

**An Analysis of Public Participation in the Integrated  
Development Planning Processes of the Hibiscus Coast  
Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

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# **Abstract**

The importance of the concept of public participation continues to gain great momentum in the circles of local government in South Africa. Public participation is a way of ensuring that local government is responsive to that which the public prioritizes as their development needs. Public participation in South Africa is very important as it is the backbone of the democratic state that the 1994 general elections introduced. In response to the importance of public participation in the local government, the South African government has passed several statutes to ensure that substance and emphasis is given to the country's local government sphere. These statutes include, amongst others, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the Municipal Structures Act 1998, the Municipal Systems Act 2000 and the Municipal Finance Management Act 2003. It is at the local government sphere where the public participation is primarily applied in order to promote both good governance and a responsive local government.

This research project is an analysis of public participation in the integrated development planning processes of the Hibiscus Coast Local Municipality. This study acknowledges that public participation is an important component of transformation and democratization of local government. Legislation alone cannot meet this requirement and more still needs to be done to truly enhance public participation in local government. This study found that despite legislation that provides for the structures that the public must use to participate in the integrated development planning processes in the Hibiscus Coast local municipality; there is a need for the Hibiscus Coast municipality to develop its own

conceptualization and understanding of public participation. Moreover, proper mechanisms need to be established to enhance the participation of the local communities and stakeholders in the municipality's integrated development processes. The study is primarily based on qualitative data collected from the Hibiscus Coast Local Municipality through personal interviews with councillors, officials and ward committee members, review of local government statutes and literature providing knowledge on the subject under study.

# Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations and borrowed ideas have been acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

Gumbi Lihle

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Student Name

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Date

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## **Dedication**

**Dedicated in Loving Memory of my mother Mrs Faith Duduzile**

**Gumbi and my father Mr Christopher Mabutho Gumbi**

## List of abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
AIDS	Acquire Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CBP	Community Based Plan
CDW	Community Development Worker
COGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	Democratic Alliance
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
HCM	Hibiscus Coast Municipality
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LED	Local Economic Development
MTREF	Midterm Review Expenditure Framework
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPC	National Planning Commission
PSC	Public Service Commission
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
TSET	Training for Socio-economic Transformation

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Declaration.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Dedication.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>List of abbreviations.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter 1.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 Background and outline of research problem.....	12
1.2 Research problems and objectives.....	15
1.3 Literature review.....	16
1.3.1 The significance of public participation in the IDP processes.....	16
1.3.2 Public participation in local government IDP processes.....	19
1.3.3 The need for stakeholder capacitation in IDP.....	21
1.4 Research methodology and methods.....	26
1.4.1 Research approaches.....	26
1.4.2 Sampling and Population of the Study.....	26
1.4.3 Data Collection and Analysis.....	27
1.5 Challenges of the study.....	28
1.6 Structure of dissertation.....	28



<b>Chapter two</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2. Theoretical framework</b>	<b>30</b>
Introduction	30
2.2 Information-sharing mechanism	31
2.3 Consultative mechanism	35
2.4 Collaborative mechanism	39
2.5 Joint decision-making mechanism	40
2.6 empowerment mechanism	41
2.7 Conclusion	44
<b>Chapter three</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>3. Legislative framework</b>	<b>48</b>
3.1 Introduction	48
3.2 Integrated development planning	49
3.2.1 The rationale for IDPs	50
3.2.2 The IDP process	51
3.3 Community-based ward plans	52
3.4 The IDP representative forum	54
3.5 community participation in local government	56
3.6 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)	59
3.7 The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (1998)	60
3.7.1 Direct advice and support	61
3.7.2 Ward committees	62
3.7.3 Traditional authorities	63
3.7.4 Community development workers	64

<b>3.8</b>	<b>The Municipal Systems Act 2000.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>3.9</b>	<b>The Municipal Finance Management Act 2003.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>3.10</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Chapter four</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4. Findings and analysis</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>An overview of the Hibiscus Coast Municipality.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Public participation in the Hibiscus Coast IDP: issues and concerns.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>IDP public Participatory structures in the Hibiscus Coast.....</b>	<b>79</b>
4.4.1	Ward committees.....	79
4.4.2	The IDP representative forum.....	83
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Theoretical conception of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast.....</b>	<b>86</b>
4.5.1	Information-sharing.....	86
4.5.2	Consultation.....	91
4.5.3	Collaborative.....	94
4.5.4	Joint decision-making.....	95
4.5.5	Empowerment.....	98
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Chapter five</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5. Discussion and Conclusion</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Conceptualization and understating of public participation by the Hibiscus Coast.....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Organizational structures and mechanisms employed by the Hibiscus Coast to enhance public participation in the IDP .....</b>	<b>105</b>

<b>5.4</b>	<b>The nature of public participation used through these structures and mechanisms.....</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>5.5</b>	<b>Challenges and successes of public participation in the processes of the IDP .....</b>	<b>108</b>
5.5.1	Challenges.....	108
5.5.2	Successes.....	112
<b>5.6</b>	<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>115</b>
5.6.1	Conceptualization and understating of public participation by the Hibiscus Coast.....	115
5.6.2	Organizational structures and mechanisms employed by the Hibiscus Coast to enhance public participation in the IDP.....	115
5.6.3	The nature of public participation used through these structures and mechanisms.....	115
5.6.4	Challenges and successes of public participation in the processes of the IDP.....	116
<b>5.7</b>	<b>Recommendations for further research.....</b>	<b>117</b>
	<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>118</b>
	<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>A.</b>	<b>Letter seeking authority.....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>Informed consent letter.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>Interviews questions.....</b>	<b>127</b>

## Diagrams

<b>Diagram 1:</b> The linkage between ward plans, IDPs, provincial growth and development plans and the National Spatial Development Framework .....	<b>53</b>
<b>Diagram 2:</b> example of Cycle of CBP and IDP .....	<b>54</b>
<b>Diagram 3:</b> Organisational structure for the IDP Forum.....	<b>56</b>
<b>Diagram 4:</b> Legislative framework for public participation.....	<b>58</b>
<b>Diagram 5:</b> areas covered by ward committees and their linkages.....	<b>62</b>
<b>Diagram 6:</b> Support roles for CDWs.....	<b>66</b>
<b>Diagram 7:</b> HCM ward boundaries.....	<b>75</b>

## Tables

<b>Table 1:</b> .....	<b>46</b>
<b>Table 2:</b> .....	<b>72</b>

# Chapter one

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and outline of research problem

The White Paper on Local Government 1998 (Republic of South Africa 1998a) defines a developmental local government as a “local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives” (RSA 1998a). Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are seen as a strategy to achieve this (Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) 2000: 19). An IDP is defined by the Municipal Systems Act (RSA 2000) as “the principal strategic planning instrument, which guides and informs all planning, and development, and all decisions with regard to planning, management and development in the municipality”. Section 24 of the Municipal Systems Act (RSA 2000) necessitates the alignment of municipal IDPs across municipalities in a particular district and “other organs of state” (Njenga, 2009: 16), by requiring a district municipality to provide a framework for the IDP in their district (RSA 2000: section 27(1)).

Municipalities as institutions are faced with great challenges in championing human rights, meeting human needs and hindrances that were inherited from the apartheid era (Mac Kay, 2004). The IDP was therefore seen as a strategic mechanism to enable the prioritization and integration of these challenges in municipal planning processes. The IDP process is a means to arrive at decisions on key issues such as municipal budgets, land management, promotion of local economic development and institutional transformation in a consultative, systematic and strategic manner (RSA:

2000). For this reason, the IDP does not only inform the management of the municipality on key issues, but it also directs the actions of other spheres of government, corporate service providers, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. The IDP, therefore, emphasizes that there should be participation from all relevant stakeholders in the planning processes of a municipality.

Public participation as a requirement in municipal planning processes is at the center of a developmental local government (RSA 1996). The Public Service Commission (PSC) highlighted that “Public participation is a mechanism for entrenching democracy and it promotes social cohesion between government and the citizens, particularly in the provision of quality and sustainable services” (PSC: 2008). The PSC is a body that has been given tasks and powers by the Constitution of South Africa to investigate, monitor and evaluate the institutions and administration of the public service (RSA 1996). The definition by the PSC has shaped the manner in which the institutions of government perceive, conceptualize and understand what public participation is. However, Taylor (2003: 110) argues that the interests of the public are usually opposed to those of the government in a public participation process and as a result public participation is a continuous struggle between the public and government. In South Africa, prior to 1994, the government suppressed all forms of public participation especially among the black communities. However, post 1994, the newly elected government committed itself to and embraced a people-centred development approach. Within this approach, public participation became a Constitutional imperative where it is stated that people’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making (PSC, 2009: V). The significance of public participation in the processes of an IDP is to

afford a chance to citizens to have a voice in deciding the priorities of a municipality regarding development (Njenga, 2009: 3). This allows the public to offer information that will inform municipal plans (Njenga, 2009: 3). Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 51) highlight that the rationale for including public participation in policy is due to the fact that it is considered as an important element of democratic governance.

The DPLG (2009: 7) emphasizes the need for local government to develop strategies and mechanisms to continuously allow citizens, business and community groups to participate in municipal processes such as planning and budgeting. The DPLG does not provide any clear rules and legislation on the exact mechanisms that can be employed by the municipalities on public participation in the processes of IDP. The IDP Guide Packs issued by the DPLG provide principles and guidelines that the municipalities can follow in their attempts to develop mechanisms they intend to employ in facilitating public participation in the IDP process (Njenga, 2009: 22). The principles are the standards and values that local governments must observe in encouraging public participation in the IDP process. Procedures refer to the processes that must be followed by municipalities in the drafting of the IDP process, while mechanisms deal with the exact methods of participation (Njenga, 2009: 22). This has led to an increasing academic body of literature on IDP and public participation. A full review of this academic literature will be impossible for the scope of this research project as it is limited only to the significance of public participation in the IDP and local government policy processes, and the need for stakeholders to be capacitated in order to be effective contributors in the IDP process. A preliminary literature review will outline the focused areas in the literature.

## **1.2 Research Problems and Objectives**

This study is an analysis of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast Local Municipality. Public participation in the Hibiscus Coast Municipality takes place in different forums, meetings and gatherings (HCM, 2013: 99). There is the IDP representative forum which serves as the main forum where relevant and external stakeholders which include Amakhosi (Traditional leaders), the Ugu District Municipality, business, entities and parastatals who are invited to debate on developmental issues that are facing the Hibiscus Coast Municipality and put forth suggestions and how these can be overcome. Furthermore, public participation is encouraged through Mayoral Izimbizo and Budget Road shows (HCM, 2013: 99).

However, there have been concerns from the political opposition particularly the Democratic Alliance (DA) as to whether the current format of public participation in the HCM is relevant or useful since 'multi-representations' by it are consistently ignored or very poorly acted upon, and there is the issue of ward councillors and their committees being sidelined during the process and are just seen to be there to 'rubber stamp' the proceedings, as a result the proceedings of public participation have been experiencing constant failure (Mchunu: 2012). However, this could be as a result of a number of reasons. It could be the case that local governments are failing to run effective public participation processes because they themselves lack the necessary skills to manage such processes, or it could be the manner, in which local governments perceive, understand and/or conceptualize what public participation is and the kind of mechanisms and institutions they employ to achieve effective public participation.



This study seeks to explore the processes of public participation in the IDP of the HCM. The following questions inform the specific research problem:

- How is public participation conceptualized and understood by the HCM?
- How is public participation promoted by the HCM in its IDP process?
- What are the organizational structures and institutional mechanisms employed by HCM in order to enhance public participation in the IDP process?
- What is the nature of public participation used through these institutional mechanisms and structures?
- What are the existing challenges with regards to public participation in the IDP?

### **1.3 Literature Review**

Academic research in the three main areas is relevant to this dissertation: the significance of public participation in policy processes; public participation in local government processes; and the need for stakeholder capacitation in IDP processes.

#### **1.3.1 The significance of public participation in the IDP processes**

This section explores the significance of the inclusion of the public in general public policy and development processes in local government particularly in the IDP process. MacKay (2004: v) argues that public participation is important in every sector of development. For an IDP process, public participation is important because it emphasizes the provision for average citizens to be given an opportunity to have a say with regards to the priorities concerning development issues of their municipality (Training for Socioeconomic

Transformation (TSET), 2007: 94). In her study on public participation in the street naming process of KwaMashu Township, Lelekoane (2011) found that participation is understood as an important and powerful tool that has the ability to help people understand the complexity of development problems and the need for devising integrated responses to difficult challenges facing local municipalities.

Moreover, public participation in the integrated development planning in the new South Africa serves to promote integration and the undoing of divisions handed down by the apartheid government (Mogale, 2003: 220). Furthermore, Creighton (2005: 17) highlights a significant need of public participation in a policy process. He states that public participation is important because it establishes a new direct link between the public and the decision-makers (Creighton, 2005: 17). This direct link establishes a way of ensuring that decisions that affect people's lives are discussed with the people concerned before a decision could be made. Creighton (2005) argues that the public and government have two different understandings of what public participation is;

*.....from the perspective of the public, public participation increases their influence on the decisions that affect their lives. From the perspective of government officials, public participation provides a means by which contentious issues can be resolved. Public participation is a way of channeling these differences into genuine dialogue among people with different points of view. It is a way of ensuring genuine interaction and a way of reassuring the public that all viewpoints are being considered (Creighton, 2005: 17).*

DPLG (2007: 15) highlights the four main reasons for promoting public participation. These reasons are:

- *Public participation is important because it is a legal requirement to consult;*
- *It could be encouraged in order to make development plans and services more relevant to local needs and conditions;*
- *Participation may be encouraged in order to hand over responsibility for services and promote community action; and*
- *Participation may be encouraged to empower local communities to have control over their own lives and livelihoods (DPLG, 2007: 15).*

Moreover, a public participation process plays a fundamental role in making policy acceptable to the public to whom it will become applicable (Bulman, 2002: 69). It is therefore the case that public participation is generally regarded as a good deed, apart from it being a constitutional obligation, and that it adds to the legitimacy of the ultimate policy. The assumption is that public participation is normatively good in that it promotes sustainable programming (MacKay, 2004: v). van der Zwiëp (1994) reiterates that, in a democratic society, openness and therefore public participation are of major importance. They guarantee that the decision-making process of the government is checked and thus prevent arbitrary and unaccountable rule.

Rahman (1990) identifies four dimensions that seek to show the positive effects that participation can have on the previously disadvantaged and excluded members of society in an attempt to stamp their position in the decision-making processes of their local municipality. Rahman (1990) argues that public participation can:

- Inspire previously sidelined groups to organize themselves in organizations that will be under their own control,
- Such organizations will bring along with them knowledge of their social environment and process of to their local government development policy agenda in a manner that no other organization will be able to do,

- Participation will promote a sense of identity nurture self-reliance which will enhance solidarity amongst stakeholders in a caring and sharing manner,
- Participation enhances the position of women in that it provides them a platform to raise their own points of view and in the process directing improvements in gender relations as will be interpreted and examined by women by themselves.

The kind of public empowerment that will be ushered by such an understanding of the process of public participation would mean that there are indeed significant changes that are taking place in the community as a whole because of the changes that are happening in the local level of society. These changes would encourage the promotion of human dignity, the promotion of popular democracy and the protection of the diversity of culture (Mogale, 2003: 225). In order for this to be achieved the public and stakeholders would require relevant capacitation in order for them to understand and actualize their role in the policy process.

### **1.3.2 Public participation in local government IDP processes**

The channels of public participation in local government, as legislated by the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, offer opportunities and channels for citizens and communities to participate in local government through structures such as ward committees, Community Based Plans (CBPs) and IDP forums in their local government development processes (Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998). CBPs are a form of participatory planning which was established to create a link between community action and the IDP where local communities develop their own CBPs which are then presented to the IDP representative forum. Ward committees are structures that are established to work with the democratically elected ward councilor to carry out his/her mandate; members of the

ward committee are community members who are tasked with representing the different interests of the ward. Many citizens rely on these mechanisms of participation and as a result many municipalities make use of these structures and mechanisms in order to enhance public participation in their policy processes.

However, Njenga (2009) in her dissertation found that effective public participation in municipal IDP processes continue to be unattainable because in these processes citizens continue to have limited power to influence decisions in the IDP process. Research has indicated that public participation through IDP processes has been superficial which “highlights the limited nature of participation through such processes in practice” (Oldfield, 2008: 489) in the sense that there is ambiguity in IDPs as strategic tools of integrating municipal activities and mechanisms of participation. Oldfield (2008: 489) asks a critical question whether “participation is a means to achieve greater administrative efficiency .....Or is it a means to empower people by giving them control over development and government processes and outcome or both?” In order to consolidate democracy, Ndlela (2005) found that South African municipalities need to move away from these low levels, superficial and conventional forms of community outreach and participation programs such as road-shows, because such programs lack iterative communication which is necessary to develop knowledge. These low level forms of participation do not empower and guarantee that the communities and stakeholders will directly influence the decision-making.

In her study on IDP in the uGu District Municipality, Todes (2002: 35) highlighted that “the IDP has managed to incorporate potentially conflicting parties, such as

traditional authorities, and competing political parties and to bring them together towards a common end". This is because the IDP must supersede all development of a municipality, therefore all development projects must be aligned to the IDP. This forces different stakeholders in a municipality who might have different objectives to come together and find a common ground for the alignment of their different objectives to one objective of the IDP. Furthermore, Njenga (2009) found that while some of the participatory mechanisms employed by the municipalities yielded benefits for communities such as promoting access to government, other mechanisms did not accommodate marginalized groups, thus hindering their participation in the IDP process. The marginalized groups included the rural poor, illiterate, the disabled and other members of society who were marginalized as a result of their socio-economic and geographical statuses in the society and therefore municipalities lacked necessary resources to incorporate these groups into their municipal processes. Bulman (2002: 2) argues that the low level form of participation in South Africa merely permits members of the community to comment on proposed policy and they are unable to influence the final decision. The authorities receive submissions from the public and make decisions. There is very limited negotiation since the number of participants is also very limited and the process is relatively straightforward. Njenga (2009: 16) suggests that this is due to the lack of legislation that offers exact mechanisms and factors that should be employed by local municipalities in their IDP public participation processes.

