

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CASE STUDY OF THE VHEMBE DISTRICT - PART 1: OUTLINE AND CONTEXT

*“...the essence of a case study is that its aim is to illuminate a decision or set of decisions and to understand why they were taken, and how they were implemented, and with what result...”* Sally and Kydd (1999).

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four discussed the implementation of IDP policy in South Africa, and Limpopo Province in particular. All the five districts were outlined on how they implement the IDP policy, and in particular, the involvement of Traditional Authorities in these IDPs. This chapter discusses the case study of Vhembe District Municipality, and its four local municipalities, namely: Makhado, Thulamela, Mutale and Musina. Vhembe District Municipality and its four local municipalities are presented here, because they provide an environment where Traditional Authorities can play a critical role in the implementation of IDP policies and processes.

In Vhembe District, there are Traditional Authorities who should participate in the affairs of the local municipalities. In this study, the role of such Traditional Authorities is limited to the implementation of the municipal IDPs – in line with the promotion of democracy at local and municipal level. Participation of Traditional Authorities must be promoted by all the municipalities, as is required by Section 152 of the **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa** 1996. To this end, traditional authorities should also be encouraged to participate in the affairs of municipalities, and particularly in their areas. According to Cole (1921:176), traditional authorities represent their subjects in a particular area. The public participation is an element of decentralization; and Vhembe District Municipality is discussed here as a unit of analysis.

## 5.2 DEFINITION OF A CASE STUDY

A case study is an in-depth study, which explores issues, present and past, as they affect one or more units (organisations, groups and departments or persons). It is a description of a management situation, based on the interview, on archival, naturalistic observation, and other data, constructed to be sensitive to the context in which management behaviour occurs (Bonama 1995:199). In public administration, a case study is referred to as a narrative of the events that give rise to decisions or groups of related decisions by a group of public administrators (Yeager 1989:685). A case study offers researchers opportunities to focus their attention on topics that are relevant to a specific field. Case studies can be about individual people in a social context, family relations, groups, business and middle-range workplace settings.

The case study research is directed at understanding the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of a particular case in all its complexity. The objective is usually to investigate the dynamics of some single bounded system, typically of a social nature, such as family group, community participants in a project, institution or practice (Mitchell **et al.** 2005:25). According to Maree **et al.** (2007:75), a case study may be defined as a unit of analysis or as a research method. It is a systematic inquiry into an event, or a set of related events, which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest.

## 5.3 RATIONALE FOR THE CASE STUDY OF THE VHEMBE DISTRICT

This aim of this case study was to investigate the participation of traditional authorities in the implementation of IDP policy in the Vhembe District Municipality of the Limpopo Province. The objective of the study was to investigate the extent to which traditional authorities are involved in the IDP processes in the Vhembe District. In order to achieve the objective of the study, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was utilised. The researcher compiled questionnaires in line with the research topic, objectives and questions. These were then distributed to the respondents. The respondents were interviewed individually, and in a focus group; while others filled in questionnaires and returned them for analysis.

A review of the literature was also conducted, in order to obtain information on the topic of the study. Observation was also used to collect some of the data. This is corroborated by Davies (2007:184) who argues that case studies can use qualitative methods with observations, interviews, and document analyses. The responses of the respondents were captured in a spreadsheet; and these were then analysed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 18 of 2010.

The collected data and their analysis enabled the study to produce deeper knowledge on the participation of traditional authorities in the implementation of IDP in Vhembe District Municipality, as alluded to by McNabb (2010:xix). It also enables the researcher to know the uniqueness of the individual case, as well as its context (Adams **et al.** 2007:112).

## **5.4 THE GOVERNANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

The following governance structures are crucial in the formulation of IDP policy in the Vhembe District Municipality. They are briefly discussed here.

### **5.4.1 Political structure**

The political structure comprises the Executive Mayor, the mayoral committee, the council and the portfolio councillors/committees. All these structures are held responsible for the carrying out of decisions taken within the IDP policy process in this municipality.

