Evaluation of the Western Cape Provincial Government's Land Provision Programme for New State Health Facilities

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ABSTRACT

The evaluation of government policy programmes is a crucial management instrument applied internationally to establish whether policies are implemented as planned, and effective in achieving specific objectives in society. The article starts off by providing selected theoretical perspectives on public policy evaluation, culminating in a Policy Documentation Template (PDT). The PDT is a framework and control instrument that can serve as a yardstick to measure the effectiveness of public policy documents. The article then refers to policy implementation theory, and the development of a Policy Implementation Monitor (PIM) follows. Comprehensive policy documentation of the Western Cape Public Works & Transport Department (PPW) related to acquisition and provision of land for construction of new state health facilities is then assessed, and the implementation of the policy programme summarised and assessed. The article concludes with a number of recommended strategies to improve the delivery of new state health facilities to the population of the province, within set time frames. Formal partnerships and legal contracting between government departments towards critical service delivery in society are key solutions being put forward.

INTRODUCTION

As a result of a growing population in the Republic of South Africa and similarly in the Western Cape Province of the country – coupled with the RSA Government's intention to improve the health conditions in society – the construction of additional state health facilities (hospitals, health centres, clinics) is a critical delivery imperative. These facilities are currently being delivered via cumbersome bureaucratic processes, where one provincial government department (Provincial Public Works and Transport [PPW]) must acquire the land, and then project manage the construction of these government facilities, utilising the budget of the provincial Health Department for construction. The complexity regarding provision/acquisition of vacant land for such projects is the focus of the article.

Perceptions exist that the slow release of land impedes timeous delivery of new government health facilities in the Western Cape Province. These perceptions arise, *inter alia*, from occasional under-spending of capital budgets and prolonged efforts by the provincial health department to get construction projects off the ground. Delayed delivery of the required facilities is detrimental to the status of health, especially in socio-economically vulnerable communities, and to development generally. An unhealthy population is an additional burden to the state and society, financially and otherwise.

The article first provides theoretical perspectives on public policy evaluation, culminating in the Policy Documentation Template (PDT), a control instrument which can be used as a yardstick to measure effective public policy documents. The article then focuses on policy implementation concepts and theory, resulting in development of a generic Policy Implementation Monitor (PIM). Various relevant policy documents of the Western Cape Public Works & Transport Department (PPW) – to acquire and provide land for construction of new state health facilities – are then evaluated. Implementation of these policies is assessed too. The article concludes with a number of recommended political and managerial strategies that will most probably improve the delivery of new state health facilities to the inhabitants of the province, within set time frames.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The article briefly summarises the essence of a comprehensive policy evaluation research study by the first author, under supervision of the second author, for the degree of Master of Public Administration in the School of Public Leadership at Stellenbosch University. The main research question was: *How does the Provincial Department of Public Works & Transport policy programme regarding land provision affect land release for new state health facilities in the Western Cape Province?* The independent research variable in this article was therefore the *PPW policy programme* regarding release of land for new state health facilities, while the dependent research variable was the *release of land* for the "construction" of new state health facilities. A qualitative research design was developed; the main research methods included theoretical analyses, documentary analyses, interviews with senior public managers, and case study examples of policy programme implementation.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON POLICY EVALUATION AND DEVELOPING THE PDT

De Coning (Development Southern Africa 1994:266) captures the fundamental processes and phases in policy making as follows: process initiation, policy design, policy analysis, policy formulation, "political" mandate/decision, policy advocacy, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Identification of these processes and phases is helpful. It must be acknowledged that an entire policy development process can be flawed, unless a proper political mandate is obtained initially, and maintained. Cloete (2000:151) highlights the essence of policy management and analysis as "lessons from their successes and failures . . . learnt in order to maximise the use of scarce resources in the establishment of sustainable service delivery systems as an important element of good governance".

Wholey, Hatry and Newcomer (1994:1) introduce their *Handbook of practical program evaluation* by stating that "we are in an age when elected officials, the media, and the public have become much more demanding about accountability and receiving quality services in return for tax dollars. Which of these services are producing adequate results . . . where are improvements needed?" Policy evaluation is important to inform the public as to whether governments (public representatives) are really addressing their needs and priorities. Such evaluation cannot take place without proper monitoring systems within policy programmes.

