

INNOVATION INSIGHTS

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Municipal Service Delivery Projects Ideas

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The Constitution heralded a challenging new era for South African local government. As an equal and autonomous sphere of government, the new status of municipalities went hand in hand with considerable responsibility, particularly for basic service delivery, which includes the provision of bulk infrastructure for water, sanitation, electricity, and refuse removal.

Furthermore, while not a core function of local government, municipalities have to foster economic development and job creation, in order to sustain their own viability, especially in light of the recently introduced Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). These priorities arise from local government's 'developmental' mandate, as framed by the White Paper on Local Government - a mandate intended to support the needs of all residents in larger and more functional areas of socio-economic activity.

As a result of legislation passed on the basis of the White Paper, the local government system rationalised the number of municipalities from 843 in 1995 to the current 284, as a more efficient basis from which to focus on the twin challenges of poverty and inequality. As the 2004 Budget Review notes, while the 2000 local government elections ushered in the current phase of transformation, the next decade carries daunting challenges. These include institution building, administrative reform, integrated planning, improvement in financial management and governance, expanding services and the delivery of free basic services, removing backlogs in infrastructure, enhancing revenue collection and management, and keeping administrative and personnel costs within acceptable limits.

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This Insight is part of a series aimed at improving service delivery through innovation. See the back page of this publication for more information about the series. The publication is targeted at practitioners and policy-makers, and shares lessons and experiences of award-winning service delivery projects.

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Municipal

Along with its increased responsibility, however, local government has been made largely responsible for raising its own finances.



This legal, financial and institutional reform has exerted considerable pressure on municipalities' ability to meet their developmental mandate, and concern as to the pace

and quality of delivery was raised during Imbizos held in the run-up to the 2004 National Elections, as well as at the national South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Conference in October, 2004.

Because of these pressures, there is an urgent need for municipalities to learn from each other, particularly where innovative ways of delivering services have been successfully implemented. Innovation is one way in which accelerated and improved service delivery is possible where delivery challenges remain substantial and, at times, overwhelming for the municipal manager. The

What is the scope of challenges facing local government?

In summary, key local government priorities include:

- ◆ The expansion and provision of free basic services and acceleration of delivery to poor households.
- ◆ The extension of services to areas not serviced.
- ◆ The creation of jobs through the EPWP.
- ◆ Enhancing capacity through administrative and financial management reforms.

The National Treasury's 2004 *Trends in Inter-Governmental Finances* suggests that backlogs in basic services remain considerable. National figures for households without access to basic levels of water, sanitation and refuse removal are as follows:

| BACKLOG DATA | | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Water | Sanitation | Refuse | Electricity | Housing |
| 3,196,613 | 4,887,163 | 5,249,849 | 3,507,172 | 1,836,226 |

Special Municipal Infrastructure Fund (SMIF) has been established to encourage and support innovative initiatives that support infrastructure projects in municipalities, and represents one way in which municipalities can access support for innovative projects.

In an effort to spread innovation, the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) has identified eight project ideas implemented at local level that could be adapted for other geographic areas. Although projects were initiated as different times and have subsequently evolved, they present pertinent themes that municipal managers and other officials could consider in designing their own service delivery agendas. These project ideas are described and discussed in this *Innovation Insight*, but the amount of detail that municipalities will require to take forward a specific idea is not provided here. Taking forward ideas will require additional efforts.

The Special Municipal Infrastructure Fund

The Special Municipal Infrastructure Fund (SMIF) is intended to support innovation in local government by:

- ◆ Enabling municipalities to implement projects that are linked to, but not currently part of, their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).
- ◆ Identifying cutting edge projects that carry acceptable levels of risk, and which will result in sustainable benefits for the municipal area.
- ◆ Encouraging municipalities to work more effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector, community-based organisations, organised labour, and other spheres of government.
- ◆ Facilitating lesson learning and knowledge sharing across projects, to enable successful innovations to be replicated and policy and procedures to be informed by outcomes on the ground.
- ◆ Promoting a culture of pride and confidence in the ability of South Africans, and the public sector in particular, to innovate and create a better life for all South Africans.

