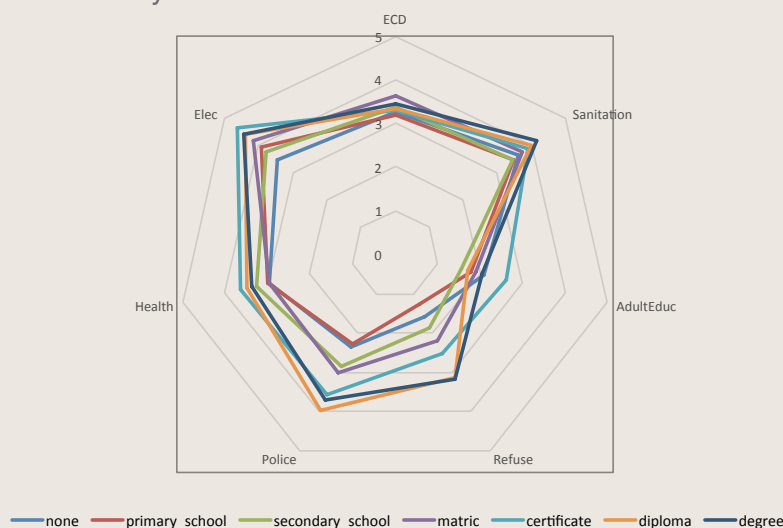


To visually display access to services, we made use of a radar plot (eg, figure 6). This plot shows the seven services of interest on one plot, as labelled. The plot has a 6-point scale, with 0 at the centre and representing lowest access to services, and 5 being at the periphery, and representing high access to services.

Each of the seven services has a score, derived from the data, which is joined up by the blue line. This plot allows easy comparison of access and the relative access across the services. For example, in figure 6, electricity access scores, on average, 4 on the 6-point scale and is relatively high; while refuse access scores only 1.

Pre-tertiary education does not, however, increase overall access to services, with scores remaining static at 3. To gain more insight into the effect of education on service access, we constructed the following plot, which represents service access by various education levels. This plot works the same as the previous access plots; except that they have several connected lines rather than only one. Each of these lines represents a subgroup – the identity of which is included in the legend. This is a useful way of identifying where differences between groups lie.

Figure 8: Access to services by education level



In this plot, it is evident that the impact of education on service access varies depending on which service is being considered. Refuse and police services are the most notably skewed by educational attainment. This may be the result of higher-educated respondents living in urban areas. When cross-tabulated with location of residence, this supposition seems justified: those with higher education levels appear to reside increasingly in Bizana (as made clear by the colour scale).

Table 6: Education level by location rounded figures (Percentage)

Education	Bizana	Ludeke	Nkantolo	Peri-urban	R61 Junction
None	26	25	20	7	23
Primary school	31	28	24	5	12
Secondary school	47	26	14	9	6
Matric	56	10	12	8	15
Diploma	81	5	2	0	12
Certificate	69	7	17	3	3
Degree	78	0	3	0	19

The relationship between location, education and access to services was further indicated by the creation of a correlation plot.⁶ The plot indicates that location and education are only weakly correlated, while access to certain services is strongly correlated (most notably, police, refuse and health).

⁶ The correlation plot is a visual representation of correlations between variables. Correlations might be thought of as the degree of association between

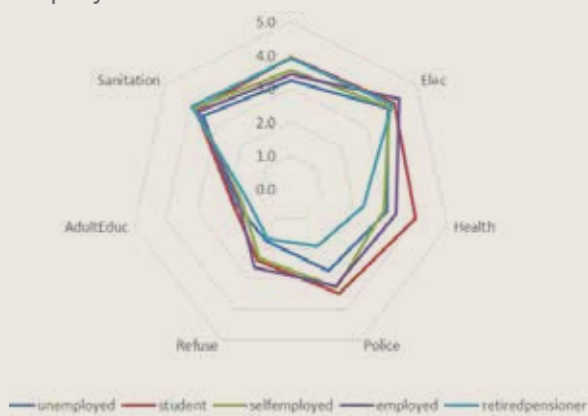


Figure 9: Correlation plot – education, location, and services



Employment status was also found to impact on access to services, with students and employed respondents enjoying slightly better access. Although noteworthy, the variation in access relating to employment was not as pronounced as with the level of education.

Figure 10: Access to services by employment status



This was broken down to reveal which services contribute to this distortion. Health and police services indicate the highest variation. Pensioners are most disadvantaged in this sense, with low levels of police and health access (ironically being the sub-group that arguably needs these services the most). It may be noteworthy that access to police services was significantly skewed according to both employment status and education level.

Some further insight into varying access to services was gained by breaking down age-related access. Although age does not show high variability in service access, a breakdown of access by age groups reveals some variation, which points to some understanding of the variations previously encountered. So while there is no difference in the first, overall age plot, the breakdown of age shows noteworthy levels of variation.

Figure 12: Access to services by age

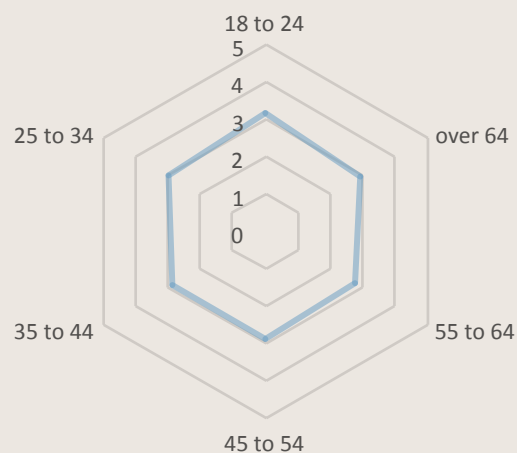
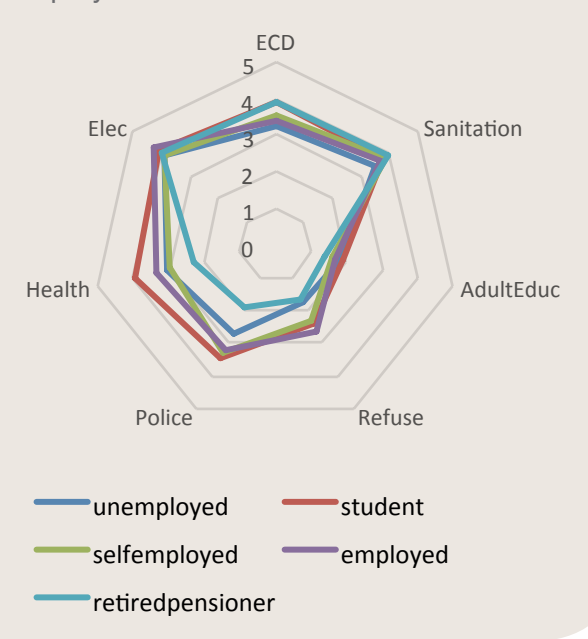
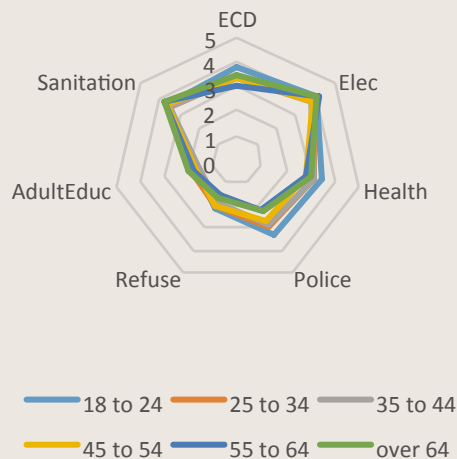


Figure 11: Access to services by employment status



Very little variation in access is evident in figure 10. But the following breakdown of age by service type indicates that access to the police and health services is very distorted by respondent age.

Figure 13: Access to services by age group



Younger people tend to have better access to services, while older people have less access. This is especially true of health and police services. This may be the result of more younger people living in urban areas. The following table supports this supposition.