Taylor and Balloch (2005:251) stress the advantages of taking a positive approach when doing evaluation, as opposed to cynicism that focuses on what is wrong only. A collaborative effort with the evaluated organisation to discover what is healthy and successful in the organisational life will result in evaluations that are more useful and not rejected outright. Recognition is a scarce commodity in public administration, the lack of which generally contributes to low levels of morale in the public service. Efficient and effective work within government departments must be recognised by managers and politicians, and by independent evaluators.

Hart and Vromen (2008:138) believe that "the powerful have always sought advice from the knowledgeable" all over the world and that public policy "think tanks" have a renewed role to play in the current era. The term "evidence-based policy" is currently used, indicating the importance of scientific policy monitoring and evaluation. These authors argue that public policy think tanks must rethink their role in the increasingly "boundary-less, highly networked societies" (*ibid.*) of today, in order to increase policy relevance and impact in societies.

DeLeon and Vogenbeck highlight the pivotal policy evaluation questions as: Are these programmes working and if not, why not and what can be done to improve them? (Rabin *et al.* 2007:518). These authors created a most useful cryptic summary of the essential evaluation questions.

Scheirer indicates that process evaluation "opens up the black box behind a program label", revealing the realities of its day-to-day programme delivery, and that "full-scale process evaluation . . . requires careful attention to the conceptual design of measurements, the creation of measuring tools, and the collection of quality data . . ." (Wholey *et al.* 1994:40). The broader picture of how the good work done by public servants practically improves quality of life in communities is, unfortunately, often lost in the process of policy implementation. The result is that many public servants and public managers lack the vital commodities of pride and patriotism in their work situation.

The Policy Documentation Template (PDT)

A critical analysis of acknowledged international scholars and practitioners' contributions to the body of public policy evaluation knowledge (only selected contributions are provided) and the subsequent logical distillation of the researcher's findings, resulted in the creation of a Policy Documentation Template (PDT). The PDT presents an integrated framework (control instrument) consisting of core principles and elements extracted from current international knowledge of *effective public policy evaluation*; the works of leading academics and researchers have been studied by Conradie in developing the PDT.

Table 1 The Policy Documentation Template (PDT)

INDICATOR ELEMENT IN POLICY DOCUMENT	Yes	No
1. Introduction/ background/ rationale		
Reference to?		
Proper description?		
Are policy options explored?		
Comment		
2. Policy development & Consultation process		
Reference to?		
Proper description?		
Who are the relevant policy makers within the Department?		
Comment		
3. Institutional & organisational arrangements		
Reference to?		
Proper description?		
Key stakeholders and institutions mentioned?		
Key role players and responsibilities mentioned?		
Organisational structure & functions described?		
Structural/Functional: is the Department structured in accordance with the key objectives to be achieved?		
Comment		
4. Overall policy objectives of Department		

INDICATOR ELEMENT IN POLICY DOCUMENT	Yes	No
Are the policy objectives clear and measurable?		
Are the envisaged outputs clearly outlined, per year?		
Comment		
5. Action plan for the specific policy programme, e.g. land provision for new state health facilities in Western Cape Province		
Is an Action Plan available?		
Are the priorities *per annum* stated? (e.g. erven to be transferred per year; indication of year in which construction of health facilities will start)		
Is it clear which official (manager) is accountable for the overall performance of the specific policy programme?		
Is it clearly stated who the project managers responsible for individual projects are?		
Is provision made for monitoring of progress with individual projects?		
Comment		
6. Resource availability		

• Financial resources availability
  • Operational expenses?
  • Staff appointments?
  • Capital to purchase land?
• Capital to construct new health facilities?		

Comment		

• Human resources availability
  • Manager (accountable officer)?
  • Project managers?
  • Administrative staff?		

