

# MANAGERIAL SKILLS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The social and political changes that emanated from the transformation process in South Africa had an effect on all spheres of government. The local sphere of government has particularly been affected by the changes since it is the sphere closest to the people and directly responsible for municipal service delivery.

This article aims to identify and analyse the status and relevance of managerial skills in the local sphere of government as well as its influence on municipal service delivery. Managers in municipalities should exhibit particular skills and competencies in order to fulfil their developmental role and provide quality municipal services to inhabitants. The article focuses specifically on category B municipalities, as categorised in terms of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* (Act 108 of 1996).

The institutional capacity as well as its influence on municipal service delivery is furthermore investigated. The availability of the necessary resources, systems, procedures and managerial tools at municipalities will be investigated in order to determine whether they could provide adequate support to managers.

The government of South Africa has committed itself to the improvement of the skills levels of public officials and to establish a culture of learning in the public service. For these purposes legislation and policies pertaining to skills development and training have also been promulgated. This article briefly outlines the various legislative requirements pertaining to skills development and training, and furthermore make recommendations in this regard.

Since the early nineteen nineties a number of social and political changes emanated from the transformation process in South Africa. To address these changes, the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)*, hereafter referred to as the Constitution, *inter alia* underpins the basic public administration and management values and principles for public officials to comply with when executing their functions. It is, therefore necessary to have skilled and competent public officials in order to comply with constitutional requirements. The need for skilled public officials is of particular importance in the local sphere of government since it is the sphere of government closest to the people and directly responsible for service delivery to inhabitants.

The purpose of this article is to identify and analyse the status and relevance of managerial skills in the local sphere of government as well as its influence on municipal service delivery. The institutional capacity of municipalities are, however, not only hampered by the inadequate skills of managers, but also due to institutional and resource impediments. The lack of effective and efficient municipal service delivery may be a result of inadequate institutional support to managers. Therefore, this article will also focus on the institutional capacity of a municipality and its influence on municipal service delivery.

Whilst individual managers may well possess the educational background required by their positions, experience and the appropriateness of their qualifications may not be congruent with the requirements of their positions. The lack of relevant management skills may be a result of insufficient skills development training or poor access to training opportunities. Access to and the obtaining of effective and relevant management skills training may enhance the competency of managers in municipalities. The focus will specifically be on a category B municipality, the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality, as categorised in terms of the Constitution. Recommendations pertaining to the improvement of the institutional capacity at the municipality as well as skills development and training opportunities for managers will be made with a view to enhance municipal service delivery.

The government of South Africa has promulgated legislation and official policies to assist managers in municipalities pertaining to their roles, functions and responsibilities towards socio-economic development and municipal service delivery. Managers in the local sphere of government are compelled to implement the legislative directives and to exhibit particular skills and competencies in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of municipal service delivery as well as to fulfil their developmental mandate. The next section will provide a brief background to the objectives of local government.

## THE OBJECTIVES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to Section 152(1) of the Constitution, the objectives of local government in South Africa are to provide democratic and accountable government to municipal inhabitants and to render services in a sustainable manner. According to Reddy *et al* (2003:ix) accountability is considered as the cornerstone of the Constitution and therefore the maintenance of accountability, as well as the effective and efficient

use of public resources, are imperative for the successful transformation of political and managerial systems in the local sphere of government. It is furthermore expected of the local sphere of government to promote social and economic development in their municipal areas, as well as a safe and healthy environment (Section 152[1], Constitution). The Constitution has assigned local government a developmental mandate. Section 152(1) of the Constitution, furthermore, determines that the local government sphere should encourage the municipal inhabitants and their organisations to become involved in local government matters. Legislation and policies such as the *White Paper on Local Government*, 1998, the *Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act*, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003) and the *Local Government: Municipal Systems Act*, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) emphasise the principle of developmental local government and particularly emphasise public participation, community involvement, the delivery of quality municipal services and transparent administrative and management systems (Reddy *et al*, 2003: viii). These are comprehensive objectives that require managerial skills, dedication and institutional capacity to materialise.

