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Message from the Executive Mayor

As we entered 2010 we realised even more the need for government to be brought even closer to people and playing a key role in the development of communities, through unlocking the political and creative energies of the people as stated in governments 1994 Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP).

Our turnaround strategy based on guidelines provided by the National Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs seeks to strengthen political accountability and by including it in the IDP we will ensure more interaction with the community we serve.

Through the Public Viewing Area (PVA) which will be situated in Jan Kempdorp we want to enable previously disadvantaged communities to watch the World Cup games live. PVA's are spaces set aside within a community that provides

an alternate to actually being at the event.

The MacDonald Pitso Sports Complex was identified to house the PVA due the centrality and the readiness of the venue. As part of the Mayoral Outreach Programme the Crime Prevention amongst Youth Summit was held in February to engage young people on the topic of crime and how to reduce the growing number of youth involved in crime. Youth from across the District attended the event. Strategic partners and stakeholders presented various topics that dealt with unemployment and poverty as a means of fighting crime.

Our youth is the future of our country and we must do whatever we can to ensure that they develop to their full potential.



**The Executive Mayor
Mr Achmat Florence**



From the Municipal Manager's Desk

“Accelerated service delivery is the only contribution / milestone that can bring satisfaction to all of us, more in particular to those we are called upon to serve.”

We have gone a significant way towards the promise of developmental local government. However, it will be naive to disregard the severe problems and challenges that local government is facing during this phase of transformation. The assessment on the current state of local government has been completed. The overall assessment indicates structural problems caused by social and economic factors outside the control of municipalities.

The other challenges range from dysfunctional municipalities due to systems failure, impoverished communities unable to pay for services, capacity constraints, spatial economy, etc. Members of our communities have a legitimate expectation that municipalities will be clean, effective and accountable. They expect the ethical foundation and principles of administration to be upheld by both elected representative and staff. To this end instruments such as proper reporting, feedback and audit documents must be in place to communicate information and promote public accountability.

Recruiting and sustaining qualified personnel to manage our complex system of developmental local government is a challenge that will remain with us for some time. I am positive we will turn the tide. The relationship between councillors and officials is an important phenomena for good governance. Uncertainty in the roles of political office bearers and senior managers negatively impact on effective management, leadership and oversight.

The above challenges that featured prominently on the state of local government are not exhaustive.

Flowing from the assessment each municipality is expected to prepare a turnaround strategy before end of March 2010. The strategy has to be encapsulated in the IDP and budget to ensure it is implemented.

FBDM has complied with all the basic issues of the turnaround strategy. Our focus will therefore be to develop a turnaround strategy that is focused on support to local municipalities. Our status as Ambassadors for Operation Clean Audit has been cemented by an “unqualified audit without matters of emphasis” for the 2008/09 financial year - the only municipality in the Province to achieve this feat.

However, we cannot pride ourselves if our locals are not achieving the same audit outcomes.

To this extend we have embarked on a programme to attend to all audit queries by having an action plan in place for each municipality.

The FBDM also have to prepare an action plan on how it will sustain its own audit status.

The remaining part of the financial year and upcoming financial year will be daunting.



**Municipal Manager,
Mr Thabo Nosi**

In search... Op soek...

On 22 October 2009 representatives from all tiers of government and other stakeholders attended the National Indaba on Local Government in Ekurhuleni following the recent surge in violent service delivery protests. The indaba had been preceded by a high-level meeting between President Jacob Zuma and most of the country's 283 mayors and municipal managers, provincial premiers and 15 Cabinet ministers in Cape Town.

This development may be viewed as a forth phase in the process to democratise and improve South Africa's system of local government. In a paper written for the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), Dr Michael Sutcliffe, former chairperson of the Municipal Demarcation Board and now city manager of eThekweni, said it was decided in 1993 that the democratisation of local government would occur in three phases, culminating in the phase marked by the demarcation of South Africa's municipalities and the holding of municipal elections in December 2005.

According to Sutcliffe, the new municipal system aimed to ensure more functional economic, financial and administrative bases; more representative and focused political structures; better administrative systems allowing for greater participatory democracy; and more equitable, efficient and effective financial arrangements.