Nyalunga (2006: 5) highlights factors that can assist in strengthening and facilitating effective public participation in local government developmental policy processes particularly the IDP. These factors are:

- *continuous consultation with the citizenry and involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs). Consultation should be implemented in a step by step way where responsibilities of all participatory structures are clearly outlined. Citizen should not be reduced to participation only by elite. Organized civil society, in the form of predominantly non-governmental organizations (NGOs), business, interest groups and ordinary citizens (especially the poor) are critical agents of the participatory process*
- *promotion of innovative ways of popular participation as opposed to dominance of ward committees over the participatory space*
- *recognition of the contribution of different sectors and interest groups as opposed to the politicization of the participatory space*
- *ensure improved information dissemination*
- *link ward committees with community structures*
- *Capacity building of municipalities. It is important that municipalities are capacitated about the importance of participation*
- *budget allocation for community consultation (Nyaluna, 2006: 5).*

Therefore public participation is a process that needs strategic and pragmatic intervention in order for it to be effective.

### **1.3.3 The need for stakeholder capacitation in IDP**

The notion of capacity building in development initiatives is based on the idea that people can be at the forefront of processes that seek to change their lives (Liebenberg and Stewart, 1997: 21). Capacity building is a process whereby individuals and groups develop and/or improve their skills to consolidate systems, resources and knowledge, as reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives (Ngwenya, 2002: 2). Therefore, in this way, people can be part of the actions that are undertaken to change their lives rather than them being ordinary

recipients of development change. Liebenberg and Stewart (1997: 22) thus define capacity building as the capacity of the community which is usually the recipients and objects of a development change to be masters of their own development. In order to achieve this would mean that the public is given a fair chance to take part in development initiatives like the IDP.

Taylor (2003: 106) argues that communities can have something to gain no matter if they are not dominant power-holders in a policy process. Public participation enables capacity-building, thus capacity would allow communities an opportunity to trade and gain access to the policy-making process because they need to understand the processes and games that make-up the process of policy-making (Taylor, 2003: 106). Clapper (1996: 74) asks the question whether the public has the necessary capacity to participate in the development planning that would have a direct influence on them, such as the IDP, because citizens usually fail to examine effectively and objectively the quality of development programmes offered to them. Capacity entails the ability of stakeholders to be competent in influencing decisions-making pertaining to their development directly (Clapper, 1996: 74). Failure on the part of stakeholders to achieve this will have a negative impact on the quality of participation being offered.

Mogale (2003: 225) argues that in the South African local government context, public participation is expected to transform the local system of governance by being closely tied up with equity and capacity empowerment principles. Furthermore, there seems to be uneven distribution of capacity which is a result of inadequate available information and uneven means for participation (Ngwenya, 2002: 2). Capacity in this



regard entails that communities are able to organize their resources and they have the necessary skills to achieve their societal objectives. Lack of capacity would therefore be the inability of the community to collectively achieve their common objectives. Demand for participation opportunities cannot be properly met without a corresponding increase in the capacity of government to supply such opportunities to external stakeholders (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 53). The National IDP Policy paper (IDP Policy) (2000: 40) highlights that;

*...lack of capacity has contributed to many IDPs failing to live up to expectations, and also to the inappropriate use and management of consultants. This in turn has often led to a lack of a sense of ownership of the IDP by municipalities, and an inability or unwillingness to use the IDP as the primary mechanism to guide the transformation and developmental activities of such municipalities.*

Nyalunga (2006: 16) found that municipalities are faced with a great challenge to promote public participation in their IDP processes because of a lack of capacitated personnel and institutional makeup of the municipalities lacks capacity to carry out effective promotion of public participation. Ndlela (2005) found that because of social exclusion, most South African citizens still experience very limited understanding of participatory democracy and need to be capacitated about its structures, systems and procedures. Warburton (2000) argues that capacity-building is a crucial aspect of a development policy process like the IDP which attempts to enhance a participatory driven approach to community development issues. Capacity-building would allow communities to gain the necessary capacity to be able to identify and be part of the solutions to their development issues. The World Bank (1996) suggests that local communities tend to become more capacitated as

the capacity of the disadvantaged members of the community is enhanced as they start to voice effective contributions in their local developmental policy processes. MacKay (2004: 24) argues that this notion presented by the World Bank can be compared to that of local community participation in the IDP as a local government developmental strategy in South Africa. This gives the impression that enhanced levels of participation can be achieved through a process of continuous involvement of the local communities in development planning.

Capacity-building on the part of the previously disadvantaged members of society in a local government system is a starting point to achieving the necessary skills in planning future developmental initiatives. MacKay (2004: 26) found that;

*...overtime, development experience has shown that when experts alone acquire, analyze, and process information and then present this information, social change usually does not take place, especially during such a complex process such as the IDP. The learning part takes place when increasing support of stakeholders through public participation in the IDP starts coming to the fore..... Also, when both experts and stakeholders are put together in a 'single basket' during the development programme phases, will be sure that social learning is acquired.*

However, (Mogale, 2003: 225) argues that the severe incapacity that is witnessed in the private stakeholders of government policy processes is as a result of

*....community organizations, labor movements and credit unions who all suffered capacity setbacks in the early post-apartheid years, as top and middle management cadres left in droves to join the new government. Those who left found themselves severely incapacitated, pitted against drawn-out transitional local governance arrangements and under-resourced as donor money was diverted to assisting the fledging government.*

The need for local governments to capacitate their local communities stems from the belief that capacitated communities will possess the confidence and ability to face their developmental problems and be able to identify the manner in which solutions are going to be found.

## **1.4 Research methodology and methods**

### **1.4.1 Research Approaches**

Because of the purpose of this study, this research took an exploratory approach. According to Sekaran (2002:123), an exploratory study is a qualitative study which is undertaken when not much is known about the situation at hand, or when no information is available on how similar problems or research issues have been solved in the past. The aim is to gain familiarity with the issues, and to gain a deeper understanding about the topic. This study made use of a qualitative research methodology. A case study was used. Qualitative research is empirical research in which the researcher explores relationships using textual, rather than quantitative, data. Results are not usually considered generalizable but are often transferable (Sekaran, 2002: 115).

### **1.4.2 Data Collection and Analysis**

The methods for data collection that were employed for this study were based on document analysis and semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions (see appendix 3), and notes were taken during each interview. In this study the anonymity of my interviewees was ensured where requested. Coding was therefore employed so that the

identity of interviewees be protected. Data will be stored in accordance with the University of KwaZulu-Natal's code of ethics for researchers.

Written data sources comprised both published and unpublished documents namely, municipal reports, memoranda, agendas, legislation, administrative documents, letters, reports, and newspaper articles.

Open-ended questions that were employed during the interviews took the form of a conversation with the intention for the researcher to explore the views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the interviewee with regards to the events and phenomena on the study that was being carried out. Data was analyzed using constant comparative method where the respondents' interview transcripts were coded and categorized into themes in order to present findings (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

The data from the interviews was triangulated with data from the written documents.

### **1.4.3 Sampling and Population of the Study**

The method of sampling that was used by this study is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling suggests that participants are chosen as a result of their defining characteristics that will assure them as holders of the relevant data required for the purposes of the study. Marlow (1998) highlights that purposive sampling gives the researcher the freedom to handpick the sample according to the nature of the problem and the study being carried out. Thus, the sample population of this study comprised of HCM Public Participation Manager (interviewee 6), HCM IDP official (interviewee 5), Youth Development Official (interviewee 11), three ward committee representatives (interviewee 4, 7 and 9) one member of the HCM Ratepayers Association (interviewee 3) and three ward councilors

(interviewee 1, 2 and 8) representing the three major political parties represented in the municipal council, and uGu district municipality IDP official (interviewee 10) constituting a total of eleven respondents. A form letter requesting an interview (see appendix 1) was sent via e-mail to all interviewees. Explicit consent (see appendix 2) was sought from interviewees who agreed to participate in this study.

### **1.5 Challenges of the Study**

The researcher had to deal with limited available documents. The documents that were said to be available on the municipal website were no longer available as the website had just been changed. This change resulted in many documents being removed. A municipal official promised to locate the documents so that the researcher can view them. After numerous attempts by the researcher to gain access to these documents and other documents that were never posted on the website the municipal official failed to live up to his promise and the research had to rely on the limited documents that were available.

### **1.6 Structure of dissertation**

Chapter one is the introduction. First, it introduces the research topic and the research problem. Second, it outlines the background to the problem, it highlighting the historical, political and social dynamics that have led to IDP and the emphasis on public participation. Third, it has presented a review of previous research in this area. Lastly, it offers an outline of research objectives, research methodology and research design.

Chapter two is a theoretical framework which is based in Brinkerhoff and Crosby's explication of mechanisms of participation in public policy.

Chapter three provides the context for this study, by outlining the legislative and regulatory requirements for IDPs in local government in South Africa.

Chapter four investigates and analyses the forms and processes of public participation undertaken by the HCM in the course of formulating its IDP. This will be based on documentary study and interviews.

Chapter five is the conclusion, final analysis, implications of the case study, and recommendations.

# Chapter two

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Introduction

This study investigated public participation in the processes of the IDP of the HCM. The theoretical framework of this study is informed by the mechanisms of public participation as presented by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002). These mechanisms generally provided a theoretical foundation for the understanding, the nature and the need for public participation in government policy processes. These mechanisms were identified as appropriate since Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 8) greatly emphasize democratic governance which is concerned with the understanding of the manner in which the public utilizes its power to influence policy processes and act as governmental watchdogs. These can be further conceptualized as information-sharing mechanisms, consultative mechanisms, collaborative mechanisms, joint decision-making mechanisms and empowerment mechanisms (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 54). This chapter will in turn discuss each of these mechanisms. Each type of participation conceptualizes the way in which the processes and procedures of public participation in a particular public policy process will have an impact upon the end result of that public policy process.

The World Bank (1996: 3) defines public participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development. This definition of participation provides a starting point for anyone seeking to do a study on public participation, in terms of the who, what and how dimensions. Brynard (1996: 41) defines public participation as an activity which seeks to include one or more individuals or groups

who have been previously excluded from the processes of decision-making in conjunction with the group or individuals who were previously at the centre of the decision-making process.

The mechanisms presented by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) were useful for this study as they unpack the ability and the manner in which the public influences government which is central for understanding effective public participation. The following section explores Brinkerhoff and Crosby's (2002) mechanisms of public participation.

## **2.2 Information-sharing Mechanism**

Information-sharing is the most basic level form of public participation (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 65). This mechanism offers the least active inclusion for external stakeholders. Government retains its authority as the ultimate bearer and sharer of information by laws and regulations (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 65). Brynard (1996: 41) argues that for this mechanism to be effective, participation will require that it is divided into two main categories, mainly the receiving of information by citizens from the government authorities with regards to proposed actions, and the sharing of decision-making power with citizens in order to shape the final decisions. The receiving of information on its own cannot really be considered as public participation (Brynard, 1996: 41). Furthermore, Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 65) give four reasons why information-sharing is important for policy and most fundamentally for policy implementation,

- *firstly, for implementation to be conducted according to democratic governance principles, accessible and widely disseminated information is key.*
- *higher levels of participation and their associated mechanisms depend upon participants having information.*



- *information-sharing is important in order for public agencies to elaborate and communicate the rationale behind policy decisions.*
- *fourthly, for the process of implementation to be carried-out in a transparent, responsive and accountable way, citizens require information.*

In order to carry-out effective public participation, the public is required to know what is it that authorities are supposed to do, what they are currently doing and what are the results. In this way informing the public or citizens through an information-sharing mechanisms is instrumental for basic democratic governance as well as higher levels of participation (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 66). Clapper (1996: 73) argues that most of the time potential citizen participants are not furnished with the correct or sufficient information to make meaningful participation. Therefore effective public participation requires that the public be reasonable knowledgeable with regards to participation and government issues, problems and strategies (Clapper, 1996: 73).

Theron et al (2005c) explores the following different strategies that can be employed or are employed by policy or project developers in order to achieve an effective information-sharing mechanism through allowing the public or participants to offer effective contributions to the policy development processes of concern to them.

- **Legal notices**

This is a strategy that offers information to the public with regards to a particular proposal or an initiative which is required by legislation that it be displayed at a specific location such as a municipal notice board and is displayed for a particular period of time. The public is given a chance to view the proposal and make comments on it before it is passed or implemented. After the period for public comments has lapsed, all comments are reviewed

and if necessary changes are made to the initial proposal. This strategy is also utilized when a municipality wants the public to adhere to a particular by-law that has been passed by the local council (Theron et al, 2005c).

- **Advertisements**

This strategy is made use of when the municipality is calling upon the public to participate on a proposal for a project or policy. This is usually done through paid advertisements in local radio stations, newspapers and billboards (Siphuma, 2009: 72). For example when an IDP forum is going to meet, the municipality advertises through these platforms so that interested parties can come and participate.

- **Background information material**

This participation strategy takes place when a municipality seeks to issue an update or a progress with regards to a planned project or implemented policy. The municipality may make use of personal hand-outs, brochures or flyers which are mostly distributed with municipal bills through mail drops, or left at a location that is accessible.

- **Exhibits and displays**

This is an informing strategy that is used by municipalities to inform the public of a particular campaign, project or issue that is underway in order to promote awareness with regards to that particular issue (Theron et al, 2005c: 73). This is a public relations strategy to show the public that relevant services are being delivered to the public. This is the reason why service providers when implementing services are at most times required to put up information displays on the service they are providing.

- **Technical reports**

These are a kind of studies, reports or findings made accessible to the public areas such as libraries in the form of municipal newsletters or are posted on the municipal website.

- **E-democracy**

More and more government institutions are relying on social media such as Facebook and twitter as a strategy to inform and make announcements so that the public is able to comment and debate on a posted issue. Municipalities are making inroads into making use of this internet based public participation mechanism in order to cope with the demands of modern day technological world (Siphuma, 2009: 83). The use of the internet as a public participation strategy is however heavily depended on whether the participants have the relevant skills and access to these technological advances so that they are effective users of this strategy.

- **Press conferences**

These are question and answer sessions at a community or public area which is basically conducted to let the media and public to get and share information about a proposal or the projected future of a planned initiative. Siphuma (2009: 84) argues that municipalities tend to prefer this strategy when the activity in question has a huge impact on the public or the intended beneficiaries.

- **Radio and TV talk shows:**

Radio talk shows are becoming a major participation strategy that is preferred to provide an interactive platform for the community and the municipality to share information and

clarify issues on mutual benefits with regards to service delivery and municipal development. A programme presenter tries to ask as many relevant questions pertaining a project or policy being discussed and at times the public would be given an opportunity to phone in and comment or ask questions (Siphuma, 2009: 84).

### **2.3 Consultative Mechanism**

With regards to the consultative mechanism of public participation, relevant stakeholders are called upon to propose their views on a particular policy. Binkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 66) suggest that a consultative process works best when all participating stakeholders are issued with sufficient opportunities to develop an understanding of the issues so that they are able to become informed participants in the process.

However, Boule (1987: 6) suggests that the common weakness of a consultative mechanism is that it does not guarantee that those taking part will be able to influence the substance of policy decisions. Boule (1987: 6) argue that the source of the problem with consultation rests upon the legal context of the term in that the courts have interpreted the term in the most formalistic of senses, in this way it does not impart any real control on the state authority. This means that with regards to consultation, citizens and interested stakeholders will be provided a platform from which to put forth their representations, but they lack the power to ensure that what they recommend will actually be regarded. Therefore the scope and assurance of changing the status quo is very limited. Taylor (2003: 113) argues that a consultative mechanism to public participation does not give participants any greater control over the process of policy formulation. Furthermore,

Taylor (2003: 113) suggests that “the aim of giving voice to people is primarily to give individuals a feeling of inclusion and a sense of community”.

Theron et al (2005c: 80), explore the consultative mechanism using the following list of strategies that are used to consult participants in public policy and decision-making processes.

- **Public meetings**

Public meetings are efficiently planned and advertised, they are formal where municipal stakeholders and the public meet at a public venue to discuss developmental issues, concerns and answer questions. This is a highly preferred form of consultation by the South African local municipalities and community structure. These meetings are conducted as part of the process of development and they are used to explain to the public policies and legislation. This is because the public is most likely to accept policies that they have been part of their formation.

- **Public hearings**

Public hearings are more or less similar to public meeting but they are more structured and formal.

- **Central information contacts**

A central information contact is a person who has been designated as an official spokesperson sometimes referred to as public relations officer for a municipality who liaises with the public and the media on behalf of the municipality. Siphuma (2009: 80) considers this strategy of public participation as one of the most extensive in South African local government since almost all municipalities have a designated spokesperson whose

responsibility is to inform the general public about the current development that a municipality is embarking upon.

- **Field offices or information centres**

These are a kind of offices or multi-purpose community service centres which are run by public officials who answers procedural governmental questions from the public. Access to relevant information is crucial to the empowerment of the previously disadvantaged members of the society with regards to information within an integrated municipal network. Moreover, skills development and effective capacity building would empower these communities to make use of the information they receive from these centres for the purposes of developing their community. In South Africa such centres (ThusongCentres of Service) have been established in local municipalities. These are one-stop service centres which provide services and information to communities, through the development communication approach, in an integrated manner (Thusong Service Centres, 2012).

