The View From Below: Citizen Voice and Regulation in Water Services to the Poor

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Water Research Commission

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Executive summary

Regulation in a democratic society cannot work independently of participation by citizens. Public agencies acting as regulators have to have the views of citizens to hand as it is their interests which are being protected. As the regulatory strategy in South Africa acknowledges, without this knowledge, regulation will have a limited impact.

Internationally there is increasing interest in engaging poor communities and capturing citizen voice in scorecards as a step towards improving accountability between citizen and provider. Such participation should assist developing the regulatory framework in South Africa as communities understand the operation and standards of water services, voice their needs, and, as necessary, seek redress. The expression of voice is an integral aspect of a developed reflexive delivery system in which community voice operates as an important prod to municipalities acting as Water Service Authorities to respond to expressed need.

Although greater attention to citizen voice is advocated, the challenge remains as to what method can be adopted to involve poor communities on the widest basis actively in people's regulation of water services?

The objective of this project has been to research ways in which the sustainability of water services to the poor can be improved by identifying a range of indicators for water services, to prepare, test and develop tools for communities to use to ensure greater sustainability of water services: by encouraging, capturing and recording community voice. In developing tools and undertaking case studies in which these tools are utilised, modified and assessed. This set of tools should assist the community to assess their needs and conclude in written representation to the Water Service Authority and municipalities generally. These tools should be validated and an institutional home located.

The research questions

The research questions were based on the premises of whether:

- tools can be effectively used by trained community facilitators to encourage citizen voice,
- cascaded through communities and
- provide valid and accurate measurement of water service standards.

The question was further whether these activities could, in turn, lead on to engagement with the institutional mechanisms for local regulation to bring about effective remedial action.

The method adopted has been to explore the variety of well established appraisal tools, rework them to interrogate the statutory and policy framework, and, where necessary, to innovate by developing new tools. These tools and the wider strategy adopted for training trainers constituted the essence of the study. The materials include those relating to the training of facilitators, community and water mapping and surveys, community priorities and timelines to development, advocacy, planning and regulation.

These tools have been developed within the framework of water services to widen the prospect for sustainability in water services. The intention is to develop a method to provide ways for communities in a variety of socio-economic contexts, e.g. deep rural, informal settlements and formal housing to use these tools to give substance and significance to voice.

A potential limitation to the study has been the challenge to the research team to act both as an advocate and judge of tools and the results of their use. A method has been adopted to subject the findings to questions of validity and reliability. Validity is assessed in the closeness of findings to reality and reliability in the constancy of findings.

The nature of voice: advantages and deficiencies

The character of post-apartheid citizenship is closely associated with advocacy of citizen voice as a key element in public participation. Citizen voice is a concept which includes the active use of voice, of the distinctive quality of containing feelings and emotions; of the desire to affect strongly; to emphasize; or to stamp with approval or disapproval. Voice is also associated with the concept of actively negotiating as in industrial relations. The tools developed in this work have been designed to provide ways of documenting citizen voice in relation to the essential water regulation issues. In itself voice has limits. Voice by its nature is ephemeral, mostly undocumented and in poor communities there is a deficit in skills in note-taking, letter writing, petitioning, and minute taking. Regulation, however, needs documentation. For people's participation in regulation to be effective, voice has to go beyond the simple expression of need or grievance to present both an assessment of what services exist and advance a set of priorities for redress. The use of tools and the final scorecard have a distinct advantage; as being designed both to reflect citizen's attitude and the systematic measurement of key indicators of services such as impact in children's health.

Tools have been designed to capture the essential community voice and data on key indicators and step by step to lead on to recording this in a scorecard. The tools themselves have been designed around the key indicators of progress towards the satisfaction of needs, to meet different policy targets (e.g. such as the reduction in the need for children to spend long hours in collecting water) and thus to be aligned to the objectives of the broad regulatory framework. The maps and surveys generate short

reports on community conditions and quality of service. The exercises leading to the final documentation and the data produced can be verified through internal and external checks and comparisons with results produced by different methods.