All municipalities are eligible to apply for grants from the SMIF, which can be awarded as once-off or renewable grants as a component of the

In the next section, we briefly look at the criteria on which projects were selected, and follow this with a discussion of the project in Section 3, specifically drawing out the lessons that would be useful for other councils. The final section briefly highlights some cross-cutting themes that could support thinking on innovation at the local government level.

Criteria for selection of good-practice case studies

The case studies selected all present outstanding examples of innovative delivery. They do not, however, necessarily represent 'best practice'; that is, approaches that must be used by all municipalities, but rather good practice in that they could be replicated and mainstreamed in appropriate instances. At the very least, they suggest generic trends that should be considered by all municipal managers in the fulfilment of their duties.

While most, but not all, of the projects were implemented by municipalities, they were selected on the basis that they:

- ◆ Hold lessons in replication for local government;
- ◆ Are especially innovative;
- ◆ Fall within the mandate of local government - applying to local government core functions and/ or to the closely related areas of local economic development (LED);
- ◆ Offer solutions to particularly challenging current problems - for instance AIDS, inner-city decay, and unemployment - that retard the development of local government; and
- ◆ Provide a wide spin-off for localities or a significant number of residents.

An attempt was made not to duplicate lessons and experiences from the different case studies.

Case study descriptions and specific lessons

The eight case studies featured fall into three major categories. The categories and cases discussed in this category are:

- ◆ **Addressing basic needs through innovation** - the eThekweni Water and Sanitation Programme, the Tembisa/Phomolong Ward-based Collection Programme, and the Electrification of Jouberton;
- ◆ **Addressing economic development through innovation** - Johannesburg Inner-City Informal Garment Operator Skills Development Project, the Uniondale Integrated Empowerment Project, and the Potchefstroom Cities for Climate Protection Programme; and
- ◆ **Addressing social development through innovation** - Soweto AIDS programme of Hope Worldwide and the eThekweni Informal Settlement Programme.

Addressing the basic needs through Innovation

- ◆ **eThekweni water and sanitation programme**

Water and sanitation is a core area of local government delivery and has particularly important knock-on health benefits. It also makes an important contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal according to which South Africa has set itself the target of ensuring basic water supply by 2008, and sanitation by 2010. The eThekweni's Water and Sanitation programme is an innovative response to this core delivery objective.

Project description: The eThekweni Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) was established in 2001 to provide some 63000 households in the newly incorporated areas of the city with water and sanitation services. These areas were prioritised as the result of outbreaks of cholera, which were exacerbated by the lack of provision of water and sanitation. In response, eThekweni Water and Sanitation (EWS) embarked on a free basic water and sanitation programme to improve the current and long-term health status of disadvantaged communities.

The logistical and cost implications of providing every household with affordable, sustainable, environmentally friendly infrastructure, however, were far-reaching, with some 750km of water pipelines required and R94m budgeted for the programme.



The EWS set out to ensure a sustainable supply of potable water, using 200-litre ground tanks for each household, connected to a water supply and a ventilated improved urine diversion toilet.

Residents require a safe, reliable, environmentally sound, easy-to-clean, private, and weather-protected toilet that is well ventilated, keeps smells to a minimum, and prevents the exit of flies and other disease-carrying pests. As a result, the EWS focused on refining existing dry toilet models (with urine running off, and faeces accumulated in a relatively dry condition allowing for relatively simple emptying) designed specifically for high rainfall areas.

Residents received this infrastructure for free, aside from a water connection fee of R300 (or labour contribution in lieu of this payment). The promotion of hygiene education was also an integral part of the programme to ensure optimal health benefits from the infrastructural rollout. In informing the community about the project, demographic data was confirmed, local community committees were trained, and liaising took place with traditional structures. The employment policy of the programme targeted the most needy individuals within the community and, in particular, women, youth, the unemployed, and single-parent households.