Comment		
7. Monitoring & Evaluation System		
Are the goals of the specific policy programme clearly stated in an Action Plan, deliverable *per annum*?		
How is progress towards the goals monitored?		
Will priority goals be achieved within timeframes or not?		
How are the results/findings of monitoring fed back into the policy planning system and how are adjustments of the policy made?		
How is the information gained via monitoring and evaluation processes presented to the Minister and his/her Executive Management?		
Comment		

Effective public policy (the actual policy documentation) must contain at least the elements/characteristics as highlighted in the PDT. This framework can be applied by state institutions to measure the sensibility of their policy documents, and to correct such documentation where content may be lacking or not useful.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION THEORY AND THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION MONITOR (PIM)

Broad public policy programmes are usually turned into practical outcomes (deliverables) in society through programme and project management methods and/or related implementation activities. Policy implementation is a most critical element in governance. It is known that many good strategies and policies often exist, but implementation in the public service either fails or is very slow.

Cloete (2003:288) states that governments have to "improve . . . traditional policy implementation capacities and mechanisms to the extent that they will be able to meet the needs, expectations, and demands in their respective societies to stave off political instability and loss of power". It is true that lack of service delivery or slow service delivery by a government can lead to unrest in society. Such conditions are exploited by political opponents within a political party, or in opposition parties, to cultivate revolt in communities, and to leverage additional pressure that can bring about change in political control.

Bardach captures the essence of the *implementation problem* as follows: "A single governmental strategy may involve the complex and interrelated activities of several levels of governmental bureaus and agencies, private organisations, professional associations, interest groups, and clientele populations. How can this profusion of activities be controlled and directed? This question is at the heart of what has come to be known as . . . the 'implementation problem'" (in Vedung 1997:226). When managers and officials of different government departments have to cooperate, such interaction often takes place in an atmosphere of political tension. Turf battles are common: each department usually wanting maximum control and influence. Managers in one department do not want to be overruled or instructed by managers of other departments. Furthermore, the sheer size of government departments is sometimes named as an excuse for ineffective cooperation and implementation; but this excuse does not hold water: many very large private sector companies function with speed, although they are big.

In a fairly recent study, Lundin (2007:647) makes the point that inter-organisational cooperation is an important factor to consider in policy implementation. His view stems from the fact that "contacts between various public authorities are inescapable in contemporary democratic states". The necessity and impact of cooperation will usually increase with increased task complexity. When there are clear connections between authorities, and they share an overall goal; one will find positive effects of cooperation during implementation of both complex and less complex policies within a policy area. Lundin (*ibid.*) states that the idea of solving public problems by means of "partnerships of actors" is popular both in "real life politics and among academic scholars".

The importance of cooperation and partnerships between departments and entities that have a joint role to play in executing specific policies almost goes without saying. The more

important question to answer is: Why is such cooperation often so problematic? The answer to this question will differ from context to context and project to project. One of the critical negative factors usually is the lack of a clear mandate as to who (a person) legally controls/ manages the project – politics and turf battles delay service delivery.

Conversion processes

Public managers must be able to use the structures and procedures of government to transform (convert) resources into effective output. It follows logically that when the policies – used as instruments to convert resources into outputs to improve the lives of citizens – do not produce the intended results, such policies have to be changed and adapted. McLaughlin and Jordan (1999) indicate that public managers are increasingly expected to describe and evaluate their policy programmes in new ways. Managers must present a logical argument for how and why the programme is addressing specific needs, and how measurement and evaluation will assess and improve programme effectiveness. Managers need clear and consistent methods to help them with this task. "There are logical linkages among programme resources, activities, outputs, customers reached, and short, intermediate and longer term outcomes. Once this model of expected performance is produced, critical measurement areas can be identified." (1999:65, 72)

Budgeting is crucial as a conversion process. Fox in *Public Resource Management* provides the long-lasting definition of public budgeting created by David Lynch, indicating that "a budget is a plan for achieving programmes related to goals and objectives within a definite time, incorporating estimates of resources required, together with estimates of resources available, usually compared with one or more past periods and showing future requirements" (Schwella *et al.* 1996:126-127). Schwella *et al.* (1996:334) express the implementational sobering thought that "budgets control everything an institution does". Budgets are "ubiquitous, oppressive, unyielding and degrading…take enormous amounts of time away from productive work" (*ibid.*).

Budgets are linked to time frames – financial years and financial periods (for example, three year expenditure cycles) – a factor that helps to push forward the practical delivery of services and facilities to society. However, it often happens that amounts not spent in a specific year are simply *rolled over* to the next year, without any sanction applied for not spending the money within a specified period. It also happens that budgets sometimes are changed during policy programme implementation, resulting in uncertainties in regard to delivery goals.