Table 7: Age group by location (Percentage)

	Bizana	Ludeke	Nkantolo	Peri-urban	R61 junction
18 to 24	56.8	16.4	15.3	2.7	8.7
25 to 34	52.9	18.8	12.5	5.1	10.6
35 to 44	52.7	16.5	11	9.3	10.4
45 to 54	42.9	19.5	14.3	9.8	13.5
55 to 64	26.7	30.8	24.2	9.2	9.2
Over 64	34.5	25	20.2	4.8	15.5

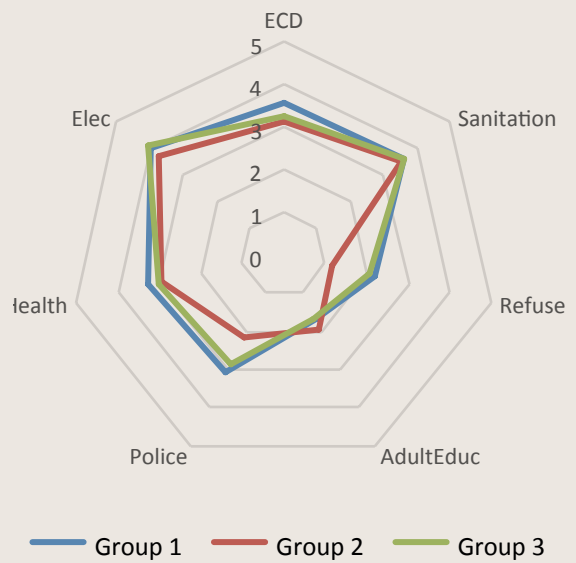
Considering employment, education, and age concurrently, indications are that variations in access to police and health services are systemically part of the urban/rural divide in the area.

Access related to three Mbizana profiles

We also investigated access to services for the three “typical” respondent groups identified in the k-modes cluster analysis. These three groups (described comprehensively in 3.1.1. above) were:

- Group 1: Young 18 to 24 year-olds;
- Group 2: 45 to 64 year-olds;
- Group 3: Middle-aged 35 to 44-year-olds.

Figure 14: Access to services by group membership



The plot bears out the previous insights, that age, education, and employment status have a significant impact on access to services. This group is the oldest of the three, are poorly educated (up to primary level), and are more rurally based than the other groups.

Urgent and important areas for intervention

Respondents were asked about which areas they perceive as being in urgent need of municipal intervention, and which areas are most important to them. Upon analysis, responses to these two variables show a very high positive correlation. This suggests that respondents most likely considered the two questions to be asking the same thing. This is indicated in figure 13, in which deviations from the mean are presented. This offers a convenient way to visualise which scores fall above or below the average.



There are only three issues that differ significantly from the mean. These are, negatively, local economic development and transport and infrastructure; and positively, employment. The negative deviations indicate that these areas are of least importance, and the middling scores are of moderate importance. The only issue of overwhelmingly high importance and urgency is employment. This scores much higher than other fundamentally important services, such as healthcare, and water and sanitation.

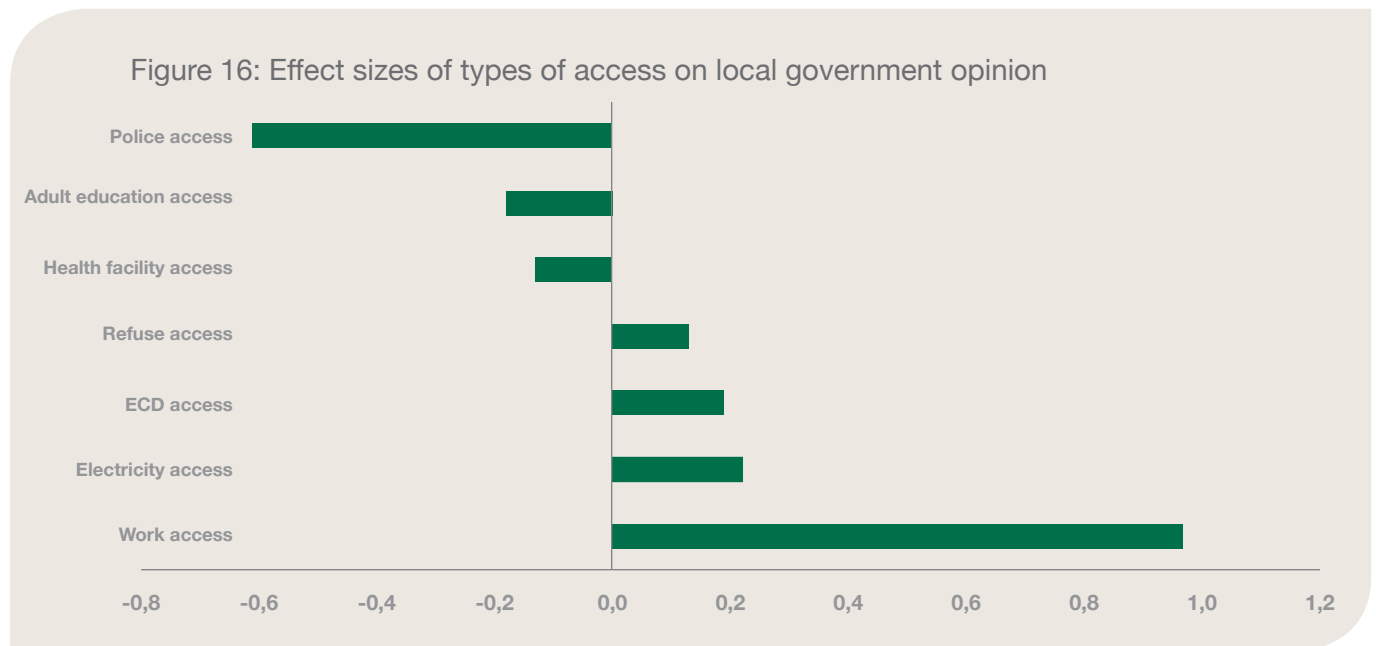
Local government perceptions

We conducted an ordinal regression to gain some insight into the impact of service access on perceptions of local government. The regression equation was specified as:

- $LGovOpinion \sim Refuse\ Access + Electricity\ Access + Health\ Access + Police\ Access + Adult\ Education\ Access + Early\ Childhood\ Development\ Access + Municipal\ Work\ Access$



The following effect sizes were included in the output:



There are really only two effects that dominate the plot and that influence local government opinion: work access and police access. The other, intermediate effects are not pronounced enough to be sure of. Work access is strongly positive and greatly increases positive opinion. Police access, on the other hand, strongly increases negative opinion. This strongly suggests that interaction with the police is a negative experience, which results in lowered positive opinion. These results agreed with the importance/urgency plot in that work had, by far, the strongest effect on local government perceptions.

Municipal satisfaction

We then examined municipal satisfaction. When asked about their perceptions, respondents indicated an overall dissatisfaction with the municipality.

Table 8: Rates of dissatisfaction with the local municipality (Percentage)

	Dissatisfied		Satisfied
Providing affordable services	62.12	24.89	12.99
Protecting and preserving its environment	62.25	23.3	14.44
Facilitating a people-driven economy	67.87	24.37	7.76
Investing in its people’s poverty fight	65.85	21.74	12.41
Strengthens culture of performance & public participation	57.54	21.84	20.62
Building sustainable communities	56.7	25.6	17.69

Do you agree with the municipality's low ranking? (percentage)

Table 9: Agreement of municipality's ranking by group membership (Percentage)

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Abstain	28	28	26
No	15	15	13
Yes	57	57	61
Total	100	100	100

In the above table, there is consistency in perceptions of the municipality, regardless of grouping. Group 3 had a particularly negative view of its low ranking. There was also a high number of respondents who abstained from responding, which may suggest a reluctance to criticise the

municipality. The following table is adjusted for abstentions so as to provide an accurate estimate of "yes" responses.