Also, in 1994 the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) stated the lofty ideal of the national government wishing “to unlock the political and creative energies of the people and bring the government closer to the people”, with local government playing a key role.

of the ideal municipality / na die ideale munisipaliteit

So what went wrong? What went wrong according to the State of Local Government Report released by the government on 20 October, is that there are “huge service delivery and backlog challenges; poor communication and accountability relationships with communities; fraud and corruption; problems with the political administrative interface; poor financial management; wasteful spending; violent service delivery protests; weak civil society formations, and the list goes on. According to the report, 64 of South Africa’s 283 municipalities are in financial “distress”, accompanied by an “escalating loss of confidence in governance”.

Over the last decade or more, it became clear that there were serious problems in local government when one negative audit report after the other was issued by the Auditor-General. AG Terence Nombembe said that municipalities across the board have received far more “disclaimed” opinions, the worst category of audit report, than have departments at any of the other two tiers of government.

Nombembe says the problem is not a lack of skills - though there are shortages - but rather one of a lack of compliance.

“From January, municipalities must develop their own turnaround strategies based on the national framework.”

At the Indaba Minister Shiceka said a framework National Local Government Turnaround Strategy would be formulated by December.

From January, municipalities must develop their own turnaround strategies based on the national framework, accommodating different needs and involving broader participation from the community and other stakeholders. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is to submit a Green Paper outlining a more ‘co-operative’ form of government with improved co-ordination co-operation between the three tiers of government.

Shiceka listed keys areas that required attention in order to arrive at the goal of “an ideal municipality”. These include “deepening people-centred government” by revamping the municipal ward system and strengthening its role and reforming the intergovernmental fiscal system.

The delegates to the National Indaba resolved that the turnaround strategy should address strengthening political accountability; building inclusive communities; developing a common classification of municipalities and a differentiated approach for municipalities; reviewing the legislative and regulatory framework of local government; addressing poverty arising both from urban growth and migration and rural under-development; reviewing the financial and fiscal model; rooting out corruption; ensuring an appropriate role for traditional leaders in local government; and identifying and addressing areas of dysfunctionality among municipalities.

The Indaba called for further broad-based consultation before the government finalised the strategy, after which every municipality must develop its own specific municipal turnaround plan by March 2010 with active assistance from provincial governments.

Verteenwoordigers van alle regeringsvlakke en ander belanghebbendes het op 22 Oktober 2009 die Nasionale Indaba oor Plaaslike Regering in Ekurhuleni bygewoon. Dit volg op die onlangse styging in gewelddadige diensleweringprotes. Die Indaba is deur ’n hoëvlakontmoeting tussen president Jacob Zuma en die meeste van die land se 283 burgemeesters en munisipale bestuurders, provinsiale premiers en 15 kabinet-ministers in Kaapstad voorafgegaan.

Hierdie ontwikkeling kan beskou word as ’n vierde fase in die proses om Suid-Afrika se plaaslike regeringstelsel te demokratiseer en te verbeter. In ’n referaat wat vir die Instituut vir Demokrasie in Suid-Afrika (Idasa) geskryf is, het dr. Michael Sutcliffe, ’n voormalige voorsitter van die Munisipale Afbakeningsraad en nou eThekweni se stadsbestuurder, gesê dat daar in 1993 besluit is dat die demokratisering van plaaslike regering in drie fases sou plaasvind. Dit sou uitloop op die fase waartydens Suid-Afrika se munisipaliteite afgebaken is en munisipale verkiesings in.

Volgens Sutcliffe het die nuwe munisipale stelsel ten doel om die volgende te verseker:

- funksionele ekonomiese, finansiële en administratiewe basisse;
- meer verteenwoordigende en gefokusde politieke strukture;
- beter administratiewe stelsels wat vir groter deelnemende demokrasie voorsiening maak; en
- meer billike, doeltreffende en effektiewe finansiële reëlings.