Electronic governance

In their conclusions regarding policy implementation, De Coning and Brynard emphasise that policy formulation and policy implementation are not necessarily consecutive processes, "but are in many cases parallel processes where policy design or redesign and revision can take place even during the formal implementation stages of the policy project"(Cloete *et al.* 2006:209).

Cloete (2003:289) argues that technological service delivery applications will enable governments to meet their service delivery targets, but "this requires a shift in public policy

and spending priorities" to use technology as an important policy instrument. Cloete asserts that developing nations cannot provide sustainable good governance without electronic policy innovations. Electronic tools can indeed be used fruitfully in policy implementation and monitoring processes and can, for instance, ensure the real-time monitoring of progress with projects. One of the best examples of the effective use of electronic instruments in public administration is that of the *management cockpit* of the Belgian Employment Bureau in Brussels. Here, a room with computer screens on the walls is used as a boardroom, where managers see a display of charts and graphics that indicate the exact status of their programmes and projects right at that moment, allowing for real-time management. Policy changes can be introduced must faster if required, as opposed to the other more traditional management and monitoring methods.

The Policy Implementation Monitor (PIM)

The PIM below is not a detailed framework, but a monitoring tool that captures the essential monitoring elements without which effective policy programme implementation is impossible.

Table 2 The Policy Implementation Monitor

Project name	Project goals	Official executing mandate (+ date)	Budget approvals in place	Project manager	Current status	Quarterly/ monthly milestones

When the PIM and PDT are utilised jointly as yardsticks to measure and improve the effectiveness of public policy documents and the implementation of such policy programmes, excellent results can be expected. These two control instruments constitute ground-breaking new policy monitoring and evaluation apparatus.

In the following sections of the article the PDT and PIM will be useful, as PPW policy documentation as well as land provision implementation processes are being evaluated.

ASSESSMENT OF POLICY PROGRAMME DOCUMENTATION OF PROVINCIAL PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The evaluation of the policy documentation of Provincial Public Works Department focuses specifically on policy related to the department's land provision to the Provincial Health Department for construction of new state health facilities in the Western Cape Province.

The PPW made a serious effort to indicate the legislative context and frameworks within which PPW policies are developed and executed. These are documented in the Department's Strategic Plan (RSA 2010: Strategic Plan). The structure of the PPW, as with

most organisations, follows the objectives to be achieved. Determination of the objectives is followed by the question: How are we going to do this (in terms of functioning)? In accordance with the functional imperatives, the structure (sections/divisions) is established, and resources are allocated.

Description and analysis of PPW policy documentation

The PPW policies to provide land for new state health facilities are guided by the general importance of good governance, the need for an effective agency to unlock and release land for construction of state facilities and the specific needs of PPW's client departments. The PPW published its new comprehensive policy documentation, *Strategic Plan (SP)2010-2014* and *Annual Performance Plan (APP) 2010/2011*, in 2010.

The land provision mandate of PPW has proper national and provincial policy foundations, complemented by the SP and the APP. The SP provides a good overview of where PPW finds itself (situation analysis), and also indicates the vision, mission and values of the organisation. The SP captures the strategic objectives of the Department well, logically deduced from various sources of information and planning processes, and then linked into one coherent plan. The SP excels in its exposition of how various PPW teams consulted in an endeavour to ensure that the macro and other related policies of the Department are aligned with each other. The PPW's mission, strategic goals, three core focal areas, six strategic thrusts, five ministerial priority programmes, and ten provincial strategic objectives are clearly outlined. Targets and a monitoring system are, however, not spelt out in the SP.

The SP mentions that effective asset management and infrastructure development will require innovative resourcing, such as leveraging the property portfolio to generate additional revenue for the department. In this process partnerships are critical, also with the private sector. The SP indicates that PPW is in need of special expertise with a view to develop complex business cases in immovable asset management, and to design solutions for specific complicated governance matters. Capacity gaps exist in professional and technical career paths in the Department.