- **Comments and response sheets**

This is a strategy that is used to gain information about the concerns of the citizens through issuing and distribution of structured questionnaires to the community so that a developer would be able to identify the key issues that the public is concerned about. Siphuma (2009: 82) argues that if this strategy is employed effectively the results would be very fruitful. However, this strategy might not be easy to undertake due to limited municipal resources and would depend on whether the people do return the response sheets.

- **Surveys and polls**

Specific information from a sample of the public or specific interest groups is put together and is scientifically analyzed and is presented to those who commissioned the research.

- **Interviews or focus group discussions**

These are one-on-one meetings where a municipality through a researcher engages with the community or a particular group of community representatives or a group of stakeholders. These meetings are based on semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions. The researcher scientifically analyses and presents data collected. Siphuma (2009: 83) argues that the challenge with this public participation methodology is as a result of a very limited number of researchers and municipalities who conduct research based on this methodology. However, this public participation strategy can prove to be very productive when implemented effectively.

- **Telephone hotlines or complaints register**

This strategy highlights that telephone, e-mail and online contacts details of key municipal officials be supplied to the public in printed format whether by hand or mail; for example municipal newsletters, lines or offices which is staffed by professional officials who have knowledge of the project or policy activity, or by an ombudsman are printed (Siphuma, 2009: 83). It is important to note that when calls are made by the public must be recorded and feedback is issued to the callers.

- **Electronic democracy**

This is a kind of public participation strategy which relies mostly on the internet, web-page 'discussions rooms', tele-voting and online communications. Records are saved and feedback is given to those who participate (Siphuma, 2009: 84). However, like the telephone hotline or complaints register, this strategy is not yet feasible for many municipalities including the HCM due to a lack of relevant technologies and educational capacity on behalf of the public who would be making use of such products.

#### **2.4 Collaborative Mechanism**

This kind of public participation gives non-governmental groups the responsibilities to design, implement and monitor policies, while government remains the ultimate decision-making authority (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 66). This public participation mechanism stems from the realization that there is no one individual, group or organizations which is altogether self-sufficient and for this reason will therefore tend to require the assistance from one another with regards to that which one individual, group or organization might not have (Hill and Hupe, 2002). Collaboration is most appropriate when government realizes that it cannot achieve the relevant policy goals without inviting the private sector to bring in the capacity, skills and knowledge that the government might not possess. In a collaborative policy process the government maintains its ultimate decision-making authority and gives away the responsibility to policy design, implementation, or monitoring responsibilities to private groups (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 67).



Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) identify three strategies which are used to conduct a collaborative mechanism of public participation. These strategies are joint committees with stakeholder representatives, joint working groups and task forces, and joint work with intermediary organizations and other stakeholder groups (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 67). These strategies are formalized procedures for the involvement of external participants in policy formulations and regulations or in informal structures that are more ad hoc and temporary (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 67). The following section looks at joint decision-making as a mechanism of public participation.

## **2.5 Joint decision-making Mechanism**

Joint decision-making mechanism differs from a collaborative mechanism in that it is a kind of mechanism where control over decisions is not monopolized by government officials but it is distributed amongst all collaborating stakeholders (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 68). What is typical of this form of participatory mechanism is the idea that it starts by addressing power differentials among the collaborating parties which is an important factor in order for this kind of participatory mechanism to work effectively (Brown and Ashan, 1996). Joint decision-making goes beyond allowing stakeholders to simply develop policy options but it allows them to participate in the choice of options and participate in the implementation of these policies (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 68). Joint decision-making plays an important role in strengthening commitment and ownership of policies. Exworthy and Powell (2004: 266) argue that policy ownership is an important component of a policy process in that it allows all stakeholders to have a belief that the policy issue is their problem too and that they have a role to play in the partnership, with solutions within their control.

The concept of 'doing things together' assumes that participating stakeholders acknowledge some advantage in pursuing a joint action (Kickert et al: 40). Furthermore, Kickert et al (40) raise the point that;

*....this advantage lies in the surplus value of the achieved jointly compared to outcomes pursued in isolation. In many cases by seeking joint interest instead adhering to one's own goals, situations may be achieved which represent an improvement for all parties either vis-à-vis the existing ones, as regards those which can be achieved on the basis of go alone strategies.*

Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 68) argue that a joint decision-making mechanism may take place through a periodic use of short-term structures. These structures are workshops, discussion forums and task forces. These structures are used to discuss and determine government priorities, solving of conflicts and disagreements and the development of ownership of policy initiatives (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 68).

## **2.6 Empowerment Mechanism**

Empowerment mechanism is an advancement of a shared decision-making mechanism which means that government officials allow non-governmental stakeholders to accomplish their own private objectives by allowing them space for independent instigation and pursuit of actions, increasing capacity, and delegating decision-making authority (Brinkerhoff and Crosby: 2002). An empowerment mechanism involves a somehow reasonable decentralization and sharing of power in an environment with a higher level of political consciousness and strength for the marginalized groups of society (Brinkerhoff and Crosby: 2002). This mechanism emphasizes;

*.....the building of capacity for stakeholder organizations, strengthening the legal and financial status of stakeholder organizations, and supporting initiatives conceived independently by stakeholders..... It should be noted that empowerment is not necessarily something that policy managers provide to external stakeholders. By definition, government officials are not in control of this type of participation, since power is delegated to external groups (Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002: 69).*

Bulman (2002: 3) highlights that empowerment mechanisms are important for policy making in the sense that they place final decision-making authority in the hands of the public and the public officials are required to implement whatever decisions that the public decide.

Theron et al (2005c) explain the empowerment mechanisms using the following list of strategies that inform an empowerment participatory mechanism.

- **Workshops, focus groups and key stakeholder meetings:**

This strategy of an empowerment mechanism of public participation allows all stakeholders to take part in small group meetings where an interactive forum share and make information available in a mutual manner that allows learning to take place with regard to an issue or subject-matter which is most of the times preceded presentations from stakeholders. Municipalities conduct workshops as a strategic mechanism to empower participants in a public participation process. Siphuma (2009: 83) states that this strategy is common at municipal level and is usually associated with positive spin-offs in the way in which those who take part share their knowledge after experts have presented expert information an identified municipal issue being discussed.

- **Advisory committees and panels:**

NGOs, CBOs, community leaders and experts on behalf of the civic society play an important role in advising the municipal decision-makers and to deliberate on specific municipal concerns. Without any available experts that would represent the interests of the community, communities are vulnerable to being exploited by developers. Siphuma (2009: 84) suggests that the use of this strategy would empower participants and consultants whose knowledge can represent these societies in occasions where they are most likely to be manipulated.

- **Task team**

A task force is a combination of specific stakeholders and experts that are created in order to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate a specific proposal.

- **Charities and consensus conferences**

These are meetings and workshops which are employed in order to serve the purpose of resolving a particular dispute or come to an agreement on a specific municipal issue. Municipalities make use of this strategy in an attempt to empower public participants when the public have deadlocks with their municipal leaders in cases where service delivery is ineffective.

- **Izimbizo/ public gatherings**

An Imbizo is a governmental initiative of local municipalities and government where questions are answered; concerns are heard and advice is taken from the public about the municipality's programmes and services (Tshwane: 2013). The public is given an

opportunity to review the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), as well as the Midterm Review Expenditure Framework (MTREF) of the municipality (Tshwane: 2013). Siphuma (2009: 84) argues that an Imbizo is an initiative that seeks to promote interactive governance which is aimed at developing an effective partnership between municipal planners and stakeholders. Izimbizo are held to ensure that more voices are heard and more people participate in the development of the municipality (HCM, 2012: 106). This strategy of participation is usually a joint venture between different government and municipal institutions where the public is given a chance to pose questions and contribute effort on issues being addressed by representatives from the municipality and its institutions.

- **Indaba**

An indaba is a dialogue between stakeholders which takes place with a purpose to identify and address common concerns (Siphuma, 2009: 84). A dialogue between a municipality and stakeholders can be advantageous in the sense that it has the potential to decrease violent protests which citizens are very keen to take part in when they are not satisfied with the kind of services they are receiving from the municipality.

- **Participatory appraisal/ participatory learning and action**

This is a social development issue centred research methodology which is conducted by concerned parties on their own in partnership with the researcher or official (Siphuma, 2009: 84).

## 2.7 Conclusion

The mechanisms of public participation by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) as explored by this chapter address issues of whether increased public participation is generally an appropriate deed for development policy. These mechanisms will be crucial in determining the circumstances at which public participation support or undermine development processes and the manner in which to identify these. The concerns with regards to public participation are explored on the perspective of development policy-makers. The mechanisms introduce the link that exists between public participation and development policies. Ideally these mechanisms need not be understood only based on the empowerment mechanism which the one used to identify whether public participation is genuine or otherwise. This chapter discovered that it will be useful to understand these mechanisms as interlinked and interrelated where one mechanism builds on the one before it. Therefore, choosing between different public participation mechanisms is determined by the objectives that a policy-maker intends to achieve through allowing participation in the process taking into consideration the cost-effectiveness and the kind of resources available.

The following table (table 1) summarizes the mechanisms of public participation as presented by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) and as discussed by this chapter. The table shows the mechanisms and the summary of the impact that each of the mechanisms will have on the participation process, how it will affect the decision-making authority in the public participation and the strategies used to achieve the desired result through each mechanism.

**Table 1**

<b>Mechanism</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Use</b>
Information-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited active participation of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Government is the ultimate decision-maker, bearer and sharer of information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal notices</li> <li>• Advertisements</li> <li>• Background information material</li> <li>• Exhibits and displays</li> <li>• Technical reports</li> <li>• E-democracy</li> <li>• Press Conferences</li> <li>• Radio and TV talk shows</li> </ul>
Consultative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders participate in policy processes.</li> <li>• Government invites opinions from the public.</li> <li>• There is no guarantee that participation will impact decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings</li> <li>• Public hearings</li> <li>• Central information contact</li> <li>• Field offices or information centres</li> <li>• Comments and response sheets</li> <li>• Surveys and polls</li> <li>• Interviews or focus group discussions</li> <li>• Telephone hot lines or complaints register</li> <li>• E-democracy</li> </ul>

Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responsibility is given to private stakeholders.</li> <li>• Government need private sector to fulfil its goals. Government maintains decision-making authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint committees with stakeholder representatives</li> <li>• Joint working groups and task teams</li> <li>• Joint work with intermediary organizations and other stakeholder groups</li> </ul>
Joint decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration in decision-making.</li> <li>• Decision making is decentralized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Discussion forums</li> <li>• Task teams/forces</li> </ul>
Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power-sharing.</li> <li>• Capacity building of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Delegation of decision-making authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops, focus groups and stakeholder meetings</li> <li>• Advisory committees and panels</li> <li>• Task teams</li> <li>• Charities and consensus conferences</li> <li>• Izimbizo/public gathering</li> <li>• Iindaba</li> <li>• Participatory appraisal/ learning and action</li> </ul>

Chapter three builds on this theoretical framework and explores the legislative requirements of public participation in the IDP processes of the South African Local Government.



# Chapter three

## 3. Legislative framework

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the legislative framework that informs the need for public participation in the IDP processes of local municipalities in South Africa. This legislation provides the manner in which municipal government should function, and offer the framework for the way in which municipalities should be interacting with communities that they govern in the drafting of the IDPs. As a basic foundation of democracy, public participation had to be strongly entrenched by legal frameworks, which include the Constitution of South Africa (1996), the Municipal Structures Act (1998), the Municipal Systems Act (2000) and the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) (Siphuma, 2009: 54). This chapter will explore these legislations looking at what it specifically states with regards to the IDP and the need for public participation in the processes of the IDP.

This chapter will firstly will look at the IDP, the IDP process and the manner in which these are perceived in legislation in South Africa through the different phases that lead to the approval of the IDP and the legislative rationale for IDPs. Furthermore, this chapter will explore the mechanisms through which the public can participate in an IDP process through Community Based Ward Plans and IDP forums. Moreover, this chapter will explore the legislation that regulates the IDP and public participation in the South African local government. It will firstly look at the Constitution of SA's role in ensuring that the citizens of South Africa have a right to be informed and participate in their developmental initiatives. Secondly this chapter will explore the Municipal Structures Act 1998 which was

enacted to pursue the developmental and participatory goals as set out in the Constitution of South Africa and how these goals influenced the call for IDPs and the use of participatory mechanisms in the IDP through ward committees, traditional authorities, community development workers and direct advice through ward councilors. Thirdly this chapter will explore the Municipal Systems Act (2000) which forms a stronger legislative foundation for IDPs and the establishment of condition for public participation in the processes of an IDP. This chapter will look at the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) and its role in the emphasis on public participation in the IDP and related policies in a municipality.

### **3.2 Integrated Development Planning**

The IDP brochure defines an IDP as “a development plan for a municipal area containing short, medium and long-term objectives and strategies. The call for IDPs represents an important shift from the manner in which the previous local authorities, the way they governed and planned development. The White Paper on Local Government (RSA 1998a) recommended a different stance in the manner local government conduct their functions so that they are able to meet the outcomes of a developmental local government (DPLG, 2000: 19).

IDPs represent new and complex governance and planning processes for municipalities to involve the public and interested role players in the processes of budgetary planning and development initiatives. IDPs are a constitutional requirement and a framework through which municipal authorities would fulfil the new role of local government through public participation. Through an IDP a municipality can give expression to the communities on the development path to be taken by the municipality.

“Integrated Development Planning for local government is, however, a form of planning that involves linkage and co-ordination between all sectors of activity that impact on the operation of a local authority” (IDP policy, 2000: 3). The IDP is South Africa’s master instrument for planning and development at local government (Harrison, 2008: 321). It is legislated by the Municipal Systems Act 2000 and supersedes all other plans that guide development at a local level”. Furthermore, the Municipal Systems Act 2000 also legislate a five phase process which is to be adhered to by all municipalities in drafting their IDPs.

### **3.2.1 The rationale for IDP**

Municipalities are faced with a situation where they have to make crucial development decisions at regular basis. This is the reason why a guideline of how best to arrive at these decisions is needed (MacKay, 2004: 52). In the past, crucial development decisions were either centered at the provincial government or at the national government and municipalities had relatively very little decision-making authority which made these bodies to issue preconceived and standardized solutions to problems faced by the local sphere of government (MacKay, 2004: 52-53). It is this mode of problem solving that is in most cases inappropriate and too expensive as it does not take into consideration the different socio-economic and demographical issues that local government is faced with. It was therefore on these grounds that IDPs were established so as to alter this way of dealing with development issues at local government. “It is important to shift from formal democracy (representative) to participatory democracy *via* a sub-council and a ward system of governance. IDPs allow communities to be involved in determining the priorities of the municipality”. One of the ways in which a community can be involved in the determination of these priorities is through Community Based Ward Plans (CBPs).

### **3.2.2 The IDP process**

The approach to an IDP is a comprehensive five phase process which also includes the necessary planning activities for each and every phase, the kind of information that is needed, the purpose for the project, the required outputs and the process that is recommended (DPLG, 2000). The stages of the IDP process as presented by the DPLG (2000) consist of;

**Phase 1** is an evaluation of the current level of development which takes into account the diagnoses of the socio-economic problems that affect the development of the local communities; these problems are analyzed and are grouped in terms of their order of priority.

**Phase 2** a local government is here supposed to develop a strategy that will combat the social ills as identified in phase 1, these strategies may include;

- Vision: this is a local government's vision to address the identified problems
- The municipality's development priorities and key objectives
- The municipal development strategies which will take into consideration the different types of development projects that the municipality will be initiating (DPLG, 2000)

**PHASE 3** states that there should be a direct link between the identified development projects, the prioritized social problems and the objectives that were identified which will include;

- Establishing task team
- Formulate project proposals
- Set indicators for proposed projects
- Project outputs, targets/locations
- Project activities and time schedules, and

- Cost, budget estimate and source of finance (DPLG, 2000)

**Phase 4** the municipality is required to harmonize and/or screen the development projects in terms of their content, location and timing in order to reach a consolidated and integrated program which will take the following into cognizance:

- An integrated spatial development framework
- Integrated sectorial programs that must include LED, HIV/AIDS, poverty alleviation, youth issues etc.
- An integrated financial plan
- A consolidated monitoring/performance management plan
- An institutional plan (DPLG, 2000)

**Phase 5** is the approval stage:

- Inviting and incorporating public comments
- Adoption by council (IDP brochure).

These five phases of IDP also determine the rationale for the emphasis on public participation and consultation in the processes. Furthermore they establish a standardized step by step routine in which all municipal governments should in their IDPs obey and must be followed as legislated.