### **5.4.2 Administrative structure**

The administrative structure is headed by the Municipal Manager. There are heads of departments, IDP steering committees, IDP progress committees, project task teams, and cluster conveners. These individuals are all required to perform their functions in terms of the IDP process plan. The IDP office and the **Planning Implementation and Management Support** (PIMS) centre personnel were responsible for the co-ordination of the process of compiling the IDP policy and the reviews.

### **5.4.3 Community**

The IDP Representative Forum and ward committees at local municipalities carry the mandate for public participation at community level. Stakeholders, such as traditional authorities are members, and they can take part in the IDP Representative Forum and ward committees. The compilation of an IDP had been made a legislative mandate for each municipality in South Africa. The **Municipal Systems Act, 2000** (Act 32 of 2000) requires that the IDP be implemented.

Effective implementation of the IDP requires that traditional authorities, who control the crucial resources, such as land, be involved in the planning and implementation of government policies, such as IDPs, in order to achieve the policy goals. If they do not feel respected and involved, they may resort to withholding the land, which is crucial for IDP implementation. There are two models of public participation; and these are delegated power and partnership. Traditional leaders, if they are granted the authority and the right to veto, would support the effective implementation of government policies (Arnstein 1969: 216-224).

## **5.5 KEY ROLE-PLAYERS IN IDP IMPLEMENTATION IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

### **5.5.1 Municipal Council**

The council is the political decision-making body that plays a significant role in participatory democracy. The council also decides and adopts the process plan and framework for the development of IDP, thereby ensuring that all the relevant actors are involved. It further ensures that the planning process is undertaken, in accordance with the agreed time frames. In addition, the council ensures that the planning process is focused on priority issues, and that it adopts the IDP Review Document.

### **5.5.2 Executive Mayor**

The Executive Mayor decides on the planning process. With the assistance of the Mayoral Committee, he also recommends to the Council the approval of the reviewed IDP. He tables the District Framework and Process Plan to the Council for approval; and he also tables the final reviewed IDP to the Council for its approval.

### **5.5.3 Portfolio Committee Development and Planning Department**

This department is responsible for interrogating and considering IDP review drafts. The other responsibility is that of recommending to the Mayoral Committee for its approval of drafts of each phase during the IDP review process.

### **5.5.4 Municipal Manager**

The Municipal Manager prepares a programme for the planning process. He is also responsible for the overall management, co-ordination and monitoring of the planning process, ensuring that all relevant actors are involved. He is also responsible for ensuring that all processes are participatory, strategic and implementation-oriented.

### **5.5.5 Vhembe District Development Planning Forum**

The Vhembe District Development Planning Forum focuses on intergovernmental development planning and facilitation within the context of the **intergovernmental Relations Framework Act**, 2005 (No 13 of 2005) between the district, the local municipalities, the State-owned enterprises, and the sector departments in the district. The development Planning Forum is chaired by municipal administrative officials. This forum comprises, among others, representatives of the Traditional Leaders (Vhembe District Municipality IDP Training Guide:13-15).

### **5.5.6 IDP Representative Forum**

The Vhembe District Municipality IDP Representative Forum is chaired by the Executive Mayor. It is composed of traditional leaders, local municipalities, a youth council, and the Vhembe District Municipality, among others (Vhembe District Municipality IDP Training Guide: 17). The Executive Mayor, the Municipal Manager, and the IDP Manager were also interviewed.

## **5.6 POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES**

The powers and functions of the district are assigned by Section 84 (1) of the **Municipal Structures Act**, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998). They are:

- Integrated development planning for the district;
- Supply of bulk electricity;
- Supply of bulk water;

- Bulk sewerage purification;
- Solid waste disposal;
- Municipal roads;
- Regulation of passenger transport services;
- Municipal airports;
- Municipal health services;
- Fire-fighting services;
- Fresh produce markets and abattoirs;
- Establishing and managing cemeteries and crematoria;
- Promotion of local tourism;
- Municipal public works;
- Receiving, allocation and distribution of grants; and
- Imposing and collecting of taxes and duties.