The Annual Performance Plan must set the targets with regard to the implementation of the strategies of the SP, as indicated by the Minister in his foreword to the SP. The APP contains substantial references to and descriptions of the expenditures to be made in realising the strategic objectives of PPW. The APP focuses on how the objectives of the SP are turned into specific goals. Extensive planning and funding processes in order to deliver new state facilities are mentioned in the APP, but insufficient emphasis is placed on how to accelerate land provision implementation and the resultant benefits of health development, economic development and job creation in a developmental state with significant poverty and unemployment problems.

The APP generally does not set clear targets and annual time frames for land provision to Provincial Health. Effective monitoring cannot take place without clear targets. Hence, the researcher also analysed the Department's land provision operational plan, with the specific view of investigating targets, time frames, project management, and accountability. The annual operational planning document does not indicate the project managers responsible to deliver the land mentioned in the PPW operational planning document, on time. No milestones (such as quarterly) towards timely achievement of targets are mentioned.

The PDT Applied

When the researcher applied the Policy Documentation Template to the PPW land provision policy programme documentation it was found that:

- Although mention is made of the need to leverage the property portfolio to generate new income streams for PPW, and that innovative property management models need to be explored, the policy documents lack information as to how and when this quest will be promoted and goals achieved.
- Excellent information is provided on the consultative processes followed in policy formulation, but little is said regarding how policy reviews and changes can be introduced, and by which body.
- Institutional and organisational arrangements are properly described in policy documents, but little mention is made of the critical stakeholders and partners with whom PPW must cooperate to enable effective land provision on time.
- It is evident that the function of land provision towards new state health facilities is not properly staffed at the PPW.
- The strategic objectives are clear, but specific outputs to be achieved per annum are lacking in the documentation. Although an annual operational planning document exists, this document lacks indication/information on annual deliverables, mandates, budget approvals, milestones, and accountable officials/managers. These are serious shortcomings in the documentation, since no proper monitoring and evaluation can take place without measurable targets *per annum*.
- Sufficient programme management for the land provision programme is in place, but a lack of project managers is evident, especially project managers with high-order cross-cutting skills.
- Progress is monitored internally by programme managers and externally by, for instance, the PPW Budget Office, but clear annual deliverables are absent from the documentation.

After evaluation of the relevant PPW policy documentation, one could assess the implementation of this policy programme.

IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATED

Implementation assessment includes questions such as: Are the policies viable, and being executed? How does a lack of clear and mandated annual targets affect implementation? How is progress monitored?

Context

Regular national government infrastructure spending serves as an additional protection and a bulwark against the current repressed state of the global economy and avoidance of increased unemployment and social decay in South Africa. Resources from national government and development aid from international institutions simply cannot have the

desired impact without proper public policy implementation. There is acknowledgement by the South African Government (Zuma 2010) that changes in policy implementation methods must be considered and applied, to accelerate implementation and development and ensure increasingly caring and effective governance.

Functioning of the land provision programme

Implementation of the PPW policy for land provision towards new state health facilities (hospitals, community health centres, clinics) is influenced, *inter alia*, by political activity; alignment with the priority needs expressed by client departments; stakeholder cooperation; mandates; intra-departmental cooperation; the annual operational plan; allocation of resources; and monitoring.

The land provision programme of the PPW essentially functions as follows:

- Processes exist through which the provincial health department determines where and when new state health facilities must be built. These needs are determined by a number of factors, amongst which the population numbers in geographical areas and the nature of health challenges are the most fundamental.
- The PPW is informed of the needs for new health facilities, and requested to acquire suitable vacant land in the targeted geographical areas.
- PPW management and officials embark on processes to identify potential erven that can be acquired, and start negotiations with the owners of the properties. In some cases, often, the property owners are municipalities, which means the provincial government must buy the land from the municipality. Cooperation from municipalities is often unsatisfactory and, on occasion, causes delays in provision on health facilities in society.
- Annual targets are basically captured in the budget documents of the PPW and the Provincial Health Department, but achievement of these targets is not enforced. The preferred principle is that Provincial Health must decide in which year the construction for a specific health facility must start, and then it must be ensured that the PPW makes the land available in the foregoing year (Cunninghame 2010). Achievement of these targets should be the joint responsibility of the two departments, even though the PPW must actually acquire the land and Provincial Health will provide the budget and design for the buildings.