### **3.3 Community-based ward plans**

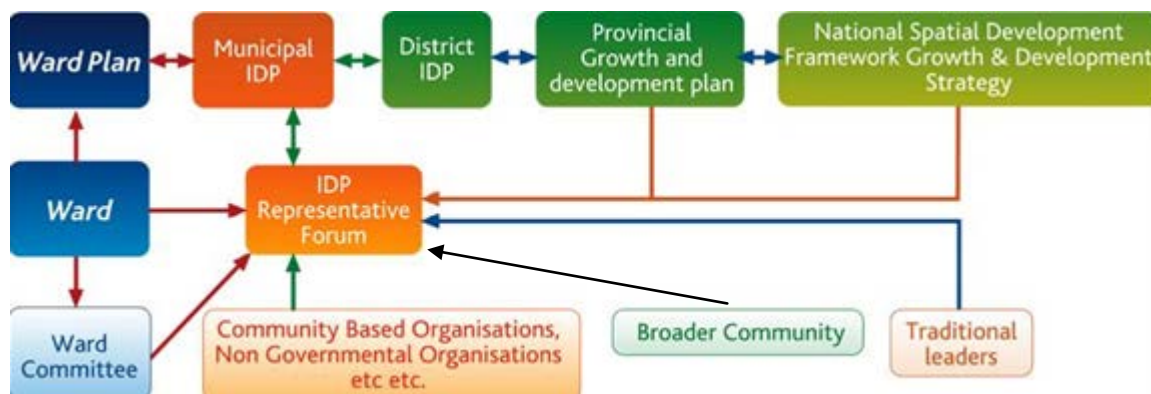
The Draft National Policy on Public Participation (DPLG, 2005: 9) argues that ward plans are a way of making sure that IDPs are more targeted and relevant to addressing the necessary development priorities as per all groups including the most destitute. CBP is a kind of participatory planning specifically established to enhance public participation and to link to the IDP. Community Based Plans (CBPs) empower ward committees with a

systematic planning and implementation process so as to afford them with the necessary skills to conduct their duties efficiently.

The National Draft Policy on Public Participation (DPLG, 2005: 9) states that ward plans should include the following;

- *an understanding of social diversity in the community, the assets, vulnerabilities and preferred outcome of these different social groups;*
- *an analysis of the services available to these groups, as well as the spatial aspects of development and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the community*
- *a consensus on priority outcomes for the ward;*
- *collective development of plans to address these outcomes, based on what the ward will do, what support is needed from the municipality, and what from other agencies;*
- *identification of support needed from the IDP;*
- *a community budget for discretionary funds from the municipality to assist the community to take forward their ward plans;*
- *an action plan for the ward committee to take forward their plan and help communities to reach consensus and to have direction.*

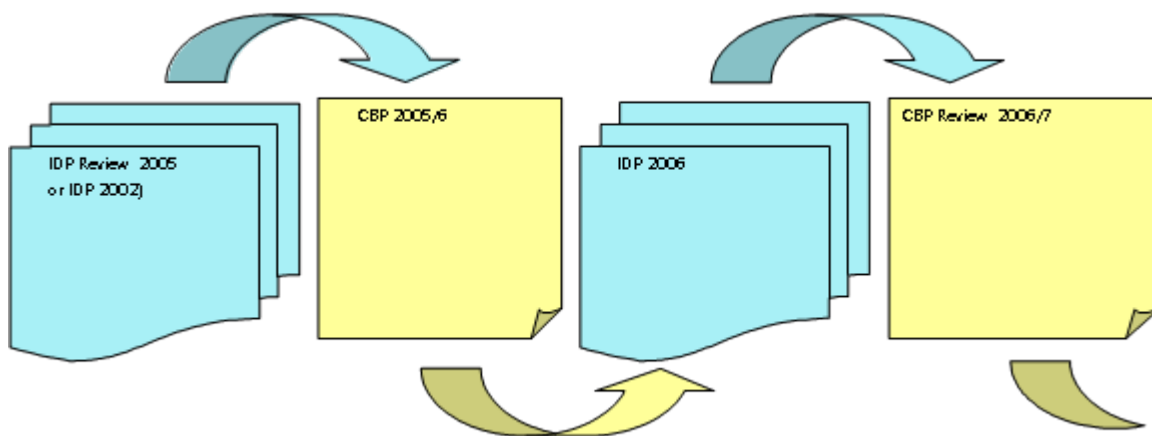
**Diagram 1: The linkage between ward plans, IDPs, provincial growth and development plans and the National Spatial Development Framework**



Source, DPLG, 2005: 9

Encouraging all local governments to establish CBP will make the requirement for public participation in the IDP a certainty, furthermore CBP should be timed so that it coincides with the IDP and IDP review processes (DPLG, 2005: 10). Once a ward committee has prepared its CBP it is therefore presented to the IDP representative forum.

**Diagram 2: example of CBP and IDP cycle**



Source DPLG, 2005: 10

### **3.4 The IDP Representative Forum**

The IDP Representative Forum is one of the most used structures beside ward committees that have been created by local government in order to deliberate development issues with the communities. The IDP Representative Forum is established and legislated by the Municipal Systems Act (2000) specifically with the intention of involving the community in the development and review of the municipalities' IDP. In this respect it is mentioned that a municipality must, *inter alia*, in terms of section 29 of the Municipal Systems Act (2000), through appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures established in terms of Chapter 4, allow for the local community to be consulted on its development needs and

priorities; and the local community to participate in the drafting of the integrated development plan” (DPLG, 2007: 55). The members of the forum should set up from:

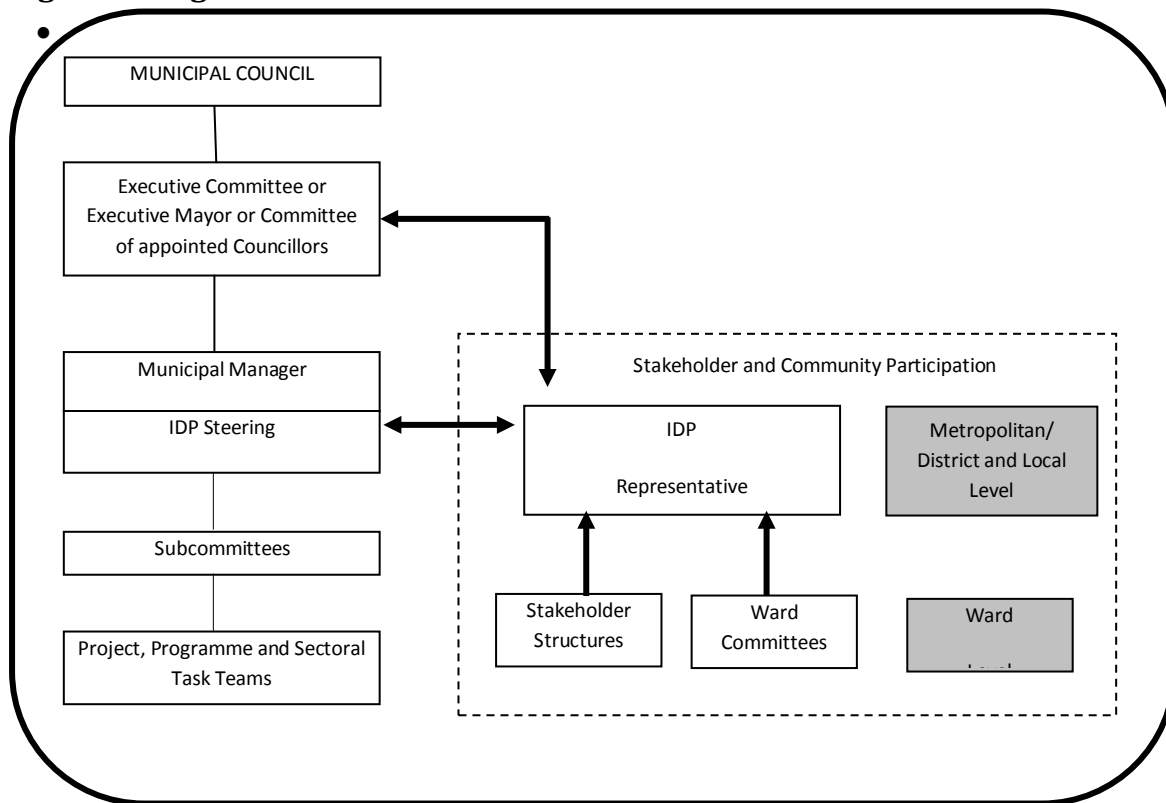
- *Members of the executive committee/mayoral committee/committee of appointed councillors*
- *Councillors (including councillors who are members of the District council and relevant portfolio councillors)*
- *Traditional leadership*
- *Ward committee chairpersons (or representative)*
- *Heads of departments/senior officials*
- *Stakeholder representatives of organised groups*
- *Stakeholder representatives of unorganised groups*
- *Resource persons*
- *Community representatives (e.g. RDP Forum); and*
- *CDWs (DPLG, 2007: 61-62).*

According to the Draft National Policy Framework (2005) the Forum will be responsible to:

- *Represent the interests of their constituents in the IDP process;*
- *Provide an organisational mechanism for discussion, negotiation and decision-making between the stakeholders and the municipality*
- *Ensure communication between all the stakeholder representatives and*
- *Monitor the performance of the planning and implementation process.*



**Diagram 3: organisational structure for the IDP Forum**



Source, DPLG: 2007

### **3.5 Community participation in local government**

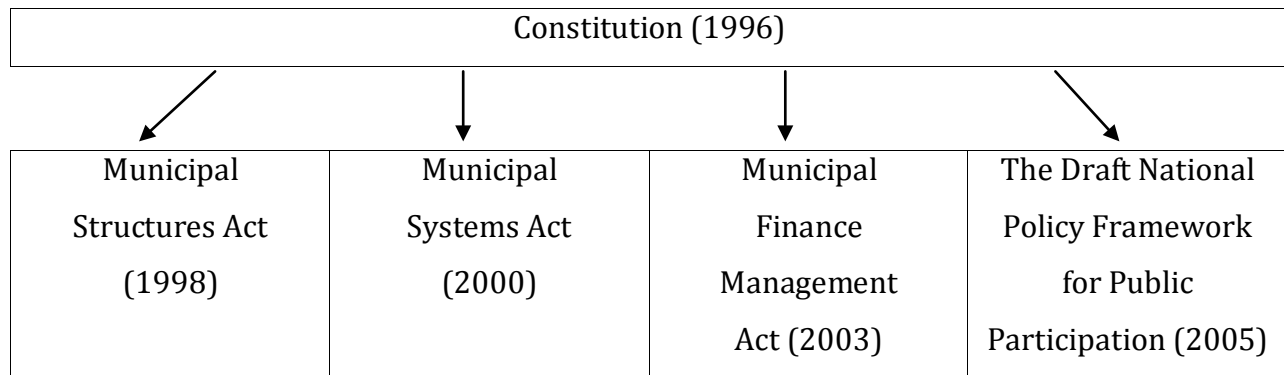
The post 1994 democratically elected government had to explore means of bringing about the previously excluded groups into the decision-making and policy formulation processes of government. Davids (2005: 18) argues that one of the means in which this was pursued, was an emphasis on legislation that would transform local government, by giving it a duty to include the previously excluded groups into decision-making processes. This transformation was in response of a call by the constitution to reestablish local government as a foundation of “a democratic, integrated, prosperous and truly non-racial society” (RSA 1998a). When this democratically elected South African government took office in 1994, it

vowed to transform and establish decentralized government institutions. Therefore a local government that has a separate autonomy and a legal status distinct from other spheres of government was created (Nyalunga, 2006: 2). The local government was to create enabling conditions for community participation and development. Act 108 of 1996 called for the development of a three sphere government which is both interdependent and interrelated (RSA 1996). A national government, nine provincial governments and 284 local municipalities were established (Nyalunga, 2006: 2). The creation of a three layer government was to establish more opportunities for the public to participate in governance and in matters of concern to them.

The essence for public participation in the local government is provided for by the South African constitution (RSA 1996) where section 152(1) (a) and (e) call for local government “to provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities”. Therefore in order to achieve this requirement, local governments are required “to encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government”. Furthermore, Section 195 (1) (e) of the constitution obligates local municipalities to promote public participation in their policy formulation processes.

The diagram below represents the policy and legislative frameworks that have been since 1994 implemented by the South African government to regulate, institutionalize and promote participatory governance, particularly in the sphere of local government. These acts have also played a significant role in the regulation and the enhancement of public participation in the processes of an IDP of a municipality.

**Diagram 4:** Legislative framework for public participation



The Municipal Structures Act (1998) and the Municipal Systems (2000) Act are the two most important acts with regards to community participation in local governments' Integrated Development Planning. The aim of the Municipal Systems Act (2000) is to produce a legislative framework that will regulate the environment for a developmental local government through IDPs (Kihato and Berrisford, 2006: 379). One of the new roles for local governments is to strategically plan an IDP. An IDP according to the Municipal Systems Act is an inclusive and strategic plan for the development of the municipality (Kihato and Berrisford, 2006: 379). However a number of other acts exist that deal with many other local government functions. The Municipal Finance Management Act (46 OF 2003) requires that local governments are obligated that they make public their annual reports. Public participation cannot be effective if the public does not have access to relevant information that will make them credible participants in local municipal governance.

### **3.6 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)**

The RSA Constitution (1996) places great emphasis on the principles of good governance. Furthermore it highlights that public participation is a crucial component of effective local municipal governance and its development. The Constitution of SA (1996) set out the foundation through which the constitutional rationale for the establishment of IDPs is based. It is in this regard that a local municipality is required to structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes by giving priority to the basic needs of the community and the enhancement of the social and economic development of a local community through an IDP (Craythorne, 2006: 146). Section 152 of the Constitution (1996) states numerous rights that citizens are entitled to, but specifically it highlights the right of citizens to take part in the governance particularly the development of their local municipality. Municipalities are therefore obliged by the constitution to take measures that will encourage the involvement of communities and CBOs in local government development initiatives like the IDP (Gwala, 2013: 1). The Constitution obligates local municipalities to:

- Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities;
- Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner;
- Promote social and economic development;
- Promote a safe and healthy environment; and
- Encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government (RSA, 1996: 81).

### **3.7 The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (1998)**

The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (1998) clarifies the manner in which the broad development and participation objectives in the Constitution should be put into action; it clarifies the functions of a local government and generically a requirement for public participation in the IDP (Oldfield, 2006: 489). Furthermore the Local Government Structures Act requires that the municipalities should pursue, with all the capacity at its command towards achieving the developmental purpose of the municipalities set out in section 153 of the Constitution (Siphuma, 2009: 63).

The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (1998) places great emphases on the creation of ward committees by municipalities. These committees are to ensure and improve community input and participation in the municipal governance and development processes particularly the IDP (Oldfield, 2008: 490). Furthermore, the Act highlights the importance of municipalities to give effect to the Act when establishing ward committees. The Act stipulates that a municipality's executive mayor or executive committee are required to issue annual reports on the extent to which the public had participated in the municipal affairs (Lelokoana, 2011: 34). It is in this regard that Chapter six of the South African constitution (Act 108 of 1996) state that ward committees can take part in local government in the following ways,

- Assessing and approving the budget
- Planning and developing the Integrated Development Plan -Ward committees should work closely with councilors and other community organizations to identify priority needs and make sure these needs are included in the budget proposals and plans (RSA 1996).

The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (1998) compels the local government municipalities to make effect of rules and procedures in order to control the election of members of the ward committee. The act makes the provision for the creation of ward committees as one of the ways in which public participation can be enhanced. Moreover, the Local Government Municipal Structures Act (1998: 52) states that the main aim of the establishment of ward committees is to encourage a participatory democracy in local government. These committees are to play a fundamental role in advising and supporting ward councilors on issues of the ward pertaining development and service delivery that are to be taken into cognizance by the councilor and present them in the IDP forum for consideration and possible inclusion in the draft IDP.

### **3.7.1 Direct advice and support**

Ward councilors are the closest access that communities have to government. Often people use councilors for direct advice and support (Nyalunga, 2006). This makes councilors to be a very important component of a participatory democracy particularly in development matters of the IDP. This is because councilors live with communities; they have a better understanding of the socio-political and economical dynamics that happen within their communities. This qualifies ward councilors to be a crucial component for offering effective support and advice to the locals on issues of development, IDP and service delivery. However, the work of these elected representatives to promote and enhance participatory governance is undermined by the systems and structures of government that is still in developing processes (Carrim: 25). Therefore, it is of great importance for councilors in

carrying out their representative duties to be impartial by not allowing their political affiliations to cloud their duties. Ward committees therefore have duty to ensure that they work closely with their ward councilors so that all members of the ward and their views are represented in the IDP regardless of their political affiliation.

### **3.7.2 Ward committees**

The Local Government Structures Act (117 of 1998) states that each municipality is to establish ward committees if the municipality sees fits (RSA 1998). However, there have been calls to make ward committees to be compulsory in every municipal ward. Ward committees possess powers to take any recommendation on each and every matter that affect their ward. Moreover, the core function of ward committees is to establish an unbiased communication bridge between the local community and the council (Friedman, 2005: 36). The 2007 National Policy Framework argues that; ward committees are a crucial component of an IDP. The Local Government Structures Act 1998 requires that municipalities involve ward committees in their IDP process. An IDP is therefore done through presentations conducted by ward committees on the IDP forum as set out in section 3.1.1-3.1.3 of the Municipal Systems Act (2000).