Progress was marked by the employment of 4,660 local labour and construction workers and 85 health workers, the handing over of 2,260 toilets, with 5,960 toilets under construction and 5,450 ground water tanks commissioned. A third of the projects were completed by 2003, with 2010 being the target date for the completion of the others.

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) and the national Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme (CMIP) provided funding for the water and sanitation programme, including health and hygiene (which is ongoing), while World Vision provided funding for the rural water and sanitation project (now supporting only health and hygiene initiatives). The Department of Labour allocates funds for skills development, while the Water Research Commission (WRC) is undertaking a pathogen study to determine safe

disposal of the contents of toilet pits. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) conducts independent monitoring of the project and evaluates knowledge, attitudes and practices. SANTAG (KwaZulu-Natal Sanitation Task Group) plays a coordinating role in sanitation in the province, and provides a forum for bringing together role players and stakeholders.

Lessons: This project suggests that water and sanitation projects are affordable and can be rolled out rapidly through the use of appropriate levels of innovation and partnering. For optimal benefits, however, community participation and liaison are important. As a result, DWAF, the current custodian of the funding arrangements, is looking at the model keenly, with the idea of replicating this in other district municipalities. eThekweni's rollout of water and sanitation, adapting suitable technology in combination with community awareness and participation to support the delivery of free basic services, demonstrates that the challenge presented by the Millennium Development Goals is attainable. A partnership approach to ensure optimal benefits, however, should be viewed as crucial.

Other water and sanitation innovations are discussed in greater detail in Innovation Insights Number 1 (Water) and Innovation Insights Number 2 (Sanitation). Both discuss the eThekweni experience in greater detail and are recommended reading for interested officials.

💧 Labour-intensive waste collection: Tembisa/Phomolong ward-based collection project

According to the President in his 2004 State of the Nation Address, across South Africa, the number of unemployed increased from 1,909,468 to 4,271,302 work seekers between 1995 and 2002. Ward-based collection is a powerful illustration of how partnerships with communities can both support the delivery of core services and meet a community's employment needs, which benefits, over the long term, enhance the viability of municipalities. This is an especially valuable lesson for all South African municipalities that face stubborn and serious levels of unemployment.

Project description: The Mayoral Committee of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality requested an investigation into alternative refuse collection systems, with a refuse collection contract scheduled to end in October 2002. Ward councillors and officials opted for a Ward-based Refuse Collection Project, which provided for the employment of 22 cleaners, one monitor, one contractor and one driver per ward. The service area consisted of 13 wards, creating a total of 313 jobs - an outcome that encouraged greater resident 'ownership' of waste generation and the environment. It has been further found that the greater levels of civic pride and community involvement have allowed for improved payment for municipal services by residents.

More than 60% of the cost to render such a service is now retained within each ward. In addition, some R80,000 has been saved each month through the new service delivery model. A recycling initiative is also planned and will create additional jobs. The intention is to award the project for a period of five years to the two wards and to expand projects to all other areas as existing contracts expire. The project has already been extended to Daveyton and Kathlehong, and a further two municipalities are considering the model.

Lessons: Enhanced service delivery, job creation, and cost savings are all feasible in a waste project, and community awareness of the environment can be enhanced. Furthermore, greater levels of community involvement in delivery support better payment levels. One of the main lessons learnt in the course of the project is the importance of ensuring that contractors who are appointed have contact with financial institutions for obtaining loans to purchase the reliable equipment they need to service the wards reliably and sustainably.

The Tembisa project, together with a number of other award-winning projects, is discussed in more detail in *Innovation Insights*, Number 3, entitled, 'Ideas For Labour Intensive Service Delivery Projects'.

◆ **Skills provision via service delivery: electrification of Jouberton**

The rollout of electricity has typically relied on established contractors, but Klerksdorp has demonstrated that providing this service can also support job creation, skills transfer, and community engagement. The creation of a corps of skilled technicians as a consequence of the project supports not only LED, but also the national objectives of economic growth and black economic empowerment (BEE).