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Preferential Procurement Regulations Revised

The National Treasury has published a draft set of Preferential Procurement Regulations under the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act 5 of 2000 that is intended to replace the 2001 regulations under the Act and that aims to align preferential procurement to the approach to Black Economic Empowerment under the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 ('BBBEEA').

The Minister of Finance has approved the draft Regulations and the document was published in the Government Gazette and all Provincial Gazette for public comments.

While the draft regulations retain the current 80-20 / 90-10 split points system for awarding public contracts, they introduce a number of important changes to the current approach.

Some of the most significant changes are the exclusive use of BEE status under the BBBEEA as the measure for preferential points with reference to a set table of points to be awarded against particular BEE status levels; the increase of the threshold values for the use of the 80-20 and 90-10 systems respectively - the 80-20 split will in future be used for all public contracts between a rand value of R30 000 and R1 million; and the extension of the regulations to all entities covered by the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999, which means that the regulations will also apply to major public entities and government business enterprises.

The effect of the new regulations can be summarized as follows:

- The preference points system as per current Act and regulations will be retained.
- The current Preferential Procurement Regulations determine that the HDI status and certain RDP goals should be used to determine preference points in the awarding of bids. The new Regulations replace the awarding of bids on the basis of HDI status and the promotion of RDP goals with the BEE rating of the bidder.
- In addition, the threshold value to distinguish between the 80/20 and the 90/10 preference point systems, is increased from R500 000 in the current regulations to R1.0 million in the new regulations to strengthen the

contribution towards the development of small, medium and micro enterprises.

- The application of the new Regulations is further extended to apply to all organs of state.
- Currently the old Regulations is still applicable until the new draft Preferential Procurement Regulations, 2009 is approved by Cabinet.

What it all means is that we will continue to use the 80/20 point system for procurement from R30 000 up to R500 000 and the 90/10 point system for procurement above R500 000 until the draft Preferential Procurement Regulations has been approved by Cabinet.

The 80 and 90 points is a combination of price and functionality and the 20 and 10 points is a combination of HDI status and RDP goals.

When the Preferential Procurement Regulations, 2009 come into place the 20 and 10 points for HDI status and RDP goals will be replaced with the BEE rating of the bidder.

The BEE rating of the bidder will be determined by approved accreditation verification agencies with the issue of a BEE rating certificate. This rating certificate will show what level contributor the company is and that will give the indication what points must be awarded out of 20 or 10.

Bidders will not be disqualified if they do not submit a BEE certificate. Under such circumstances a bidder will simply score no points.

2010 Soccer World Cup PVA for the District



“ The FIFA Football World Cup is not just a sporting event between countries , it is a phenomenon that has the power to unite a Nation , move a country and awake its people to their true potential”

The SABC and FIFA released guidelines in 2008 to ensure that all potential soccer fans should be able to have access to the 2010 Soccer World Cup games. The public viewing areas (PVAs) are spaces set aside within a community that provides an alternative to actually being at the event.

For many people in the Northern Cape Province and specifically the Frances Baard District it would be almost impossible to share in the hype of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Even though the Northern Cape is not going to host any soccer match nothing should prevent our community to share in this great and historic occasion.

To address this the MacDonald Pitso Sports Complex in Jan Kempdorp has been identified as the stadium in the larger district area to host a PVA. This follows after the Sol Plaatje Municipality indicated that they will be hosting a PVA in the Kimberley area.

Funding

Frances Baard District Municipality has secured an amount of R573,000.00 to stage a two match PVA in the district. A further R20,000.00 will assist SMMEs to participate by helping them to sell their products at this event.

Further financial contributions may come from the three partner local municipalities. In addition to the available funds the PVA Stakeholders Committee will also solicit funding from Private Sector and Banking Institutions. Available funds will determine how many and which soccer matches will be accommodated.

LED Managers of Local Municipalities, Tourism Officials and SABC staff engaged in various planning meetings which coincided with inspections of the proposed venue. It was decided to use the MacDonald Pitso Sports Complex for the PVA due to its centrality and the available infrastructure situated in Jan Kempdorp.

The local municipalities of Phokwane, Magareng and Dikgatlong all agreed to work together to ensure a successful 2010 PVA in Jan Kempdorp.