Regulation and rights

Central to the method is a focus on materials to extend knowledge of the specific rights and regulations which impact on the conditions of the poor. It is argued that regulation arises from these rights which are the framework in which standards are established and extended. Rights to water services are contained in the Constitution, in statutes, regulation and in policy; these have been captured in a set of documents to make basic information and knowledge available to communities.

The rights to water services lead specifically to their measures in indicators of communication, participation, access, quality, health, which are generally associated with good service. The completed instruments are designed to lead on to communication with the municipality and to the representation of community interests in planning at the Ward level and beyond.

Each tool relates to the measurement of the realisation of standards and targets set out in policy. These measures are precisely those which are set for performance in the delivery of water services through municipal provision. From each side; from that of the community, and that of the municipal officials more or less the same set of performance indicators form the common agenda for assessment.

Cascade: training and materials

Training has been central to the work and set within a strategy of cascading. Without the training of Development Practitioners the tools can not be effectively used, but training of a few community members restricts the tools to a narrow ambit. A solution has been found in the cascade. The possibilities of cascading training from the research team to trained community practitioners, from a few individuals to other individuals and wider communities, have been explored. Relevant materials have been written to support this process. To what extent can the training of trainers succeed layer by layer: moving from one community to another?

The training and fieldwork have been supported by the production of materials at different levels of complexity and a strategy devised to develop skills and abilities among the community trainers and facilitators.

The training has faced several challenges. With a view to achieving a high level of responsibility among trainers and to the generalisation of the training experience, it has

been important to ensure that the training be accredited by an appropriate training body or SETA. In this case, the Education and Training SETA (ETDP) has been approached and training materials have been developed to meet the Unit Standards making up the learnership termed Development Practice. The HSRC has finally been accredited by the ETDP to conduct training and award certificates.

Voice and agency

The project has started with the concept of developing community appraisal of water services, has created appropriate tools, and has tested and revised these in the field. This has been conducted largely in the rural areas of Mbizana local municipality, although there has also been an engagement in shack areas in eThekwini Metro. In Mbizana the fieldwork has been conducted in cooperation with the local municipality and councillors have been informed and involved in the work for the final results to be absorbed in municipal planning.

Parallel with the tools has been the exploration of agency. Can the direct intervention of researchers be passed to trained community practitioners from poor communities? In the pilot studies the method adopted has been to move in sequence from the research team conducting appraisal to training community members to undertake this task. The project has advanced in such stages from direct intervention to the deployment of teams of trainers. The research has moved to exploring all the tools and methods which would allow poor communities themselves to voice their needs and study the engagement with communities, representatives, and water service authorities.

Research findings

There are two levels of research findings: firstly on the use of the tools themselves in various environments and training regimes and secondly of the assessments and data arising as their outputs. Most of the tools were found to be readily adopted and used and the few which were not well used and were dropped. The outputs from community appraisal are voluminous since they are related to the regulatory framework; they can be reduced to a scorecard to simplify and focus the results. The rankings on the scorecard capture both measures of standards and assessments by communities.

The second level of analysis is that of the results of the scorecards reveal a wide variance between conditions and standards and a considerable difference in the rankings in rural communities and urban shack areas. There is relatively high level of concurrence between communities in the same type of area. Although there is considerable dissatisfaction in the rural and urban areas involved, the various line items of the scorecard show how this is related to actual conditions. Rankings indicate a spread of scores which show the effect of measuring standards and considered assessment.

The possibility of rankings being developed from an established scaling system is considered.

People's needs: municipal responsiveness

Many studies conclude that the key to closing the circle in effective delivery is in encouraging municipal responsiveness. The circle would start with voice, generate responsiveness and finally lead to better services. The project explored ways in which responsiveness could be encouraged by making all the links between community, ward, local municipality, to district municipality and implementation.

These many layers make it difficult for community representation to secure the goal of access and better services. The research team has pursued communications of the results of the community appraisals in workshops with the district municipality.