Challenges

The researchers found substantial frustration at Provincial Health with the long delays in land acquisition by the PPW. Provincial Health faces the problem of under-spending their budgets owing to unavailability of land for health facility construction. The meetings between the two departments where progress with land acquisition is discussed are found unacceptable by Provincial Health (Cunninghame 2010).

Although annual operational plans for PPW land acquisition do exist, these plans are seriously flawed and cannot be successfully implemented and monitored. Some of the most obvious flaws are:

- Numerous land acquisition projects are identified as priorities *urgent*, but it is not clear which of these projects have been legally requested/mandated by the Department.
- There is no information on target financial years for these projects to be completed; neither about intended year of transfer of these properties. Thus, there are no clear targets to be achieved in an annual period, which renders successful project management impossible.
- It is not clear who the accountable PPW project managers are.
- Monitoring of its own land provision implementation by the PPW is not only defective, it is also not in good standing. It is faulty, insufficient, poor, deficient, crippled, restricted, and totally flawed. This situation stems from the fact that a clear schedule with clear annual targets to be monitored does not exist.

The PIM Applied

The gap between current implementation at the PPW and a picture of successful implementation can be demonstrated by application of the PIM to PPW practice. Consideration of the PIM indicators reveal the following:
- Project name: Erven to be acquired by the PPW are indeed described in current PPW planning documents, usually in terms of erf numbers and related descriptions.
- Project goals: the annual operational plan of the PPW does not indicate clear project targets, for example, to acquire a specific erf by a certain time.
- PPW has official mandates to acquire land, as specified in the budget documents and other planning documents. However, clear mandates such as approved Cabinet instructions, or legally enforceable instructions from the Department to acquire land, or official, written annual agreements, are not in place.

Case study illustrations

Implementation case studies illustrate some practical implementation challenges. Du Noon is a township area in Milnerton, Cape Town (thus an urban context), where a community Health Centre is urgently needed in the poverty-stricken community. The PPW must provide the land, and the Department must provide the funds for the community Health Centre. In February 2011, the PPW was still locked in a process of acquiring land owned by the National Department of Public Works.

A questionnaire to the PPW regarding this project revealed the following:
- The date of the Provincial Health instruction/request to the PPW to acquire land is not provided in the response. This information is important, because there should be logical steps to be implemented from that date, to be monitored monthly and quarterly. This extract from the questionnaire response (response in bold italics) explains the reality.

In which year must the land purchase be finalised (transfer)?	*Preferably 2010/11, subject to availability of funds and NDPW finalising its disposal process*
In which year will construction of the facility start?	*Preferably 2011/12*

- The second extract from the questionnaire response reveals important information about project management and time frames. It actually speaks for itself: "No time frames set."

What are the steps to be followed henceforth, from 1 June 2010 that will finalise the process to transfer the land to the appropriate authority (Provincial Public Works)? What is the time frame agreed to by all the role players? Who will drive the project forward as Project Manager?	*No time frames set. Acquisition driven by Property Management: Property Development* *(Acquisitions component) of PPW*

Conclusions regarding PPW land provision implementation

The following overall conclusions can be drawn:
- It is obvious that the PPW pursues land acquisition projects either without the mandate of the provincial Cabinet, or does not strategically utilise the importance/imperative of constitutionally enforceable state functions. Thus, it will not be necessary for the PPW to unsuccessfully endeavour for seven years to obtain municipal land to build a state district hospital in the Mossel Bay area, if the PPW approached and implemented the project as an enforceable constitutional and Cabinet imperative.
- The annual operational plan of the PPW is not a useful instrument, since it is not linked to enforceable targets and time frames.
- The land provision programme of PPW is functional, generally, but is not at all managed effectively – no measurable goals can be monitored *per annum*.
- The methodologies utilised by the PPW are *old school* – in a negative sense. Project management approaches and methods are not employed; neither is effective real-time electronic monitoring of project progress utilised.
- The two departments, the PPW and the Provincial Health Department, are working in silos – there is no consensus (contract) on what they want to achieve by what dates. In order to have successful implementation, the two departments will have to drive the programme synergistically to deliver much needed new state health facilities.
- There is a lack of cooperative agreement at the top executive level, not only between the PPW and the Department, but also in cooperation with municipalities, for instance, the cases of the envisaged new Mossel Bay district hospital and Du Noon community health centre.

