

**POLICY
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GOOD GOVERNANCE AFRICA

From Paper to Practice: Enhancing Integrated Development Plans to Improve Governance

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March 2024



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Executive Summary

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) systems play an important role in ensuring that South Africa's municipalities are able to effectively fulfil their core mandate of service delivery. One central component of this system is the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), a strategic framework used for several functions, including guiding key priorities and providing a roadmap for effectively delivering public services. However, even though most municipalities consistently submit IDPs, the quality of service delivery, especially amongst municipalities that have Water Services Authority responsibilities, is uneven. This raises the questions around which factors are more influential in determining effective service provision, and why they are lacking in dozens of municipalities. Using Good Governance Africa's 2024 Governance Performance Index (GPI), this policy briefing provides a range of stakeholders with consolidated insights into how these issues can be addressed.

Recommendations

- All spheres of government, but especially the Department of Cooperative Governance, need to prioritise the finalisation of a dedicated local government-specific national capacity-building strategy.
- To augment the workability of IDPs, municipalities ought to pay greater attention to PME considerations around the realistic financing of plans and asset management.
- The national government should develop a coherent regulatory framework that emphasises increased oversight for external partners used as part of the PME process. Municipalities can use this to better evaluate the potential benefits and drawbacks brought by any potential external partner.
- To address the concern about municipalities submitting IDPs as a “checkbox” exercise, there needs to be increased oversight of the internal monitoring and evaluation systems which municipalities maintain. Independently developed tools such as the GPI are useful barometers according to which progress can be benchmarked by municipalities.
- Municipalities should explore how boosting community engagement within the local governance planning process can strengthen PME systems. The national government can find ways to incentivize the development of creative strategies to foster citizen participation.

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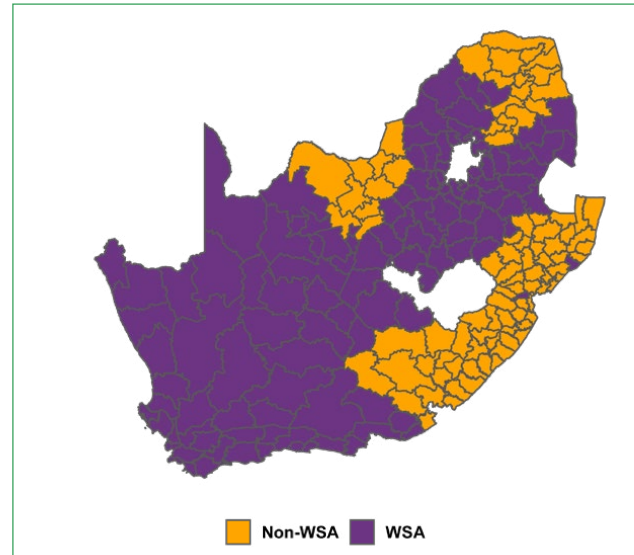
Introduction

Local government in South Africa plays a vital role in the functioning of the state. Often seen as the implementation arm of the South African government, it is also the governmental sphere that most commonly operates as the interface between the citizen and the state.¹ Constitutionally, the core responsibility of local government in South Africa is service delivery.² This encompasses ensuring that critical public services like water, sanitation and solid waste removal, are both accessible and of good quality.³ However, many municipalities have struggled to fulfil their mandate in both respects. Previous attempts by national government to identify and address the issues surrounding service delivery have highlighted the importance of effective Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) frameworks within local government to effectively identify and address these challenges.⁴