The Stadium

The MacDonald Pitso Sports Complex is situated close to the residential area in Jan Kempdorp and can easily be accessed via tarred road.

The playing area is well covered with grass but needs some leveling of areas with top soil. The track needs to be cleared from grass overgrowing in some areas.

The complex boasts a well structured concrete stand which could accommodate 100 - 150 people with ample toilet facilities, a small kitchen, storeroom facilities and a table tennis room. The total crowd capacity of the stadium is approximately 5 - 8 thousand.

The additional tennis and multi-court area can provide additional parking space. The stadium is well fenced with one main entrance / exit gate and a pedestrian double ticket control gate. Electricity and telephone cable networks run within close range of the stadium. There is also ample space for stalls.

On the day the matches will be televised the programme will start with pre-match entertainment in the form of live DJs and artists. Activities as build up to the matches will start three hours before kick-off. There will be entertainment during half-time and possible entertainment after the match is still to be finalised. Provision has also been made for a beer garden and a gaming area.

Safe drinking water awareness and training in the DMA

Water is the essence of life and safe drinking water is a basic human right to all. The quality of drinking water impact on health, both through outbreaks of waterborne diseases and by contributing to the background rates of diseases.

The residents in the District Management Area (DMA) are dependent on water sources such as the Vaal River and boreholes for drinking water. The Environmental Health Unit collected water samples from settlements such as Olierivier, Blikfontein, Eierfontein, Boetsap, Spitskop and Dancarl. The results indicated that the water was not conforming to the South African National Standards (SANS) Drinking Water Specification, Code 241 (SANS, 2006).

After extracting the water from the source, it must be disinfected to remove the contaminants. Disinfection is the major means of guaranteeing the microbiological quality of drinking water. Chlorine is a relatively cost effective and readily available chemical that when dissolved in clear water in sufficient quantities will destroy most disease causing organisms without being a danger to people. When chlorine is added, it purifies the water by destroying the cell structure of organisms thereby killing them. The process only works if the chlorine comes into direct contact with the organisms.

With the assistance of the Technical Section chlorine was procured to treat the water. By adding the chlorine to the water it was made safe for consumption by humans. It was decided to use chlorine as it is cost effective and requires no electricity. This would have been very cumbersome in an area where electricity is not always readily available.

An implementation plan was compiled to identify persons from the respective communities who were trained on how to administer the chlorine to the water. Communities have also been instructed to sanitize the storage tanks before chlorine was added to the water. The Council has further procured a mobile treatment plant for the residents of Olierivier who previously depended on untreated water from the river. The distribution system from the treatment plant to the households will be completed within this quarter. This will ensure that each household will be supplied with treated, safe drinking water.

Why should drinking water be tested for bacteria?

Several germs that cause disease in humans are carried by humans and animals in their gut and excreted in feces. Drinking water can become contaminated with human or animal feces by surface run-off and septic tank malfunction etc. When fecal contamination occurs, there is potential for disease causing germs to be present. Therefore, it is important to ensure there is no fecal contamination of drinking water.

How is drinking water quality tested for bacterial quality?

Indicator bacteria are used to assess the bacterial quality of drinking water. These are “Total Coliforms” and “Fecal Coliform”.

Why are coliform bacteria used for testing drinking water?

Total coliforms are a group of bacteria that are naturally present in the environment. They are used as an indicator of overall water quality and the effectiveness of drinking water disinfection. E. coli, a fecal coliform, originate only in the intestine of humans and animals, and are regularly excreted in feces in abundant numbers. Therefore, E. coli is used as an indicator of fecal contamination of drinking water. The above indicator bacteria are used as universal indicators of drinking water quality because it is neither practical nor feasible to test for individual disease causing organisms in drinking water.

Do indicator bacteria cause disease?

No. Neither total coliforms nor the fecal coliform E. coli by themselves cause gastrointestinal disease in humans. The fecal coliform E. coli that makes up the natural intestinal microbial population does not cause waterborne or foodborne illness. However, the presence of the indicator bacteria suggests a potential for disease causing organisms to be in drinking water.

