

CHAPTER EIGHT

PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION AS A TOOL FOR AN EFFECTIVE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to evaluate monitoring and adherence to the laws and rules governing public participation in the Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB), City of Cape Town (CCT) and Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipalities in South Africa. The aim is to uncover the existing monitoring and evaluation method to ensure municipalities under research comply with the mandated public participation during the implementation of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) processes. Questioning whether these municipalities are using the participatory strategies for development, including monitoring and evaluation, to encourage compliance of participation for residents and other relevant parties pertinent to the IDP. A qualitative methodology, using a purposive sampling method and open-ended survey questionnaires, was used to collect data from 510 community members. The study found that none of the metropolitan municipalities had an existing monitoring and evaluation framework which means that community structures cannot be assessed effectively for their performances. Residents still have to protest before they receive information about local development plans and are included in such plans. Ward committees' powers prevent residents from gaining insightful details on IDP initiatives and are thus useless to communities. The chapter proposes the adoption of participatory monitoring and evaluation as a tool to assist metropolitans and residents to gain insight into the IDP progress, since public participation has been reported to be among the weak elements in the local government realm. Once key parties are actively involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation, they will be able to offer innovative, participatory methods of evaluating and benefiting from innovation by considering the views and goals of those who will be most directly impacted.

The chapter has five further sections: the problem statement, a review of extant literature on public participation in monitoring and evaluation; a discussion on the method of data collection and analysis, a presentation of the findings and discussions, and a conclusion.

NATURE OF PROBLEM

According to section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), “encouraging the participation of communities and civic organisations in all aspects of local governance” constitutes one of the goals of municipalities. Public engagement is also emphasised in the White Paper on Local Government, 1998, which discusses how people can be involved in governmental affairs and the crucial role the municipality plays in ensuring the engagement of citizens in the formulation of policies, the design of municipal programmes, execution, monitoring, and assessment (White Paper on Local Government, 1998). The goal of public engagement is to strengthen local democracy. The White Paper emphasises that municipalities must establish suitable plans and procedures to guarantee participation, giving some guidance as to how to do so:

- Forums of organised structures (particularly on issue-specific policies, as opposed to many policies, alongside the areas of setting goals).
- Organised involvement of stakeholders in council committees, especially for transitory issues-focused committees)
- Participatory action study using targeted focus groups to gather in-depth data on subjects
- The creation of partnerships, particularly amongst residents in marginalised regions (White Paper on Local Government, 1998).

These suggestions are based on the guidelines that public engagement needs to be a methodical procedure as opposed to a series of open gatherings and that public involvement is not helpful in all areas of municipal governance and should be focused on specific practices (White Paper on Local Government, 1998). Local government must promote public engagement and find effective ways to facilitate participation. This mandate ensures that representative democracy is supplemented with participatory governance. Communities and users should participate in the municipality’s decision-making procedures (Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000). The municipality should decide on the standards, practices, and platforms that will best enable citizen involvement. The public announcement of municipal meetings and the receiving, handling, and evaluation of pleas and concerns are the processes required for participation (Asha & Makalela, 2020). The Constitution 1996 and other pieces of legislation that support public participation in municipal affairs do not specify the specific protocols for taking part in the integrated development planning approach. The researchers argue that such a lack of clarity from the statutes makes it easy to bypass the anticipated application of public participation within the IDP.

The purposes of public participation in integrated development planning

There are many ways for municipalities and residents to participate; integrated development planning constitutes one of them. Strategies that should guarantee local government participation are:

- giving users a selection of services
- user- and citizen-centred approaches to governance and delivery of services
- collaboration on project execution between municipalities and community/stakeholder organisations
- allowing citizens to submit requests and register complaints, and pressuring the municipality to act (Gumbi, 2014; Khawula, 2016).

It is necessary to consider involvement in the creation of municipal IDPs within the larger framework. This accomplishes four main purposes:

- Needs orientation: making sure that the needs of people are considered
- Suitability of solutions: using the people’s knowledge and wisdom to develop acceptable and long-lasting solutions and approaches

- Community ownership: mobilising the resources and efforts of the community's members to promote collaborative relationships between the local government and the people for implementation and preservation
- Empowerment: Putting integrated development into practice by organising a public gathering and a platform for settling disputes, coming to agreements, and discovering commonality to provide the groundwork to allow the municipality to transfer more responsibility and transparency to the community (National Policy Framework for Public Participation, 2007).

The selection of appropriate protocols and techniques for public engagement should always be guided by the objectives mentioned earlier. Yet, if not encouraged or overseen, the municipality cannot ensure that the goals are to be successfully reached. . This chapter refers to participatory monitoring and evaluation, which emphasises including numerous parties in the monitoring and evaluation procedures, typically the participation of certain people, communities or organisations. These are frequently referred to as beneficiaries in the language related to offering support. Participatory monitoring and evaluation are often found under the larger category of participatory methods (Mayanja, 2020). Mgo-ba and Kabote (2020: 2) describe participatory monitoring and evaluation as a “growing collection of approaches, strategies, attitudes, and behaviours that allow individuals to plan, operate, monitor, evaluate, and ponder as well as share, analyse, and improve their awareness of life and surroundings”.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Through participatory monitoring and evaluation, residents take on active roles as organisers, decision-makers, and performers. Instead of being ‘service recipients’, they become ‘change agents’. Individuals whose situations will be transformed will have a feeling of ownership and drive for the initiative once they fully engage in the IDP preparation and appraisal and take part in decision-making. This is because their interests and requirements are considered.

The status quo of participation in monitoring and evaluation in the South African public sector

A summary of cases from South Africa in the context of the monitoring and evaluation status refers to the study by Nelson (2016), which shows that while many policies serve as useful guides in the national, provincial and municipal spheres of government, the local sphere lacks the same success. This is because there is no specific M&E framework that directs its effective institutionalisation within the local sphere of government. The challenge lies in integrating the monitoring and evaluation policy techniques, which can be transformed towards promises of the state to produce positive outcomes, contributing to attainment of governance. The creation of procedures for public officials that are performance-oriented and purposeful should be the main goal of a participatory M&E policy. Additionally, plans must be developed to enable doctrine to permeate governance practices. This is particularly important in the local sphere of government since there is a void in the Act that currently exists when it comes to creating an institutional M&E system for municipalities.

Kariuki and Reddy (2017) found that, except for the metropolitans, most municipalities had inadequate capacities for M&E. Municipalities were unable to provide high-quality M&E solutions because they lacked sufficient resources for hiring qualified M&E staff. Their recommendation is that authorities must prioritise efficient M&E for local governance, which is sensitive to the demands of the people. It was suggested that municipalities have sufficient resources, including employees who are qualified to monitor and evaluate. This is essential for enhancing their ability to provide effective tracking and evaluation of operations.

The findings of the study by Magagula (2019) indicate a shortage of personnel with M&E expertise and qualifications for the Office of the Premier (OTP), M&E Directorate, and M&E divisions of the different provincial ministries. Using M&E leads to making decisions and implementing them success-