## THE DEVELOPMENTAL ROLE OF MUNICIPALITIES

**T**he Constitution outlines particular duties for municipalities to comply with. One of these duties, prescribed in Section 153(b) of the Constitution, requires of municipalities to participate in national and provincial development programmes. This refers to programmes such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Integrated Development Planning (IDP) and Local Economic Development (LED), which are all aimed at improving the quality of life of municipal inhabitants. It is also expected of municipalities to give priority to the basic needs of their inhabitants and to promote the social and economic development of municipal inhabitants by structuring and managing the administration of the municipality and their budgeting and planning processes in such a manner that it could enhance the abovementioned objectives (Section 153[a], Constitution).

The *White Paper on Local Government* (1998:16) provides a basic framework for a democratic, developmental local government system in which municipalities should provide their inhabitants with sustainable services and a quality of life that meets the social and economic needs of their communities. The White Paper therefore provides guidelines and directives for the restructuring of municipalities to meet their challenges and fulfil their developmental roles.

As one of their developmental outcomes, municipalities are responsible for the provision of household infrastructure and services, described as the fundamental purpose of local government in the *National Urban Development Strategy* (1997:35). The priority of municipalities with regard to services should be to extend basic municipal services, such as the provision of water, electricity, sanitation, refuse removal, storm water drainage and the provision and maintenance of roads, to those who have little or no access to services. Municipalities must ensure that these services are rendered on a sustainable basis (*White Paper on Local Government*, 1998:43; cf *Development Bank of Southern Africa*, 2000:1).

From the statistical data of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality it is evident that the level of municipal services at the municipality are not up to standard and that the municipality should seek methods and outline priorities to successfully deal with these challenges. It can therefore be deduced that managers of the Municipality should possess the required managerial skills and capacity to fulfil their developmental role and to improve the quality of life of their municipal inhabitants in such a manner that it enhances the social development and economic growth of the municipal area. The developmental mandate of municipalities poses a number of challenges to municipalities which will be outlined in the following paragraphs.

## CHALLENGES FOR MUNICIPALITIES

Existing municipalities in South Africa face additional challenges compared to municipalities elsewhere in the world. These challenges are brought about by factors such as political and social transformation, structural and administrative changes, an emphasis on decentralisation, the developmental role of the sphere of local government and financial constraints faced by the majority of South African municipalities (Craythorne, 2003:44; Reddy *et al*, 2003:ix). Transformation brought about yet another challenge, which is the rendering of public services of quality, irrespective of fundamental changes in the structure and functioning of the local sphere of government (*White Paper on Local Government*, 1998:35).

Odendaal (2003:47) indicates challenges that municipalities need to confront. Almost half of municipal inhabitants do not have access to basic services such as water and electricity. It can be deduced that a huge backlog exists in the service infrastructure (Cameron, 1999:230). The unemployment rate, believed to be between 37% to 44%, contributes to poverty (Ackron, 2003:6). Poverty, in return, might contribute to the high levels of crime in South Africa. Almost 16% of the South African population is illiterate and HIV/Aids has enormous consequences and negatively affects economic growth at all spheres of government (Odendaal, 2003:47). Furthermore, public officials lack the necessary skills to fulfil their mandate. Municipal structures, processes and technology are often outdated or obsolete and this could have a negative affect on sustainable development as well as on municipal service delivery (Odendaal, 2003:47).

## MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY

As one of the core programmes of the RDP, service delivery needs to be emphasised and priority be given to programmes and strategies aimed at the improvement of municipal service delivery. Not only is service delivery justified on moral and social grounds as a means to meet the basic needs of inhabitants and provide better quality of life to the poor, but also to provide infrastructure support to the previously disadvantaged to enter the economic community. This will lead to community empowerment and an increase in the economic output of the country as a whole. Service delivery has various objectives *inter alia* to provide access to basic services to impoverished inhabitants, and

to ensure the continuity of services, not only to the poor, but to all levels of society (*White Paper on Local Government*, 1998:111-112; and *cf* Ismail *et al*, 1997:132).