Awareness and Training

Langverwag (Milking Parlour)



The owner of the farm was shown how to safely use HTH. It was recommended that due to moderate demand of water, they dose three scoops once a week in the tank. The EHPs will monitor the quality trends to check effectiveness of the frequencies.

Boetsap Police station



Police officers and the Station Commissioner were shown how to safely dose HTH. The demand of water is high in this area. The pumps fill the tank twice a day. It was recommended that they dose three scoops once in three days. The EHPs will monitor the quality trends to check the effectiveness of the frequency.

Spitskop (Setshabelo Primary School)



The school principal was shown how to safely use HTH. In this school, the ladder of the elevated tank is not safe and does not reach to the top of the stand. It was recommended that due to moderate demand of water, they dose three scoops once a week in the tank. The EHPs will monitor the quality trends to check the effectiveness of the frequency.

Blikfontein (Kgotatsano primary School)



The school principal and the water supply operator were trained on how to dose and to safely use HTH. It was recommended that due to moderate demand of water, they dose three scoops once a week in the tank. The EHPs will monitor the quality trends to check how effectiveness of the frequency.

Die regering se Heropbou- en Ontwikkelingsprogram (HOP) het ook in 1994 die verhewe ideaal gestel dat die nasionale regering graag “die politieke en kreatiewe energie van die mense wil ontsluit en die regering nader aan die wil mense bring,” met die plaaslike regering wat ’n sleutelrol hierin sal speel.

Wat het dan verkeerd geloop? Wat volgens die Verslag oor die Stand van Plaaslike Regering, wat op 20 Oktober deur die regering bekendgestel is, verkeerd geloop het, is dat daar “massiewe dienslewering- en agterstanduitdagings is; swak kommunikasie en aanspreeklikheidsverhoudings met gemeenskappe; bedrog en korrupsie; probleme met die politieke administratiewe koppelvlak; swak finansiële bestuur; kwistige spandering; gewelddadige dienslewering-sprotes; swak formasies in die burgerlike samelewing, en so gaan die lys voort. Volgens die verslag is 64 van Suid-Afrika se 283 munisipaliteite in finansiële “nood”, wat met ’n “eskalerende verlies aan vertroue in die regering” gepaard gaan.

Dit het oor die afgelope dekade of meer duidelik geword dat daar ernstige probleme in plaaslike regerings is toe die een negatiewe ouditverslag na die ander deur die Ouditeur-generaal uitgebring is. Die Ouditeur-generaal, Terence Nombembe, het gesê dat munisipaliteite baie meer “afwysende” menings, die ergste kategorie in ’n ouditverslag, ontvang het as die departemente van enige van die ander twee regeringsvlakke.

Nombembe sê dat die probleem nie ’n gebrek aan vaardighede is nie – hoewel daar tekorte is – maar eerder ’n gebrek aan gehoorgewing.

Minister Shiceka het by die indaba gesê dat ’n raamwerk vir ’n Nasionale Draaistrategie vir Plaaslike Regering teen Desember geformuleer sou wees. Munisipaliteite moet vanaf Januarie hul eie draaistrategieë aan die hand van die nasionale raamwerk ontwikkel; hulle moet verskillende behoeftes in ag neem en breër deelname van die gemeenskap en ander belanghebbendes verseker. Die Departement van Deelnemende Regering sal ’n Groenskrif voorlê wat ’n groter ‘samewerkende’ vorm van regering uitstippel met verbeterde koördinerings- en samewerking tussen die drie vlakke van regering.

Sicheka het sleutelareas gelys wat aandag verg ten einde die doel van ’n “ideale munisipaliteit” te bereik. Dit sluit in “om regering wat op die mense sentreer, te verdiep” deur die munisipale wykstelsel op te knap, die rol daarvan te versterk en die fiskale stelsel tussen regeringsvlakke te hervorm.

