

Imperatives for Co-operative Governance: A Case Study of Local Municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

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ABSTRACT Despite the South African government's effort to enhance co-operative governance, the high rate of service delivery protests confirm that co-operative governance has not fully developed as a mechanism to improve service delivery. The aim of the study was to ascertain factors influencing co-operative governance and the perceptions of local government regarding the effectiveness of both the National and Provincial Governments' support for co-operative governance. The study used the quantitative research method to investigate the needs and extent of co-operative governance in local municipalities with the KwaZulu-Natal province as a case study. The key issues municipalities consider important for improving intergovernmental relations (IGR) include communication and consultation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), concurrent function clarity and technical support. The paper recommends the implementation of a participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) system to enhance communications and alignment of the integrated development plans across the three spheres of government.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa as a young democracy and a developmental state should ensure the alignment of national resources towards sustainable economic growth, promote wealth creation and social protection within the global environment. However, the country is experiencing increased service delivery protests resulting in the loss of lives and damage of state property, high unemployment, high levels of inequality and poor economic growth (Maserumule 2016). Beall et al.'s (2005) statement that the country was in a state of "fragile-stability" with weak state-society linkages still holds true as local government is still perceived to be ineffective and corrupt and communities are no longer interested in working with government to establish a social order. According to Manyaka and Sebola (2015), the poor service delivery in many municipalities could also be attributed to there being no proper and holistic mechanism existing for appraising the performance of public officials and politicians.

The Draft Green Paper on Co-operative Governance (2010) states that co-operative governance is a critical component of good governance which is a requirement for an effective developmental state focused on integrated service delivery amongst the three spheres of government. In particular, strong co-ordination and co-operation between the three spheres of government and the communities is needed for ef-

fective Integrated Development Plan (IDP) implementation, financial planning for common programmes and projects and the effective management of integrated service delivery. In the absence of good IGR among the national and provincial sector departments, municipalities are unable to develop viable plans that could be successfully implemented and completed (NCB-FLG 2008) via the IDP process. Tau (2015) suggests that the violence due to municipal boundary disputes indicate there is a weakness in the government-society partnerships and the litigations among the three spheres of government highlight the low levels of mutual trust and good faith. The study is, therefore, relevant as it aims to determine the key factors affecting co-operative governance and the support given by the national and provincial government to the local municipalities.

Objectives

Co-operative governance encompasses the partnership between the three spheres of government to fulfil its functions of addressing the needs of the people through good intergovernmental relations. However, the South African public sector is currently plagued by poor productivity, political infighting, weak financial sustainability and the inability to meet the service delivery needs of the masses, resulting in regular service delivery protests. The above issues

indicate that co-operative governance has not fully developed to deal with the above challenges. The aim of the study was to identify the key issues that affect co-operative governance in local government. The objectives included ascertaining the extent to which the local municipalities viewed both the provincial and national governments' support for co-operative governance.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Conceptualising Co-operative Governance

Co-operative governance as defined in Chapter 3 of the Constitution (1996) states that the national, provincial and local spheres of government are distinct, interdependent and interrelated (Section 40) and requires the three spheres of government to operate as a coherent unit to become effective and efficient in providing products and services. According to section 41 of the Constitution (1996) good intergovernmental relationship should also include mutual trust and good faith amongst the three spheres of government by fostering friendly relations; assisting and supporting one another; and informing one another of, and consulting one another on, matters of common interest; co-ordinating their actions and legislation with one another. The outcome of effective IGR is achievement of service excellence in the three spheres of government so that faith and trust can be retained in government (Geldenhuys 2008).

The promulgation of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act No. 13 of 2005, and the formation and implementation of formal intergovernmental relations forums was supposed to promote service delivery performance and intergovernmental relations amongst the three spheres of government. These tools have not been effective due to the lack of capacity among the local municipalities and district municipalities. In addition, the lack of urgency given to intergovernmental relations due to the perception that provincial and local government spheres are structured as agencies of national government, rather than self-reliant spheres of government, undermines the principles of co-operative governance.