In order to improve municipal service delivery, address the backlog in services and provide in the needs of municipal inhabitants, particular principles and approaches to service delivery need to be taken into account. New approaches to service delivery can include options such as public-private partnerships, contracting out, partnerships with community based organisations (CBOs); non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and building on existing capacity (Gitsham *et al* in Reddy *et al*, 2003:204). Municipalities should take steps to facilitate service delivery by entering into these partnerships, and by designing and implementing policies that will improve human resources, enhance efficiency and decrease the vulnerability of municipal inhabitants (Khan & Cranko in Parnell *et al*, 2003:266). Whichever approach chosen by a municipality, it should enhance the ability of the municipality to achieve its social and developmental goals and improve the quality of life for all. For managers in municipalities to successfully and sustainably provide in the needs of their inhabitants through service delivery, will require a particular level of capacity, whether skills capacity or institutional capacity. It is therefore evident that skilled municipal officials will be required to promote and implement innovative service delivery methods.

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

The vision for the public service, as captured in the *White Paper for Human Resource Management*, 1997, is to develop a competent and capable workforce that is committed to deliver services of a high quality to the public. With the launch of the *Presidential Strategic Leadership Development Programme* (PSLDP) in July 2000, President Thabo Mbeki stressed the importance and necessity of relevant skills and training in the public service in order to keep up with technological development and international standards (Fraser-Moleketi, 2000:2). The South African government has, therefore, committed itself to promoting a culture of life-long learning and development and in the view of this commitment, passed various legislative measures to provide a framework for skills development.

Not only is the development of skills, and for the purpose of this article, specifically managerial skills, a method to improve the attributes of managers, but is also meant to improve the capacity of public service institutions in totality to obtain their objectives. Skills development will enhance the capacity of managers to fulfil their developmental role. It is imperative that developmental needs and shortcomings in the public service be addressed through skills development and training in order to enhance the capacity for good governance (*Human Resource Development Strategy for the Public Service*, 2002-2006:2-3; Kroukamp, 2002:460).

Through developing the professional capacity of public service managers, institutional change will be promoted. Training will assist managers to obtain the necessary skills and competencies to fulfil their duties in an effective and efficient manner and will improve managerial skills such as decision-making, problem solving and leadership. The eventual

objective should be to develop managerial capacity to fulfil their social and developmental roles and provide quality public services. Training should become one of the core elements of institution building (*White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service*, 1995; and compare Mello, 2002:272-273).

In order to assist municipalities with capacity building and the implementation of systems established through legislation, the *Municipal Systems Improvement Programme* (MSIP) was increased from R92 million in 2002 to R132 million in 2004/2005. Funding of Planning, Implementation and Management Support (PIMMS) Centres in district municipalities, was one of the important initiatives to enhance capacity building, especially to assist with the IDP (*DPLG Annual Report*, 2001:12).

Compared to international standards, investment in training and skills development in South Africa is insufficient (GEAR, 1996:25). It is imperative to improve the level and effectiveness of training to enhance productivity and capacity. Improved and relevant management training, relevant job grading, institutional capacity and modern work practices are necessary to enhance efficiency and productivity in the public service (GEAR, 1996:25-26). Additional problems, outlined in the *Human Resource Development Strategy for the Public Service* (2002-2006:19) need to be addressed. It refers to challenges such as a fragmented and uncoordinated approach to training and education in the public service and the provision of training and education that are not relevant; insufficient resources to implement human resource development strategies and current skills levels in the public service (only 3% of the public service workforce are highly skilled personnel) (Fraser-Moleketi, 2000:2). A lack of effective cooperation between Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and other institutions and a lack of a strategic, needs-based, outcomes-based and competency-based approach to public service training and education are also challenges to be addressed (*Human Resource Development Strategy for the Public Service*, 2002-2006:19; Olivier, 1998:20).

The *Skills Development Act*, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) emphasises the fact that not only should skills of public officials be developed, but also that the levels of investment in training and education in South Africa be increased. A learning environment should be created that provides opportunities for public officials to improve their skills. Public officials should furthermore be encouraged to participate in training programmes. Particular tools and institutions are established to assist in accomplishing these objectives, such as the National Skills Authority (NSA), the National Skills Fund (NSF), a skills development levy-grant scheme, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), labour centres and the Skills Development Planning Unit. Partnerships between the public and private sector, as well as cooperation with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), should also be encouraged (cf. Kroukamp, 2002:453-455).