Conclusions and recommendations

The project has succeeded in providing a set of tools for community appraisal and engagement with the evolving regulatory system. New tools appropriate to the situation have been developed and existing community tools reshaped. These tools and community materials on water services are supported by an established training programme and strategy for spreading their use and techniques. The methods and materials have been developed in deprived and remote communities with the greatest challenges in water services and the tools have been shown to add data and value to community advocacy for better services.

The method of training of trainers has succeeded at a number of levels; in their deployment in rural communities, conclusion of community exercises, and engagement with municipal structures. The formal assessment and accreditation of their new knowledge has been undertaken. It is argued that an open-ended cascade offers wide possibilities but is demanding and has less chance of impact on objectives. A 'controlled' cascade through Wards in cooperation with local government is offered as a more limited model.

The tools succeed in the sense that they can be widely used and generate results which match the requirements of the regulation strategy. This has distinct advantage in giving substance to citizen voice. The question of validity and reliability has been pursued. Although it has been difficult in all instances to assess the accuracy of the measurement of distances, standards, health conditions, etc., these appear to be within the range observed by the team and in reports of the areas. The ranking of services is shown to be closely related to actual conditions. Reliability is evidenced in the constancy of findings of the similarity of rankings within urban and rural areas and in the dissimilarity between areas.

The tools have led to an increase in the transfer of information from community to service provider, although they have not led to concrete change. The various routes to greater accountability between provider and citizen have been explored but have yet to succeed. Mechanisms for effective local regulation need to be developed through linkage with the requirements for performance management in municipalities.

It is recommended that this initiative in developing community tools and in training in community appraisal of water services be taken up in municipalities working to create the citizen engagement needed in regulation and developing responsive management of water services.

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Ms Bongiwe Msane	DWAF: Water Services Regulator
Dr Udesh Pillay	Human Sciences Research Council
Mr Peter Ramsden	Engineering consultant
Mr David Still	Partners in Development cc
Dr Anthony Turton	Centre for International Political Study
Mr Teddy Gounden	eThekwini Water and Sanitation

There were many key debates, particularly over the relationship between scientific research and social advocacy, the validity of the results derived with tools used by the public, and the relationship between rights and responsibilities. Many of these have been animated, some forcefully argued, but all debates have been driven by the desire to see water services meeting peoples' needs properly functioning.

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Acronyms

AC and SO	Assessment Criterion and Specific Outcome; terms used in Unit Standards
CDW	Community Development Worker
CHW	Community Health Workers
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ETDP	Education, Training and Development Programme
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority
SETA	Skills, Education and Training Authority
SFWS	Strategic Framework on Water Services
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WSDP	Water Sector Development Plan

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Foreword

This report sets out to describe the activities undertaken, strategies developed, and tools created on the project. There has been a whole series of reports, presentations, papers, and assessments associated with the project which are listed in the Annexures. These are available upon request from the WRC (KSA 3) and the HSRC.

These reports include the following:

Ideas and tools

Conceptual model
Prototype tool

Pilot reports

Pilot survey 1: Trustfeed
Pilot survey 2: Mpande
Pilot survey 3: Impendle
Mbizana Baseline Report
Assessment of the pilot surveys

Tools and training

The complete set of tools used in the project
Training of trainer manuals
Training of facilitator manuals
Training report

Reports from Mbizana cascade

Village reports compiled from the community appraisal
Single village report
Under-five health: use of the tool
Children's water route: use of the tool

Municipal and final report

Report on ward forums and workshops with municipality
Final report

A note on terminology is needed: since the project largely relates to voice and local regulation, municipalities are often referred to. The reference is generally to a municipality operating as water service authority and provider, but in the interests of clarity and economy of language, the word municipality is used. Where this is not the case, it will be indicated in the text.