Project description: The installation of electricity to houses and streets carried out by members of the community of Jouberton, a previously neglected township on the edge of mining activity, was accomplished through a highly successful skills training and on-site mentoring programme. Funding was sourced from the RDP and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

Contracts were divided into materials and labour, with the second part designed to encourage the training of community members. Some 60 unemployed youths (who all met the requirement of ten years of formal schooling and a sound basis in literacy) were selected to undergo a month of technical training at the local technical college. They were then supervised on-site by the NGO, Community Upliftment Network (CUN), alongside 145 residents who were employed to undertake labouring tasks.

The success of the project was outstanding - 24 houses were to be connected every month, but the target was exceeded, with some 300 households being connected in the first month. Members of the teams have subsequently formed their own companies and tendered for work elsewhere. Furthermore, connections were straight-line and aesthetically pleasing, with attractive lighting installed rather than typical high-mast floodlights. Along with improved water and sanitation services, the project has contributed to increased payment levels to the municipality.



Lessons: Again it is evident that community involvement in major projects supports greater ownership of projects and improves payment levels by addressing community needs. What is significant about this project is that community members, given appropriate training, can prove to be highly productive technicians who can contribute to a locality's economic well-being over the long term, multiplying the benefits of training in this way.

Addressing economic development through innovation

◆ Turning inner cities around: Johannesburg's inner-city informal garment operators' skills development project

This case study presents an exciting example of the ability of cities to create a competitive advantage in vulnerable sectors and to counter urban decay through a focused project within a framework of inner-city regeneration. It is especially relevant in light of recently introduced tax-break legislation to promote investment in inner cities through Urban Development Zones (UDZs).

Project description: The past two decades have seen significant challenges to both the inner city of Johannesburg and the city's garment industry. The 1980s were characterised by major retrenchments in the latter, with a pronounced impact on garment operators, leading to an exodus of established designers and other professionals from inner-city buildings. Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) clothing manufacturers from the informal sector moved into these buildings and developed their own businesses. A needs assessment survey of garment operators was undertaken by the University of the Witwatersrand, leading to a funding proposal. The Ford Foundation, along with the Department of Labour, accordingly funded a project in 2000. This project had three objectives:

1. To establish business development services

(with skills upgrading, garment operators forming producer networks, business mentoring programmes, an information and referral centre, and the establishment of market linkages);

2. To establish social services to allow informal garment operators access to medical aid through a bargaining council; and
3. To develop social capital by linking immigrant garment operators with South African fashion products, as well as informal association activities where project services can be offered.

Targeted beneficiaries have mostly been black females earning low wages. Besides the partnerships formed with funders, Wits Technikon provides training materials and all facilitators, CIDA City Campus provides business student mentors for the garment operators who complete the Department of Labour training course, and SEWAFRICA - a private partner - provides the venue. As a result of the project, 340 garment operators have been trained and skilled, ten networks are operational, and incomes have risen from R500 per month to R1,000 per month. Medical aid is provided to a minimum of 75 garment operators.

The role of the City of Johannesburg has primarily been one of providing facilitating conditions for the project. The Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) upgraded the area to minimise crime and encourage a cleaner and safer working environment for the operators. The model is being considered for replication in Durban and in parts of Mozambique.

Lessons: Inner-city regeneration requires a baseline level of upgrading of infrastructure and conditions (as supported by the attachment of slumlord properties to support Johannesburg's Better Building project, for instance), but focused sectoral projects are also important in rekindling areas of potential competitive advantage. In addition, these areas may only be apparent in the informal sector at the starting point of projects.