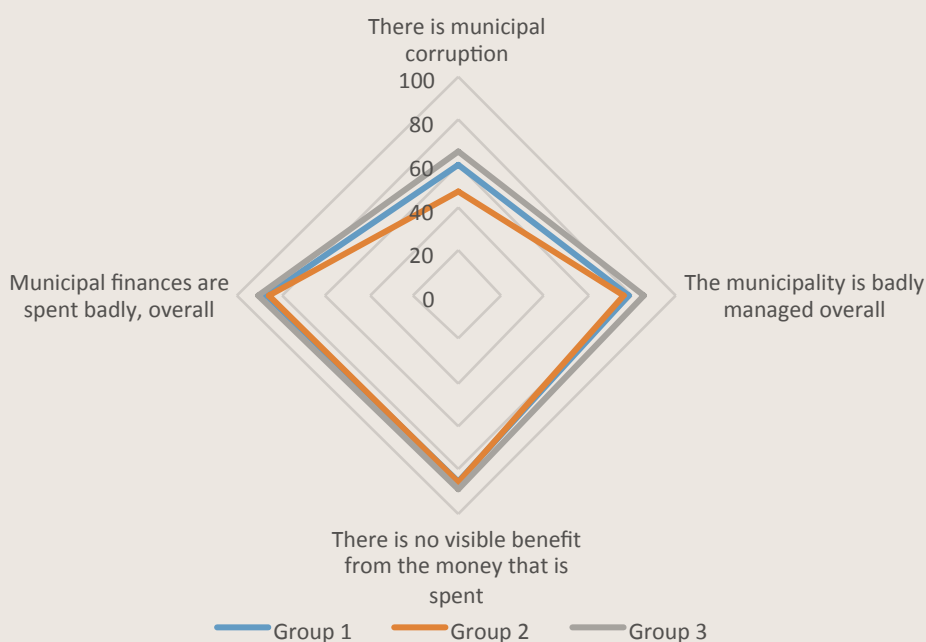
Do you agree with the municipality's low ranking? (percentage)

Table 10: Agreement of municipality's ranking by group membership (Percentage)

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
79	79	85

When respondents were asked whether they had heard of any problems relating to corruption in their municipality, some variation was evident. Group 2 was most favourable to the municipality, with the majority of responses being that they do not perceive corruption. Groups 1 and 3, however, indicated a much stronger view that there is corruption.

Figure 17: Perception of municipality by group



The reason for Group 2's lower perceptions of municipal corruption are difficult to explain. Recall that they are older, more rural respondents, who are poorly educated. It's possible that they have less access to police, which is a strong driver of negative opinion of local government overall.



Municipal/local government views

62%

were dissatisfied with the municipality



Summary of Citizen Survey findings

The quantitative analysis has provided a number of insights into citizens' living conditions in Mbizana, and the related impact this has on their perception of local government and the municipality.

Three main respondent profiles are identified. Firstly, a group of 18 to 24-year-olds, who live at the family home. They rely on family support. They are secondary school educated, but do not have a matric. The second group consisted of 45 to 64-year-olds, who own their homes but do not own land. They are generally poorly educated (not beyond primary level), and live more rurally (predominantly in Ludeke and Nkantolo, and peri-urban areas). This group engages in crop cultivation. The third group consists of 35 to 44-year-olds, who own their home. They have completed secondary education.

Household sizes are relatively constant, at around four or five. Migration of family members exerts an effect on households in the region. Its impact may be significant in this respect, as better-educated individuals typically migrate away from rural areas. The majority of respondents own their properties, although overall there is no significant difference whether ownership is by family or individual. Those that own land indicate that they use it to build a house or cultivate crops.

Income analysis indicates that a staggering number of respondents are unemployed. A high proportion of respondents subsist on government grants. Some respondents generate some form of income by doing odd jobs, while a smaller proportion relies on family support.

Access to a range of services was assessed, although not all these services are provided by the municipality: sanitation, for example, refers to "access to a working toilet", which may include waterborne (municipal) and non-waterborne (private) sanitation.

The major factors affecting access to services are education level and employment status. Pensioners are most disadvantaged in this sense, with low levels of police and health access (ironically being the sub-group that arguably needs these services the most). Respondents' perceptions of priority areas for municipal action yielded convincing results; they overwhelmingly saw employment as the most urgent issue.

Overall, some common themes emerge. Most striking is the pervasive view of the municipality and local government as corrupt, ineffective, and doing a less than satisfactory job.





3.1.2. Phase 1 – Qualitative Analysis

As described above in the methodology section, the series of interviews with various leaders presented below were conducted in June 2017, in parallel with 3.1.1.

Municipal Leader

The GGA team met with a leader in the municipality. The conversation was frank, with some deep insights provided, taking stock of what has been achieved in the rapidly growing town of Bizana and giving deep analysis on the challenges confronting the town and the rural areas that make up the Mbizana Local Municipality. The municipality runs on a budget of about R360-million, with 24% of this being self-generated revenue and the rest coming from national grants/funds (equitable share allocation and a municipal infrastructure grant, in the main). The municipality consists of 31 wards, with 62 councillors. Within the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) framework, there are also 12 traditional leaders who are recognised within the municipality.

Service delivery

The municipality has achieved important milestones in the delivery of basic infrastructure, such as the electrification of households – even in rural areas. However, the challenge is in reaching deep rural areas where households are often scattered, making the cost of delivering electricity to them significantly higher compared to rural areas that are in organised residential communities. The municipality has implemented its housing-provision strategy competently, even receiving awards from the Department of Human Settlements for its efficient and effective approach to delivering this constitutional imperative.

An area that poses a challenge for the municipality is its ability to maintain gravel roads. Ideally, these should be maintained about every six months, for which the municipality receives about R8 million. The money is never enough because this is a largely rural municipality with countless gravel roads, potentially running into hundreds of kilometres. To deal with this challenge, the municipality has begun building its own internal capacity to maintain roads instead of outsourcing the task through the tendering system. To this end, the municipality has begun buying its own civil plant, intending to reduce the cost of road maintenance. A critical problem confronting the municipality (which was also indicated by other respondents) is the lack of a functional and sustainable storm-water drainage system. The institutional dilemma for the municipality is



that issues relating to water and sanitation are the district municipality's competence. Bizana was (like many other rural towns) developed without a forward-looking town plan that would have foreseen population growth, business development and infrastructure pressures. Given that building a properly functioning storm-water drainage system would require disturbing people's properties and forward-looking town planning, the municipality feels national government needs to intervene through the Department of Water and Sanitation. The poor (or lack of an effective) drainage system in Bizana poses serious health hazards for certain communities as well as an environmental threat from uncontrolled flows, spillages and dumping that would be contained by an efficiently functioning drainage system.

Economic development

The municipality is trying its level best to unlock opportunities in Bizana, but there are limited sectors for economic participation. Bizana's economy is dominated by the retail sector with less focus on manufacturing and agriculture. The retail sector performs well - the town's branch of Mr Price, for example, is said to be the best-performing in the region in terms of revenue generation.

Crime and safety management is an area that needs continuous improvement for Bizana's business owners to feel safe and gain the confidence to expand their operations. While manufacturing would be a welcome investment in the municipality, some steps have been taken to enhance agricultural activity with the launch of the Bizana Rural Enterprise Development (RED) Hub – a white maize plant situated in Ludeke. This plant is able to run 23 hours a day, but is currently running at just eight hours due to the low volumes of harvested white maize being sent to the plant for processing.

The GGA team visited the plant to gain more insight into the product range produced and its availability to the market. The team concluded that there is still much to be done to make the plant accessible to the local market. Currently, the plant packages mielie-meal in 5kg and 10kg bags. Yet, in places like Mbizana, mielie-meal is a staple product and many locals buy it in 25kg and 50kg bags, so that it lasts longer and they pay a relatively low price buying in bulk. Plans to make it easier to sell harvested maize to the plant, and broaden the base of people and communities who do so, probably need to be devised.