**Diagram 5: areas covered by ward committees and their linkages**



Source: DPLG, 2005: 8

Ward committees are therefore forums that are established to create deliberative which is set up to:

- *Promote self-management, awareness building and ownership of local development;*
- *Enable faster access to information from government, as well as collecting information about the situation at community level (Social Audit) as well as closer monitoring and evaluation of service delivery;*
- *Provide clarification to communities about programmes and enable community involvement and quicker decision making;*
- *Enhance transparency in administration;*
- *Harness local resources to support local development;*
- *Improve planning, which can now be based on local strengths, needs and preferred outcomes;*
- *Improve the accountability of government (DPLG, 2005: 8).*



### **3.7.3 Traditional authorities**

Traditional authorities are one of the important ways through which communities especially traditional communities can participate in the development initiatives of their local municipal government. Traditional leaders play a crucial role in promoting and enhancing public participation since they are also an important component of a councilor's constituency (Nyalunga, 2006). The traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003 acknowledge tribal authorities as tribal councils with a big role to play that is linked to the functions of local government in development matters like IDP. The role of the traditional council is to facilitate for the involvement of the traditional community in the processes of the development of a local municipality's IDP (Nyalunga, 2006). However, Traditional system of leadership continues to encounter stumbling blocks that prevent it from encouraging effective community participation in the processes of the IDP and yet they have an important role to play. The National Public Policy Framework (2005: 66) argues that;

*traditional leadership constitutes an important constituency and a key interest group in many areas, especially around development and service delivery issues. Hence traditional leadership should be part of the IDP forum, and ward committees must establish relationships with traditional leadership and their councils in terms negotiated at local level, subject to any formal agreement between government and houses of traditional leadership at provincial or national level.*

### **3.7.4 Community development workers**

Community Development Workers (CDWs) are an initiative that was launched in 2003 whose aim is primarily to support local communities in order to be able to access the services of government and meeting their necessities (DPLG, 2007: 11). However CDWs are

not employed by municipalities but are an intervention by the national and provincial government. CDWs are appointed through a formal advertisement which is placed in the media and after applicants have gone through a screening process they enter into learnerships. CDWs continue to be employed throughout South Africa. The CDWs have the play a supportive role to assist ward committees through:

- *Ensuring that ward committees and civil society are informed on government support and services*
- *Encouraging ward committees and civil society engage with opportunities*
- *Identifying needs and building on strengths by facilitating CBP locally*
- *Supporting implementation of community activities and projects by community structures such as community workers and Community-Based Organisations*
- *Providing technical support (compiling reports and documents for example) to ward committees to monitor community projects and to account to communities and municipalities (DPLG, 2007: 11).*

The establishment of CDWs is a strategic initiative which provides local staff of local municipalities who can assist ward committees and provide a communication bridge that will connect communities and government in order to achieve effective participation in the IDP.

**Figure 6: Support roles played by CDWs**



Source: DPLG, 2007: 14

### 3.8 Municipal Systems Act (2000)

The Municipal systems Act (2000) affords for a stronger legislative foundation for IDPs. Furthermore it encourages and establishes conditions for the local public to participate in the preparation, implementation and reviews of a municipality's IDP (Mbewana, 2012). It is in this regard that section 29 (i) of the Municipal Systems Act (2000) gives processes that a municipality must follow in drafting its IDP. These processes emphasize on the consultation of local communities on their development needs and priorities and for local community to participate in the drafting of an IDP. According to the Municipal Systems Act 2000 an IDP is supposed to be an inclusive and strategic plan for the development of the municipality (RSA 2000). Therefore, Section 16 of the Municipal Systems Act 2000

emphasizes the necessity for local municipal legislatures to “develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance, and must for this purpose (a) encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including in (i) Integrated Development Plan; (ii) the performance management system; (iii) performance, (iv) the budget (v) and strategic decisions relating to services” (RSA 2000). Section 2 of the Municipal Systems Act (2000) defines a municipality as consisting of “(i) the structures, functionaries and administration of the municipality; and (ii) the community of the municipality. Municipal planning therefore requires these “structures, functionaries and administration of the municipality” to act in partnership with “the community of the municipality” in all IDP processes (IDP Policy, 2000: 14).

Chapter 4 section 17(2) of the Municipal Systems Act (2000) highlights that “a municipality must establish appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures to enable the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality”. The Municipal Systems Act (2000) specifies the process that must be followed by a municipality to draft its IDP. This process includes the consideration and adoption of the draft plan (Craythorne, 2006: 149). The process must therefore take the following form:

- The IDP must be drafted in harmony with a predetermined programme which must be specific on time frames for different steps;
- This must be done through proper mechanisms, processes and procedures which are established in terms of the provisions that relate to community participation;
- The IDP must allow for the identification of all plans and planning requirements which bind the municipality with regard to national and provincial legislation;

- The IDP must be aligned with all other matters that may be prescribed by regulation (Craythorne, 2006: 148-149).

### **3.9 The Municipal Finance Management Act (2003)**

The legislation on municipal public participation legislation also place great emphases on the involvement of the public in the processes of the Municipal Finance Management Act 2003. The ward committee resource book (2005: 17) gives specific purposes for this Act; it suggests that the Municipal Finance Management Act 2003 purpose is to:

- bring about transparent and effective financial management in municipalities and municipal entities;
- set up a municipal financial recover service which allows the National Treasury to intervene where a municipality faces a financial emergency; and
- show the difference between short-term borrowing and long-term capital investment, in a chapter on debts.

The Municipal Finance Management Act 2003 places great emphases on the participation of communities in the following budget processes:

- i) the preparation, tabling and approval of the annual budget
- ii) the annual review of:
  - a) the IDP in terms of Section 34 of the Municipal Systems Act 2000;
  - b) budget related policies; and
- iii) the tabling and adoption of any amendments to the IDP and budget related policies; and
- iv) any public participation processes, relating to the preparation, review and tabling of budgets.

With regards to community involvement on tabled budgets, section 23 of the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003: 40-41) argues that:

- i) when the annual budget has been tabled, the municipality must consider any view of,
  - a) the local community; and
  - b) the National Treasury, the relevant Provincial Treasury and any provincial or national organs of state or municipalities which made submissions on the budget.

Section 23 of the Municipal Finance and Management Act 2003 argue that a municipal council has a responsibility to ensure that the views of the general municipal community are considered when a budget is tabled for approval (RSA 2003). Furthermore section 33 suggests that the community should be consulted when a municipality seeks to extend to enter into an agreement that will go beyond the three years that are required per annum's budget (RSA 2003).“Section46 requires a similar process before a municipality may incur long term debts. Section 84 of the Municipal Finance Management Act 2003 requires a public participation process before a municipality may establish a municipal entity. A municipality considering entering into a public-private partnership is required to consult the community in terms of section 120” (Gwala, 2013: 6). The notion of consultation is also a legislative requirement as stipulated in the Municipal Finance Management Act 2003 is also applied in the processes of IDP.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter sought to explore the different frameworks which serve as a base on which the notion of public participation is entrenched upon in South Africa. These frameworks afford the public a chance to be able to participate in different structures of governance that have been established by the government. These structures may take the form of IDP

representative forums and ward committees. Councilors and municipal managers have a responsibility to oversee and ensure that these structures are effectively implemented so as to create enabling conditions for effective public participation. In the process of involving communities and CBOs in the matters of local government municipalities must induce a culture of participatory governance that goes beyond simply consulting but must open space for formal representative government with a clear system of a participatory local government.

The legislative frameworks presented by this chapter highlighted that an effective developmental local government is one that is able to change the lives of the people for the better and one that will play an important part in accomplishing objectives as laid out in this chapter. The legislation presented by this chapter identified ideal opportunities through which the public will be able to participate in their local development initiatives particularly the IDP. Furthermore these legislations emphasise a system of accountability and responsibility one that will be used in implementing the municipal IDPs. These legislations place great emphases on the important role that is played by effective public awareness, they are legislated in order to make sure that local development initiatives are steered by the members of the public, and improve the manner in which the public continuously take part in their local government development initiatives. The following chapter presents the findings and analysis of this study which will be based on this legislative framework using the theoretical framework presented in chapter two.

# Chapter four

## 4. Findings and analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this empirical research and it will issue an analysis on the state of public participation in the IDP processes of the HCM. The aim of this study is to analyze public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast. This chapter discusses the findings of this study by placing public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast within a theoretical framework of public participation. The mechanisms of public participation by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) will be used to determine and judge the kind of public participation that is employed by the Hibiscus Coast in its IDP processes. Through these public participation mechanisms this chapter seeks to determine the manner in which the Hibiscus Coast municipality carries-out the municipality's public participation activities in its IDP processes.

The use of Brinkerhoff and Crosby's (2002) participation mechanisms to analyze public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast municipality will indicate that public participation in planning processes of the Hibiscus Coast municipality does not have any one approach that is overriding and undifferentiated. In the Hibiscus Coast there are elements of each one of these mechanisms in the municipality's planning processes as table two below is a summary of the findings by this present study on how each participation mechanism is used in the Hibiscus Coast municipality's IDP public participation processes.



**Table 2**

<b>Mechanism</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Hibiscus Coast Municipality</b>
Information-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited active participation of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Government is the ultimate decision-maker, bearer and sharer of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal notices</li> <li>• Advertisements</li> <li>• Background information material</li> <li>• Exhibits and displays</li> <li>• Technical reports</li> <li>• E-democracy</li> <li>• Press Conferences</li> <li>• Radio and TV talk shows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal notices</li> <li>• Advertisements</li> <li>• Exhibits and displays</li> <li>• Technical reports</li> <li>• Press conferences</li> <li>• Radio talk shows</li> </ul>
Consultative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders participate in policy processes.</li> <li>• Government invites opinions from the public.</li> <li>• There is no guarantee that participation will impact decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings</li> <li>• Public hearings</li> <li>• Central information contact</li> <li>• Field offices or information centres</li> <li>• Comments and response sheets</li> <li>• Surveys and polls</li> <li>• Interviews or focus group discussions</li> <li>• Telephone hot lines or complaints register</li> <li>• E-democracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings</li> <li>• Public hearings</li> <li>• Central information contact</li> </ul>

Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responsibility is given to private stakeholders.</li> <li>• Government need private sector to fulfil its goals.</li> <li>• Government maintains decision-making authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint committees with stakeholder representatives</li> <li>• Joint working groups and task teams</li> <li>• Joint work with intermediary organizations and other stakeholder groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint committees with stakeholder representatives</li> <li>• Task teams</li> </ul>
Joint decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration in decision-making.</li> <li>• Decision making is decentralized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Discussion forums</li> <li>• Task teams/forces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Task teams</li> <li>• forums</li> </ul>
Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power-sharing.</li> <li>• Capacity building of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Delegation of decision-making authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops, focus groups and stakeholder meetings</li> <li>• Advisory committees and panels</li> <li>• Task teams</li> <li>• Charities and consensus conferences</li> <li>• Izimbizo/public gathering</li> <li>• Iindaba</li> <li>• Participatory appraisal/ learning and action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops and stakeholder meetings</li> <li>• Task teams</li> <li>• Izimbizo/ public gathering</li> </ul>

#### **4.2 An overview of the Hibiscus Coast Municipality**

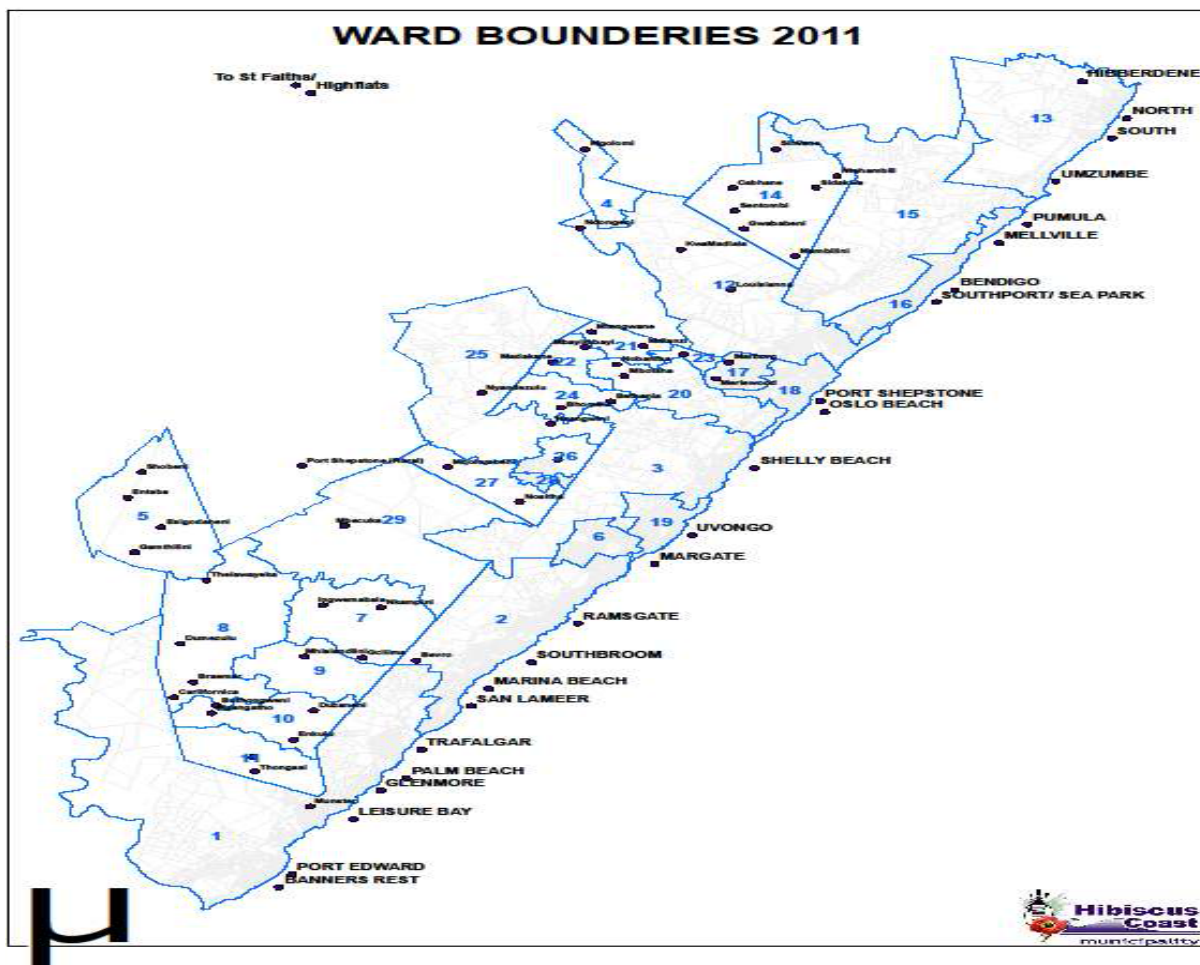
The Hibiscus Coast Municipality is categorized as a type B municipality one of the six local municipalities under the Ugu District municipality in KwaZulu-Natal South Africa. A category B municipality is the most local of the three tiers of local government and their responsibilities are shared with the district municipality. The Hibiscus Coast municipality boasts the highest population number relative to other local municipalities and it is also the district's most developed and thus serves as the seat of the district. The municipality covers almost 837 square kilometers in extent (HCM, 2012: 7). The HCM has six traditional authority locations, 29 municipal wards and six town centres (HCM, 2012: 7). The Hibiscus Coast has a skewed infrastructural development where along the coast there is a well-developed infrastructural activity and reasonable economic growth.

However, "the hinterland is characterized by poor infrastructure provision and a large number of formal and informal settlements not well connected to the coastal settlements where economic activities and public services is concentrated" (HCM, 2012: 7). The Hibiscus Coast has a population of approximately 256 135 where Black Africans make-up 82% of the population and Whites 11% (HCM: 2012). The ANC is the majority party in the Hibiscus Coast. It occupies 41 of the 58 council seats of the municipal council followed by the DA with 11 seats and the rest divided between the IFP and the NFP. The Hibiscus Coast has 28 municipal wards divided between the ANC and the DA, 20 and 8 respectively. Wards 1, 2, 6, 12, 16, 17, 18 and 19 are for the DA the rest are ANC. The location and the boundaries of the municipal wards are shown in the map below (HCM, 2012: 7).

There are two main structures through which the public of the Hibiscus Coast can participate in the processes of the IDP. These are Ward committees and IDP forums.

The ward committees are used by the Hibiscus Coast at the local ward level, where committees meet and deliberate on development issues that are of concern to them as a ward and that they would like these concerns addressed by the IDP. The IDP forum is therefore the main body for public participation in the Hibiscus Coast. The IDP forum is a body that is open to different interest groups where these interest groups in the Hibiscus Coast sit, debate and negotiate on IDP issues within the municipality taking into consideration the submissions by ward committees and/or ward plans.

**Diagram 7: HCM ward boundaries,**



Source HCM, 2013

The Hibiscus Coast Municipality's organizational structure for the IDP forum as required by the IDP Framework (DPLG: 2007) is represented by the structure below. The IDP/task team/ steering committee elaborate on the context of the discussions of the IDP by issuing inputs that relate to the many steps of the planning process, it processes these inputs from the public participation process, identifies mechanisms and procedures that will specifically address the context of the Hibiscus Coast Municipality, discusses and comments on experts' input (interviewee 5). The IDP manager is responsible for the day to day effective running and management of the IDP process whilst the executive committee is responsible for the overseeing and overall management of the process to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are represented in the process (interviewee 5). The municipal council has the final decision, approval and monitoring of the IDP.

#### **4.3 Public participation in the Hibiscus Coast IDP: issues and concerns**

IDPs are in their third round and there is a concern about the Hibiscus Coast Municipality that it does not yet have the two crucial components of effective participation in the IDP processes. These are the Public Participation Framework and public participation forum. Public participation in the Hibiscus Coast is currently under the office of the Speaker of the municipality. It is in this regard that the Hibiscus Coast in its IDP (2013: 14) acknowledges that the current issue with public participation in the IDP is that it is not effective and well-coordinated because the municipality is yet to develop its municipal public participation strategy. This strategy will deepen public participation in the municipal IDP processes through effective and coordinated efforts (HCM, 2013: 14). Moreover, as a result of the

delayed establishment of the municipal public participation forum, the Hibiscus Coast in its IDP (2013: 104) highlights that the municipality is unable to deal effectively with issues of public participation and public participation structures.