1 Introduction

> Too often, services fail poor people—in access, in quantity, in quality. But the fact that there are strong examples where services do work means governments and citizens can do better. How? By putting poor people at the centre of service provision: by enabling them to monitor and discipline service providers, by amplifying their voice in policymaking, and by strengthening the incentives for providers to serve the poor.
>
> Chapter 1: World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People

There is growing interest internationally in ways in which citizens can be directly involved in the appraisal of their water services. Public participation through the encouragement of citizen's voice is recognised as essential to increase the accountability of providers and to improve services. In a recent report from Kenya, Citizen Report Cards are being released on service conditions in the urban water sector, in another report from WaterAid reflecting community action in a number of countries, citizens action leading to reports assessing water services is promoted (WSP Access, 2006 and WaterAID, 2006). These initiatives all work towards bridging the gap in communication between citizens and service providers and government and increasing accountability to citizens. Various methods are employed, but most start from the perspective of the community, deepening awareness of rights and of service standards which could be expected, and conclude with a summary scorecard of citizens' views.

Although it arises independently, the work described here is part of this trend as it takes forward engagement with civil society and with a strategy of assessment leading to improved service. It works to widen the ambit of autonomous community action, to de-professionalise tools and applications, and (hopefully) answer some sceptical questions of method and results raised in the sector. It also explores a process for engaging local government in its role in planning, delivering and regulating of services. The tools and procedures set out in the materials described below are designed to meet the needs of local regulation in the South African setting, but have more general reference.

The research does, however, go beyond the involvement of citizens actively voicing their priorities and engaging with authorities. These tools go further than recording the people's attitudes to key aspects of service by engaging ordinary people; the set of tools works to document practices and measure standards of water service such as school sanitation. The measuring of municipal service performance is a key aspect of regulation as well as local government legislation. The involvement of trainers, facilitators and citizens in measuring the central aspects of services goes beyond the recording of attitude to the measurement of standards.

A key question in the methodology is the extent to which there can be a clear demarcation between the recording of attitude, which compresses a range of judgements into a single value ("good", "poor", "unsure" etc.), and the measurement of service standards which is based on precise assessment of definite conditions (e.g. volume of water per minute or under fives having diarrhoea over a day). This has particular relevance in the scoring of service standards and practices as the two components (recording of attitude and tabulation of data) are often combined in a compressed final mark.

The accountability of providers and authorities, it is argued, will increase the *sustainability* of water services. In this study, sustainability refers to services that are accessible to the people, at a standard which the people feel meets their needs. This implies they will protect this service against vandalism, neglect or misuse, and thus secure services against high maintenance costs. This definition is specific to the relationship between people, provider and service, while an all-inclusive notion of sustainability would have to refer to water resources and management. This notion assumes that service providers are committed to meet the people's needs and the standards set out in regulation. Central to this concept of sustainability is the notion that the effective representation of poor people's interests in water services will elicit greater municipal responsiveness and the eventual improvement of water services.

The South African water sector has a fairly comprehensive set of goals and targets which require assessment by the sector and the citizens served (See Annexure A). Although it is not possible to engage with all the complex issues in environmental, economic and public health; citizen voice has a crucial bearing particularly on the social components and to record the citizen's experience of the full set of service standards set in regulation. In the local and broader sense, the project team has worked to provide the means by which communities can measure progress towards these explicit water sector goals and engage with water service providers and authorities to secure an improvement in service standards. These tools and activities work towards the development of community voice in the implementation and regulation of water services. The training manual accompanying the report helps make this possible.

It is increasingly acknowledged, as the World Development Report of 2004, that services are failing poor people and that greater accountability is the key to improving these services. Internationally and locally a gap has been identified between citizen, government and service provider; a gap which has not been filled either by market relations or yet by local government practice (WaterAID, 2006). This gap needs to be bridged, and responsive municipal services built. This task raises questions about strategy and final purpose: the strategy in this project has been to explore the ways in which the poor organised on a voluntary basis can engage effectively with official structures. The main line of this strategy has been to direct the results of community appraisal within ward and other forums to explore the possibilities of civil engagement through the structures provided for in municipal statutes. The civil society organisations

and the people themselves can reserve other possibilities (such as petitions, protest meetings, etc.) if this strategy failed. This experience raises the question about the extent to which responsive municipal systems can be encouraged and developed; in the early stage of the project the focus has been on community voice and documented appraisals as the most active element leading to the development of a more responsive system.