At the moment, the plant's mielie-meal products are unavailable from any stores in Bizana, and anyone who wishes to buy them has to go directly to the plant, which is quite a distance out of town. The GGA team, therefore,

concluded there are issues to be resolved with regard to administration, packaging, product range, marketing and accessibility to local markets.

Given the high rate of unemployment, the municipal leader indicated that economic opportunities in the municipality need to be urgently addressed; the 2011 Census recorded a staggering 43.6% unemployment rate, with youth unemployment at 52.4%.

To unlock meaningful economic opportunities, the municipality has identified the necessity to deal with some land-ownership issues, especially with regard to vacant land immediately outside the town, towards nearby villages. Some of this land is said to be subject to land claims by locals, while some is owned by people who are not developing it.

The municipality is working on a land-agreement package to try and transfer land onto the books of the municipality, making it easily serviced, to expand the town. Citizens have continuously indicated that they expect the municipality to provide more than basic services. A pressing need for some locals is technical assistance for businesses, especially in the areas with growth potential such as sand mining, quarries, tourism and fishing.

For this to be possible, there is a need for greater partnerships with institutions such as the Small Enterprises Development Agency (SEDA), the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and many others. These calls need to be complemented by trustworthy and effective crime and safety management strategies – an area that can be improved upon. The GGA team noticed that the town of Bizana sleeps very early, with most shops closed by 17:30.



Talking to some people around town, crime emerged as the main reason they thought shops closed early compared with similar rural towns.

Public participation

In terms of public participation, the municipal leader noted that great efforts were being made to reach communities through various community engagement methods. However, there is still a shortage of multi-purpose community centres that can facilitate information sharing between citizens and municipalities, and for citizens to share information among themselves. Community centres like these would enhance the ease of communication as well as citizens’ ability to participate in municipal affairs.

The municipality also has plans to build a civic centre, which would enhance public participation in a space that could be used by both the public and the municipal council. To bring about the necessary social transformation, an initiative called “operation masiphathisane” has been launched to emphasise the importance of collaboration between society and the municipality.

Institutional development

The leader felt extremely positive about developments in the past three to four years, aimed at transforming the municipality’s administrative capacity to deliver good audit outcomes. The main feature of these developments was the recruitment of competent people to the municipality’s internal auditing committee.

As a result, the municipality has enjoyed a trajectory of improving audits, leading to a clean audit outcome from the auditor-general for the financial year 2015/16.

The municipality has 227 employees and the Bargaining Council determines salaries. Much of the money for salaries comes from the municipality’s equitable share and self-generated revenue. While the institutional development side of the municipality seems to have received adequate attention, with the necessary administrative capacity put in place, there remains a challenge. The interface between the administration and the political leadership is too close – going beyond the council playing an oversight role over the administration. For this reason, the institutional arrangement of municipalities needs a rethink.

Of course, Mbizana local municipality is not unique when it comes to this. The challenges and constraints on the functionality of municipalities posed by the interface of the administration and political leadership have been identified by numerous research initiatives – carried out by the government itself and by external researchers. There still seems to be no solution to these challenges, although many professionals serving municipalities are yearning for a solution that will have them function independently of council, without feeling pressured by politicians on what actions to take or not to take.

Religious Leader

A religious leader revealed to GGA that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa’s Ludeke Circuit mission was where ORT completed part of his schooling. Nelson Mandela and Winnie Mandela’s wedding also took place there. For this reason, the mission is a heritage site that could one day serve to grow tourism and as a history archive.

The leader identified the issues affecting local people as being unemployment and hunger. There is a need for



projects in the communities. It is unfortunate that there is such hunger and deprivation in an area with rich and fertile soil that could be used for farming projects. Government has a tendency to make many promises followed by little action, or none at all.

Added to these challenges is the pervasive corruption within government ranks. It is a scourge that distorts government's ability to deliver basic services to society and must be arrested, given the poor level of service delivery in areas that most need government services.

Here, the church has a role to play, but a limited one. The core function of the church is to liberate people spiritually, hoping that it can impart sound values and morality so that people act in the best interests of society. There are institutions such as the NYDA whose role in rural areas must be probed. Do they conduct enough roadshows in these areas, or they are too far removed from rural communities? At present, very little seems to be done for to grow and sustain Small Micro Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) in rural areas.

The welfare of elderly people also poses a challenge. Increasingly, elders in rural communities are raising their grandchildren whose parents have moved or have died. Some elderly people live alone, with no one to care for them and there are not enough state-funded, home-based care workers.

The religious leader was asked if he thought that old-age homes offered a solution. He pointed out that there is a cultural dilemma around old-age homes. Old people have a sense of wanting "to die at home", closer to their roots and ancestors. The place they call home represents an institution far greater than them, and they cannot "abandon" it so easily by agreeing to go to an old-age home. However, there is a need to think of ways in which the elderly in our society, especially in rural areas, can be adequately cared for.

Business leader (female)

This leader owns a flourishing business in the hospitality industry in Bizana. She stated that there is business in Bizana and competition is healthy, but one must always try to improve their services to set themselves apart. Her business venture was sparked by the need to retain government spending within the town. The municipality was hosting a number of its functions in Port Edward, which is in KwaZulu-Natal. This meant that government was not investing in local businesses, because there were no suitable places to host certain meetings that needed facilities with onsite catering.

Her business has grown over the years, offering many more hospitality services now than it initially did. The growth of the business has caused serious challenges with sanitation. Businesses and residential areas rely on septic tanks and



“honey suckers” are not always readily available to empty them. This sanitation problem is fuelled by the lack of a storm-water drainage system.

A question arising out of the discussion with the municipal leader was put to the businesswoman – why do local business owners not live in Bizana, where they do business and generate profit? She noted that it was worrying that business owners tended not to live in Bizana. Previously, this was because of unstable water and electricity supply, but these had improved.

Probably for the first time, Bizana has a medical doctor who actually lives in the town, but for some people there are still not enough attractive residential areas in Bizana in which they would like to live. Others worry that if they were to have a medical emergency, they would not be able to get the quality response they can afford.

Many business owners actually own houses on the lower south coast of KwaZulu-Natal and commute between home and their businesses in Bizana. This probably makes sense, as business owners do not necessarily need to be at work every day. However, their living out of the area remains a challenge worth pursuing as it paints a picture of a municipality whose economy is “foreigner” owned - in the same sense that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) operates at a national and global scale. This seems a local form of

FDI – where an investment is made in an economy but the profits, and potentially the bulk buying, happens far away from the town wherein businesses operate.

There are many social problems in Bizana, but unemployment is highly problematic in the area and businesses are inundated with young people coming in looking for jobs. At times, the businesses end up employing more people than they need because some people – due to personal circumstances that they detail – are difficult to turn away without offering them a job.

Given the high rates of unemployment, some young people have resorted to giving birth in order to access the government’s child social grant. The mothers often misuse the grant money by using it for their own personal needs instead of catering for the needs of their children. This leads to malnutrition in the children, adversely affecting their growth and development, with potential to limit their progress at school and ultimately in life, sucking them into the vicious cycle of poverty into which their parents were born.

In her closing thoughts, the business leader did suggest that greater cooperation between business and the municipality would benefit development in the town. There is a ratepayers’ association that is gaining momentum and standing – becoming an important voice for business and other ratepayers, alongside the local chamber of business. Another area that needs probing is the work of the police and other police station personnel. There is a trust deficit between business and the police, making Bizana for some an unattractive place for doing business.

Business leader (male)

This business leader serves in local business structures and sits on some boards tasked with the development agenda. Two important things came out of the discussion with him: the need to sort out sanitation issues and the storm-water drainage system and, most importantly, the challenges around medical care. For some time, there have been numerous attempts to lobby that St Patrick’s hospital be made a referral hospital. In the former Transkei region of the Eastern Cape there is one public referral hospital, and that is the Nelson Mandela Academic Hospital located in Mthatha.