Die afgevaardigdes na die Nasionale Indaba het besluit dat die draaistrategie die volgende behoort aan te spreek:

- die versterking van politieke aanspreeklikheid;
- die bou van inklusiewe gemeenskappe;

- die ontwikkeling van ’n gemeenskaplike klassifisering van munisipaliteite en ’n gedifferensieerde benadering tot munisipaliteite;
- ’n herbesinning oor die wetgewende en regulerende raamwerk vir plaaslike regering;
- die aanspreek van armoede wat uit sowel stedelike groei en migrasie as landelike onderontwikkeling spruit;
- ’n herbesinning van die finansiële en fiskale model;
- die uitroei van korrupsie;
- die versekering van ’n gepaste rol vir tradisionele leiers in plaaslike regering; en
- die identifisering en aanspreek van areas van wanfunksie in munisipaliteite.

Die indaba het verder ’n oproep gedoen om breedgebaseerde konsultasie voordat die regering die strategie finaliseer, waarna elke munisipaliteit teen Maart 2010 met die hulp van provinsiale regerings ’n eie spesifieke munisipale draaistrategie moet ontwikkel.

“Vanaf Januarie moet munisipaliteite hul eie draaistrategieë aan die hand van die nasionale raamwerk ontwikkel.”



Mr Thabo Nosi (seated) started working for Frances Baard District Municipality (FBDM) in 1998 at the young age of 36, as director administration. He is now in his eighth year as Municipal Manager. Hannes van Biljon started his FBDM career the same year, 1998, also in his mid-thirties. He has just started his second five-year contract as Chief Financial Officer. He had almost a decade of experience in municipal finance management prior to his FBDM employment.

“We must remember , says Mr Thabo Nosi the Municipal Manager of Frances Baard District Municipality (FBDM), - that district and local municipalities are independent and autonomous categories of local government. Each has distinct assigned powers and functions. None is above the other, but district municipalities have a special responsibility to assist local municipalities so that they can perform their duties.”

Photograph by Mr B Carlsson

“You have to be bold enough to take it on!”

“You cannot assist others and do a good job at this, if you don’t have your own house in order,” continues Thabo, “and we have worked hard on that over the years.” Hannes van Biljon, the district finance director nods in agreement. “You have to have internal control systems in place, but also know the weak spots in the system, and be bold enough to enforce compliance with the rules. Regular and systematic reporting to Council is important, and so is reporting to provincial treasury.”

“Another very important issue is to ensure that all unit heads in a municipality executes the powers and responsibilities delegated to them. When delegated responsibilities are not clear (a failure of senior management), then many things

go wrong from the outset. The Finance Department is a watchdog, but the responsibility for compliance with rules and regulations rests mainly with the line functions,” says Hannes.

Reasons for poor performance

The legal framework is very comprehensive and yet many municipalities fail to meet the financial management standards, and many do not have a clean audit. Why is this so? What are the main reasons for failing municipalities? According to Mr Nosi and his finance management colleague, there are a number of reasons for failure, including:

- unclear responsibilities among officials and politicians

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- leaders who don't react when something is wrong
- not realizing that financial management is a continuous process, not just approval of a budget
- people in key positions are not competent to do the job. Everybody involved must know what to do, when, and actually perform their duties. And leaders must check and follow-up
- line managers on lower levels are not fully aware of the rules and are either unknowingly or deliberately not following the rules
- the municipal manager and/or the finance manager are not taking failing officials and councillors to task, and not reporting them to Council for sanctioning, or to the MEC and the Auditor General
- deviations in supply chain management has become the norm rather than an exception, and a weak so-called paper trail. Senior management do not bring these deviations to the attention of Council, the MEC or the Auditor General
- project management is weak, especially when it comes to small-scale local projects. There are many tempting opportunities for people to enrich themselves.
- very poor asset management. Assets are not properly registered, opening the doors to corruption.

Clean audit ambassadors

Frances Baard District Municipality was part of a pilot programme run by National Treasury to implement the principles and processes in the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA). By 2007 the municipality had reached the required level of competence and compliance with MFMA finance management standards. The municipality has also over the years managed to obtain unqualified audits.