## MANAGEMENT SKILLS REQUIRED FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY

**M**anagement skills as required in the local sphere of government are described and the various management skills currently available to managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality are determined with a view to make recommendations

**Table 1: Skills levels of senior managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality**

Skill	Never	Hardly ever	Some= times	Often	Always
Communication				75	25
Partnering				75	25
Analytical thinking			25	50	25
Concern for excellence				75	25
Motivation		25		75	
Influencing/Negotiation			50	50	
Leadership				75	25
Interpersonal skills			25	50	25
Conflict management			25	50	25
External awareness			25	50	25
Judgement				25	75
Computer literacy				50	50
Political savvy			25	75	
Continuous learning				75	25
Conceptual thinking			25	50	25
Thoroughness			25	50	25
Integrity/Honesty					100
Flexibility				25	75
Creativity				75	25
Tenacity			25	75	
Self-confident					100
Stress tolerance			25	25	50
Responsiveness				75	25
Professionalism					100

**Table 2: Skills levels of middle managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality**

Skill	Never	Hardly ever	Some= times	Often	Always
Communication			40	60	
Partnering			40	20	40
Analytical thinking			40	60	
Concern for excellence			20	40	40
Motivation			60	40	
Influencing/Negotiation			40	60	
Leadership				100	
Interpersonal skills				20	80
Conflict management			20	60	20
External awareness		40	60		
Judgement			100		
Computer literacy			40	60	
Political savvy			20	80	
Continuous learning			40	40	20
Conceptual thinking			40	60	
Thoroughness			20	80	
Integrity/Honesty				40	60
Flexibility		20	40	40	
Creativity			40	40	20
Tenacity			20	40	40
Self-confident			20	40	40
Stress tolerance			40	60	
Responsiveness			20	40	40
Professionalism				60	40

regarding the relevancy and improvement thereof. The focus is primarily on senior management, although middle managers were also requested to complete a questionnaire as the skills required of middle managers in the municipality are considered similar to those of senior management.

A number of managerial skills are indicated in the job descriptions of managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality. These skills were determined within the legislative framework of the local sphere of government. The municipal manager, senior managers and middle managers all completed a questionnaire delivered in order to determine their level of competency pertaining to particular managerial skills. It should be kept in mind that this is a subjective instrument of measurement, since it was expected of managers to rate themselves on management skills and attributes. It was expected of managers to portray their opinion on a particular skill or attribute by indicating the level to which they agree that they possess and use the skill as: never, hardly, ever, sometimes, often or always. Table 1 indicates the skills levels of senior managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality, as rated by themselves, whereas Table 2 indicates the skills levels of middle managers of the municipality, as rated by themselves.

It is interesting to note that both senior and middle managers of the municipality rated themselves particularly high on managerial skills, though it became evident through interviews held with the HODs and the municipal manager that there is a substantial lack of managerial skills and competencies at the middle management level. It can be argued that these managers should be required to undergo training since it is apparent that they overestimate their own capabilities. The next section will focus on the importance of training for managers in the local sphere of government with a view to improve and develop their managerial skills.

## **TRAINING AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MANAGERS IN MUNICIPALITIES**

**T**raining has the obtainment of skills as end result. In this respect particular managerial skills should be acquired that can assist managers to improve their capacity to deliver sustainable municipal services. Although training programmes are offered to managers and opportunities exist to attend these programmes, it is not necessarily used to its fullest extent (Botha, Interview, 14 October 2003).

Results from the questionnaire compiled for this research and completed by managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality reflected that adequate training opportunities for managers exist to a limited extent only. Fifty percent (50%) of senior management indicated that the municipality makes no provision for the development and implementation of training programmes for managers, whereas 40% of middle management indicated the same. The remainder of senior and middle management indicated that provision is made for such training programmes to limited or to some extent. Seventy five percent (75%) of senior management and 60% of middle management furthermore indicated that they would prefer more training opportunities for managers of the municipality. It can therefore, be deduced that the majority of managers would prefer to be provided with more training opportunities.

The majority of respondents, who obtained formal training and qualifications through a university or technikon indicated, with the exception of a few, that their qualifications are mostly relevant to their daily responsibilities. However, with regard to the question whether in-service training or training programmes already undertaken, were relevant to their daily responsibilities, the opinions of both senior and middle management varied to a great extent. In the case of senior management 25% indicated that it was irrelevant; 25% replied that it was relevant to a limited extent; another 25% indicated that it was relevant to some extent; and 25% replied that it was relevant to a great extent. Twenty percent (20%) of middle management indicated that the in-service training or training programmes offered, were not relevant; 40% that it was relevant to a limited extent, 20% that it was relevant to some extent and another 20% that it was relevant to a great extent.