Intergovernmental Relations

Intergovernmental relations (IGR) is an essential component of co-operative governance

and refers to both the vertical interaction among the three spheres of government and horizontal interactions between governmental institutions. It is therefore a mechanism through which the values of co-operative governance could be institutionalised (Edwards 2008). According to Fox and Meyer (1995) in Malan (2005), IGR involves managing the complex and interdependent relations, fiscal and administrative processes among the three spheres of government and the sharing of knowledge. Factors affecting intergovernmental relations include the type of state, political ideology, the extent to which power and authority are devolved to other spheres of government, fiscal relations and administrative considerations (Du Toit et al. 1998). This is evidenced in the many African National Congress (ANC) dominated local municipal councils in KZN where power and authority are highly contested amongst the ANC members themselves, resulting in a reduced focus on service delivery, poor fiscal discipline and maladministration.

Challenges in Co-operative Governance

In forging ahead with the transformation of the public sector, it must be noted that IGRs are works in progress as it is an evolving process of communication and consultations to improve the effectiveness of service delivery. Rapoo (1999) asserts that the following factors further influence intergovernmental relations, namely, history of the country; divisions among political groups' conceptions of power, authority and purpose; nature and identity of the political parties at national and provincial government; and economic strength of the provincial and local spheres of government and its institutions.

With regard to the history of South Africa, apartheid created the socio-economic and service delivery inequalities that the current government is finding challenging to obliterate, and backlogs in infrastructure development and access to basic services by the poor continue to persist (Abrahams et al. 2009). The post-1994 government had the key challenges of overwhelming demand by communities for immediate service delivery and the transformation of the public sector in structure, efficiencies and human resources capacity development (Lues 2016). In addition, the African National Congress is the dominant party in most provinces (including KZN) and municipalities and there is evi-

dence of increased interfactional fighting within the ANC (COGTA 2010). It is perceived that the placement of politicians by the ANC is based on seniority in the party with the most senior members being placed in the national government and the least influential politicians being placed in local government. Maserumule (2016) argues that the inherent bureaucracy in government, indulgence in self-interested ventures at the expense of the common good and the government's disrespect for the Constitution encourages poor governance and makes co-operative governance irrelevant. This poses challenges to the local government administrators where the political power and party loyalty reign supreme in service delivery decision-making rather than serving the best interests of the communities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used the case study approach to obtain a deeper understanding of co-operative governance as the phenomenon investigated within the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The mixed method design which incorporates both the quantitative and qualitative approaches was used to ensure that the combined data collected was adequate to report on the above phenomena. The quantitative data was collected via questionnaires and the qualitative data was collected through structured interviews. First, the questionnaires were mailed to each of the municipal managers offices. Upon receipt of the completed questionnaires the municipal managers' offices were contacted for the details of the municipal officials to be interviewed. The qualitative aspect of this study included semi-structured interviews with the nominated municipal officials involved in the municipal performance management functions.

Sample

The KZN province has one metropolitan region, fifty local municipalities and ten district municipalities. The sample included the fifty municipalities in the B category, ten district municipalities in the C category and one metropole in the A category. The questionnaire was mailed to each of the 60 municipalities in KZN and the response rate for the mailed questionnaire and

the semi-structured interviews were 33 percent, making the research findings representative of the population.

Data Collection

The completed questionnaires were mailed to the office of the researcher and the semi-structured interviews were held with the municipal officials at the specific municipal offices. The data collected from the questionnaires was analysed with the PASW Statistics version 18.0 and the results are presented in the form of graphs. The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews was thematically coded.

RESULTS

Generally, there are gaps between the requirements of the local municipalities for co-operative governance and the perceived level of effective support from both the national and provincial government (Table 1). Local municipalities found the provincial government to be more effective in co-operative governance support than the national government. For example, 92 percent of the respondents required monitoring and evaluation support but only 52 percent of the respondents found the current support from the provincial and 28 percent of the respondents found the current support from the national government to be effective. The findings and detailed explanation for each of the co-operative imperatives is discussed below.