From the above listed powers and functions, it is clear that District municipalities have a huge challenge of providing the various services, which take place in the area of jurisdiction of traditional authorities. In order to properly provide these services, stakeholders, such as the traditional authorities, should be involved because they represent their communities. The participation of traditional authorities guarantees the legitimisation of the projects by traditional communities.

## **5.7 MAKHADO MUNICIPALITY**

The Makhado Municipality is located at the foot of the Soutpansberg Mountain Range. It is 100 km from the Zimbabwean border along the N1 Route. The Makhado Municipality is made up of six areas of the Transitional Local Councils, which amalgamated in 2000. The Makhado Municipality is made up of Makhado, Vleifontein, Waterval, Vuwani, and Dzanani formal towns. Its administrative office is in Makhado town (Makhado IDP Review for 2010 /2012:15). Makhado Municipality has been demarcated into 37 wards.

### **5.7.1 Brief history of Makhado Municipality**

Makhado Municipality is named after a 19<sup>th</sup> century Vhavenda king, Makhado, who led his followers in a war against the attacks of Boer trekkers. His statue stands along the N1 in the town of Louis Trichardt (Makhado Local Municipality 2010:3).

The name Makhado has made history in South Africa. In 2003, the Minister of Arts and Culture approved the recommendation for the name change from Louis Trichardt to Makhado. The new name was published in the Government Gazette of June 2003. There were objections made against the name change; and at the Pretoria High Court, Judge Legodi dismissed the appellant's objection in 2005.

The appellant took the matter to the Appeals Court in Bloemfontein, where the name Makhado was reviewed, and set aside in 2007 (*The Chairpersons' Association vs Minister of Arts and Culture* 2007). The new consultative process was embarked upon, and in the Government Gazette 2011 No. 851, the Minister approved the name Makhado for the town Louis Trichardt.

The following individuals within the municipalities were used as units of analysis; and they were therefore interviewed. They are: the mayor, the municipal manager and the IDP manager.

### **5.7.2 Powers and functions of Makhado Municipality**

Makhado Local municipality has powers and functions assigned to it in terms of the provisions of Sections 84 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998. Among those powers and functions, it has to prepare an integrated development plan for the whole municipal area (Makhado IDP Review for 2010 /2012:10). Makhado Municipality has 24 Traditional Authorities, who are represented by 11 Traditional Leaders in Council. Four of them died, and only one was replaced. Therefore, eight individuals now represent the traditional authorities in the Council (Data provided by Makhado Municipality).

## **5.8 THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY**

Thulamela is one of the four local municipalities that make up Vhembe District. It shares borders with Mutale Municipality in the North-Eastern part, Makhado in the South, and South-Western side. Thulamela was established in 2000, in terms of the

**Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998** (Act 117 of 1998). Thulamela is a rural local municipality situated in the North-Eastern part of Limpopo Province. Thulamela is made up of five areas of the Transitional Local Councils, which amalgamated in 2000.

### **5.8.1 Brief history of Thulamela Municipality**

Thulamela is a name derived from the Karanga language of Zimbabwe. The name means “Place of giving birth”. The ancient settlement has been declared a national heritage site. This is situated in the North of the Kruger National Park at the Punda Maria Gate. The present Thulamela is a municipal area that covers a combination of some tribal areas and the town of Thohoyandou, which was the capital of the former Venda Bantustan. Thulamela municipality has been demarcated into 38 wards (Thulamela IDP Review 2007 /2008-2011 /2012:11). Thulamela has nineteen traditional authorities, who are represented by nine traditional leaders (Data provided by Thulamela Municipality). The researcher interviewed these traditional leaders, together with the municipal mayor, the municipal manager, and the IDP manager.

### **5.8.2 Powers and functions of Thulamela Municipality**

Thulamela Local municipality has powers and functions assigned to it, in terms of the provisions of Sections 84 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998. Among those powers and functions, it has to prepare an integrated development plan for the whole municipal area (Thulamela IDP Review for 2010 /2012:10). Thulamela Municipality has eleven traditional leaders in Council. Four of them died, and only one was replaced. Therefore, there are now eight traditional authorities represented in Council (Data provided by Makhado Municipality).