The variety of opinions on the relevancy of in-service training and training programmes already undertaken indicate that some managers experienced this training as useful for the fulfilment of their daily duties, whereas others did not. It can be deduced that the majority of training programmes attend, were either irrelevant or that particular managers selected to attend particular training programmes were selected inappropriately. Whichever might be the case, it is evident that training received thus far, has not improved the skills of managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality, partly because there is insufficient opportunities for managers to attend training programmes and partly because they did not necessarily attend relevant training programmes in the past. It is imperative for managers of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality to receive more and more relevant training in order to enhance their managerial skills.

Although the majority of senior managers might possess the required relevant skills in order to fulfil their daily duties and the eventual effective delivery of municipal services, these managers do not have adequate opportunities to attend training programmes to develop these skills or obtain new skills. These managers are furthermore restricted in fulfilling their responsibilities with excellence by substantial human and financial impediments.

A number of training programmes are available for managers. The financial and human resource constraints at the municipality, however, prevent managers from making use of these opportunities. Results of the questionnaire referred to, and completed by managers indicate that in the cases where managers had the opportunity to attend training programmes, these programmes were either irrelevant or that the particular managers selected to attend particular training programmes were selected inappropriately.

The situation draws the focus to the institutional capacity of the municipality that creates obstacles to not only municipal service delivery, but also to training opportunities for managers which indirectly has a negative impact on service delivery.

## **THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE NOKENG TSA TAEMANE MUNICIPALITY**

**B**y investigating the institutional capacity of a municipality it is possible to determine whether the municipality possesses the ability to perform its functions effectively and whether it provides its employees, specifically managerial employees, with

the necessary support to exercise their duties and deliver quality services to municipal inhabitants. It is imperative for a municipality to focus on incentives that will enhance its institutional capacity. This not only includes financial incentives, but also the introduction of new technology and the improvement of accountability and control mechanisms. It is furthermore important to focus on an organisational culture that enhances problem solving, participation, teamwork, shared professional norms and a strong sense of mission (Grindle & Hildebrand 1995:444; PRC, 1998:15-16).

Grindle and Hildebrand (1995:442) argue that institutions often fail to promote and sustain economic and social development. This is due to an inability to establish and manage systems that identify problems, formulate policies and implement activities to act on these problems, and continue to exercise these activities on a permanent basis (cf. Cloete in Parnell *et al*, 2002:287). It is important to determine whether the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality possesses such systems to ensure the effective functioning of day-to-day activities and service delivery and continue to use these resources/systems on a sustainable basis.

A number of additional factors also influence the institutional capacity of municipalities, for example the economic, social and political milieu within which municipalities deliver their services. The rate of economic growth in a municipal area and the state as well as political stability and the human resource profile of a community also have a particular influence on the institutional capacity of municipalities (Grindle & Hildebrand 1995:445). According to Whelan (in Parnell *et al*, 2002:240) the lack of financial management capacity especially influences the institutional capacity of a municipality negatively. Furthermore, the effective functioning of a performance management system, a committee system and an Employment Equity Plan also affect the institutional capacity of a municipality.

From the interviews held with senior management and middle management of the Municipality, and the questionnaires completed by them, it is evident that the majority of systems, measures or procedures that should enhance the institutional capacity of the municipality, are either not in place, or not functioning in a most effective manner. It is also noteworthy that there is a slight difference on perceptions on these matters between senior management and middle management.

Currently there is limited economic growth in the municipal area due to financial constraints and the economic, political and social milieu of the municipality which currently is not to its advantage. A lack of financial and human resources seems to be the most significant institutional constraints to the municipality which result in a number of problems that restrict the institutional capacity of the municipality. A lack of sufficient human resources creates an administrative overload for managers of the municipality and prevents them from adequately focusing on managerial tasks and functions. Problems emanating from the lack of financial resources are poor cash flow, insufficient office accommodation and equipment as well as a lack of sufficient vehicles at the Traffic and Licensing Department. Financial impediments also lead to the negligence of public spaces, parks, recreational areas and roads that cannot be sufficiently maintained (Boshoff, Lötter, Botha, & Pieterse, Interviews, 14 October 2003).