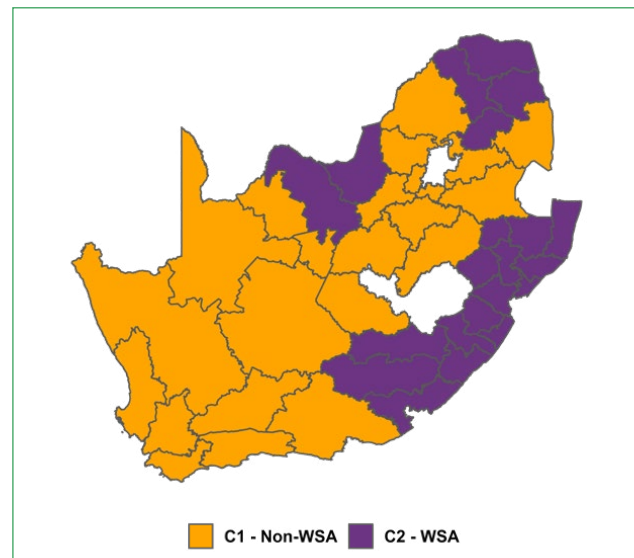
By law, Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), which are detailed development plans that municipalities need to produce at the start of their elected term, are a key component of this system.⁵ Research by Good Governance Africa (GGA) indicates that while local municipalities are consistent in the submission of these plans, the quality of service delivery remains inconsistent.⁶

Utilising GGA’s 2024 Governance Performance Index (GPI), this policy briefing informs policymakers, municipalities, civil society and citizens on how best to address this problem. GGA’s focus is to assess the current PME system in local government and provide recommendations on how to more effectively utilise the system to address poor service provision. Due to the greater depth of municipal-level data on the quality of services available for these units, we specifically focus on local and district municipalities that have Water Services Authority (WSA) responsibilities. Figure 1 maps the local and district municipalities that have these responsibilities.

Figure 1: Mapping South Africa’s Water Services Authorities



Local Municipal classification in terms of WSA responsibilities



District Municipal classification in terms of WSA responsibilities

Source: GGA (2024)

1 Palmer, I., Moodley, N., & Parnell, S. (2017). "Chapter 3: Institutions". In *Building a Capable State: Service Delivery in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Zed Books; Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA). (1998). "The White Paper on Local Government". CoGTA. Pretoria: Government Printer.

2 Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. (1996). "Chapter 7: Local Government". In *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Printer

3 Palmer, Moodley & Parnell. (2017).

4 Masilo, M., Masiya, T., & Mathebula, N. (2021). "Monitoring and evaluation in the public sector: a case of the Department of Home Affairs (South Africa)". *European Journal of Economics, Law and Social Sciences*, Special Issue (December 2021). Graz: IIPCCL Publishing.

5 Office of the Presidency. (2000). "Chapter 5: Integrated development planning". In *Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000)*.

6 Good Governance Africa (GGA). (2021). "Governance Performance Index: 2021". GGA. Available: <https://gga.org/governance-performance-index/>