Concurrent Function Clarity

According to Table 1, 92 percent of the respondents considered concurrent function clarity to be important for co-operative governance while only 28 percent (National Government) and 44 percent (Provincial Government) of the respondents indicated that the current concurrent functions clarity support are effective. According to the Report, the Role of Premiers' Offices in Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation: A Good Practice Guide (The Presidency 2008), co-operative governance among the three spheres of government creates complexity in policy formulation and implementation due to the concurrent functions of each sphere of government. This lack of clarity and confusion stifles service delivery and could have led to ser-

Table 1: Requirements of the municipalities for co-operative governance and the effectiveness of the National and Provincial governments' engagement in co-operative governance

	<i>Importance to local government (%)</i>	<i>Provincial government effectiveness (%)</i>	<i>National government effectiveness (%)</i>
Communication and consultation	100	68	32
Technical support	92	60	24
Leadership	84	40	40
Fiscal support	88	48	48
Concurrent functions clarity	92	44	28
Monitoring and evaluation	92	52	28

vice delivery protests. In their study of a district municipality, Pretorius and Schurink (2011) confirm that the lack of clear distinctions between the district and local municipalities' functions "hampers the execution of resolutions and activities throughout the region", thus adversely affecting service delivery. Bovaird and Löffler (2003) comment that public organisations cannot be assessed only on service delivery but also on the manner it exercises its political, environmental and social responsibilities. Therefore, public sector employees should be capacitated to fully understand their specific functions in terms of Schedule 4 and 5 of the Constitution. With a clear understanding of their functions, officials could provide better services in terms of the Batho Pele principles which provide guidelines to providing good customer services.

Fiscal Support

According to Table 1, 88 percent of the respondents considered fiscal support to be important for co-operative governance while 48 percent (National and Provincial Government) of the respondents indicated that the current fiscal support is effective. Fiscal support includes the processes and conditions applicable when the different spheres of government share revenue and other resources either by grants or loans. Every sphere of government has to deal with the pressures created by fiscal constraints and conflicts caused when the demand for public services exceeds supply (Seasons 2003 citing Pal 1998 and Paquet 1999) thus necessitat-

ing the need for good co-operative governance. According to Thornhill (2009), the Division of Revenue Act (No. 29 of 2000) provides money to be allocated by parliament to municipalities according to pre-determined criteria with many municipalities still not being financially sustainable and becoming dependent on the national and provincial government. Therefore, for effective IGR, local government should be adequately capacitated both financially and with human capital to undertake its constitutional mandates. In addition, high poverty levels are also attributed to backlogs in infrastructure development and services and limited access to basic services by the majority of the citizens (Abrahams et al. 2009). It is worth noting that national government has introduced many legislation and strategic initiatives to transform the public sector and has increased the number of citizens receiving basic services of housing, water and electricity. Re-evaluation of the fiscal distribution policies and the demarcation of the municipalities should be undertaken to ensure improved socio-economic sustainability of the municipalities which could lead to improved IGR.

Leadership

According to Table 1, 84 percent of the respondents considered leadership to be important for co-operative governance while only 40 percent (National and Provincial Government) of the respondents indicated that the current leadership was effective. The term "leader" is used to define different types of individuals having authority, charisma or the "influential increment over and above the mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organisation" (Katz and Kahn 1978 in Siegel 2010). Further, the ability of the leader to influence stakeholders external to the organisation is critical for effective IGR since service delivery as a "wicked problem" spans across many ministries, sectors and departments (Siegel 2010).

Since IGR is voluntary, there are insufficient accountability mechanisms to ensure the effective operations of the IGR forums and implementation of IGR recommendations which could lead to the low levels of leadership effectiveness. According to De Villiers and Sindane (2011), leaders and officials cannot be forced to co-operate and consult and the situation is aggravated by the dominance of the African National

Congress in the majority of the provinces, including the province of KwaZulu-Natal, resulting in limited public accountability. Co-operative governance operates in an environment of respect and trust and should therefore not be used as a tool for coercion and dominance by participants. This means accountable and responsible leadership across the political and administrative entities, in all levels, is required to strengthen the relationship among the three spheres of government, eradicate corruption and to change the attitudes of public servants to become more accountable to the communities (Kuye and Ile 2007). Moshaike and Penceliah (2016) found that there is a positive correlation between the political leadership and the performance of the local municipalities and concluded that leadership, accountability and governance need to be enhanced to make the municipalities more effective.