Therefore, as a result of the Hibiscus Coast Municipality not having its own public participation framework, the municipality therefore does not have its own definition of how the municipality understands the concept of public participation in its IDP processes. Therefore when one seeks an understanding of how this concept is understood by the municipality, one will have to rely on individual information from interviewees of how they understand the concept. However, the HCM instead emphasizes on its commitment towards achieving and practicing effective public participation. Moreover, a theme that can be found from the manner in which municipal officials of the HCM that were interviewed is that public participation is understood as a process that allows the public to be able to inform the decision-making process of the HCM.

*..... public participation is a combination of consultation and collaboration, where the municipality consults and collaborates with the public and interest groups during the drafting of the IDP.....information gathered therefore informs the final decision (Interviewee 5).*

Interviewee 6 gave a more or less similar understanding of the processes of public participation in the HCM, where she understood the process as;

*.....basically a process whereby the HCM consults the public on their development issues to be considered in the IDP.*

Having to rely on individual understanding of what public participation is and not having any public participation framework that will speak to the specific municipal conditions

have caused some ward councillors within the Hibiscus Coast to note that the current format of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast raises concerns as the IDP output does not reflect the will of the people. A ward councillor (interviewee 1) highlighted that;

*.....in the Hibiscus there is a sense that public participation is carried-out simply to fulfill its legislative requirement in the IDP process and not really to understand the needs of the people and then give them exactly that they want.*

This highlights that the municipality does not see public participation as a key strategy to guarantee that the municipality is indeed responsive to that what the public wants included as their needs in the IDP. IDPs are understood as the key strategies to make sure that municipalities are responsive to the development need of the community. Therefore an IDP forms a cornerstone for a responsive municipal IDP. Therefore inadequate public participation will hamper the effectiveness of the responsiveness of an IDP.

A ward councilor (interviewee 2) raised concerns with the way public participation in IDP processes of the HCM is being understood and therefore carried-out. He argued that;

*.....as a per the legislative requirement, the municipality is supposed to be consulting and getting feedback from the public with regards to development issues to be considered and decided upon in the IDP, but this is not happening. It is more like the municipality is telling the people of what it has done, what it will do and not really taking into consideration what the people have to say.*

A member of the HCM ratepayers association (Interviewee 3) stated that “...people are not really participating”. The municipality has “a narrow understanding of what public participation is and they think it is just these roadshows and Izimbizo that do not bear any

fruits” and “they use these gatherings as mere public relations strategy” (interviewee 3). A ward committee member (interviewee 4) concurs with interviewee 3 that Izimbizo and mayoral road shows in their current format are understood as a municipal public relations strategy and argued that;

*.....these gathering of the municipality are more like the municipality uses them to boast to the public about what the municipality has supposedly done and what they will be doing.*

#### **4.4 IDP Public participatory structures in the Hibiscus Coast**

The HCM mostly depends on two structures for the public in order to participate in the processes of the IDP. Ward committees and IDP representative forums are the two main official structures. Ward committees are use locally at ward level whilst the IDP representative forum is the main structure used for community participation for the entire processes of the IDP. This section will therefore explore public participation in the HCM looking at these two main structures and the manner in which these structures are used are used to enhance public participation in the HCM and if these structures are actually meeting their legislative requirements. Furthermore, this section will explore and disseminate the challenges that these two structures encounter in attempts to pursue their roles in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast as well as the benefits that each structure can bring to the processes of the IDP if effectively employed.

##### **4.4.1 Ward committees**

In the HCM there are different views with regards to the functioning of the ward committees. Ward committees are the most basic form of public participation in ensuring



effective public participation in municipal policy processes. In its IDP review, the Hibiscus Coast Municipality noting the importance of fully functional ward committees states that;

*...all ward committees are committed to serve their communities and are fully functional. The municipality has conducted a workshop to capacitate the ward committee component to ensure that ward committees are fully functional and effective (HCM, 2013: 99).*

However, this was not the case according to a ward committee member who stated that ward committees are not afforded space to perform their duties in the IDP process. He argued that;

*.....it is very rare that the municipality would require any inputs from us (ward committee) we sometimes feel that we were simply formed to fulfill the legislative requirement from the department (COGTA) not that we are needed for anything.*

Moreover, in a response to the South Coast Ratepayers Association, the Hibiscus Coast contradicted its statement that all ward committees are capacitated, fully functional and effective. The response stated that;

*...Council would like to apologize for its failure to educate our communities on the roles and responsibilities of Ward Committees (HCM, 2013).*

When asked whether as a ward committee, they have developed their ward plan, a committee member (interviewee 4) was not aware that there was such a thing as a 'ward plan'; his reply was "*what ward plans?*" which gave a clear understanding that the ward committee member did not have any knowledge of the existence of ward plans. Therefore this lack of capacity on the part of ward committees and lack of commitment on the part of the municipality signifies a significant failure on the part of this important component of the IDP process in the HCM. A ward committee member (Interviewee 9) stated that it is

not the case that municipal ward committees are failing to conduct their responsibilities because of incapacity but it is a matter of not doing what they are supposed to be doing;

*....we are supposed to meet regularly and discuss issues of development and general concerns for our ward, but our chairperson (councilor) is hardly ever present and when we meet he (councilor) always fails to give feedback about issues that we have raised for consideration in the IDP forum.*

*...as the municipality we are aware of the current hiccups that some of our ward committees are experiencing which is the reason why we have decided to set aside some resources that will assist with the operational costs of ward committees to enhance public participation and the IDP at the same time (Interviewee 5).*

Ward committees are supposed a structural mechanism that is democratic in the manner in which different ward stakeholders are represented. However ward councilors select ward committee representatives. The setting of agendas and addressing issues raised in the council thereafter is the statutory responsibility of the ward councilor (Oldfield, 2008: 491). During the election of ward committee representative, a ward councilor would;

*....push for the nominations of people that are affiliated to him and his political party so that he does not have a problem with a committee that will question him on his doings... Moreover, people get to these committees so that they are better aligned to get employment from the municipality and not to serve the interests of the ward (interviewee 7).*

These are the kind of tendencies that make one raise the question whether ward committees are rightly placed to fulfill their legislative requirement to be a strategic structural link to decision making, influence and shaping the IDP of the HCM. This is because currently ward committees in the HCM lack the necessary understanding of their role in the IDP process and they seem to lack also the capacity to fulfill this role. This was

admitted by the HCM that at the moment ward committees do not have the necessary skills to effectively pursue their role. The HCM argued that;

*.....as the HCM we want to see our ward committees being able to do all that they are supposed to be doing in terms of IDP processes which is why the municipality has delegated some managers and head of departments (HODs) to go and sit in as secretariats at ward committee meetings to ensure that more support is being issued and a collaborative link between the council and the ward committees is effectively reached (interviewee 5).*

Trough public participation the municipality wants to collaborate with the ward committees in order to ensure that which we deliver to the public is what the public wants (interviewee 6). However, such endeavor by the municipality still does not give the public the necessary power to the ward committees to have direct influence of the decision making.

The problem with ward committees in the HCM is that they do not have any power to directly influence the decisions. They serve as a body that advises the councilor who in turn inform the council of the issues pertaining to the ward.

*....our participation as ward committees does not guarantee that the issues that we raise in the meetings will be discussed and be decided upon by the council (interviewee 4).*

As this study has discovered that ward committee members can have real commitment to the development of their local communities, but due to insufficient capacity and inadequate empowerment they are unable to live up to this role. In an IDP process for example, ward committees can play a an important role in facilitating ward deliberations on its needs and priorities, where information gathered would be directed towards the IDP processes of the

Hibiscus Coast. Furthermore, ward committees would therefore issue feedback to communities on whether those recommendations that they provided reached the final planning decisions.

One of the major findings with regard to members of the ward committees is that they often lack clear understanding of their role in the IDP processes. There is a need for these processes to be facilitated effectively and a need for ward committees to be thoroughly trained on the IDP processes of the HCM and be given access to the information pertaining to the IDP and its processes. It became clear that the HCM uses a consultative mechanism of participation through these committees. Therefore processes would require that they are planned carefully, meaningfully and ward committee members are adequately empowered so as to make sure that the outcomes of the deliberations do reach the IDP decision makers in the municipality.

#### **4.4.2 The IDP Representative forum**

The IDP representative forum is used in the Hibiscus Coast as the central structure through which the public can participate in the Hibiscus Coast's IDP processes. It is a structure where different stakeholders that have interests and exist within the municipality also take part in the processes of the IDP. The Hibiscus Coast IDP review 2013-2014 highlight that the IDP representative forum includes;

*.....provincial departments, Amakhosi, Ugu District Municipality, business, entities and parastatals who are all invited to discuss developmental challenges facing the municipality and means of overcoming developmental challenges (HCM, 2013: 99).*

Ward councilors participate in the IDP forum and other elected officials who participate in the forum to represent the mandate they are given by their constituencies. These ward councilors have a specific role which is generally to make it a point that the interests of their wards are included in the IDP of the Hibiscus Coast. They are therefore an important component of the IDP and as a result need the necessary capacity and resources to participate in these processes. This is because a lack of any of these resources will undermine a councilor's ability to effectively contribute in the IDP process.

However a ward councilor (Interviewee 2) indicated that many of them in the Hibiscus Coast do not understand the IDP process in general and therefore failed in their attempts to consult their wards as required, when asked about his role in the IDP processes and the promotion of public participation, he blatantly stated that;

*.....I wish I knew myself what is it I am supposed to do.*

This study found that some ward committees are dysfunctional and as a result their ward councilors could not represent the interests of the ward in the forum effectively. A councilor raised concern with the dysfunctional committees and how this affects him from doing his job effectively.

*.... I want to do something, but I cannot do it without a committee that is fully functional and capacitated (interviewee 8).*

A statement raised by a ward committee member gives a clear indication that without the necessary capacity on the part of public representatives, the interests of the wards might never be able to reach the decision-making panel of the municipality. He stated that;

*These ward committees are supposed to be an important aspect of public participation in the IDP, their not being functional and capacitated has the potential*

*to compromise the community severely in terms of representation in the IDP processes(interviewee 4).*

However, ward councilors are not the only source of public representation in the IDP forum. The community was also represented by other community based associations particularly the ratepayers association. The Hibiscus Coast acknowledges these stakeholders stating that their engagement in the IDP allow for a strengthened relationship to manifest between the municipality and the residents of the Hibiscus Coast (HCM, 2013: 100). A member of the ratepayers association stated that;

*....ratepayers have a lot of grievances and therefore by taking part in the IDP process we can make sure that the voice of a ratepayer is heard at the highest decision-making bodies of the municipality(interviewee 3).*

A key challenge for these associations to participate in the IDP is the nature of some of these structures which prevent them from participating in the IDP processes. The HCM requires that only organized and recognized structures are to participate in the IDP forum. In the Hibiscus Coast there are many of these unorganized groups and interested individuals who might have valuable information and might want to participate in the forum. Community organizations lack the necessary resources to be able to be effectively organized. The marginalization of unorganized groups was confirmed by a call in a local newspaper (South Coast Fever, 2013: 23) where the municipality was inviting interested stakeholders who must have a development background to participate in the IDP forum by submitting their applications to the municipality. Therefore, this suggests that moreover from being an organized group, the municipality has the authority to accept or reject one's

application which will give the municipality the power to put people in the forum that they know represent a certain view and not people with a view different from theirs.

Furthermore, there is an inadequate representation of the voice of the public in the IDP forum. This is due to the fact that most of the representatives who participate are not mandated by the public and as a result they are not accountable to the community. The elected officials do not carry any mandate because the structures those that are supposed to be giving a mandate are either absent, weakened or blatantly dysfunctional e.g. ward committees. The Hibiscus Coast has not been able to make necessary efforts to guarantee that these so called unorganized groups of the marginalized communities are able to organize themselves so that they are able to meet the minimum of participating in the IDP forum. This was confirmed by an Ugu District Municipality official who argued that they still have a significant challenge in reaching certain parts of the municipality as most parts of the municipality are deeply rural and the municipality lack the necessary resources to ensure that the IDP forum is able to hear and represent all of these people in the rural areas. The constitution obligates all municipalities to ensure that the marginalized groups of the society are encouraged to participate in the development processes of their local municipality.

#### **4.5 Theoretical conception of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast**

##### **4.5.1 Information-sharing mechanism**

This section discusses the strategies that this research found to be employed by the Hibiscus Coast in pursuing the municipality's information-sharing form of public participation in the municipality's IDP processes. Furthermore, this section looks at the

manner in which the Hibiscus Coast disseminates participatory information to communities to improve public participation in IDP processes. Effective dissemination of information is one of the key factors that can strengthen public participation in local government (Nyalunga, 2006: 5). The following strategy of information sharing that is used in the Hibiscus Coast is legal notices. These are a legislative requirement in terms of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000.

- **Legal notices**

This research project found that legal notices are one of the strategies of information-sharing mechanism used by the Hibiscus Coast Municipality in the municipality's IDP processes. The Hibiscus Coast has notice boards in almost every municipal office building, library, clinics and Thusong centres. These notice boards are used to display notices that invite public comments, concerns and inputs on draft IDP policies, IDP reviews and general participation in municipal processes.

*Legal notices are mostly put on the municipal website. These notices are a call for public comment in our local government development processes. In order to accommodate the municipality's isiZulu speaking population, these notices are issued in both isiZulu and English (interviewee 6).*

However, one of the challenges that were found to hinder the success of this strategy in the Hibiscus Coast processes is the issue of accessibility. Most of the citizens of the Hibiscus Coast live in rural areas where there are either no facilities like a library available to display these notices or the community is so scattered that, for some, access to these notices is very limited. A ward committee member (interviewee 4) argued that the community mostly relied on the ward councillor to share with them information. The member did not show any knowledge of the existence of another form of accessing



information. The following strategy of information-sharing is advertisements which are one of the strategies that are used by the Hibiscus Coast for public participation information-sharing purposes.

- **Advertisements**

The Hibiscus Coast has invested “loads of cash” in advertising space in almost all the Hibiscus Coast local newspapers (interviewee 6). The municipality uses these platforms to call for the public to participate in the processes of IDP. However, most of these local newspapers are mainly English papers and therefore a huge population of the Hibiscus Coast lack interest in these papers as a result of the paper’s English orientation. Although some advertisements appear in national vernacular newspapers, but these newspapers are either too expensive or can hardly be accessed by some members of the population of the Hibiscus Coast since these are mostly available in town areas. This creates a major deficit in terms of public participation in the IDP processes.

*..... you must understand that we (Hibiscus Coast Municipality) have a lot of areas that are still very rural in terms of infrastructure which therefore hinders accessibility to these areas. These areas tend to be very far away from town and getting to them will require a certain kind of resources to be available at all times which the municipality does not have at the moment. The municipality is working on something, we are faced with a challenge and the municipality does acknowledge that (interviewee 5).*

An official in the Public Participation office of the Hibiscus Coast confirmed that indeed there is a need for adequate resources to be allocated in IDP public participation processes (Interviewee 6). However, the Hibiscus Coast does not have sufficient financial, human and technical resources to guarantee that the promotion of public participation through

advertisements will reach each and every member of the society (interviewee 5). Due to lack of these resources required to promote public participation, a lot of people seem to have no interest in participating in the processes of IDP (Interviewee 6). Therefore, this is an indication that even through advertisement strategies; there is still a significant amount of people who are members of the Hibiscus Coast population whom the municipality is unable to consult as they are in areas where the municipality has insufficient resources to guarantee their participation.

- **Technical reports**

The Hibiscus Coast uses this strategy as a way of getting the public to be informed about the state of the municipality and progress on IDP. The municipality places draft IDP, policies and research report in strategic areas of the Hibiscus Coast where the public can access these documents and know in order to get information on development projects that the municipality is embarking upon. These areas also include the municipal website. The municipality will soon be launching a municipal newsletter which will be distributed throughout the Hibiscus Coast (interviewee 10). The municipality has very limited resources to ensure that each and every citizen of the Hibiscus Coast is accessible and informed about the IDP and the municipality's development issues.

However, one of the major challenges for most of the population who wish to participate in IDP processes is the understanding of the language and jargon that is used when drafting these reports. An official at the Ugu District Municipality states that the language issue has discouraged a lot of people from participating in these processes including Amakhosi and community representatives mostly from rural and traditional authorities (Interviewee 10).

*Most of the people in the Hibiscus Coast are in the rural areas and a majority of those including those in the urban areas cannot understand the language that is used in these processes. It is not just about English as a language, but it is mostly the jargon that tends to be thrown in these processes and in documents that are supposed to be informing the people of the IDP and its processes (interviewee 10).*

*...using 'big English' is a strategy used by the Hibiscus Coast to minimize the number of participants, as most of us cannot understand.... this helps them to make decisions quickly (interviewee 7).*

- **Radio talk show**

Radio talk shows are proving to be one of the Hibiscus Coast's largest form of information-sharing between the municipality and the public.

*The municipality has at least two radio talk shows in a local radio station weekly and one in a national vernacular radio station (interviewee 6).*

In the local radio station talk show the public is invited to call in and either ask questions, make comments or share concerns and information with the official that is present in the show. Moreover, the show in the national radio station is pre-recorded; the presenter is the one responsible for asking the entire questions regarding the issue in question.

This strategy has proved to be very effective to those who participate in the talk shows for the Hibiscus Coast in terms of IDP public participation processes because people from different areas far away from each other are able to discuss share information and ideas with the municipality at the same time through a radio talk show. The municipal officials use such a platform to obtain information from people in faraway places who might not be able to physically attend to public meetings. Through radio talk shows officials get to understand about the people's socio-economic conditions, the needs of the

people and their attitudes. Information is therefore incorporated in the IDP. However, again with this strategy the issue of access becomes a problem as a lot of people in the municipality have no access to FM radio devices, have frequency coverage that is very limited and have no electricity. The next section looks at the manner in which a consultative mechanism of public participation and strategies of consultation are used in the processes of IDP in the Hibiscus Coast.

