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# Editorial

At the end of the calendar, and the last issue of the Journal, it is appropriate to reflect on some of the important occurrences during 2015 that may have an important effect on the future of governmental policies and administrative as well as managerial practices.

One of the significant issues which could be mentioned is surely the number of public protests and marches by members of different communities. The issues affecting public administration and management is firstly to reflect on the possible reasons for the protests and then to consider how it affects the practises to maintain effective and efficient service delivery. Communities argue that protests are the only way of getting the politicians' attention in the marches concerning lack of service delivery. Some protests concern the assumption that "government does not listen, that officials do not implement the promises made by the political office bearers". Some protests highlight corruption preventing the delivery of services, while others demand that their human rights are not respected. It is not the intention to try and validate the reasons put forward. The implication is that all governmental bodies will have to reconsider their approach to public participation and the involvement of communities in decision-making, not just informing them about policies, financial implications and infrastructural requirements. Communities should actively be involved in decision making. In the local sphere the ward committees could play a significant role in e.g. planning and even policing.

As far as the administrative and managerial implications are concerned officials should adapt their approaches to implementing policies. If a positive commitment is not developed no success will be obtained in trying to satisfy communities. Managers in particular should view implementation as a community driven action. This implies that the advice and experience of communities should be utilised when actions are undertaken. They should be continuously involved by explaining how projects are developed, tenders invited, tenders allocated, money provided for in the budget, personnel appointed the procedures followed and ultimately how accountability is maintained. The bottom line is the change required in attitude and commitment to excellence.

The eleven articles in this issue cover a variety of topics. In the first article on *Attacking the bureaucratic elephant* Saloojee and Kuye argue that several assumptions exist that guide and shape the issues related to decentralisation and partnership to create a responsible and citizen-focussed public service. These assumptions are then discussed and evaluated. Govender and Reddy do a review of local government and explains the areas of success and failures. This is followed by Pillay, Taylor and Raga's article on the role of equality and human rights in promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the workplace. Jordaan discusses the dilemma facing South Africa's exports to China and raises the question whether the aim should be higher quantity or bigger variety. Kuye and Tshiyoyo's article addresses a topical issue related to the reconciliation and strategic governance in Burundi and the great lakes region. The emphasis is on recent leadership developments and policy decision-making and argues that decision making can be rational despite the *inherent messiness* of politics in the developing world. Ingle's article may seem strange in a public administration journal as it concerns agricultural developments in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the focus is on policy

making and the attendant administrative support required for promoting agriculture. A more philosophical article by Sing follows. In this contribution the author focusses on factors and considerations required to enhance ethical governance in public administration as practice. Hendriks and Botha are concerned about the lack of uniformity in accounting approaches in the South African public sector as accrual accounting is not fully implemented while cash accounting is still prevalent. Diederiks and Tiba investigate the South African consular corps in the United Kingdom and argue that effectiveness could be promoted by considering the privatisation of some consular services. In the article by Maepa and Thornhill, the focus is on impact evaluation as a reform mechanism to assess the performance of Gauteng's three metropolitan municipalities in delivering basic services to informal settlements and whether the millennium Development Goals are indeed achieved. Dominique E. Uwizeyimana discusses *Mobile phones as means for extending e-governance in rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa* in the last article.

The AJPA wishes all the readers and contributors who have made the year 2015 in academic publishing of the journal a success a wonderful festive season.

**J O Kuye (kuyej@up.ac.za)**

Chief Editor