FBDM was recently appointed by the national minister as a 'Ministerial Audit Ambassador' in the clean audit campaign. "Being an "ambassador," says Mr Nosi, is really just strengthening the role that the district municipality already has according to the Municipal Structures Act and the MFMA. We must simply assist and help where there is a lack of local capacity." The main support efforts are now geared towards:

- establishing proper financial management systems with diligent processes and control systems based on General Recognised Accounting Practices (GRAP) and standards set by the Accounting Standards Board
- compliance with the MFMA, especially with regard to budgeting, reporting and supply chain management
- audit outcomes and how to respond to them through a medium to long-term action plan.

"So far," conclude Thabo and Hannes, "we have invested almost R10 million in the development of our finance management support programme. We have, for example, purchased a common computerized financial information system for our local municipalities (the same one we use

at the district), and we train staff. We also hire external municipal finance people that can provide hands-on guidance to municipal officials.

"Together we can achieve more!"

According to the Municipal Structures Act of 1998, district municipalities are required to build the capacity of local municipalities (Category B Municipalities, as they are formally called) in their districts, so that these can perform their functions and exercise their powers. This is the institutional background to the concept of Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Support Units.

Another important area, besides O&M, where districts need to support local municipalities, is in financial management and auditing. FBDM has established a Municipal Support Unit – Finance to provide dedicated financial support. The unit has eight members who are all FBDM staff members. They are accountants on various levels, and financial interns. The unit also hires external resource persons from time to time to assist with support efforts.

"The goal is ambitious," explains Hannes van Biljon, FBDM Finance Director and the leader of the unit, "to transform local municipalities to such an extent that they become self-sufficient, responsive and developmental, and above all, financially sustainable!"

"We can't achieve this," says Hannes, "unless we are prepared to support them over a long period of time. It takes time to do a thorough analysis of the financial management in each municipality and then to agree on a long-term strategy for financial support. In previous support attempts there was a lack of communication and coordination between stakeholders. Everything was ad hoc. We don't want to repeat those mistakes. To succeed there must be commitment, ownership and accountability among all stakeholders."

Hannes van Biljon is the dedicated coordinating support programme manager in the district area. The stakeholders he is referring to are the local municipalities themselves (councillors as well as officials), the Provincial Treasury Department, Department of Cooperative Government, Housing & Traditional Affairs and of course the Support Unit. The Development Bank of Southern Africa is another keen stakeholder, as they have granted many loans to municipalities in the Northern Cape over the years.

"We are aware of the sad fact that many local municipalities are poor, and in many cases they are also poorly managed, due to a lack of relevant staff competence and leadership. It is a very arduous task to rectify this situation and to build the necessary capacity. This is another factor that makes it necessary for us to have a long-term perspective in our support efforts," concludes Hannes, "but together we can achieve more."

The things we must do are not rocket science, but have a lot to do with attitudes!"

Article courtesy of O&M Handbook; Management of O&M

16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children

The year 2009 officially marks the ten year anniversary of the 16 Days of activism campaign for no violence against women and children. This campaign, the main social mobilization tool against the prevalence of acts of abuse against women and children in South Africa, has over the ten years witnessed exponential growth, making it the second most known government event in South Africa.

A United Nations-endorsed campaign the 16 Days Campaign takes place annually from the 25th November (International Day of No Violence Against Women) to the 10th December (International Human Rights Day).

This campaign focuses primarily on generating an increased awareness of the negative impact of violence on women and children as well as on society as a whole. Though the campaign has succeeded in raising awareness amongst South African public, there continues to be cases of abuse of children and women.

This continuing difference between a high level of awareness and persisting abuse is a cause for concern, and an indication that more needs to be done to cultivate a culture of taking action against abuse by relevant justice authorities, communities, civil society and other stakeholders. This necessitates a review of the current arrangements around fighting gender based violence and child abuse.

On the 26th of November 2009 the Office of the Speaker of the Frances Baard District Municipality (FBDM) launched an integrated rural programme at Smithsmine in the Dikgatlong Municipal area. The purpose of the programme was to raise awareness amongst community members of this area. In attendance were also councillors from the Dikgatlong Local Municipality and officials from the South African Police Service (SAPS).