#### **4.5.2 Consultative mechanism**

This research project found that the Hibiscus Coast Municipality uses three strategies of a consultative mechanism to enhance public participation in the municipal IDP processes. Consultative mechanism is a mechanism that is mostly used to refer to the participation strategies of the Hibiscus Coast. Almost all the interviewees of this study acknowledged that the municipality is using a consultative strategy of public participation. These strategies are public meetings, public hearings and central information contact. This section will explore each of these strategies and the manner in which the Hibiscus Coast Municipality conducts public participation in the IDP using each strategy.

- **Public hearings and meetings**

The Hibiscus Coast conducts Public hearings and meetings in the form of IDP/Mayoral budget roadshows. These meetings are an opportunity given to the public by the municipality for the public to voice their concerns with regard to issues pertaining service delivery, IDP, and the budget which requires the attention of the municipality (HCM Public Notice, 2011). Izimbizo and IDP/Mayoral roadshows are part of the Municipal Community

Participation Programme. This programme requires that the Mayor and the municipal Executive Committee and councilors to hold meetings and hearings with members of the local communities per ward within the theme of IDP budget roadshows and Mayoral izimbizo. However, due to inadequate resources, the municipality has been unable to consult each and every ward during the IDP roadshow season. The municipality has therefore resorted to clustering where the twenty eight municipal wards have been divided into six clusters (interviewee 8). A public hearing meeting is therefore conducted per cluster (IDP review, 2013: 101).

A ward committee member (interviewee 9) highlighted that these public hearings and meetings are not accessible to many ward committee members and public members as a result of clustering due to insufficient transport that is usually provided for the public to these meetings.

*....transport that they (HCM) provide in the form of a bus is usually not enough because one bus must accommodate at least people from two wards where wards are near each other....this transport is never enough because what usually happens is that the bus will be filled by people who are not really going there to participate but who go there for the entertainment and sustenance that is usually provided (interviewee 4).*

A ward councilor (interviewee 1) concurred with Interviewee six and argued that;

*...a very limited number of interested people participate in these proceedings. And, most of those who attend these meetings would otherwise not attend if it was not for the food and entertainment performances that are provided.*

Furthermore there are many more challenges that are encountered by the municipality in conducting these consultation processes as interviewee one indicates;

*....the consultative form of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast needs to be improved because its current format is really not speaking to the needs of the people on the ground and what the municipality wants to achieve with these programmes (interviewee 1).*

Another ward councilor also questioned the municipal format of conducting these public hearings and meetings. He stated that;

*....it is more like the municipality is telling the people of what it has done, what it will do, without really taking into consideration what the people have to say and what they really want (interviewee 2).*

One of the disadvantages of these processes in the Hibiscus Coast is that the strategies do not guarantee that what the public had contributed during public participation processes will be part of the final draft of the IDP. It is in this regard that (interviewee 3) argued that;

*It is meaningless to say that the people through these public consultation processes are given the power to participate whereas they lack the power to influence decisions, in short we (public) might just be participating for fun and not necessarily to make a difference.*

A ward councilor (interviewee 8) argued that as much as public participation through these IDP/Budget izimbizo is a good thing but they are more like a sit, listen and do nothing type of activity because most of the time the municipality never goes back and actually address the issue and concerns that the public had raised.

*There is a need for us councillors and senior administration staff of the municipality, instead of sitting and listening. We need to be out there giving the public what they have already requested, pleaded for or demanded.*

However, the 2013-2014 IDP review (HCM, 2013: 100) highlights that the public hearings that are conducted during the consultation phase of the IDP have been very successful and have allowed the municipality to make sure that there are more voices that are heard and that are participate in the development of the IDP.

#### **4.5.3 Collaborative**

This paper established that the Hibiscus Coast collaborates with other sectors of the society through joint committees with stakeholder representation and task teams in the IDP public participation processes. However, there are very limited and real aspects of this mechanism of public participation in the IDP processes where the Hibiscus Coast collaborates with the private sector so that the process of public participation is enhanced.

- **Joint committees with stakeholder representatives**

These joint committees have allowed the municipality to access skills, capacities and resources that it does not have. For example, the municipality teamed-up with the Institute for Democracy in Africa (IDASA) in order to enhance effective public participation in the IDP processes. The IDASA conducted workshops to capacitate stakeholders in the IDP process particularly ward committees (IDP review, 2013: 103). The Hibiscus Coast also invited the South Coast Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), ratepayers association and CBOs to form joint committees with the municipality in order to bring into the process the capacity and skills that the municipality needs. The Hibiscus Coast needs all the skills and capacities that the private sector possesses, this sector of the public usually have a

better understanding of the situation and issues on the ground and the manner in which these can be addressed (interviewee 5).

- **Task teams**

A task team involves all major stakeholders that represent a specific view and experts who are organized by the municipality who collaborate with the Hibiscus Coast to oversee a particular aspect of an IDP process (interviewee 5). For example, a task team of public participation practitioners' forum which includes NGOs e.g. IDASA, the district (Ugu) and stakeholders has been established which oversee the entire process of public participation in the IDP (interviewee 6). These task teams do not have decision making powers they presents their findings in the IDP representatives committee. The municipal council is however the final decision-maker and it may at times give away the design and some implementation responsibilities of an IDP.

#### **4.5.4 Joint decision-making**

This research project discovered that in the IDP public participation processes of the Hibiscus Coast, there are elements of a joint decision-making mechanism. These elements of joint decision-making that are used by the Hibiscus Coast are workshops, task teams and forums (IDP forum, public participation practitioners' forum). However, these structures of joint-decision making by the Hibiscus Coast lack credibility since there is no distribution of decision-making authority among all collaborating stakeholders. The final decision making authority is in the hands of the municipal council only.



- **Discussion forums**

The discussion forum is a platform which the Hibiscus Coast employs to bring together all interest groups and individuals who share the same vision and whose expertise, thoughts and experience can assist the municipality to achieve its development objectives as set out in the IDP (interviewee 5). In a discussion forum participants discuss and take unanimous decision on an issue where everyone participating takes ownership of the decision. Ownership of a decision is achieved when participants have direct influence to decision-making. However a lack of direct influence to decision-making has caused some members of the public not to take ownership of the decisions that are taken by the council since they are not part of the decision-making body. A member of the Ratepayers association (interviewee 3) indicated that,

*....it is hard to take ownership of a decision you did not really participate in, the Hibiscus Coast needs to open space and empower people so that they are effective participants in the decisions that they (Hibiscus Coast) take.... Even for us community organizations that form part of the committees and tasks teams in the IDP process, there is no way we can guarantee that our contributions reach the decision-making because we are no longer there when that process happens.*

The 2013-2014 IDP review of the Hibiscus Coast quoting the IDP guide packs confirms that the municipal council has the final decision and may approve or disapprove the IDP (HCM, 2013). A ward councilor (interviewee 2) who is also a member of the IDP forum highlighted that

*..... the council decides what goes in and what goes out (IDP)... I do not think that it would be fair to therefore blame us (IDP forums) if the IDP fails to bear any fruits... we are not the decision-makers.*

- **Workshops**

The Hibiscus coast uses a series of these workshops to listen to demands, engage on ideas and to establish ownership of the processes of development that the municipality embarks upon. A municipal official confirmed that these workshops has had a positive contribution on the implementation of the IDP in the Hibiscus Coast which is caused largely by the fact that there has been a significant involvement of stakeholders who participated significantly in the IDP development processes in order to impact the decisions that will be made afterwards (interviewee 11). These workshops play an important role in empowering and capacitating those stakeholders that might otherwise lack the necessary capacity to be effective participants in the IDP. Incapacity influences the processes negatively. If the stakeholders do not have the necessary capacity to participate in the IDP processes the whole meaning and the need for public participation is undermined as decisions will continue to be taken on behalf of the community anyway. A ward councillor (interviewee 2) was quoted saying that;

*....people lack the knowledge and capacity to understand the importance of their participation in these programmes and processes, and how their active participation can help shape the future of the Hibiscus Coast to their liking.*

A ratepayer's association representative (interviewee 3) suggested that people do not participate because they do not have the necessary understanding of their role in the Hibiscus Coast Municipality IDP processes. She argued that;

*.....the municipality must ensure that the workshops it provides for stakeholders is effective and empowering so that they are able to understand that these programmes are for them to take part in the decision-making processes of the Hibiscus Coast (interviewee 3).*

A youth officer in the municipality spoke of the youth as being one of the important stakeholders in the municipal IDP processes that are constantly being ignored, have no capacity and has lost hope in the IDP processes, he stated that;

*.....the youth is the majority of the population of the Hibiscus Coast and according to the statistics they are the most hard-hit by the socio-economic challenges that faces the municipality. The youth is unemployed, uneducated and have no interest in these processes because they do not have the necessary capacity and strength to participate, they have lost hope that these municipal public participation processes will ever render change in the socio-economic status quo that they are living under (Interviewee 11).*

#### **4.5.5 Empowerment mechanism**

The 2012 Hibiscus Coast annual IDP report argues that in the Hibiscus Coast councillors and ward committees are empowered in the form of workshops so that they are able to understand the municipal policy processes particularly the IDP, its implementation and effective service delivery (HCM, 2012: 104). However this seems to contradict interview evidence from ward councilors and ward committee members who agreed on the inadequacy of ward committees and councilors in functioning their respective duties and promoting public participation. The Hibiscus Coast municipality has put up systems to that are supposed to effectively and efficiently deal with ward committee issues, these include workshops to empower the ward committee component to make sure that ward committees are fully functional and effective. The municipality uses workshops and stakeholder meetings, task teams and izimbizo as strategies of an empowerment mechanism in its IDP public participation processes. However, these strategies of an empowerment mechanism that are undertaken by the Hibiscus Coast municipality are seen

as mediocrity because they do not give participants the ability to engage in the decision-making process. The municipal council retains the decision making authority as decision-making is not decentralized to other levels in the public participation processes.

- **Workshops and stakeholder meetings**

Workshops are a strategic public participation strategy that allows the municipality to hit “two birds with one stone” (interviewee 5). This is because this strategy of public participation allows public participation in a manner that affords the municipality both stakeholder participation and capacitation to take place simultaneously. The municipal stakeholder meetings include ward committees, councillors, municipal council, provincial departments, the chamber of commerce, parastatals and community organizations (HCM, 2013). The Hibiscus Coast tries to accommodate every view or group in the IDP processes (interviewee 6). Moreover, the municipality has a responsibility to ensure that stakeholders are capacitated to be effective participants in these processes which is what the municipality wants to achieve through these workshops (interviewee 5).

A ward councilor (interviewee 8) raised concern with regards to the workshops that are conducted to ‘supposedly’ empower ward committees to assist the ward councillor in conducting his duties. The ward councilor (interviewee 8) argued that;

*...there have been workshops to empower ward committees on their role but many (ward committee members) have left or either lost interest because they feel that everything was just a public relations strategy and not really to empower them with relevant knowledge to be effective participants in the IDP processes.*

An official of the HCM (interviewee 5) argued that it is not the case that the workshops that the municipality conducts are a mere public relations strategy; he quoted the IDP saying that “ward committees undergo workshops so that they as an important component of public participation in the IDP ward committees can be empowered and capacitated to be fully functional and effective” but they are not the final decision-makers. A municipal official stated that;

*.....the workshops that the ward committees went to are not only to inform them but they have a responsibility to take the information and go back to their respective communities and inform their communities so that it is not only them (ward committees) who are aware of the IDP processes but the entire community knows about these processes and the different phases of the IDP d(interviewee 6).*

An empowerment mechanism is important because the final decision-making is placed in the hands of the public. However, this is not the case in the Hibiscus Coast where the final decision-making authority is in possession of the municipal council. The community of the Hibiscus Coast might have taken part in the IDP draft processes but they do not have the power to influence the final draft of what to take in and what to take out of the draft.

- **Izimbizo/ public gatherings**

An imbizo in the Hibiscus Coast is ideally a very simple process. It is an opportunity that the municipality uses in order to directly interact with the public.

*...what usually happens at an imbizo is that all the IDP committees are present and they answer questions from the public, listen to the public's concerns and take advice from the public with regards to municipal development issues that should be addressed by the IDP (interviewee 6).*

However there are elements of manipulation in the processes of public participation in the izimbizo because communities are called upon to make submissions and comments on the drafts that have already been completed. A ward councilor (Interviewee 1) highlighted the manner in which some councilors and the public are manipulated into accepting a draft policy or budget or IDP that they did not participate in. He argues that;

*...at times we are just seen to be there to rubberstamp the proceedings and not for any of our inputs (interviewee 1).*

The ward councilor stated this referring to the izimbizo and budget roadshows that are also used as platforms to promote public participation and comment on already existing IDP drafts. It is also used as a public relations strategy where government would use the proceedings to promote its image, can be used as a strategy to get public support on government processes or policies like the IDP (interviewee 1). This was found to be the case in the Hibiscus Coast. A ward councilor (Interviewee 2) argued that;

*....it is more like the municipality is telling the people what it has done, what it will do and not really taking into consideration what the people have to say.*

It cannot be doubted that this practice by the Hibiscus Coast lack democratic credibility since it undermines certain elements of democracy to participate. Manipulation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast undermine real public participation and engagement that can be achieved if real participatory mechanisms were being employed by the municipality.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter discovered that the majority of public participation activities in the Hibiscus Coast fail to enhance greater public participation. There is a prevalence of low levels of public participation. Furthermore one of the reasons discovered to motivate low public

involvement in the Hibiscus Coast may be a multitude one being lack of capacity. Therefore in order for a developmental local government to succeed there is a need for low citizen participation to be eradicated. Lack of capacity in the Hibiscus Coast indicates that citizens do not have the necessary competence to objectively evaluate or judge the effectiveness of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast.

This research found that the Hibiscus Coast municipality generally abides to the requirements as set out by the Municipal Structures Act (1998) and the mechanisms of public participation presented by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) in creating an enabling environment through which public participation structures such as ward committees, IDP forums, traditional leaders and CBOs can be able to function effectively. However, ward committees as an important component of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast IDP processes are not appropriately functioning because of inadequate capacity and lack of effective dissemination and accessibility of information. The Hibiscus Coast embarks on different programmes that would enable the community to participate in the municipals IDP processes. These include the Mayoral izimbizo, budget and IDP Road shows. Ideally some of these programmes and mechanisms have the potential to promote the basic principles of a democracy through the enhancement of effective public participation where citizens will have direct access and influence to decision-making in the IDP and thus having power to hold the municipality accountable.

This study identified a number of challenges pertaining to public participation in IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast. One of the major challenges identified by this study that hinder effective public participation in the processes of IDP is limited access by the

public to participatory strategies used by the Hibiscus Coast. However, this study also acknowledged the benefits that surfaced as a result of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast.

The Hibiscus Coast Local Municipality does not yet have its own definition of the concept of public participation. Therefore an understanding of how the municipality conceptualizes and understands the idea of public participation heavily relies on the manner in which key decision-makers and managers within the municipality conceptualizes and understand the concept. The manner in which they express the idea of public participation in the IDP processes show a legitimate aspiration on the part of the Hibiscus Coast to create an enabling environment for meaningful public participation in the municipality's processes of planning. The consultation of the public in the IDP decision-making processes and the manner in which the Hibiscus Coast associates the concept of public participation with basic requirements for a democratic society creates a picture of how the Hibiscus Coast conceptualizes and understands public participation in the IDP processes.



# **Chapter 5**

## **5. Discussion and conclusion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This study sought to analyze the processes of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast Local Municipality. Five key questions that informed this study's research problem were asked. This chapter will briefly discuss each question based on the research findings highlighted above (chapter 4).

### **5.2 Conceptualization and understating of public participation by the Hibiscus Coast**

This study found that the Hibiscus Coast municipality is still under the process of developing its own public participation strategy. Therefore the Hibiscus Coast does not yet have its own institutional conceptualization and understanding of the concept of public participation that informs the municipality's specific processes. The municipal stakeholders that were interviewed used more or less similar terms to refer to the processes of public participation in the IDP processes; these were stakeholders, communities, interest group, public and citizens. These terms are similar to the terms the World Bank uses to conceptualize public participation which differentiates between popular participation and stakeholder participation. From the Information gathered from the interviews, it became clear for this project that public participation in the IDP processes is understood as a process that afforded the public to be able to take part in the decision-making processes of the Hibiscus Coast IDP processes.

### **5.3 Organizational structures and mechanisms employed by the Hibiscus Coast to enhance public participation in the IDP**

This research project discovered that there are two main structures for public participation in the IDP of the Hibiscus Coast. These are ward committees and the IDP forum. The ward committees operate at local community level and the IDP forum is the main structure. There are many challenges that hinder the effectiveness of these structures. In the ward committees, challenges range from political interference to incapacity and lack of motivation. While the municipality is embarking on programmes that will capacitate these structures there is still a long way to go and more still needs to be done in this regard (interview 6).

One of the major concerns with regard to the IDP forum and other participation forums in the Hibiscus Coast is that they do not have decision-making powers. These powers are only in the possession of the municipal council. These structures have shown great potential in the sense that they have managed to bring together stakeholders from different backgrounds to come together discuss and agree on a single development path in the form of an IDP to be taken by the municipality. However the municipality requires that for an interest group to participate in the forum it must be organized but the municipality does not give minimum standards for these groups as to what does the municipality require in terms of being organized. The group must also submit an application which gives the municipality the privilege to pick and choose the groups that which the municipality prefers to be in the forum.