People from Bizana with serious medical conditions who need high care have at times to sleep on hospital benches so as not to miss the bus travelling to Mthatha. This sort of indignity in treating seriously sick people could be averted by upgrading hospitals in other towns within the former Transkei to regional facilities.



Traditional Leaders

Two traditional leaders were consulted. They believe rural areas have been neglected as far as service delivery is concerned, and they are helpless to improve people's lives because they lack institutional authority and resources to do so. They pin their hopes on outsiders who, from time to time, come in to run workshops and conduct advocacy programmes, bringing attention to the plight of local people.

The youth are seen as no longer willing to respect traditional leaders, viewing them as outdated, exploitative and underserving of their power. This creates problems with traditional leaders' attempts to foster social cohesion and maintain social stability.

Closer cooperation between institutions such as traditional leadership councils, the municipality and the police could resolve this. At times, traditional leaders and council contest each other over authority and responsibility. Attempts are made to delineate the duties of each of these public leaders, with councillors seen as leaders of development initiatives and traditional leaders responsible for maintaining social order and stability.

Poverty and unemployment were uppermost on these leaders' minds, and they called on GGA to continue the work it is doing to restore hope to local people who, at times, give up on the belief in a bright future and fall victim to drug and substance abuse. This can easily lead them to crime, which was once rare in rural areas, but is now rife, pointing to a sense of declining social fibre in these societies, fuelled by material deprivation and destitution. These circumstances make it difficult for traditional leaders to maintain law and order, while trying to dissuade communities from taking the law into their hands through mob justice.

3.1.3. Issues identified during fieldworker debriefing

The fieldworkers, when reflecting on their work, emphasised the following as lessons learned and areas upon which great attention must be focused. A need for:

- Focused engagement with the Early Childhood Development (ECD) sphere. Some fieldworkers told of just how pedagogical approaches at ECD and foundation

phase of the education system had become, much to the detriment of children. They were comparing the type of instruction they received at school with that being received by their children. It was alleged that some teachers are not even marking spelling books properly, and there are no changes or marked corrections in their children's exercise books. There is also no opportunity for one-on-one sessions with teachers and learners. The teacher-to-learner ratio has also gone up significantly in lower grades.

- Dialogue forums among parents to discuss parenting methods. A much more open and educational parenting approach is needed when dealing with children today. An example was given of a fieldworker encountering her young son with a condom. The mother wanted to shout at him at first, but quickly realised that it was more important to have a conversation about the importance of a condom, even though the child was so young he would not be able to use one, but it was important to deal with his curiosity.
- Greater coherency and better articulation on policy planning across government departments. The welfare and development of children (from early childhood development to 12 years of age) should be the responsibility of one ministry, with other departments playing a supportive role. It is important to try and align policies across departments, especially finding a way of moving ECD away from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education.
- Pilot programmes like *Nal'ibali* should not be experimented with in some schools and not others, because it creates a gap where some children are advancing much quicker than others in the same education district.
- Improved teaching of language proficiency, especially English, in most rural schools. Poor English proficiency adversely affects children in their high school years, leading to high failure rates because learners are unable to comprehend their subjects, which are taught and examined in English. At times, you will find pupils passing other learning areas very well but failing to pass English, subverting their potential for entry into institutions of higher learning.

- Focused short-term intervention programmes are needed for matriculants who are underperforming academically. Conducting extra classes to create more teaching time is not always effective. These extra classes need to be conducted by teachers with enthusiasm and commitment to ensure learners are using the time productively.
- Prioritising the employment of local people when new businesses come to town. The practice of new retailers opening up shop with staff sourced from outside Bizana was frowned upon. This frustrates locals because they do not benefit from businesses operating in their town. A similar statement was made in one of the interactions during the research, noting that Bargain Wholesalers in Bizana has a bus to transport employees who do not live in Bizana to work.
- There was a call for the Mbizana Local Municipality to lobby business for the construction of a factory in the area – at least one to absorb labour in high volumes. The view was that two or three factories could significantly contribute to alleviating unemployment. To this end, a proposal was made for the municipality to carry out research into what types of factory could thrive in Bizana. Another view was that there should be a push to open proposed mining activities in Xolobeni.
- Transparent communication of employment opportunities available in government entities, especially the municipality, because there is a problem with current employment practices. Allegedly, nepotism is common, and for some jobs one needs to know a relative, friend or be well connected with someone on the inside.
- Some people are also keen to use the land for their own agricultural initiatives. Perhaps, there is a need for agricultural co-operatives that are directly linked to the local market. The supermarkets in Bizana should not be buying stock, already available from local farmers from big commercial farmers elsewhere. The municipality should also make more effort to find ways to make fallow land productive again, including the sugarcane plantations that are now barren.
- Improved public spaces, including those with safe drinking water and free public toilets. Presently, people are forced to find alternatives in toilets where an entry fee is required. This, coupled with poor sanitation in the low-cost housing areas in Bizana’s peri-urban space, presents possible health hazards.
- Greater civic education, especially in the villages where people appear timid and unforceful in how they talk about the municipality. They seem unable to voice their views with conviction, while members of the Ratepayers’ Association in town speak with a far superior sense of the prevailing conditions and the need to hold the municipality accountable.
- Focus attention on service delivery in peri-urban spaces, especially in low-cost housing areas on the periphery of the town. There, people complain about the lack of refuse collection, to the point they are forced to dump their refuse close to their homes, leading to unwanted health hazards – especially for children. Some people in similar low-cost housing areas complained about high electricity tariffs.
- Advance infrastructure provision in some rural areas that still suffer from a lack of access roads from certain households to the main gravel roads. As a result, when people (especially the elderly) get sick they cannot walk and need to be transported in a wheelbarrow, because cars are unable to reach their homes. There is also a shortage of housing for some people in rural areas.
- Rooting out corruption in the municipality. One mother told of how a municipal official promised her daughter a job in exchange for sex. The sex happened but the job did not; instead the girl ended up pregnant and the municipal official neglected the child. This set up of despair has made life extremely difficult for the family. The family only gets by on the child support grant paid for the younger children in the family. The family lives in a one-room structure, and the girl who was promised a job now possesses a matric certificate, but has been unable to study further.



Document prepared for focus group discussion

MBIZANA

MUNICIPALITY



GGA study in Mbizana

AUGUST 2017

Introduction

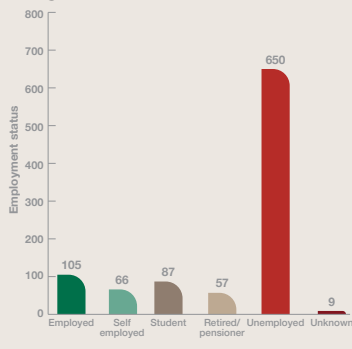
Good Governance Africa (GGA) conducted in-depth research that was done along an approximately 32km transect in the municipality, running from Nkantolo village to the central business district of Bizana town. It comprised of three components: a) a citizen survey with close on 1000 participants; b) interviews with leaders in various sectors and c) an informal business survey.

The first reason for the study was a need to understand the lived experiences in Bizana, birthplace of former African National Congress president Oliver Reginald Tambo in the year of his centenary celebration by government. The second reason was to visit what was the worst performing municipality in the GGA Government Performance Index (GPI), an initiative to rank South Africa's local municipalities, published in 2016.