In her presentation on the topic of no violence against women and children the Speaker, Cllr M Chwarisang, emphasized the importance of bringing this programme to especially the rural communities who are normally neglected and left behind.



The Speaker, Cllr. Maria Chwarisang, talking to the community at Smithsmine.

She also made mention of the role of FBDM with regard to supporting marginalized community groups such as people with disabilities, women, children and senior citizens. She further emphasised the following:

- We are all Responsible
- We can all make a Difference
- We are all Accountable
- We'll participate in stopping Violence
- We give support in these kind of programmes

The community was given an opportunity to raise their concerns and issues regarding women and children abuse.

Some of the issues raised include the following:

- Corporal punishment at school
- Safety at school i.e. toilet facilities not safe, youth not attending school
- Possibility of rape high, especially female rape cases
- Basic services – Water, sanitation, clinic, health services and response time of SAPS and Ambulance Services
- Reported cases that do not go to court
- Relocation of community from private property to anywhere

NATIONAL HEADLINES

SA to introduce new car tax despite concerns

The National Treasury will press on with plans to introduce a new tax on vehicles designed to curb carbon dioxide emissions, despite concerns this could hamper the ailing car sector's recovery.

The motor industry is struggling to get back on its feet after being hit by the global economic crisis and depressed local demand, which saw new vehicle sales fall to six-year lows in 2009.

The new tax, mooted last February, is part of government efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions as well as increase tax revenues that have declined sharply as Africa's economy grappled with its first recession in 17 years, which it exited in the third quarter of 2009.

The Treasury spokesperson said that the adjusting of existing excise duties on motor vehicles to take CO2 emissions into account will still be implemented on March 1 2010. The National Association of Automobile Manufacturers (Naamsa) says it accepts the new tax in principle, but its early timing could hinder recovery prospects for struggling car makers.

"The industry is currently emerging from one of the deepest and most severe recessions in its history and the introduction of additional taxes ... could, if they are too punitive, result in the industry lapsing back into recession," said Naamsa director Nico Vermeulen. Additional taxes usually meant higher prices, which could knock sales volumes and curb job creation, he added in an emailed response to questions from Reuters.

Car makers BMW, Ford, General Motors, Daimler, Nissan, Toyota and Volkswagen all have manufacturing plants in South Africa. The unavailability of cleaner fuels is also a concern for manufacturers, who cannot bring in new less-polluting engines because the proper fuel for those is not yet sold in South Africa. South Africa currently only conforms to Euro-two engine emissions levels, whereas many of the newer vehicles already have Euro-five compliant engines, Vermeulen said. Vermeulen said the South African motor industry and oil industry were involved in extensive research and negotiations to fast-track the introduction of the new fuels locally by 2012.

Source: Mail & Guardian Online

EVENTS CALENDAR

LED: Business Plan Writing Skills Workshop:

16 March 2010 (Phokwane)

30 March 2010 (Sol Plaatje)

19 March 2010 - 2010 Local Organising Committee meeting

Editorial Note

In this issue the focus was very much on the issue of service delivery and the performance of in particular local government to perform on its mandate. Municipalities are currently hard at work to plan and strategise to comply with the March 2010 deadline as prescribed by the national framework.

Also covered is the revision of the current preferential procurement regulations and interested parties are encouraged to contact the Supply Chain Unit if they seek more clarity on how it will impact them. Of specific interest to all will be the BEE rating certificate and how to identify a suitably qualified verification agency to ensure that your business is rated according to the regulations as approved by Cabinet.

An article which I am sure will create quite a lot of excitement especially among those who were not lucky enough to acquire a ticket to one of the games which will be taking place in the month of June, will be the PVA in Jan Kempdorp. For those of you who would have liked to be able to experience the excitement and buzz of the packed stadiums and also be able to say "I was there", we offer an alternative. So join the many people who will be flocking to the MacDonald Pitso Stadium and share the moment with many other fans of the "beautiful game". SMMEs are encouraged to make full use of this opportunity to create exposure for their businesses.

Inputs from you, the reader, are always welcome and we encourage you to contact us should you require more information on the featured articles.

Gerline Roman
Editor

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