#### **5.4 The nature of public participation used through these structures and mechanisms**

This study discovered that in the Hibiscus Coast lower rungs of participation according to the Brinkerhoff and Crosby's (2002) mechanisms of participation were used by the municipality. This means that citizens will have inadequate power to directly influence decisions being taken during the IDP processes. SALGA (2013: 6) argues that the process of public participation in an IDP process should be used as an opportunity for participants to influence policy decisions. Therefore for public participation in the Hibiscus Coast to be effective there is a need for participants to be assured that their contributions will indeed influence the final decisions. The nature of participation in the Hibiscus Coast should not only give those in power the authority to make final decisions in the IDP process. This is because such an act gives the impression that the municipality uses community participation in order to legitimize the processes, plans and programmes of the Hibiscus Coast (Interviewee 1).

The community deliberations that take place at different phases of the IDP processes, forums and in the road-shows are unsuccessful in guaranteeing that the participation of the community will indeed result to direct influence of the decisions being taken by the municipal council. This played a significant role in undermining real public participation to take place in these IDP processes. The nature of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast is therefore one that fails to administer effective participation and citizen engagement in their IDP processes. According to Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 7) effective participation is one that allows for the "incorporation of views of a range of societal groups in the formulation of policies". This kind of participation offered by the Hibiscus Coast to

communities is the same to what Arnstein (1969: 218) refers to as 'non-participation'. Arnstein (1969: 218) argues that citizen participation under such circumstances is one that is meant to cure and capacitate other than just being seen as an activity to address the issues of the public.

Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 66) argue that effective public participation will require that the public is made aware and capacitated with regards to what is that they are supposed to do and how they are to perform their roles. Informing the public through the sharing of information is instrumental for basic democratic governance as well as to meet the higher levels of public participation (Brinkerhoff and Crosby: 2002: 66). However, the facilitation of community input in most cases it is partial and at times superficial, and many ward committee processes presenting pre-determined positions and programmes for limited feedback and information-sharing only (Oldfield, 2008: 491). Clapper (1996: 73) argues that most of the time potential citizen participants are not furnished with the correct or sufficient information to make meaningful participation. Therefore when people lack information they also lack the capacity to be effective participants as public participation requires that the public be reasonably knowledgeable with regards to participation and government issues, problems and strategies, and the role that they as the public are supposed to play based on their pre-obtained knowledge and information (Clapper, 1996: 73).

## **5.5 Challenges and successes of public participation in the processes of the IDP**

This study discovered that public participation in the Hibiscus Coast IDP has got both challenges and successes. Some of the challenges that hinder effective public participation in the IDP that were discovered by this study is lack of capacity, language in the sense that many people do not understand the English, inadequate resources which result to the municipality being unable to reach some places for participating in the IDP, lack of continuity because there is no follow up on concerns that are raised by the public during their participation in the IDP programmes and lastly is political affiliation where the minority party is being excluded from the processes because they are not affiliated to the ruling party. The successes that were recorded by this project are enhanced relationship between stakeholders, enhanced communication between the municipality and the public and increased levels of participation.

### **5.5.1 Challenges**

There is no shying away from the fact that while public participation in the IDP processes has got a number of benefits but also it brings with it a number of challenges that tend to hinder the process from being effective. This section will explore some of the challenges that undermine the processes of the IDP in the Hibiscus Coast.

- **Lack of capacity**

This study has discovered that in the Hibiscus Coast there is a significant portion of the members of the community representatives who lack the necessary capacity to being effective contributors in the IDP public participation processes. This incapacity influences the processes negatively. If the people do not have the capacity to participate in the IDP

processes the whole meaning and the need for public participation is undermined as decision will continue to be taken on behalf of the community anyway. These quotations clearly indicate that there is a significant portion of the Hibiscus Coast society that is not capacitated to take part in these processes. These members of the municipality range from ordinary citizens to people elected to represent the community in the forums that discuss the IDP.

- **Language**

One of the major challenges that impact negatively on the public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast is the issue of language. An official at the Ugu District Municipality states that the language issue has discouraged a lot of people from participating in these processes including Amakhosi and community representatives (Interviewee 10).

*Most of the people in the Hibiscus Coast are in the rural areas and a majority of those including those in the urban areas cannot understand the language that is used in these processes. It is just about English as a language, but it is mostly the jargon that tends to be thrown in these processes and in documents that are supposed to be informing the people of the IDP and its processes.*

- **Inadequate resources**

The municipality does not have enough available resources to ensure that the IDP public participation processes are able to reach even the most rural areas of the municipality (interview 6).

*..... you must understand that we (Hibiscus Coast Municipality) have a lot of areas that are still very rural in terms of infrastructure which therefore hinders accessibility to these areas. These areas tend to be very far away from town and getting to them will require a certain kind of resources to be available at all times*

*which the municipality does not have at the moment. The municipality is working on something, we are faced with a challenge and the municipality does acknowledge that.*

An official in the Public Participation office of the Hibiscus Coast confirmed that indeed there is a need for adequate resources in the processes of the IDP (Interviewee 6). Due to this lack of resources a lot of people have lost interest in the participation processes and the IDP processes as a whole (Interviewee 6). Therefore this is an indication that there is still a significant amount of people in the Hibiscus Coast population whom the municipality is unable to consult as they are in 'deep rural' areas. Public participation in planning processes can require a lot of funds to be injected into the process, it also can be very time consuming and uncontrollable when conducted in large scales. It is a common challenge with a number of municipalities to source resources like funds or make public participation in the IDP less costly, to make public participation more regular and requiring less from those who support it. This is the situation that is faced by the Hibiscus Coast.

- **Lack of Continuity**

One of the challenges that were raised by an official of the Hibiscus Coast (Interviewee 5) is that the IDP processes of the municipality lacked continuity with regards to the issues and concerns that the citizens raise during the IDP/Budget izimbizo that take place yearly. The issue is that every year the municipal izimbizo visit different wards or communities to listen to their issues and concerns pertaining development and the IDP (Interviewee 5). Therefore there is no continuity in the sense that these programmes do not go back to the wards that they have been to in order to do a follow up to find out whether the issues that that particular ward raised previously has been addressed.

- **Political Affiliation**

Political affiliation of public representatives and municipal officials is one of the challenges that were surfaced by this study in its attempt to analyse the public participation processes of the IDP in the Hibiscus Coast. This practice poses a challenge to basic principles of democracy and good governance. It undermines minorities their constitutional right to be heard and as members of the public to participate in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast. This practice is said to be very ripe in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast municipality. A number of interviewees that took part in this study confirmed that indeed in the public participation processes of the IDP in the Hibiscus Coast political affiliation is a challenge that they have to deal with.

*....Political affiliation is one of the biggest challenges that we are facing within the municipality not only in the IDP processes only to such an extent that last year (2012) we had to go to the extent of writing a letter to the Executive Mayor threatening that we are going to boycott izimbizo because our councillors and ward committees (DA) are continuously being side-lined because of our political affiliation (Interviewee 2).*

*Political affiliation is a problem to all aspects of any municipality, from cadre deployment to public participation in the IDP..... the municipality would go to such an extent where they only go to municipal wards where they know that politically they will get support and no one is going to challenge them in order to make the process seem as if it were successful (Interviewee 3).*

However, a councillor (interviewee 2) from the majority ruling party (ANC) disagreed saying that;

*...I do not think it is a problem (political affiliation) in the IDP, there have other parties who complained about being ignored but I think it was just the opposition being the opposition who always must cry about something.*



It is clear by the look of these three quotations that indeed there exists an even greater challenge within the Hibiscus Coast IDP/ public participation processes. This challenge is the tension between the political parties and the public representative associations regarding the manner in which public participation is being practiced by the Hibiscus Coast in the municipal IDP processes. Political parties in the municipality spend a vast amount of time and energy pointing at the faults of one another rather than serving the community that need development the most. However the following section will look at the successes that transpired as a result of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast.

### **5.5.2 Successes**

This section will explore some of the successes that were brought about as a result of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast municipality. This section argues that as a result of public participation in the processes of the IDP in the Hibiscus Coast there have been somehow enhance relationships between stakeholders, enhance communication and increased level of participation. As much as more still needs to be done in order to improve the state of public participation in the Hibiscus Coast municipality; however there has been a great improvement when compared to the previous apartheid and during the early years of the new democratic South Africa regime where there was literally no or very limited opportunities for public consultation and/or participation in local government processes.

- **Enhanced relationships between stakeholders**

Effective public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast would not have been a success if stakeholders failed to get to know each other. Effective engagement in

these processes would not be a reality if it is the case that stakeholders do not know one another and are unable to tolerate the different backgrounds and interests that each one of them represents. The fact that the Hibiscus Coast is able to hold its IDP programmes that require the meeting and the coming together of many different stakeholders without any major hassles reported means that there has been a sense of tolerance that has developed amongst stakeholders in the IDP processes as a result of their participation. Moreover, the Mayoral road shows and IDP/ budget izimbizo that the municipality embarks upon every year would not be a success if it is the case that the municipal council and the staff did not develop a relationship with the public upon which to set a base for communication.

- **Enhanced communication**

Enhanced communication is as a result of the ability and the capacity of stakeholders in the IDP process to communicate with the purpose of gaining an understating of each other's needs, problems and the knowledge to understand that stakeholders are different and therefore there is a need to take into consideration all these differences that exist amongst the participants at an IDP process. This would not be achieved without proper communication amongst stakeholders.

This study came to a conclusion that participants of the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast did develop these communication skills that have enabled them to acknowledge their differences. Although conflicts are bound to arise in such settings, but the stakeholders seem to use proper channels of resolving their dispute. Moreover, communication has meant that the municipality is able to recognize and represent the kind of information that citizens need so that they can be able to be effective participants in the

processes of the IDP. Through the development of this communication bridge as a result of public participation in the IDP processes of the Hibiscus Coast, the municipality has acquired a skill for understanding the interests of the citizens as well as their issues and concerns.

- **Increased level of participation**

Public participation in the Hibiscus Coast seems to have established higher levels of participation than before despite the public not having the power to directly influence decisions. The municipality has responded to a call by the constitution and legislation on participation to consult and encourage citizens to participate in the development of the municipality. Nevertheless, there are still challenges that the municipality faces in this regard and consultation is not the best mechanism for public participation there is but it is a step in the right direction.

## **5.6 Recommendations**

### **5.6.1 Conceptualization and understating of public participation by the Hibiscus Coast**

The municipality must develop its own clarification of the manner in which it conceptualizes and understands public participation based on the socio-economic and geographic dynamics of the municipality. Clarity on this will empower the Hibiscus Coast to be able to understand the right mechanism of public participation that is going to take into consideration the specific municipal dynamics for a municipal specific conceptualization.

### **5.6.2 Organizational structures and mechanisms employed by the Hibiscus Coast to enhance public participation in the IDP**

The Hibiscus Coast municipality must address the issues that are faced by its ward committees as these are crucial structures of public participation in an IDP process at local community level. There is a need for ward committees to collaborate with other CBOs that may exist within the committees' wards so as to strengthen their voice and capabilities. Furthermore, ward committees need to be given more power to be able to influence decisions. The municipality must find ways of sourcing the resources needed to ensure that even the people in deep rural areas are able to participate in these processes.

### **5.6.3 The nature of public participation used through these structures and mechanisms**

The decision-making authority must be decentralized to include also the IDP forum and ward committees. There is a need for the municipality to explore more formidable nature of public participation that will empower citizens to be able to impact on decisions.

#### **5.6.4 Challenges of public participation in the processes of the IDP**

- **Lack of capacity**

The municipality must make it a point that all those who lack the necessary capacity to participate in the IDP are capacitated so that the IDP process can bear the desired fruits. It is a constitutional mandate of municipalities to encourage citizens to participate in these processes.

- **Language**

The municipality must ensure that it communicate with the public in a language that is convenient for the in order to avoid other members from not participating due to being constrained by language.

- **Inadequate resources**

The municipality must find ways of sourcing funds and resources to ensure that there is no one who is not reachable to participate in the IDP because of lack of resources. The Hibiscus Coast must approach the provincial and national government for assistance in this regard.

- **Lack of capacity**

The Hibiscus Coast must ensure that follow-ups and feedback are conducted in instances where a community raised its concerns and issues on a road-show to ensure that the issues raised are being addressed.

- **Political affiliation**

This research recommends that there be clear separation of party politics and governance.

### **5.7 Recommendations for further research**

There is a great demand for further research to be conducted on the manner in which the current advancements of social networks within local communities can be utilized to enhance community participation in the processes of the IDP. Furthermore, there is a need for research to be conducted on how the structures of society that have existed within society and that are still operational can be targeted by local municipalities to be used as a way of consulting society. These structures include churches, stokvels and any other platforms that a society uses to come together sharing a common view.

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## Appendix A



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### **Letter Seeking Authority**

#### **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**RE: Introducing Mr. L.Gumbi– M.Soc.Sc. Student at University of KwaZulu Natal**

This letter serves to introduce and confirm that Mr. L. Gumbi is a duly registered M.Soc.Sc. (Policy and Development Studies) candidate at the University of KwaZulu Natal. His research project is an investigation of the IDP processes in Hibiscus Municipality. The outcome from the study is expected to improve practice, inform policy and extend theory in this field of study. As part of the requirements of a M.Soc.Sc. degree, he is expected to undertake original research in an environment and place of his choice. The UKZN ethical compliance regulations require him to provide proof that the relevant authority where the research is to be undertaken has given approval.

We appreciate your support and understanding to grant Mr. Gumbi permission to carry out research in your area(s). Should you need any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

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Professor R. Lawrence  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Policy and Development Studies  
School of Social Sciences  
[Lawrencer@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Lawrencer@ukzn.ac.za)  
033-260-5980

## Appendix B



University of KwaZulu Natal  
Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209  
Pietermaritzburg

Humanities Research Ethics Office  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Miss P Ximba  
031 260 3587

Dear Respondent

### Informed Consent Letter

**Researcher:** Lihle Gumbi  
Institution: University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Telephone number: 031 260 5841  
Email address: [206500401@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:206500401@stu.ukzn.ac.za)

**Supervisor:** Professor R. Lawrence  
Institution: University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Telephone number: 033-260 5980  
Email address: [Lawrencer@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Lawrencer@ukzn.ac.za)

I, **Lihle Gumbi**, of University of KwaZulu Natal, kindly invite you to participate in the research project on the IDP processes in Hibiscus Municipality.

This research project is undertaken as part of the requirements of aM.Soc.Sc. in Policy and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, which is being undertaken through the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Policy and Development Studies Department.

This research project aims at investigating:

- How is public participation conceptualized and understood by the HCM?
- How is public participation promoted by the HCM in its IDP process?
- What are the organizational structures and institutional mechanisms employed by HCM in order to enhance public participation in the IDP process?
- What is the nature of public participation used through these institutional mechanisms and structures?
- What are the existing challenges with regards to public participation in the IDP?

This research project will be conducted in a semi-structured interview format with open-ended questions.

Participation in this research project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the research project at any stage and for any reason without any form of disadvantage. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Department of Policy and Development Studies, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. A copy of this dissertation will be available at the UKZN library should you wish to see the final results of this study.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please feel free to contact myself or my supervisor at the numbers indicated above.

It should take you about 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you for participating in this research project.

## DECLARATION

I..... *(full names of participant)* hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.  
I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

### **Questions to be used as the basis for interviews**

#### **Questions for councillors, ward committee and ratepayers association members**

1. According to your understanding, what is the state of public participation in the IDP process in HCM?
2. What role do you play in the promotion of public participation in the IDP?
3. What are the structures and mechanisms that are employed by the HCM in order to enhance public participation in the IDP?
4. How is public participation in the IDP in HCM carried out? Please provide examples.
5. In your opinion does the IDP of the HCM reflect the public's inputs and decisions and how does this happen?
6. How does political affiliation influence participation (if it does) in the IDP process in HCM?
7. What are the existing challenges with regards to public participation in the IDP process in HCM?
8. Is there anything you would like to share with me which the questionnaires did not cover or anything that is related to public participation in the HCM's IDP?

#### **Questions for the Public Participation Manager and IDP Manager**

9. Does the HCM have any policy documents on public participation? If yes, what are they?
10. According to your understanding, what is the municipality's role in facilitating participation of the public in the IDP?
11. What role does your office play in the IDP public participation process?
12. How do you understand the process of public participation in the IDP processes by the HCM?
13. How is public participation in the IDP in HCM carried out? Please give examples.
14. What role does your office play in the IDP public participation process?



15. What role does ward councillors play in the IDP process? Please provide me with some specific examples.
16. In your opinion does the IDP of the HCM reflect the public's inputs and decisions and how does this happen?
17. What are the existing challenges with regards to public participation in the IDP process in HCM?
18. Is there anything you would like to share with me which the questionnaires did not cover or anything that is related to public participation in the HCM's IDP?

### **Questions for the Youth Development Officer**

19. How do you understand the process of public participation in the IDP processes by the HCM?
20. What role do you play in the promotion of youth participation in the IDP process?
21. What is the status of youth participation in the IDP process in HCM?
22. According to your understanding, how is public participation in the IDP carried out in HCM?
23. What are the structures and mechanisms that are employed by the HCM in order to enhance public and youth participation in the IDP?
24. How does the youth participate in the IDP process? Please provide examples.
25. In your opinion does the IDP of the HCM reflect the inputs of the youth and how does this happen?
26. How does political affiliation influence participation (if it does) in the IDP process?
27. What are the existing challenges with regards to youth participation in the IDP process?
28. Is there anything you would like to share with me which the questionnaires did not cover or anything that is related to public participation in the HCM's IDP?