Our study has resulted in three major focus areas:

- 1 Demographic snapshot
- 2 Social mobility and economic reality
- 3 Governance and democratisation

Employment status of citizens living in Mbizana



Age of citizens in Mbizana

Age	Number
18-20	61 (6%)
20-29	245 (25%)
30-39	236 (24%)
40-49	150 (15%)
50-59	145 (15%)
60-69	70 (7%)
70-79	41 (4%)
80+	12 (1%)
Unknown	14 (1%)

1 Demographic snapshot

In the citizen survey there were 974 respondents and most (67%) of them were female, with 32% being male (1% did not declare their gender). This means there is possibility of a high concentration of female-headed households in the area with these women mainly being single parents, grandmothers and some as students. Our survey only included people from 18 years upwards, meaning the respondents either fell in the working-age population group or were pensioners. About 55% of the people interviewed were between the ages of 18 and 39 (mainly known as the youth), while the working-age population (18 to 59 years) made up 85% of the respondents.

This means those caught in the unemployment trap could be without jobs for a long time if no interventions are made - and the majority of them are women who often have to fend for their children and grandchildren over time. Most households (52%) house one to five people and over a third (37%) house six to nine people.

In the Business Survey 328 economic activities were identified, the great majority entailed subsistence agriculture: over 200 separate smallholder activities and a total of 112 businesses were identified. A large number of crops was grown in the area. In some cases livestock was reared – predominantly sheep, cows and goats, and to a smaller extent horses, pigs, chickens and donkeys. The remainder, which were the focus of this analysis, were cash-based micro-enterprises, including retail grocery outlets (“spaza shops”), street traders and liquor outlets.

Sources of income among citizens living in Mbizana



Income grant
458 (47%)



Work
223 (23%)



Sales/business
102 (10%)



Pension
94 (10%)



Donations
79 (8%)



Remittances
46 (5%)



Unknown
51 (5%)





There were 74 owners of micro-enterprises that answered questions, the majority (89%) being South Africans and the remainder being non-South African. Among the South African owners there are more females (60%) than males (40%), while the non-South African owners are made up of only males, indicating it is men who are likely to migrate away from home in search of economic opportunities.

People's individual incomes are low, with over two thirds (71%) of all respondents earning less than R1500 a month, while 30% earn less than R400 a month. Household incomes are slightly better indicating that there are not many sources of income, and where there are they combine low incomes. The majority (55%) of households have an income of less than R1500 a month.

2 Social mobility and economic reality

We found that 84% of the people have access to electricity. Among them just under two-thirds (61%) indicated that they could afford it and over a fifth (22%) claimed they could not afford electricity. Access to sanitation for most people (77%) is through toilets that are located outside the house. About a tenth (11%) of the people had no access to sanitation. An overwhelming majority (74%) said they were not happy with the sanitation they received. This is important given that sanitation has implications for both health and dignity, constitutional rights that all citizens should enjoy.

There was also serious material deprivation due to high levels of unemployment (67%), with 22% of the unemployed indicating they are no longer looking for work due to lost hope.

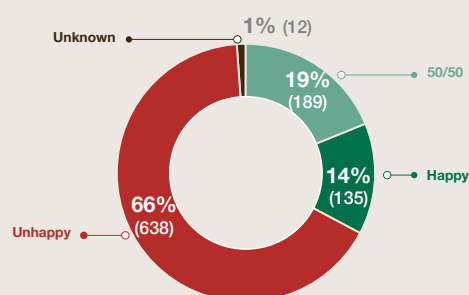
3 Governance and democratisation

There were great similarities in how people responded in both the citizen and business surveys on how the municipality was performing in meeting its vision for the people of Mbizana. The vision translates into six goals that the municipality aims to achieve:

- a) Investing in it's people poverty fight [sic]; b) Providing affordable services; c) Facilitating a people-driven economy; d) Building sustainable communities; e) Protecting and preserving its environment; f) Strengthening a culture of performance & public participation.

In the business survey over 60% of the respondents were dissatisfied on all of the above. In the citizen survey dissatisfaction ranged from 53% to 64% on all the above.

How residents feel about local government in Mbizana Municipality



* The sense of unhappiness felt by citizens towards the municipality along with their perception that government should be improving across all areas reflects their overall municipal rating.

Three areas citizens would like the municipality to address most urgently

Areas to address urgently	Top Priority	2nd most important	3rd priority
Healthcare & Nutrition	326 (2)	43	18
Safety & Security	164	58 (2)	21
Employment	513 (1)	91 (1)	44 (1)
Education	265	52 (3)	20
Water & Sanitation	274 (3)	39	35 (3)
Electricity	86	36	19
Social & Community Development	75	30	19
Local Economic Development	42	13	18
Transport & Infrastructure	37	19	20
Land & Housing	177	33	37 (2)

Citizens satisfaction levels with the Mbizana Municipality's performance

	Investing in poverty fight	Providing affordable services	Facilitating a people-driven economy	Building sustainable communities	Protecting the environment	Performance and participation
Satisfied	117 (12%)	120 (12%)	71 (7%)	161 (17%)	132 (14%)	186 (19%)
Dissatisfied	621 (64%)	574 (59%)	621 (64%)	516 (53%)	569 (59%)	519 (53%)
Room for improvement	205 (21%)	230 (24%)	223 (23%)	223 (23%)	213 (22%)	197 (20%)



3.2. Phase 2 – Focus Group Discussions (based on analysis of 3.1)

Introduction

GGA visited Mbizana Local Municipality on August 21-23, 2017 to conduct community feedback sessions on the preliminary research findings of the Citizen Survey and the Informal Business Study conducted in June 2017. All survey participants who initially gave their contact numbers and indicated an interest in being kept informed about future developments received an SMS invitation. The feedback sessions happened in two venues, one in eLudeke at the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA), Ludeke Circuit Mission, and another in Bizana, at the LoveLife Centre.

Firstly, on arrival, attendees were handed an information sheet printed in both isiXhosa and English, giving feedback on the preliminary findings, followed by a GGA presentation of the results.

Secondly, attendees were divided into groups of 10 to deliberate on the future they imagined for Bizana. The “Imagine Mbizana” concept was adapted from the Imagine Chicago approach developed by Bliss Browne, who described the process as one that “involved generative dialogues between multiple community groups and interests, described as ‘inter-generational’ learning communities”. Our participants in Mbizana were diverse across age and gender. In total we interacted with almost 120 people who had participated in our survey.

The group discussions were rich, lively and diverse. Each group chose a rapporteur to share with all attendees what the group deliberated on and found important in their “Imagine Mbizana” exercise that was intended to be generative and give ideas for future development pathways. Many ideas and solutions were shared, but these can broadly be packaged into five themes; employment, multi-purpose centres, values, community services, plus safety and security and education.

FGD Emergent Themes

Employment

The people of Bizana envisage a town that offers them sustainable employment in three main areas - factories, agricultural activities and vocational jobs. The abundance of arable land, and the ease with which livestock thrives, is seen as untapped potential for multiple forms of agricultural activity. To the credit of the Eastern Cape government, this potential seems to be recognised,

because they have launched one of the province’s Rural Enterprise Development (RED) hubs, built at a cost of about R53.3 million, in a village just outside Bizana. The hub is in the form of a milling facility that processes maize.

The facility could act as a good launching pad for future agricultural activity. Another facility sought after by the locals is an abattoir that would make it possible for people to get value out of owning livestock, especially cattle and sheep.

People are frustrated that their town is a consumerist-driven economy with not much productive capacity. This leads to the enrichment of retail and supermarket store owners, who are often not born and bred in Bizana. A call was made for the Mbizana Local Municipality to commission research on the sectors of competitive advantage the municipality can exploit and start manufacturing plants to generate employment and long-lasting productivity in the local economy. For this to be possible, locals want to be taught skills to be able to do vocational jobs. Some of the examples given included sewing shops, salons, carpentry, and much more. Manufacturing uniforms for local schools was suggested as a possible avenue to grow a thriving local clothing sector.

An interesting observation was one of local “capital flight”; large sums of money made in the town and municipality were taken into neighbouring KwaZulu-Natal, to Port Edward and beyond, where patrons and significant investors, many originating from Mbizana and this part of the Eastern Cape, live. The outflow of capital, which is generated in the municipality, is a concern, as recently expressed by the local municipality leader. It would be helpful to consider strategies for inward investment in what, by all accounts, is a thriving provincial town with arable land and high investment potential.