The income received from the provision of electricity, which is currently provided by the Tswane Metropolitan Municipality in the Roodeplaat Dam area, is insufficient. If electricity to this area can be provided by the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality without paying for the infrastructure, it will make a significant contribution to the revenue-base of the municipality. Water for this area is furthermore purchased directly from the supplier, therefore the municipality cannot charge a service fee which can also serve as a source of income for the municipality.

A performance management system, a system of the delegation of authority and a complete organisational structure is not yet in place and restricts the managers of the municipality in fulfilling their functions effectively and efficiently and subsequently result in inefficient municipal service delivery. Additional to that, the committee system of the municipality has been approved, but does not seem to be utilised to its fullest and most effective extent as yet (Boshoff, Interview, 14 October 2003). It can be deduced that the respective structures, systems, processes and procedures of the municipality should be improved in order to be useful for the enhancement of the institutional capacity of the Municipality.

Factors such as the size of household size in the municipality, which is extremely bigger compared to other municipalities in Gauteng; the relatively young age profile of municipal inhabitants; the high rate of unemployment; and the low levels of education of inhabitants place a significant amount of pressure on the Municipality to comply with the needs of municipal inhabitants and provide quality services. It is evident that the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality should make it a priority to improve its institutional capacity and take active steps in order to improve municipal service delivery to inhabitants (*Metsweding District Municipality IDP Review Report, 2003:8-12*).

The most significant impediment to institutional capacity at the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality is inadequate financial resources. It can be argued that the focus of the Municipality should be to broaden the revenue-base of the Municipality. This can be done in a number of ways. One of the routes to follow is through residential and industrial development. The Municipality is already involved in the development of residential areas, though the prospect of industrial development and the improvement of the central business district should also be considered.

A policy of credit control which the municipality is currently experimenting with, could be vigorously applied in order to broaden the revenue-base of the Municipality. The Municipality could seek to increase partnerships with private companies. It is evident that the Municipality should seriously consider following the route of partnerships to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of municipal services, since thus far they could not manage to do it on their own due to the lack of institutional capacity.

Positive results could emanate from an increased revenue-base. Not only will the Municipality be able to send managers as well as other personnel of the municipality to attend training programmes, but they might be able to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the municipality in the long term and subsequently qualify for grants from national and provincial government.

In addition to the improvement of management skills on middle management level, which should receive priority, the development of skills of municipal councillors should

also be focused upon. A number of processes and systems which should already have been approved to comply with legislative requirements, such as municipal by-laws, an Employment Equity Plan, a performance management system and a system for the delegation of authority, are duties of the Municipal Council that were neglected. The Municipal Council of the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality approved the IDP of the Municipality, but had to review the plan due to an alleged lack of adequate community participation. The negligence to comply with matters on time and a lack of correct procedures, might be based on a lack of adequate skills of Municipal Councillors. It is therefore imperative to look into skills development opportunities for the members of the Municipal Council.

## CONCLUSION

Currently the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality applies crisis management due to a lack of adequate institutional capacity. It is evident that the Municipality needs to increase its revenue-base and strengthen its financial position in order to improve the quality of municipal services and to provide such services in a sustainable manner to municipal inhabitants. It is imperative for managers of the Municipality to have institutional support in the form of funds, human capacity, processes, systems, supplies, equipment and technology to enable them to fulfil their functions with excellence which will result in the eventual delivery of quality municipal services.

Additional to institutional capacity, managers should also possess particular managerial skills. It became evident that senior managers of the municipality possess to a great extent the required managerial skills, though these skills are lacking on the middle management level. Training opportunities exist and can be pursued for management skills development once the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality is in the financial position to provide the opportunity for such training to its managers.

Although this study is applied to the Nokeng Tsa Taemane Municipality specifically, it can be deduced that the present situation, pertaining to institutional capacity and managerial skills, is experienced by the majority of municipalities in South Africa, especially the smaller ones, viz category B municipalities. The lack of financial capacity and viability is a restricting factor to most development opportunities of municipalities. The improvement of the financial positions of municipalities should therefore be the first priority in the local sphere of government since this is the sphere of government directly responsible for service delivery.

## NOTES

1 This article is based on research done for completion of a MPub degree.

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