Thornhill (2009) provides the following guidelines for effective IGR, namely, the existence of a supreme authority that is subject to the constitution, public accountability, effectiveness and efficiency principles and all actions should comply with the constitutional values of equality, human dignity and operate in good faith. Finally, Reddy (2001 citing Watts 1999) suggests there should also be a culture of co-operation, trust and respect and capacity development for successful IGR. Therefore, to achieve the above, leaders should be competent in adopting an inclusive management approach, comply with legislative stipulations, set achievable goals and ensure monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes and impacts of their interventions. This view is confirmed by Kroukamp and Lues (2008) who assert that the role of municipal managers involves more than execution of legislation and must include policy making, implementation and analysis of performance.

Technical Support

According to Table 1, 92 percent of the respondents considered technical support to be important for co-operative governance while only 24 percent (National Government) and 60 percent (Provincial Government) of the respondents indicated that current technical support is effective. Since policies developed and implemented by national and provincial governments

do not accurately reflect the local needs and requirements, the main driver for IGR should be the local government IDPs (De Villiers and Sindane 2011). Geldenhuys (2008) comments that the challenges local municipalities experience in obtaining co-operation from the provincial government to develop the IDP, adversely affects IGR. In this regard Kuye and Ile (2007) confirm that poor IGR is also a problem of local government technical capacity and management rather than only procedures.

According to Malan (2005), IGR is further hampered by the incoherent development and intervention of national development priorities and the delivery of services is ad hoc and lacks institutional definition. This makes capacity development plans to deal with the technical issues more challenging. De Villiers and Sindane (2011) add that co-operative governance challenges are prevalent among the three spheres of government due to a lack of IGR capacity and capacity development; monitoring and evaluation of IGR forums and interventions; accountability mechanisms to manage IGR performance; and open communication and consultation due to the domination of political party agenda. Therefore, technical support for socio-economic development is required by the smaller and financially constrained municipalities for the development of the IDP and the provision of basic services to the communities. In some instances the district municipalities offer the technical support for basic service delivery to the municipalities within the district, creating a platform for effective IGR.

Communication and Consultation

According to Table 1, 100 percent of the respondents considered communication and consultations to be important for co-operative governance while only 32 percent (National Government) and 68 percent (Provincial Government) of the respondents indicated that the current communication and consultations are effective. Currently, the IGR structures are used for the purposes of top-down communication and the issuing of instructions rather than for collaborations and consultations among the local municipalities. Kuye and Ile (2007) argued that co-operative governance would be ineffective if provinces and municipalities are told what to do by the national government. Therefore, IGR should

provide communication channels for constructive engagements and be open to the bottom-up approach when dealing with the different developmental issues. In the municipal environment, communication has been identified as a critical challenge that influences leadership decision-making for service delivery (Pretorius and Schurink 2007). Malan (2005) proposes dispute settlement mechanisms, information sharing and consultation, co-ordination of concurrent functions and joint programmes and oversight roles should be monitored and evaluated for efficient and effective leadership.

According to De Villiers and Sindane (2011), sustainable and effective IGR should prevent competition, litigation and conflict in a complex multi-tiered government system. Bovaird and Loffler (2003) explain that service delivery is also affected by the existence of “wicked problems” that cannot be solved by the traditional problem-solving tool thus requiring greater levels of key stakeholder participation. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (2010) further confirms that the IGR system is complex and practitioners need to capacitate themselves when dealing with this complexity. The above complexities could be overcome through a collaborative approach and open dialogue for planning and implementing a participative monitoring and evaluation system.