Education

Quality education was seen as the future backbone of a thriving Mbizana. The education proposals included a need for schools with social services (for example, social workers and nurses dedicated to serving schools) and accommodation facilities (hostels) for learners, especially those who find places in schools too far from their homes and have to rent rooms in homes close to the school. The town of Bizana and its youth will flourish most in skills development if a Technical and Vocational Education and

Training (TVET) College is launched, fully equipped with all the necessary infrastructure, facilities and human resources to produce cutting-edge future employees and entrepreneurs in industry and society at large.

The poor quality and, at times, unavailability of early childhood development (ECD) centres needs to be addressed. ECD was identified as a priority in the future Mbizana that people envisaged. To contribute to making this a priority, GGA has invested in putting a local female fieldworker from a village in the study area through a professional Montessori training programme for children from birth to three years old. Teaming up with our social worker, our trainee teachers will also work with members of the broader community to exert a transformative future for those concerned.

Multi-purpose Centres

Access to information and departmental offices such as home affairs, social development, and agriculture should be made easier through satellite and mobile centres that directly reach rural areas. The cost of travelling from a village to Bizana to certify documents at the police station or to reprint a birth or death certificate can be a burdensome cost on locals. At times, this leads to homebirth babies going unregistered for years, affecting them in the future because without a birth certificate they cannot receive the child grant or register at school.

The multi-purpose centres should be seen as community resources that would serve as centres of municipal information dissemination, especially for issues that require public participation and job advertisements, to promote greater transparency and accountability. Good governance is most achievable when there is a good flow of communication and information in society, as people become much aware and better equipped to frame their views on development issues. The multi-purpose centres are also seen as potential bridges of the digital divide between urban and rural areas, because they can house libraries equipped with internet access. The imagined future of Mbizana is one where its rural areas are fully equipped, with ability to efficiently and cost effectively access services that are important in day-to-day life.

Community services (including safety and security)

The future society in Mbizana must be filled with spaces and facilities for children to play and develop their talents. There must be facilities to care for the elderly, especially those who live alone. There is a dearth of sport and



recreational facilities. Sport and other talents (arts and cultural opportunities) must be developed, and not only as a mechanism to keep young people active and away from social ills often induced by excessive exposure to drugs and substance abuse. Sport and talent development must be deliberate and focused with the intention of unlocking the potential monetary value that can accrue to those that do well in these activities but might not be so academically inclined. The elderly are seen as among the most vulnerable in society and deserve to live in spaces that give them ease of access to health care and recreational facilities. There are plenty of cultural considerations to be made in providing these, but a conversation needs to be started on how to provide the best quality of life possible for the elderly.

The future Mbizana must have community services that make for better public spaces. There should be functional street lights, public toilets and roadside taps. These community services are possible if the infrastructure for water and sanitation, education, public amenities and public transport are revamped and planned for long-term sustainability. This would attract greater investment to build future office parks; malls and business areas that would add greater value to local economic development in Bizana and the broader municipality of Mbizana.

Values

The work of governance, business and social development in the imagined Mbizana must be governed by values of transparency, honesty, serving with integrity and promoting self-sufficiency among its people. These values must stand as core pillars of the work done during public participations and while conducting business. The adherence to these values will ensure that employment opportunities are not subject to nepotism, especially within government departments and the local municipality. Opportunities must be widely spread among society, and people be kept informed of employment opportunities, widening the pool from which to source prospective employees. These values will also be anchored around improving the practices of accountability, transparency and responsiveness. Such a flourishing, values-based society lies diametrically opposed to one, which enables bad governance, corruption and crime to thrive. To this end, inclusive participation, active citizen agency and diverse stakeholder engagement is key.

Stakeholder Engagement

The GGA team was meant to have a conversation with a panel of high-level stakeholders, convened by the municipal

mayor's office. However, this was cancelled at the eleventh hour, with the Mayor stating - through an aide - that the GGA team had not adequately consulted her from the onset of commissioning the study. Given that the study included citizens' perceptions and experiences of governance, the entry point to the study needed to be as free as possible of political influence.

This why the GGA team liaised with the municipal leader's office when conducting the fieldwork, respecting the administrative and political interface that is often difficult to manage at local government level. We also consulted the ML's office in the build-up to our feedback visit.

The buy in of the mayor is important at this phase of the study because political will is one of the key ingredients necessary for speedy, responsive and well-thought development to be implemented. Cancelling the meeting at the eleventh hour seemed to carry political motives and considerations that do not augur well for the multi-stakeholder partnerships necessary for development. The fact that ward councillors and their supporters in distinctive political party dress arrived for the town feedback meeting was disturbing, since neither the councillors nor the supporters concerned had participated. Of equal concern is that the councillor in question exited the meeting as soon as the mayoral forum had been cancelled. Only after his exit did participants start to open up about corruption in the municipality. Therefore, we cannot exclude the reality that citizens were afraid and intimidated by such "governance" strategies aimed at disruption and spoiling the meeting.

Summary

The citizens of Mbizana carried much hope and enthusiasm, given the manner in which the study was conducted, including the promise kept by GGA to return and engage with survey participants once the preliminary results had been generated. This is the level of trust-building that suggests possible linkages between society and development practitioners, albeit these must necessarily be within government institutions and in civil society. This local government work is important for the democratisation of our communities, and in this way democracy gains greater meaning than just being perceived in its minimalist form as a voting process.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Mbizana Local Municipality mapping, comprising the Citizen Survey, Small Business Survey, Leadership interviews and Focus Group Discussions, was a resounding success in illuminating five important aspects of the daily life experiences of citizens that quite possibly reflect those of others living in other parts of the municipality.

We managed to elucidate knowledge on: a) the reality of citizens' living conditions on the ground, b) an overview of their demographics, c) the aspirations of people along the transect, d) challenges that inhibit the attainment of those aspirations and e) a sense of available remedies, with many coming from the local community itself.

The study was confronted with a number of challenges that demonstrated a shortage of full democratisation in some parts of our research landscape. Some citizens were unwilling to talk to fieldworkers without permission from local councillors.

Some councillors confronted our team for lack of consultation on the nature of the research that was being conducted.

This shows how councillors act as gatekeepers, seemingly with self-entitlement to regulate the day-to-day life of citizens where they are in power. There was an incident where our fieldworkers had to abandon a research area because of a councillor's attitude and that of aligned locals.

This reality, coupled with the mayor's cancellation of a mayoral forum at the eleventh hour, indicates an absence of political will and commitment to advance governance through interaction with multiple stakeholders on the development agenda of the municipality.

Much work needs to be done in making society understand the importance of researchers, especially outsiders, in giving perspective to nuanced material conditions that confront citizens and those who govern. Our work highlights the crisis that arises when political interference muscles its way into – and comes to overwhelm – an administrative space.

The study findings demonstrate that a large proportion of the respondents live in Bizana, which means a potential over-emphasis of urban issues. The sample of respondents is, however, broad enough to represent views within lesser urban features as well as rural and peri-urban areas.

Our study comprised mostly of women, with household sizes relatively constant, at four to five individuals. Migration of family members is a factor that exerts an effect on households in the region. Its impact is significant in that, typically, it is the better-educated individuals who migrate from rural areas. This negatively leads to a “brain drain”, but through remittances positively adds to the families of those who migrated. It was not, however, possible to obtain any insight into the demographics of those that had left the area.

Income analysis indicates that a staggering number of respondents are unemployed. Overall, the population faces a financially precarious reality, with the vast majority earning small wages, below R1,500 a month. The high reliance on government grants, and “passive” forms of remuneration may be, in part, due to residents finding themselves in an economic structure that systematically neutralises their efforts to progress and innovate.