Responsive municipal structures are needed: but what will bring them into being? Will it be a gradually developing professionalism through national intervention or systems which are shaped through democratic engagement with an informed public? The latter stage of the project has engaged with these questions but not set out a further set of tools and practices for these questions to be fully answered. The starting point to eliciting greater responsiveness has, however, to be the clear articulation of citizen priorities and needs.

Structure of report

The report is organised as follows: the stages and progress in development of the project is set out, followed by findings and assessments of the tools and initiatives. There is a discussion of the regulatory framework and the prospects for wider extension of community appraisal by cascading from the base to new areas. This is followed by the research questions, method, tools, findings, analysis and conclusions. The data on the use of tools and the results from the scorecards are set out in tables. The results are finally analysed and conclusions drawn.

There are broadly seven sections to the report. In the first the research objectives, questions and methods are set within a literature review.

1. Introduction
2. Concept and literature review
3. Developing ideas and identifying indicators
4. A cascade approach to voice and appraisal
5. Findings on case studies, tools and the pilot
6. Municipal responsiveness: closing the circle
7. Conclusions and recommendations

In the second section the key concepts involved in citizen voice and community appraisal are developed, in the third the targets of the water sector and indicators of the Regulation Strategy are set out and the link established between the tools and policy framework.

Following the pilot studies the set of tools was set within a training framework and a cascade approach; this is discussed in the fourth section on the cascade. The revised tools were used in rural communities and shack areas and the findings presented firstly in relation to their use and secondly in relation to the scorecard.

In the fifth section on findings and the sixth section on municipal responsiveness, the impact of the tools and scorecard is assessed. Finally conclusions are drawn, and recommendations made.

Table 1. Chronology of activities

November	Production of Draft Field Manual, translation of material
25-26 November 2005	Trustfeed community workshop
31 November 2005	KwaMpande, Vulindlela, workshop. Pilot case study with the revised tool by HSRC team jointly with NGO.
30 January 2006	Workshop with civil society. Gaining voice: tools and strategies to develop community voice.
21 February 2006	National HSRC seminar: "None but ourselves" developing community voice on water services.
7 March 2006	Meeting with Amakhosi within the Mbizana Local Municipality
March 2006	Production of training materials: The Right to Water
10-13 April, 2006	Impendle, Ingwe Local Municipality. Pilot involving training of community members and NGO officials.
April 2006	"Preparing for Engagement" Mbizana Local Municipality Baseline Report.
10-13 April, 2006	Walking together: developing community voice on water services. Presentation to and discussion with traditional leaders in Mbizana Local Municipality, Eastern Cape.
21 April 2006	Presentation to and discussion with the Mbizana Local Municipality
3-4 May 2006.	Presentations to Traditional authorities, Local Government and Rural Economic Development Summit, Durban.
19-24 June	Training of the trainers course; learners assessed for knowledge and ability in learning and training.
July-August	Training and deployment of facilitators in Mbizana Ward 2, 19 and 20.
22 August 2006	Meeting with Madam Speaker, Noma Khosazana Meth, Mbizana Local Municipality.
18 October 2006	Presentation to Water Summit of the OR Tambo District Municipality
22 & 23 November 2006	Two ward forums, Mbizana Local Municipality.
11 January 2007	Workshop with OR Tambo District Municipality to assess results of fieldwork and encourage municipal responsiveness

2 Concept and literature review

A large proportion of South Africa's population live in conditions of poverty resulting from a history of deprivation. The basic services which make life bearable have, in the past, been denied or grudgingly conceded to the majority. This has now changed. Many poor families have accessed a service providing clean drinking water in the recent post-apartheid period since 1994, but continued poverty can make access to higher levels of service uncertain. Others, particularly in rural areas, remain without basic water services and are still vulnerable to water-related diseases, or are subject to poorly functioning services with a high level of interruption.