In relation to local government, Bovaird (2002) notes that good local management is not only about a high level of service delivery but also involves engaging local communities in solving their own problems and creating a better future for its beneficiaries. Geldenhuys (2008) further asserts that the improvement in local government performance depends on the quality of the interactions between and amongst the organs of state, that is, effective participation must be promoted among all stakeholders. In this regard, Brett (2003) differentiates between weak and strong participation. The former involves consulting or informing while the latter implies an empowering process in partnership with the various stakeholders to collectively define the challenges and find solutions for sustainable outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

According to Table 1, 92 percent of the respondents considered M&E to be important for co-operative governance while 28 percent (Na-

tional government) and 52 percent (Provincial government) of the respondents indicated that the current M&E support systems are effective.

Public service reform in South Africa has undergone a paradigmatic shift from “apartheid based, internationally outdated public services to a more democratic administration” (Cameron 2009). The provincial and local spheres of government, with its unique structural complexities, experience constraints such as lack of human capacity, poor and lack of infrastructure and poor governance due to the lack of accountability. Recent concerns with performance management, efficiency and effectiveness have sparked a renewed interest in M&E as all state entities are required to “do more with less” (Seasons 2003). M&E is also seen as important due to its benefit of improved transparency, better goal achievement and all stakeholders working towards achieving a common goal of service excellence. However, local municipalities are constrained by inadequate M&E skills, financial resources and the lack of the relevant systems and commitment by politicians. Further, the South African government, through the Presidency, has embarked on implementing the Government-wide monitoring and evaluation system that would be aligned to the provincial and local M&E systems. However, the implementation of the M&E systems as yet to be completed resulting in the local municipalities M&E systems are not being fully effective.

The following themes emerged by asking the respondents the following question: “How can monitoring and evaluation improve co-operative governance”?

Single Window of Governance

Since local municipalities still work in silos, M&E will afford an opportunity to align with national and provincial programmes to avoid duplication of services provided. National and Provincial government must work from a single window of governance and address the M&E issues on a regular basis to eliminate misalignment. M&E will link the three spheres of government and improve communications which could avoid duplication in terms of requests from national government, provincial government and the treasury. It would clarify the functions of provincial and local government and create a

linkage through regular reporting. In addition, the national and provincial monitoring and evaluation systems must be linked to the municipal-wide monitoring and evaluation system. The GWMES should be functional and must link financial controls with the achievement of service delivery targets. Local municipalities should have standardised financial systems where M&E would use actual expenditure rather than projected figures to make evidence-based decisions.

The integrated service delivery approach has not been successful due to the absence of co-operative governance and integrated planning across the spheres of government, poor accountabilities of local municipalities and lack of service culture and limited resources in many local municipalities (Abrahams et al. 2009). An added factor is the delay in implementing the GWMES and linking it to the provincial and local M&E systems. Within this context, effective IGR is critical due to the increased demands for better and more services from citizens, complexity of governmental activities, the plethora of legislation that has to be complied with, sharing of developmental activities among the spheres of government and competition between the spheres of government (De Villiers and Sindane 2011). The South African Government is currently considering a single public sector that would streamline the mobility and transfer of staff, review the assignment of powers and functions, promote integrated service delivery and better policy co-ordination across the three spheres of government.

Communications

The majority of the respondents commented that M&E would provide clear communications and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each sphere of government since M&E assists in liaising with other government departments that offer services in the area. Some respondents suggested that the mayors should meet four times a year and the municipal managers should meet 10 times a year for IGR to be more effective. Provincial government would see the needs of the municipalities and the practicalities of the municipal functions. This would then allow provincial government to make informed decisions.

Once again, communication has been highlighted as the key factor for disseminating infor-

mation about the municipal programmes and projects. There is the perception that provincial employees do not fully understand the daily operations of local municipalities and the needs of municipalities. This could be attributed to the top-down management approach adopted by the province.