GPI Overview

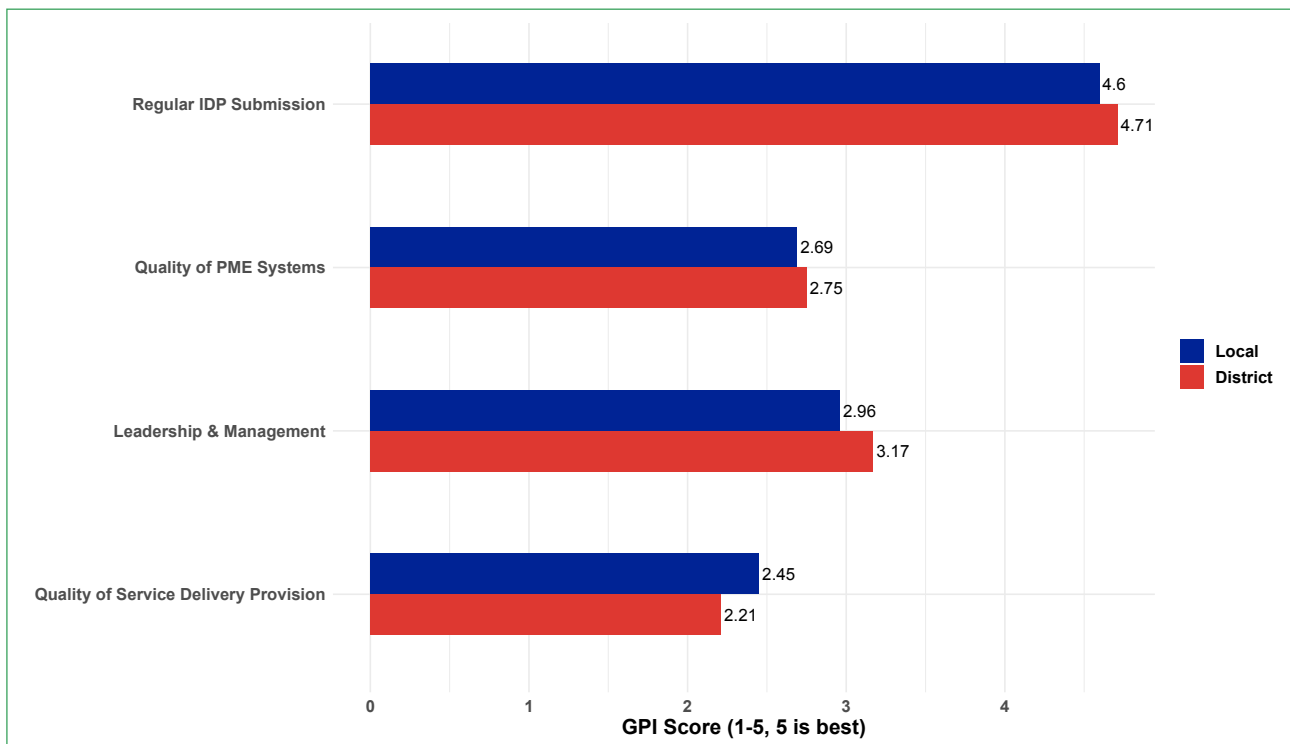
The Governance Performance Index (GPI) is a governance quality assessment tool created by Good Governance Africa (GGA) to evaluate municipal-level governance performance in South Africa.⁷ The GPI draws on publicly available data derived from the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA),⁸ the National Treasury,⁹ Statistics South Africa¹⁰ and the Department of Water and Sanitation,¹¹ among others. In the 2024 GPI report, district, local and metropolitan municipalities are separately scored and ranked on core dimensions of governance: Administration & Governance, Leadership & Management, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Service Delivery. All categories are standardized according to a 1-5 scale, with higher values reflecting better municipal functionality.¹²

As it relates to this policy briefing, the GPI stresses the importance of complementing rigorous IDPs with suitable monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure

appropriate service delivery quality. Another important “input” is the quality of leadership and management in a municipality. This is especially so in the case of the 115 local municipalities and 21 district municipalities that have WSA responsibilities.

Figure 2 is highly suggestive of the close numeric relationship between the quality of planning, monitoring and evaluation systems and the quality of leadership, on the one hand, and the quality of service delivery in a municipality on the other. By contrast, it is striking how on a standardised scale, there is a drop off of more than two GPI points between the regular submission of IDPs, and the quality-of-service delivery provision. To put this analysis into greater context, Table 1 below offers more information on the constituent elements of each of these dimensions in the GPI.

Figure 2: Average GPI 2024 Scores for WSA Municipalities on Select Dimensions



Source: GGA (2024)

7 Good Governance Africa (GGA). (2024). “Governance Performance Index: 2024”. GGA. <https://gga.org/governance-performance-index-south-africa-2024>

8 Auditor-General South Africa (AGSA). (2023). “Consolidated General Report on Local Government Audit Outcomes: MFMA 2021-22”. Available: <https://www.agsa.co.za/Reporting/MFMAReports/MFMA2021-2022.aspx>.

9 National Treasury. (2024). “Municipal Finance Data”. Available: <https://municipaldata.treasury.gov.za/>

10 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). (2023). “Stats SA Census Portal: 2022”. Available: <https://census.statssa.gov.za/#/>

11 Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS). (2023). “Water and Sanitation releases 2023 full Blue Drop Report” Available: <https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/water-and-sanitation-releases-2023-full-blue-drop-report-05-dec-2023#:~:text=The%20Department%20of%20Water%20and,as%20well%20as%20the%20Green>