Water poverty - the disadvantaged access to water experienced by the poor - is thus associated with communities that remain without water services and suffer water-related diseases and with services often characterised by 'breakdowns' and with uncertain retention of higher levels of service. This is a challenge to one of the key objectives of government policy and of the Millennium Development Goals (Target 10) which is to increase sustainable access to safe drinking water.[1]

The Municipal Services Act sets out that municipal services must, in the broadest sense, be sustainable: they must be equitable and accessible, provided efficiently and effectively, financially and environmentally sustainable, and regularly reviewed to be extended and improved.[2] Sustainable water services to the poor are those which meet people's needs, as well as the required social, operational and financial criteria that prevail now and into the future. Sustainability here includes service coverage of the population, measures to provide for the poorest, continuous operation at the required standards, financial management and related environmental issues. As discussed previously, sustainability in this research includes these elements but the emphasis is on social acceptability; particularly on the relationship between people, provider and the service itself. This should provide for services which meet (or go beyond) the standards for service set out in regulation through the articulation of citizen voice and increased municipal responsiveness.

[1] Target 10 sets out the task as follows: "Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water." In South Africa the target set nationally is to achieve water services for all by 2008.

[2] S73 (2), Municipal Systems Act, No 32 of 2000.

These are comprehensive conditions and if uniformly implemented would resolve the historic problems of access for the poor majority. Research has, however, concluded that in addition to those without piped water, a proportion of water services particularly to the rural poor is not being adequately sustained.[3] The tools for sustainability are intended help resolve the contradiction between the promise of policy and law and the actual conditions for the poor.

Special attention is given to the development and articulation of citizen voice to municipal government as the 'missing link' in local regulation to assist in the diagnosis of water service problems and the working out of solutions. To achieve this, the set of tools has to provide recognition of the special needs of the poor, encourage the participation of the poor and provide the basis for assessing outcomes in better services and in health and wellbeing. It is oriented to bridging the gap between customers and municipalities by providing instruments to measure the extent of water service problems identified by citizens. It will help assess what mechanisms and practices are available in municipalities to respond to complaints and resolve them. The construction of a tool for use at a local level is intended to be made available, firstly, for the use of civil society and Water Service Authorities, and secondly, for the use of DWAF as the national regulator.

This tool will also serve to assist Water Service Authorities in meeting the requirements of reporting in terms of the Municipal Systems Act[4], the DWAF Regulation Strategy and relevant policy proposals, and the Batho Pele principles. The tool will also assist the WSA in reporting on the state of water services and on ongoing attainment of goals by identifying what administrative systems are necessary for information collection, and for disseminating this information to different stakeholders within and beyond the municipality.

The identification of the types of information needed to enable reporting on the extension of services will also serve to assist departments in making effective decisions, tracking progress, and reporting outcomes. There is a necessary flow of information within municipalities between finance, planning, technical, and management functions to achieve sustainability.

The task of this project *Developing an appropriate tool: Voice, measure and intervention in ensuring the sustainability of municipal water services to the poor* as set out above is to

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[3] Hemson and Owusu-Ampomah, 2005.

[4] Municipal Services Act, 108 of 1997, Section 17 (2).

assemble a set of tools for the task of eliciting citizen voice and undertake community appraisal. Taken as a whole these tools lead on to greater democratic oversight and the development of systems of accountability; this, it is argued, is a critical aspect of sustainability. The research team has linked these tools to teaching materials to provide for the training of community workers to encourage and capture community voice, to measure indicators of progress towards standards and targets, and lead on to engagement with municipalities to achieve consultation and redress. In short the project has created a pilot study in increasing accountability by improving participation to effect local regulation.