Integrated Development Plans

Majority of the respondents commented that M&E is a mechanism to ensure that each sphere delivers on its service delivery targets once the relevant strategies (IDP) are in place. Local government performance and its effect on service delivery can then be objectively assessed. To achieve better alignment between the national, provincial and local government programmes, participation of the three spheres of government in the IDP forums is to be encouraged. M&E would integrate programmes and assist local government to achieve the provincial and national goals via regular reports generated from the M&E system. Some respondents indicated that M&E would contribute to better understanding the provincial and national government goals. Currently there are no guidelines from national and provincial government to local government in terms of the specific figures or baselines to be used. Few respondents expressed a concern that M&E could have a negative influence on work performance since it promotes the "big brother" approach.

DISCUSSION

The challenge for the newly formed decentralised state was to ensure that the three spheres of government operated as cohesive units to deliver services that would drastically reduce the service delivery backlogs created by the previous apartheid government and to satisfy the expectations of the people. To this end, co-operative governance, through good intergovernmental relations, was seen as the catalyst to improve the quality of the living standards of the citizens. This required the public sector to transform and to provide value to the majority of the citizens through institutional and behavioural change from government (Cloete 2008). First, the value changes related to the historic discriminatory practices ought to be removed and open policy systems with a participatory process be

introduced. Second, the institutional changes included restructuring government by eliminating ethnic and racial entities and introducing other races into the different levels of government. Finally, the incoming public servants who did not have the requisite qualifications and experience in the public sector needed behavioural changes. In regards to the behavioural change of public officials, the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery (Batho Pele) introduced eight principles for service delivery which included, setting service standards, increasing access, courtesy, openness and transparency and redress. In a similar vein, the Draft Green Paper on Co-operative Governance (2010) states that co-operative governance is a critical component of good governance which is a requirement for an effective developmental state focused on integrated service delivery amongst the three spheres of government. However, Nzewi et al. (2016) in their study on municipal cultures found that municipalities continue to experience challenges in service delivery, financial sustainability, local economic development and good governance.

The demarcation of the municipalities on the assumption that large cities, small towns and rural areas could deal with the socio-economic issues of their areas despite their different financial, human capacities and historical service delivery and developmental inequalities also contributed to the poor performance of the smaller municipalities. The government approach to municipal demarcation and distribution of funds based on the “one size fits all” policy has left many municipalities unable to carry out their functions due to financial unsustainability. The outcome was that local government now solely depended on national and provincial government for additional support, rather than operating as a distinct, interdependent and interrelated sphere of government, thus adversely affecting the context of co-operative governance as stipulated in Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (108 of 1996).

In South Africa, co-operative governance is further required for the development of the identity of the different spheres of government due to the different functions of national, provincial and local government. National government focuses on macro-social, economic and security issues, provincial government engages in regional socio-economic and human development of the region. Finally, local government provides basic services and manages the issues of the built environment. However, there is also confu-

sion regarding schedule 4 and 5 functions between the province and local government. In the absence of effective and efficient IGR a multi-sphered government would become irrelevant, thus leading to competition, litigation and conflict replacing co-operation amongst the three spheres of government. To promote co-operative governance, the district and municipal intergovernmental forums need to be empowered to make decisions that would deliver better and more services.

District intergovernmental forums exist but are not effective due to the lack of capacity in both the district and local municipalities (Edwards 2008 in De Villiers and Sindane 2011). Further, the forums do not have the power to make executive decisions but only to make recommendations, thus not achieving the purposes of the IGR Framework Act. District intergovernmental forum should promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations between the district municipality and the local municipalities in the district (Section 24). The role of a district intergovernmental forum is to serve as a consultative forum for the district municipality and the local municipalities in the district to discuss and consult each other on matters of mutual interest.

Two or more municipalities may establish an inter-municipality forum to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations between them (Section 28(1)). The role of an inter-municipality forum is to serve as a consultative forum for the participating municipalities to discuss and consult each other on matters of mutual interest, including, information sharing, best practice and capacity building; co-operating on municipal developmental challenges affecting more than one municipality; and any other matter of strategic importance which affects the interests of the participating municipalities (Section 29).