12 GGA. (2024).

Table 1: Overview of select GPI dimensions depicted in Figure 2

GPI Dimension/ Sub-Category	Overall GPI Category	Brief Description	Data Sources (Year of most recent release)
Regular IDP Submission	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation	This dimension reports whether a municipality has annually produced an IDP update across a multi-year span	National Treasury Municipal Database (2023/24)
Quality of PME Systems	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation	This dimension considers aspects of PME such as AGSA's scores relating to internal audits, oversight responsibility, quality of submitted performance reports, and strategic planning and performance management, among other things.	Auditor-General MFMA (2021-22); Statistics South Africa's Non-Financial Census of Municipalities (2021)
Leadership & Management	Leadership & Management	This GPI category, draws from AGSA indicators relating to the quality of leadership and risk management in a municipality, as well StatsSA data on administrative management turnover in municipalities.	Auditor-General MFMA (2021-22); Statistics South Africa's Non-Financial Census of Municipalities (2021)
Quality of Service Delivery Provision	Service Delivery	This GPI dimension focuses on basic service delivery provision relating to water, sanitation and solid waste management.	Census (2022); Department of Water and Sanitation Drop Programme Reports (Blue Drop [2023], Green Drop [2022], No Drop [2023])

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation within the public sector:

Good governance can be understood as the effective and equitable distribution of resources. In this regard, planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) systems are crucial for good governance because they provide a framework for enhancing and supporting decision-making processes. In particular, they supply vital information to policymakers, helping them identify governance challenges, assisting with designing policy to address these challenges and measuring the efficacy of policy interventions. As Kedibone Phetla, a former Deputy Director in the Department of

Agriculture, highlights, the main function of these systems is to gather and disseminate this information to ensure the continued functioning of the state.¹³

PME systems also contribute to promoting the democratic values of accountability and transparency by informing citizens and civil society, as well as ensuring that decision-making is open and transparent. Thus, many scholars argue that PME systems are a vital part of the public sector because they serve as the backbone for how the government approaches service delivery whilst also ensuring that structures are meeting the needs of citizens.¹⁴

¹³ Phetla, K. (2017). "Monitoring and evaluation in the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries". Thesis for the Master of Public Administration in the Department of Public Administration and Management, the University of South Africa.

¹⁴ Kusek, J.Z. & Rist, R.C. (2004). "Ten steps to a results-based monitoring and evaluation system: A handbook for development practitioners." Washington DC, United States: World Bank Publications.; Mofolo, M., Mkyane, L. & Skade, T. (2014). "Actions and behaviours essential for monitoring & evaluation to succeed in South African public service." In Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review, 2(3):5-24;

The greater receptiveness to the importance of PME systems within the public sector led to several countries adopting these systems, including South Africa.¹⁵ As early as 1994, several regulatory frameworks, policies and legislation were introduced to try and institutionalise PME within every sphere of government. At the local level in South Africa, the PME system is centred around Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).¹⁶

IDPs as a mechanism for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation:

IDPs are a comprehensive and detailed strategic plan through which development goals and service delivery execution plans are outlined for 5 years.¹⁷ Additionally, they identify challenges that impede the municipality from executing its constitutional mandate while also regulating local government to ensure that it is fulfilling its role effectively. IDPs can, therefore, be understood as one key mechanism through which planning, monitoring and evaluation takes place in local government.¹⁸ As part of the institutionalisation of this system, the function and mandate of IDPs are set out in the Municipal Systems Act of 2000.¹⁹

This Act requires municipalities to develop a comprehensive plan detailing everything from long-term goals to operational strategy, community needs and financial plans. Furthermore, IDPs are not only important for municipalities themselves but also for provincial and national government structures, because they help them ensure synergy in providing public services and driving national development goals.²⁰

Beyond the planning component, IDPs are also important in a monitoring and evaluation sense as they should enable municipalities to carry out their mandate insofar as it relates to service delivery and community development. Scholars Sebake and Mukonza highlight that Chapter 6 of the Municipal Systems Act outlines the framework for which the performance of the municipality is measured.²¹

While the Act gives a lot of freedom in terms of what the monitoring and evaluation system looks like, the key indicators need to relate to what was established in the IDP. Additionally, IDPs can be reviewed annually.