## **5.9 MUSINA MUNICIPALITY**

Musina was first known as Messina, until 2002, when it was renamed Musina. It is formed by four portions of Transitional Local Councils. Musina Municipality does not have any Traditional Authorities in its area of jurisdiction.

As such, there is no traditional Leader serving in its Municipal Council. The researcher did not interview anyone in the Musina Municipality.



### **5.9.1 Brief history of Musina Municipality**

Musina local municipality is named after a town that was called Messina during the apartheid era. This Northern-most town borders Zimbabwe just across the Limpopo River, which is also known as Vhembe. It is clear that this region is very significant, as both the district and the province derived their names from this municipality.

This town was popular for its great copper deposits and the ancient Vhavenda tribesmen who stayed here some decades ago mined the copper for trade. They called this copper '*musina*'. It is a historically significant municipality because of the famous Mapungubwe heritage site, which is situated some few kilometers from the town of Musina.

### **5.9.2 Powers and functions of Musina Municipality**

Musina Local municipality has powers and functions assigned to it in terms of the provisions of Sections 84 (1) of the **Municipal Structures Act**, 117 of 1998. Among those powers and functions, it has to prepare an integrated development plan for the whole municipal area (Musina IDP Review for 2010 /2012:10).

## **5.10 MUTALE MUNICIPALITY**

This North-Eastern located municipality in the Vhembe District is the most rural municipality of all the four municipalities of this district. Mutale municipality was formed by the amalgamation of Mutale/Masisi/Vhutswema Transitional Local Councils. The municipality is mainly rural (Vhembe Voice 2004:6). In Mutale Municipality, the researcher used the mayor, the municipal manager and the IDP manager as units of analysis, and interviewed them. Traditional leaders were also used as units of analysis, and were interviewed.

### **5.10.1 Brief history of Mutale Municipality**

Mutale was named after the River Mutale that cuts across Lake Fundudzi. Both Mutale and Lake Fundudzi's waters do not mix in the process of crossing each other. Mutale's water simply flows through Lake Fundudzi's waters. There are seven traditional authorities in Mutale, who are the custodians of the land (Mutale IDP 2010 /2011:5). These traditional authorities are represented in the Mutale Municipal Council by four leaders. Two traditional leaders serve in the Vhembe District Municipality.

### **5.10.2 Powers and functions of Mutale Municipality**

Mutale Local municipality has powers and functions assigned to it in terms of the provisions of Sections 84 (1) of the **Municipal Structures Act**, 117 of 1998. Among those powers and functions, it has to prepare an integrated development plan for the whole municipal area (Mutale IDP Review for 2010 /2012:10). Mutale Municipality has eleven traditional leaders in Council.

### **5.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed a case study. Such a case study is undertaken whenever there is a need to obtain an in-depth knowledge on a particular topic. This aim of this study was to investigate the participation of traditional authorities in the implementation of IDP policy in the Vhembe District Municipality of the Limpopo Province. The objective of the study was to investigate the extent to which traditional authorities are involved in the IDP processes in the Vhembe District. In order to achieve the objective of the study, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was utilised. The researcher compiled questionnaires in line with the research topic, the objectives and the questions; and these were distributed to the respondents. The respondents were interviewed individually, and in a focus group; while others filled in the questionnaires and returned them for analysis. A review of the literature was also conducted, in order to obtain information on the topic of the study. Observation was also used to collect some of the data. Case studies also use qualitative methods with observation, interview and document analysis.

The responses of respondents were captured in a spreadsheet and analysed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18 of 2010. The collected data and their analysis enabled the study to produce deeper knowledge and understanding of the participation of traditional authorities in the implementation of IDP in Vhembe District Municipality. In this study, traditional authorities' representatives, and thus traditional leaders, were sampled as the respondents, in order to address the topic, the objectives and the research questions of the study in Vhembe District Municipality and its four local municipalities, namely: Makhado, Thulamela, Mutale and Musina. The next chapter will discuss in greater depth the case study of Vhembe District focusing on the presentation of the results.