Residents are, in this sense, captives of institutional and state realities that keep the area in a state of poverty. A significant majority of respondents indicated that their environment was unfavourable for business (although some indicated that it was favourable).

Access to a range of services was assessed, although not all of these services are provided by the municipality: sanitation, for example, refers to “access to a working toilet”, which may include waterborne (municipal) and non-waterborne (private) sanitation. The same might be said of refuse. Other services are more obviously municipal or local-government based, for example access to water and electricity. Access to these services varies significantly within the community, with only moderate access to the most basic services (save for electricity that has been extended to include most parts of the remote villages), whether provided by the municipality, the community or self-enabled.



Rural areas are seemingly under-serviced and without accessible institutions of help close by. Greater efforts must be made to provide basic services to all people, irrespective of education levels and employment status. Many of these services are constitutional rights intricately linked to the restoration of people’s dignity.

A good example to illustrate this point is sanitation. Access to sanitation for most people (77%) is through toilets that are located outside the house. About a tenth (11%) of the people had no access to sanitation and 6% of them access sanitation either within or more than a five-minute walk from their homes. Unsurprisingly, an overwhelming number (74%) of the people said they were unhappy with the sanitation they accessed.

Asked what areas the municipality should address most urgently, it was unsurprising that employment creation topped the list as participants’ first, second and third priority. Local economic development, and transport and infrastructure were seen as low priorities for municipal intervention. The other priorities that citizens wanted urgently addressed are; healthcare and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, safety and security, as well as land and housing. These are all somewhat linked to the identified material deprivation that cripples people’s ability for social mobility and the achievement of a better life for all. This reality of destitution probably explains why participants’ opinion of local government overwhelmingly indicated a citizenry despondent and at times indifferent with the performance of the local municipality.

Resoundingly, people communicated their dissatisfaction at the municipality’s inability to deliver on its vision translated into six goals: a) Investing in its people poverty fight [sic]; b) Providing affordable services; c) Facilitating a people-driven economy; d) Building sustainable communities; e) Protecting and preserving its environment; f) Strengthening a culture of performance and public participation.

Opinion of local government is overwhelmingly affected by only two issues – work access and police access. The provision or facilitation of work access was found to be strongly related to increased perceptions of local government. Police access, on the other hand, strongly increases negative opinion of local government. This strongly suggests that interaction with the police is a negative experience, which results in lowered morale.

When municipal satisfaction is broken down into the three respondent profiles, the strongly negative view of the municipality is again evident across all groups. The third group (middle-aged respondents, who own their home and have completed secondary education) display a particularly negative view of the municipality. When respondents were asked whether they had heard of any problems relating to corruption in their municipality,



Group 2 (the more rural, poorly educated and older group) was most favourable of the municipality, with the majority of responses being that they do not perceive corruption.

The reason for this may be a perceived reliance on the municipality for income grants, or a lower access to police, which creates a negative view of local government and municipality. Furthermore, it could be that some people feared speaking out against the municipality, or they lack enough knowledge of municipal affairs. The latter was evident when participants were asked if the municipality provides access to formal work opportunities. The majority (56%) of people said “NO”.

Surely the answer is “yes”, because the municipality employs people and creates projects, but if there are knowledge gaps citizens may not know this. The knowledge gaps can be attributed to a poor information spread – indicating a need for strengthened public outreach by the municipality itself, especially to deep rural areas. This lack of information has, we found, affected how citizens at times understand democracy.

The conversations with leaders revealed a need for investment in adequate infrastructure that will catalyse development and economic activity for the Mbizana Local Municipality. Such infrastructure demands forward-looking leadership that can anticipate growth and the spatial patterns of the future Bizana. Such leadership needs to act



with integrity, transparency and responsiveness, exercising high levels of accountability to clamp down on anyone who is corrupt or corruptible.

The public infrastructure required centres mainly on water and sanitation (a storm-water drainage system is needed), healthcare facilities (improved administrative status and function of St Patrick’s hospital so it becomes a referral hospital), education and skills development (with suggestions for a vocational skills training college to be built and a focus on ECD), as well as land and housing. The improvement of these areas is seen as fundamental to providing a solid base for the future development of Mbizana Local Municipality.

Mbizana’s citizens carried much hope and enthusiasm, given the manner in which the study was conducted; including the promise GGA kept to return and engage with survey participants once the preliminary results had been generated. Building this level of trust is what makes linkages between society and development practitioners possible, albeit these are necessarily done within government institutions and in civil society.

This local government work is important for the democratisation of our communities, and in this way democracy gains greater meaning than just being perceived in its minimalist form as a voting process. The citizens, during the focus group discussions, were given an opportunity to imagine their future municipality.

Their dreams and hopes are anchored in a future municipality that is economically thriving, offering sustainable employment in three main areas – factories, agricultural activities and vocational jobs. Quality education was also seen as the foundation upon which the future Mbizana will be built, with dedicated focus given to the early childhood development phase, as well as making schools places with access to social services, counselling and primary healthcare, for example. The future municipality will have multi-purpose centres built in rural areas to provide closer access to information and departmental services that are important to citizens. Lastly, the future Mbizana will be a safe and secure place to live in, with appropriate facilities for children to play and develop their sport, art and the other recreational talents they possess.

This imagination exercise helped citizens transcend the boundaries currently imposed on them due to material deprivation. The task proved that no challenge is insurmountable, and for that reason the future remains bright in the birthplace of Oliver Tambo. The duty rests upon various multifaceted efforts to build the thriving Mbizana that many dream about. To a large extent, the speed and scope, which with the people’s vision becomes a flourishing reality, will largely depend on whether local government acts cooperatively and collaboratively as an enabler of the “bigger picture”, or inhibits it by myopic gatekeeping and spoiling in sectarian or political party interest.



WHAT IS GOOD GOVERNANCE AFRICA?

Good Governance Africa (GGA) was established in February 2012 as an independent and registered non-profit organisation with the aim of promoting better governance in Africa and thereby helping to improve the lives of all citizens.

GGA engages in applied research and stimulates critical debate. All our work is based on exploring and advancing the key governance principles of democracy, accountability and transparency, and combining these with upholding the rule of law and respecting human, civil and property rights.

GGA also seeks to build a bridge between government and the private sector in all African countries, while strengthening civil society and promoting grassroots democracy. We engage in a range of other initiatives that include sponsoring events, hosting workshops, commissioning research and investing in future leaders on the continent.

WHAT WE DO

OUR CORE FOCUS: GGA researches, analyses and interprets information to produce fact-based knowledge in five fundamental areas: local governance, natural resources, national security, child development and youth formation, and the promotion of ethical values and spirituality.

OUR OUTPUTS: GGA produces several flagship publications – Online Digital Database, African Survey, Africa in Fact, our in-house quarterly journal and the Africa Survey, an annual compendium of some over 6 000 economic, social and political indicators.

Africa in Fact is available as both an online and print publication and enjoys a diverse readership approaching 10 000 subscribers worldwide. The Africa Survey is a comprehensive collection of figures and infographics covering all 55 African countries. Updated annually with trend analyses, it is an exceptional data and information resource for researchers, analysts, investors, business people, and representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations alike.

GGA now offers a membership-based model with a suite of products and services.

MEMBERSHIP


Join our good governance community and benefit from a range of exclusive products, programmes and services. Three membership options are available to choose from, with access to data on Africa, news, stories and reportage, venue hire and more. Contact us on sales@gga.org for details.

CENTRES AND COVERAGE

GGA currently has three operational centres, giving the organisation a pan-African reach. Johannesburg is home to the SADC office and takes operational responsibility for the region. Accra operates as a hub for west Africa, while the Nigerian office, dedicated to Africa's largest nation and economy, is based in Lagos. Four more centres are planned: Nairobi (east Africa), Abidjan (Francophone west Africa), Kinshasa (the Congo) and one for the Sahel region.



GOOD GOVERNANCE AFRICA STRIVING TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF ALL CITIZENS

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