IDPs in practice

Even though IDPs are regularly submitted, the GPI illustrates that this has not necessarily translated into better service delivery.²² Some case studies also demonstrate this point. For instance, according to a study by Mukwevho focused on Emfuleni local municipality in Gauteng, there were more than 100 projects proposed to be implemented between 2002 and 2012.²³ However, each of these projects was expected to be implemented within 12 months of their respective inception, a set of targets that are self-evidently unrealistic from both a financing and execution standpoint.

More generally, there has been a persistent problem whereby compliance with legislated timeframes has taken precedence over the development of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. This significant discrepancy between the IDPs that have been submitted and the implementation of these plans points to several key issues. Among these are the overemphasis on planning mechanisms at the expense of effective monitoring and evaluation systems, a lack of adequate human resource management and expertise, insufficient clarity on how municipalities plan to finance their projects, the prioritisation of compliance with legislation over implementation, and a lack of intergovernmental support and cooperation.

A final pervasive concern, depicted in Figure 3, is the high and widespread levels of citizen discontent with municipal governance in South Africa according to surveys conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council.²⁴ Potentially, this reveals that municipalities are increasingly struggling to realise the 1998 White Paper on Local Government's

15 Mofoto, Mkywane, & Skade. (2014).

16 Ibid.

17 Adonis, V. & van der Walt, F. (2017). "Measurement of Implementation of Integrated Development Planning: A Conceptual Framework for South African Municipalities". *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9 (7), 41-52.

18 Sebake, B., Mukonza, R. (2020). "Integrated Development Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation in the City of Tshwane: A Confluence Question for Optimising Service Delivery". *Journal of Public Administration*, 44(3).

19 Office of the Presidency. (2000).

20 Subban, M. & Theron, H. (2012). "Tracing a decade of drafting, reviewing and assessing integrated development plans in KwaZulu-Natal: Some key reflections". *Town and Regional planning*. 61, 21-29.

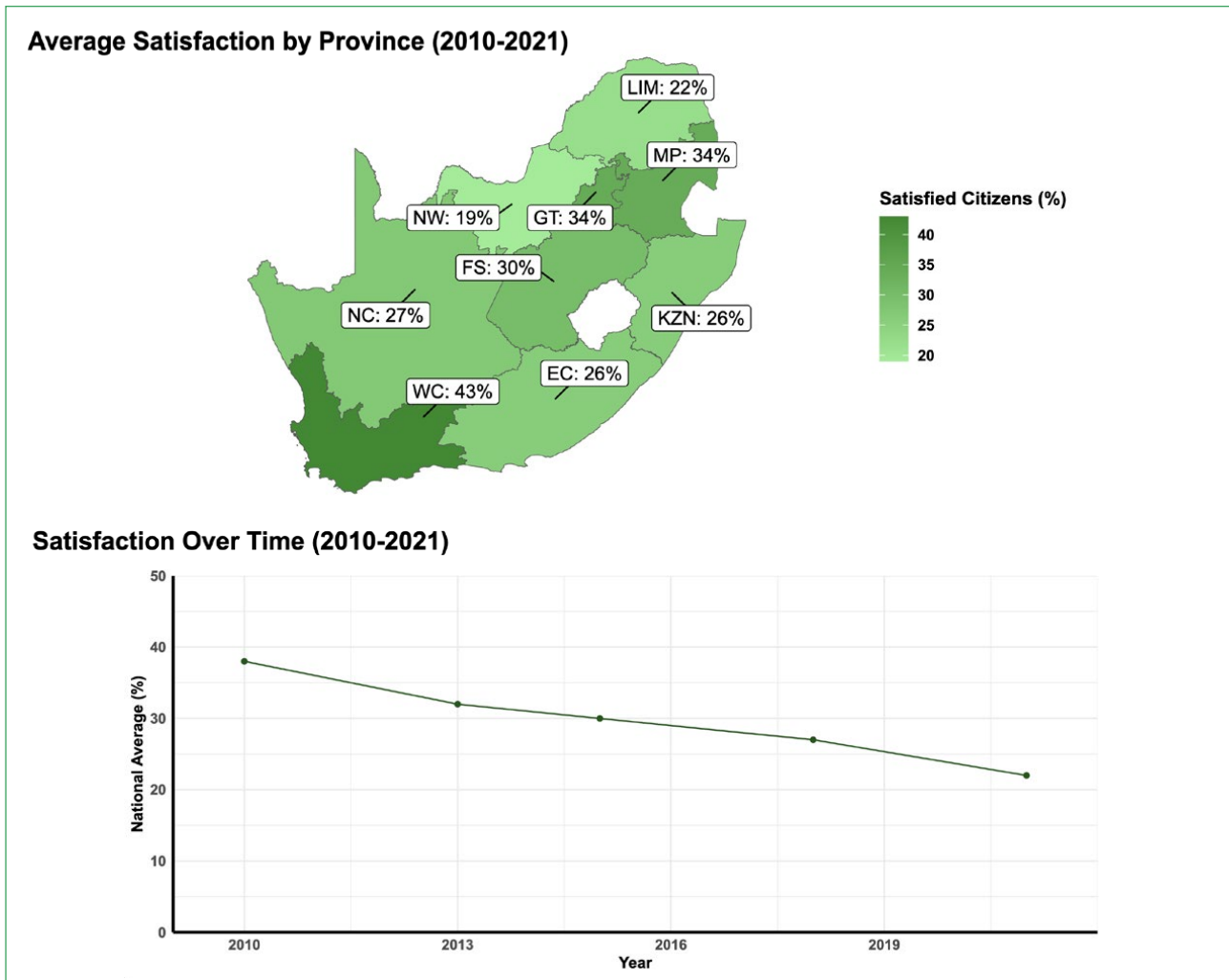
21 Sebake, B, Mukonza. (2020).