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Participatory M&E is defined as a process of individual and collective learning and capacity development through which people become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses, wider social realities and visions and perspectives of development outcomes (Estrella 1997). Participatory M&E emerged due to the traditional M&E systems' limitations in focusing mainly on measuring and assessing project achievements, failure to engage the relevant beneficiaries, serving as a control tool for managing programmes and projects, emphasis on quantitative mea-

tures, thus ignoring qualitative information which provides a better understanding of the outcomes and focusing on the interest of the implementers and donors rather than on the interests of the other stakeholders, in particular the communities (Vernooy et al. 2003). To overcome the above limitations, PME include effective participation, learning, negotiations and flexibility that is conducive to adapting to the complex and rapidly changing socio-economic dynamics of the emerging population in South Africa.

The aim of using PME is to increase relevance and effectiveness by jointly determining how progress should be measured and the actions to be taken, to consider the context within which the intervention occurs, ownership and sustainability. Ultimately, PME increases co-operation among various stakeholders, develops “local” solutions and opportunities and empowers the local communities in problem solving, leadership and acquiring of skills through capacity-building initiatives (Matsiliza 2012). Due to the accountability and service delivery demands made by citizens, organs of state need to respond effectively by engaging all stakeholders in the relevant planning and development processes (Pretorius and Schurink 2007). However, strong participatory processes cannot displace the need for hierarchical public bureaucracies, market competition and representative democracy due to the imbalance of power, knowledge and resource ownership amongst the various stakeholders (Brett 2003).

While the Constitution (Chapter 3) and the Municipal Systems Act (Chapter 4) stipulate the need for public developmental interventions, IGR in South Africa is dominated by the national and provincial spheres of government based on authority, power and prescriptions (Edwards 2008), resulting in reduced public participation. According to Matsiliza (2012) “there is a growing concern that M&E should also be participatory in South Africa to provide more opportunities to promote development and accountability”. In the absence of an inclusive approach to local governance, accountability, transparency and access to information and empowerment of civil society is not fully realised (Steinich 2000). Brett (2003) adds that support for participation emanates from the failure of state systems that encourages inertia, corruption, exploitation of the poor and unemployment.

CONCLUSION

Co-operative governance and IGR are evolving processes in South Africa and the government needs to support the forums and tools of co-operative governance if it wishes to achieve its developmental goals. Despite the introduction of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act and the increased delivery of basic services, the number of service delivery protests are increasing, indicating that co-operative governance has not been effective. To promote good co-operative governance, municipalities require M&E, fiscal and technical support, concurrent function clarity, leadership and communication from both the national provincial government to perform their tasks more effectively and efficiently. Interestingly, local municipalities’ expectations of support for co-operative governance from national and provincial government has not been fully met with the provincial government generally performing better than the national government. This could be attributed to the fact that various intergovernmental relations forums exist and they promote intergovernmental relations among the local municipalities, district municipalities and provincial government rather than directly with the national government. Monitoring and evaluation is considered as a key mechanism to enhance co-operative governance amongst the national, provincial and local spheres of government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Participatory monitoring and evaluation could provide better alignment of national, provincial and local governments’ programmes and policies and could assist in the achievement of national priorities through better provision of funding, and legislative support to undertaking service delivery. An effective PME system should also improve co-operative governance through regular, open and transparent communication which enhances sharing of information and new knowledge. This approach also requires municipalities to effectively engage citizens in governance and development issues to ensure they accept the municipality as a legitimate vehicle for basic service delivery and democratic expression. In this regard the participatory approach would also assist to create a balance of interest

between the political party, municipality and the communities. Here, good governance should embrace negotiations by all stakeholders in the matter affecting their targeted outcomes through agreed governance principles that are implemented and regularly evaluated.

The paper further proposes that co-operative governance, in particular, intergovernmental relations, should be made mandatory and be included in the performance management contracts of all senior political and administrative leaders. Performance indicators and targets should be developed for monitoring and evaluating co-operative governance for each municipality through a participative process. Through dialogue and communication among the different spheres of government improved service delivery can be achieved, provided that all stakeholders are in support of a common goal and are not divided along political lines. Finally, the success of co-operative governance and IGR depends on the capacity of both political and administrative leaders to work together, with respect and trust to achieve common goals.

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