◆ **Confronting rural unemployment:
The Uniondale integrated empowerment project**

Uniondale's empowerment project represents a promising example of fostering economic activity in rural areas that are facing economic stagnation. Unemployment has typically been the most severe in these rural areas, because of a decline in the value of agricultural production and increased economic marginalisation. This puts pressure on the ability of municipalities to intervene in an effort to both facilitate and stimulate job creation. In the case of Uniondale, a number of ad hoc poverty-alleviation projects were recognised as being insufficient to address the crisis, and an integrated project initiative was chosen to coordinate various projects and to maximise resources and products, as well as to promote joint marketing.

Project description: Initiated in July 2002 in Uniondale, in the Western Cape, the Uniondale Integrated Empowerment Project (UNIEP) was launched to address the serious need to alleviate poverty in the Uniondale District Management Area (DMA), of which Uniondale is the largest town. Some 13,069 residents were in dire need of economic opportunities, with a needs assessment suggesting an unemployment rate of some 65% of respondents - a group that the pressurised agricultural sector could not absorb, especially those more skilled residents.

Job creation was therefore pursued through non-agricultural products, supporting entrepreneurship. The project was divided into a first phase, focusing on production, while the second addresses social upliftment more broadly. UNIEP is managed by a partnership of the Eden district municipality and role players within the UNIEP Section 21 Company that was established to support the project. The town's hotel was purchased as a venue for the project for showcasing products and providing administrative services.

The project integrates 12 initiatives that manufacture sewing goods, aloe products, wooden products, furniture, and quilts. Services offered include administration and accounting, tourism services, the supply of tea and refreshments for customers in a tea garden, the growing of garden produce, the manufacture of preserves, and a soup kitchen. Training has also been supported by UNIEP. As a result, approximately 30% of the families living in

and around the Uniondale area have benefited from the project, declaring average monthly incomes of R750. Projects involved are expected to become self-sustaining by 2004, with total expenditure for 2002/03 amounting to R168,000. It is estimated that some R16.7m has been attracted into the area since the project's initiation.

Lessons: LED can be sustainable and significant, even within the confines of stagnant economies and relatively low budgets, but projects need to be both integrated and strategic. These characteristics have important implications for the need for high-level management of projects even where individual projects may seem relatively small.

◆ **Towards sustainable development:
Potchefstroom's cities for climate-protection programme**

As deliberations at the World Summit on Sustainable Development illustrated, the concept of sustainable development is complex, multi-faceted, and far-reaching. Many municipalities struggling to meet basic mandates may therefore question the concept of sustainable development's relevance to delivery. Potchefstroom's leadership in the area of furthering sustainable development demonstrates how the philosophy can be of value to councils, residents, and future generations.

Project description: The Potchefstroom City Council joined the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Programme of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives in 2001, as part of an initiative to curb global warming and its adverse impact on future water, food, and energy supply. The CCP Programme is a performance-oriented campaign that offers local governments a framework for developing a strategic agenda for projects that reduce global warming and air pollution emission. This entails the added benefit of improving the living conditions of local communities.

A number of projects were initiated by the Potchefstroom City Council to reduce the current energy consumption levels, which amounts to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. One of these projects was carried out through the reduction of energy consumption by upgrading streetlights. A number of 200 Watt Incandescent streetlights have been upgraded with 125 Watt



Mercury Vapour (MV) and 70 Watt High Pressure Sodium (HPS) light emitters in some of the thoroughfares in Potchefstroom. If the project is successful, further upgrading

will be rolled out in other residential areas.

Another project related to the retrofitting of the airport runway and taxiway with energy-saving light emitters. Potchefstroom has also incorporated energy efficiency guidelines into the building plans of new municipal buildings and is auditing the green compliance of existing buildings. A new mayoral wing and offices are being built in conformance with the South African Energy and Demand Efficiency Standard, while the recovery of methane from the sewage treatment plant has also been considered in light of its potential contribution to the reduction of gas. In addition, the city has submitted proposals to plant 15,000 trees in poorer suburbs, with the aim of sequestering carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Clean water supply has been prioritised and Potch Eco-Grow has facilitated the planting of basic vegetable gardens for the city's poorest households, in an attempt to combat hunger.