22 GGA. (2024).

23 Mukwevho, H. (2012). "An Evaluation Of The Effectiveness Of The Integrated Development Plan On Service Delivery With Reference To The Emfuleni Local Municipality In Gauteng". Thesis for the Master Development Degree in the Faculty of Management Sciences and Law, the University of Limpopo.

24 Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). (2023). "Election Indicators Reports". Report prepared for the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC). Available: <https://repository.hsrc.ac.za/handle/20.500.11910/1567>

Figure 3: Satisfaction for Municipal Performance



Source: HSRC (2023)

aspiration that “municipalities must adopt inclusive approaches to fostering community participation”.²⁵ Interestingly, there is a uniformity between the province where municipal functionality is highest according to the GPI, and where they are most satisfied (the Western Cape with a GPI average of 4.13). At the same time, the same is true of the province with the weakest average municipal performance and lowest satisfaction level (Northwest province with a GPI average of 2.59).²⁶

Ultimately, resolving these interlocking problems in a manner that reverses citizen discontent requires the adjustment of our existing regulatory frameworks in a manner that tackles each of these components.

The way forward

To address the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems within IDPs, there needs to be greater buy-in from municipal management.²⁷ Municipal leaders spanning the political and administrative realms need to acknowledge the importance of effective monitoring and evaluating systems, especially when it comes to understanding how they contribute to local and national development goals. To promote buy-in from management, the Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), and other relevant national and provincial authorities should advance the development of a dedicated national capacity-building strategy, applicable to the local governance level. Such a document would necessarily

25 CoGTA. (1998).

26 GGA. (2024).

27 Phillips, S. (2024). “Why some water service authorities perform well and others poorly”. Business Day. Available: [https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/opinion/2024-01-30-sean-phillips-why-some-water-service-authorities-perform-well-and-others-poorly/#:~:text=It%20was%20clear%20from%20the,and%20senior%20managers%20of%20the; Mukwevho, H. \(2012\).](https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/opinion/2024-01-30-sean-phillips-why-some-water-service-authorities-perform-well-and-others-poorly/#:~:text=It%20was%20clear%20from%20the,and%20senior%20managers%20of%20the; Mukwevho, H. (2012).)

work in sync with the 2022 National Framework on the Professionalisation of the Public Sector.²⁸

A core component of such a strategy should be the development of a dedicated fund and programme that provides and facilitates regular monitoring and evaluation training workshops for essential municipal staff. **Given the absence of suitable and realistic financial planning and asset management practices within the IDP process in dozens of municipalities, focusing capacity building on these areas ought to be an immediate priority.** There should also be clear mechanisms that support municipalities in developing adequate succession management plans, as well as better outlining pathways for growth for municipal staff.