The general functioning of the land provision programme is haphazard and an example of bureaucratic red tape, time wasting and unintellectual, vague efforts to achieve the unachievable. The land provision programme is understaffed and lacks project management expertise. Without proper managerial direction the programme is not focussed on a specific goal. The land provision programme's implementation is basically impossible to monitor. Targets are not achieved on time by the PPW. The Provincial Health Department is co-responsible for this failure, because it has not contracted the PPW regarding dates when land for specific construction projects must be available.
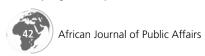
STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the study must compel the public manager and committed officials to find viable answers to the most important public administration questions: How can my work have a specific impact to address the serious needs in the community? How does the day-to-day work provide tangible human dignity to communities, families, and individuals? Answers to these questions can produce a sense of meaning, pride and patriotism – but can also produce a quality decision to introduce fundamental change to the land provision policy programme. But executing the decision is imperative for implementation on time as planned, and within the allocated funds. It is here that the major challenge lies, far more than in making the quality decision *per se.*

Answering the main research question

The answer to the question 'how does the Provincial Department of Public Works & Transport's policy programme for land provision affect land release for new state health facilities in the Western Cape Province?', is that ineffective land release by PPW negatively impacts on the provincial government's programme to construct new public health facilities in the Western Cape, as summarised above.

Political and policy recommendations

- The PPW policy programme for land provision will have to be changed to produce effective policy documents, and to ensure successful implementation. Effecting these changes will have a positive effect on the timeous release of land for construction of new public health facilities.
- An all important precondition for improved public health facility delivery in the Western Cape is drastically improved cooperation and partnership between the PPW and the Provincial Health Department. The fact that Provincial Health carries the constitutional mandate to establish these facilities, with PPW performing a vital supportive agency function, does not absolve any one of the two departments from the responsibility to, jointly achieve the set goals.
- The PPW should formally consider changes to the land provision policy documentation, based on the results of application of the PDT.
- Improved project management is a vast challenge in public administration in South Africa. It must be understood that project management in a government context cannot be successful without cross-cutting approaches and proper mandates. Single point accountability is critical – when projects fail it must be possible to identify the accountable project manager. The same applies when successes must be celebrated. The essence of project management remains legal mandates, specific goals, appropriate resources, strict time frames, and real-time monitoring.
- It is recommended that the PPW utilises the PIM in its policy, planning, implementation and monitoring processes.
- It is recommended that the status of the Provincial Health Department as policy programme partner be raised considerably and that the content of such a partnership

be captured in a *Health Facility Partnership Contract* (HFPC). The HFPC must contain stipulations on the nature, scope and functioning of the partnership, and contain the priority construction projects to be started *per annum* (by implication providing the land provision deadlines). The HFPC must be Provincial Executive Council -approved. The HFPC should be the policy documentation link that can complete the currently defective body of land provision policies. The HFPC can serve as an annual operational plan, indicating annual deliverables, mandates, budget approvals, milestones, and accountable officials/managers.

- The appointment of a policy think tank consisting of a group of independent expert professional individuals will be useful. They should be given the following tasks:
  - Facilitate the establishment of a Health Facilities Partnership Contract (HFPC) between the PPW and Provincial Health Department.
  - Ensure that the HFPC contains the essential elements on functioning of the partnership, and contains the mutually agreed new public health facility projects to commence during at least the next three financial years (2011/12 – 2013/14).
  - Initiate a sophisticated computerised electronic management cockpit for real-time monitoring of progress with the priority land/facility projects.
  - Document a broad policy and strategic framework for innovative asset management approaches and models that will maximise revenue streams for PPW, without decreasing the asset base of the Western Cape Provincial Government.
  - Attend to updating of PPW asset registers, innovative land release models and clear province-wide projects

CONCLUSION

Synergistic collaboration between two large government departments in the Western Cape and the utilisation of intellectual new approaches that transcend narrow, fear-based political power contestations can benefit vulnerable sections of the population and have a positive spill-over effect on other policy sectors in other South African provinces and beyond.

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