This multifaceted approach (supported by the Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism and USAID) to reduce greenhouse gases is integrated across departments of the city's university and its partners. The project has resulted in the reduction of 8,705,723kg of greenhouse gas emissions annually. Cost efficiency is also a factor - in the upgrading of streetlights, the MV light emitters have resulted in an average energy saving of 23% and the HPS light emitters in an average energy saving of 50.5%. Retrofitting of light emitters on the runway has resulted in 25,581kWh or R5,372 energy savings to date and an annual saving of 20.8 tons of carbon dioxide. Since 1996, 4,070 trees have already been planted and 12.5 tons of carbon dioxide have been sequestered as a result.

Lessons: A strategy to support sustainable development is not only feasible, but also beneficial for South African cities of all sizes. The residents of Potchefstroom, as a consequence of forward-looking planning, now face more stable hydrological and vegetation patterns in the future, which will protect their incomes by reducing the likelihood of droughts. It is clear therefore that, correctly pursued, a green agenda, rather than compromising poverty alleviation, can in fact complement human development poverty alleviation.

Fostering social development through innovation

◆ Partnering to combat aids: Soweto Aids Programme of Hope worldwide

The AIDS pandemic is one of the most critical threats facing the development of South Africa's localities. Although health is a provincial responsibility, programmes that support the prevention, management and treatment of AIDS are likely to become increasingly important for municipalities to engage with. The Soweto AIDS programme - identified by a city official who facilitated space for a counselling room that ultimately grew to several clinics - illustrates one such initiative that should be championed to develop the livelihood of municipal residents.

Project description: AIDS support groups are currently maintained at 11 clinics throughout Soweto. The project provides multi-level, holistic support to HIV-positive patients, as well as training in AIDS prevention. This is achieved by means of integration with Department of Health facilities and staff. Clinic nurses identify patients they suspect are HIV positive. The Soweto AIDS programme then provides counselling, support groups, nutritional support, home-based care, advice on income-generating activities, and training and ongoing education. Help with disclosure to family and children is also given, as well as with the tracking of children to ensure adequate care in the event of their parents' illness or death.

These services are provided at Health Department facilities in partnership with local clinic staff. The level of integration with the Department of Health, as well as the wide-ranging support services provided set this project apart from the rest. Large-scale education programmes undertaken by the

project have educated hundreds of thousands of people, and millions of condoms have been distributed. The project estimates that it reaches 90% of Soweto communities. During 2000, the project undertook 3,980 counselling sessions and 1,054 home visits. One-hundred-and-fifty-six tons of fresh produce and 18 tons of canned goods have been distributed through its nutritional support programme and 245 community workers have been trained as AIDS workers. The project is heavily reliant on donor funding and the programme has been successfully implemented in five other townships in the Johannesburg area and in four other cities in South Africa. Support programmes have also been set up in four major prisons in partnership with the Department of Correctional Services.

Lessons: Co-operative governance can support a meaningful and multi-faceted response to AIDS - one that is necessary to contain the potentially devastating impact of the pandemic. Local government responses, while necessary, are therefore best co-ordinated with other programmes for optimal impact.

◆ **IT solutions to planning and housing: informal settlement programme**

eThekweni officials have demonstrated that a technological solution in the form of a database can contribute to prioritising the development of some three-quarters of a million residents living in settlements within the city's limits.

Project details: The programme essentially constitutes a management and decision-making tool that allows a rational approach to upgrading and relocating settlements. It consists of an audit of existing settlements, the identification of appropriate interventions, the prioritisation of projects, and a programme for intervention. These objectives are aimed at approximately 500 settlements consisting of approximately 118,000 structures (or approximately 80% of informal settlements in the city), and they provide information on the development and management of informal settlements.