Another occasional risk factor, particularly in underequipped municipalities, is the frequent reliance on external stakeholders to ensure timely IDP submissions.²⁹ The reality is that without some external assistance, municipal PME systems could collapse in the short term, but the plans developed with this assistance must reflect the needs of the relevant local community. With this in mind, **national government should adjust our local governance regulatory framework to better enable greater oversight for potential external partners.** Moreover, within such a framework, each municipality should be encouraged to develop their systems for assessing the benefits and risks associated with any potential external partner.

Finally, addressing citizen dissatisfaction would require policymakers to think creatively about the role that local communities can play in ensuring oversight. Our existing legal framework for local governance, including as it relates to IDPs, does contain numerous provisions for community participation, but these can be strengthened.³⁰ **One idea worth exploring and institutionalizing is that there be a citizen-led effort to draft a citizen's charter, in each municipality.**³¹

These charters can be drafted at the start of each municipal term, with annual reviews occurring with citizens and municipal representatives alike present, complementing the IDP process. Sebake and Mukonza argue that by

municipalities consulting more often with the community, accountability increases and trust in local governance is enhanced because citizens feel they are contributing to the decision-making process.³² This in turn can reduce citizen participation in service delivery protests, or more concerning, unlawful riots, in favour of engaging with the municipality through official forums.³³

National government can also play a role in promoting and better incentivizing municipalities to develop innovative solutions devised to foster public participation in the local governance process, especially as it concerns providing oversight. One way to do this would be to institute an annual awards scheme, that focuses on rewarding elevated citizen participation in the local governance process and is designed along the lines of the discontinued Municipal Performance Excellence (VUNA) Awards.³⁴

Conclusion

The effective alignment and realisation of South Africa's local and national development goals necessarily require that municipalities enhance their effectiveness through developing robust planning, monitoring, and evaluation systems. However, as Good Governance Africa's 2024 Governance Performance Index highlights, Integrated Development Plan submission rates are high, but critical service delivery quality disparities exist, notably in municipalities with Water Services Authority responsibilities. The GPI demonstrates how, rather than IDP submission rates, the quality of leadership in a municipality, and the presence of adequate PME systems, are more closely correlated with service delivery outcomes. To bridge this gap, existing national frameworks focused on the skills development of public servants should be better applied to the local level. Among the priority areas should be to require greater clarity on project financing, asset management, succession planning, and the development of suitable internal monitoring and evaluation systems. Another critical dimension in addressing the systemic challenges facing PME systems in municipalities is raising community engagement. In this regard, independent and rigorous tools like the GPI can serve as a critical benchmarking mechanism for municipalities and citizens alike to track progress.

28 National School of Government. (2022). "A National Framework Towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector". Pretoria: Government Printer.

29 Mubangizi, B. (2019). "Monitoring and Evaluation Processes Critical to Service Provision in South Africa's Rural-Based Municipalities". *Journal of Reviews on Global Economics*, 8, 555-565.

30 The Presidency. (2000).

31 Desai, P., & Zondo, M. (2023). "Enhancing Political Accountability in South Africa". Good Governance Africa. Policy Briefings. Available: <https://gga.org/enhancing-political-accountabilityin-south-africa/>

32 Sebake & Mukonza. (2020).

33 Desai, P., Bennett, M., & Dube, C. (2022). "The role of local governance in achieving political stability". Good Governance Africa. Intelligence Reports. Available: <https://gga.org/the-role-of-local-governance-in-achieving-political-stability/>

34 Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA). (2021). "Local Government: A Chronology of the past 21 years". Pretoria: Government Printer.

Notes:

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