These settlements are particularly vulnerable to flooding, landslides and unhygienic and hazardous conditions that not only perpetuate poverty but also spill into surrounding areas. The Informal Settlement Relocations Working

Group fosters a culture of co-operation between departments, using technical models that manage to circumvent personal or political preferences in the upgrading of habitats. Combating poverty is achieved by identifying, prioritising and beginning the relocation of settlements that are at risk from natural disasters. Beneficiaries are able to receive formal land tenure and an asset that has utility and commodity value. People living in informal settlements benefit directly from economic opportunities that arise during the construction of projects. Funding is derived from the Department of Housing and the eThekweni council.

Lessons: Although informal settlements are often perceived as unmanageable developments, they pose serious risks for their residents and intervention in them is crucial. Systematic management of settlements is of immense value, and can best be implemented with technological assistance that objectively identifies those communities at greatest risk.

Cross-cutting themes and general lessons

The case studies explored in the previous section not only yield specific lessons for different areas of service delivery; they also bring to light several cross-cutting themes that contributed to their success. All municipal managers should therefore consider these lessons as preconditions for successful programme management.

They include:

- ◆ The crucial role of partnerships. Whether it is with communities, civil society organisations, other spheres and agencies of government, the private sector and/or donors, all projects were supported by shared solutions to challenging problems. This implies a need for openness in addressing the challenges of councils, and the importance of communication.
- ◆ Responding to community needs rather than considering logistical limitations. Most projects were premised on a clear understanding and prioritisation of community needs, which required an understanding of constituencies' concerns and adequate communication channels. In return, higher payment levels into communities themselves tend to be a clear benefit of innovation in most cases.



- ◆ A combination of high- and low-tech solutions was evident in the case studies, suggesting that innovation relies on the moulding of technology to meet circumstance-specific needs, and that the real skill behind innovation lies not in the adoption of technology per se, but rather in how well it is tailored to particular circumstances.
- ◆ Innovation can support multiple objectives, such as basic service delivery, health care and employment generation. While this implies greater benefits for communities, it also requires cross-departmental co-operation and management for ensuring optimal results.
- ◆ Innovation need not be costly. On the contrary, once projects were initiated, most of the case studies tended to yield cost savings from innovative service delivery.
- ◆ Leadership and lateral thinking were evident in all cases. This is not necessarily something that can be easily replicated, other than by encouraging open mindedness, courage in management and political leadership in attempting new solutions to the pressing challenges of local government. Innovation is a mindset that needs to be fostered and implies high-level risk taking for directing organisations. It was also evident from most of the case studies that a brave vision of municipalities or specific sectors guided projects.

What do these case studies mean for the municipal manager? They show that solutions exist to mobilising resources in innovative ways to meet the needs of development. Furthermore, these solutions have been applied in recent years by municipalities that are willing to share the lessons they have learnt.

The intention of this paper, however, is not to prescribe a particular form of delivery but to illustrate how innovation can be adapted to address the needs and challenges of individual municipalities. To this end, readers are encouraged to seek further information on other innovative

projects from the Impumelelo Innovations Awards database or the CPSI so that they can explore further the feasibility of these projects for individual municipalities. The stakeholders of existing projects should be interacted with so that their experiences can be reviewed in the light of individual municipal priorities.

To promote a culture of learning and sharing, municipalities that have managed to find innovative solutions should share their experiences and optimise the value of these in this way. By testing ideas through experimentation to ensure suitable levels of customisation, the paper has attempted to demonstrate that there are solutions to the considerable implementation challenges that local governments face.

The most important conclusion suggested by the case studies is that there exists a wealth of ideas that can be of tremendous value not only to the individual municipality, but also to the broader service delivery framework. But this is not to underplay the challenge of taking ideas forward. There is a need to combine resources and funding on the one hand with technical and managerial skills to identify ideas that should be taken forward. The Special Municipal Innovation Fund (SMIF) can help in the case of the former need - resources and funding - and the publication *Making Service Delivery Happen - Innovation at Work*, along with a supportive learning culture, can help with the latter, which places the ball squarely in the court of municipalities for taking innovation in public service delivery forward.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------|
| AIDS | - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| CPSI | - Centre for Public Service Innovation |
| CCP | - Cities for Climate Protection |
| CMIP | - Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme |
| CUN | - Community Upliftment Network |
| DBSA | - Development Bank of Southern Africa |
| DMA | - District Management Area |
| DPLG | - Department of Provincial and Local Government |
| DWAF | - Department of Water Affairs and Forestry |
| EPWP | - Expanded Public Works Programme |
| EWS | - eThekweni Water and Sanitation |
| HIV | - Human Immune-deficiency Virus |
| HPS | - High Pressure Sodium |
| HSRC | - Human Sciences Research Council |
| IDP | - Integrated Development Plan |
| JDA | - Johannesburg Development Agency |
| LED | - Local Economic Development |
| MIG | - Municipal Infrastructure Grant |
| MSE | - Micro and Small Enterprise |
| MV | - Mercury Vapour |
| RDP | - Reconstruction and Development Programme |
| SALGA | - South African Local Government Association |
| SANTAG | - KwaZulu-Natal Sanitation Task Group |
| SMIF | - Special Municipal Innovation Fund |
| UDZ | - Urban Development Zone |
| UNIEP | - Uniondale Integrated Empowerment Project |
| WRC | - Water Research Commission |
| WSP | - (eThekweni) Water and Sanitation Programme |

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ABOUT THE SERIES

Effective responses to the many developmental challenges facing South Africa - combating poverty, dealing with disease, providing reliable services, and so on - require a significant level of experimentation and innovation. Old approaches are not always appropriate for addressing new challenges, a new institutional environment, or other changes.

In the last decade there has been no scarcity of experimentation and innovation. In many cases, individual projects have provided the evidence to spur on the re-thinking of service delivery arrangements and to improve policy and practice. In some cases, South African initiatives have contributed to shaping global thinking on particular issues - for example, the Working for Water project.

Innovation is vital if we are to meet our development challenges. There is growing acceptance, too, of the importance of other measures when development challenges are dealt with.

These include a stronger emphasis on:

- ◆ Acknowledging and rewarding innovation or simply good practice;
- ◆ Introducing systems that encourage learning and knowledge sharing; and
- ◆ Ensuring that policies and strategies are informed by practical experiences on the ground, i.e. the concept of evidence-based policy making.

The Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) was established with a specific mandate to unlock innovation in public service delivery. An important task in this regard is to identify innovations in service delivery that have proven to be successful and sustainable, and to assess how these innovations can be replicated elsewhere or mainstreamed. In this way, the innovation can be taken from one part of the country to another, or can be institutionalised

in the area where it was started. Better still, it becomes the dominant way, nationally and internationally.

However, the experiences and findings of service delivery and innovation specialists have shown that replication and mainstreaming are far more difficult to achieve in practice. On this basis, the CPSI has created a work programme dedicated to enhancing our understanding of replication and mainstreaming and our ability to replicate and mainstream successful innovations.

With funding from the Ford Foundation, the CPSI has initiated this series of short Service Delivery Innovation Briefs. Each brief focuses on a different area of service delivery. The brief combines an exploration of key challenges within that sector and looks at the lessons that can be learned from award-winning cases where a different or innovative route was chosen. Where possible, the brief identifies crucial policy questions that may require attention and debate.

The case studies are drawn from the Impumelelo Innovations Award database. The database is managed by the Impumelelo Innovations Award Trust and contains more than a 1000 examples of alternative approaches to service delivery in a range of service delivery areas, as well as projects focused on poverty alleviation. The database includes nominations as well as approximately 120 award winners from the first five years (1999–2004) of the awards programme.

The Impumelelo Innovations Award is primarily an awards programme. As such, the projects that are conferred with an award address only some of the many challenges faced within a specific area of service delivery. Despite this limitation, these projects do form an important basis for policy and practice. In addition, they assist in identifying improvements that can be replicated or mainstreamed, or help to spur on new innovations.

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