In following this route a number of innovative instruments have been created to go beyond voice itself to the participation of citizens in measuring specific service standards. Citizen voice here is augmented by including tools for people to gather appropriate data, analyse this data and prepare community reports and appraisal. These somewhat ambitious goals are necessary to ensure that autonomous activity among citizens leads on to activating community and political representations on key issues. To ensure authenticity these representations have to include concrete measurements. These can be contrasted to official reports or could encourage complementary investigation by municipalities; in each case concentrating on specific measurable conditions. All of this engages with the development of regulation in water services by taking forward community participation in an evolving regulatory framework. Case studies have been written up on the experience gained in the field.

The project takes forward the ideas of involving people in regulation, through the creation of knowledge and awareness in communities, and of reporting from communities in terms of the frameworks governing water services to stimulate responsiveness from local government.

The provision of water services is set out in policies and legislation and includes broad commitments to meeting the needs of the poor.[5] The achievement in water service delivery nationally, with a particular focus on rural areas, is often presented in ministerial speeches for parliamentary review. In broad outline, this is a form of oversight or supervision, but the goals and the more precise targets are also intended to be monitored through regulation: the detailed review and reporting by the national Department and Water Service Authorities. Regulation, both national and local, as set

[5] South African Constitution, Transitional Measures: White Paper on Local Government, Municipal Demarcation Act, Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Systems Act, Municipal Finance Management Act, Water Services Act, National Water Act, Strategic Framework for Water Services.

out in policy statements, is being developed to ensure that the people's needs are met through service provision and compliance with the relevant norms and standards, i.e. to ensure the rights to which people are entitled and the sustainability of these services.

Effective regulation is defined in the Regulation Strategy as "revealing performance, improving accountabilities and having a sound basis for interventions".[6] The exercise of oversight and regulation by the WSA over the management of water services has been identified as fundamental to their improved operation. In terms of the inter-governmental order, Water Service Authorities have statutory powers to run their services, largely as they think fit. They have the responsibility to deliver, but with wide latitude to make policy decisions, albeit within broad national policy guidelines. This means that they are self-regulatory agencies which has implications for their accountability. Citizen voice has largely to be articulated at the local municipal level to be effective at the level of the WSA.

On certain indicators, municipalities have to report to national departments, such as DWAF, DPLG, and National Treasury on their performance. These departments have launched their own policies and guidelines, which have to be implemented, monitored and verified, by means of information provided by municipalities. While municipalities are self-regulating, they are required to provide certain information to these authorities – in particular, when they have received capital or operating funding from them.

There is a particular need to review water services to the poor at the local municipal level where political representation of localities is direct and other forms of community representation are active to achieve greater accountability.

Since most municipalities have not developed a separation of functions between the Water Service Authority and the Water Service Provider, the WSA generally rely on internal processes (council and departmental reports and meetings) to ensure compliance with social and other goals.

The Strategic Framework for Water Services contains a number of reservations in relation to self-reporting by 'regulated institutions', in particular for lacking credibility and penalties.[7] How can a greater impulse to regulating and reporting be provided? The Strategic Framework for Water Services (SFWS) and Regulation Strategy both agree that monitoring is most effectively undertaken where the voice of consumers and citizens is

[6] National Water Services Regulation Strategy, 2.3.

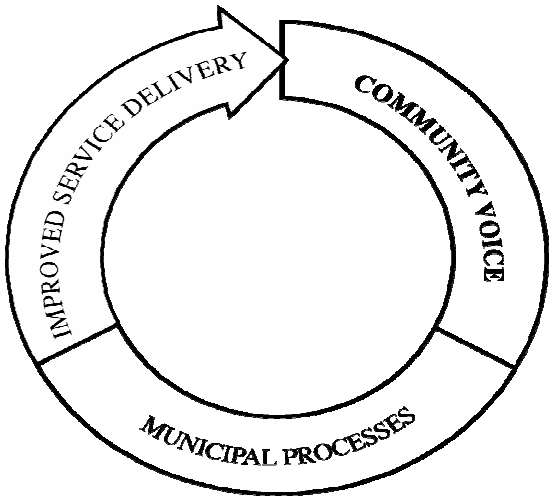
[7] Strategic Framework for Water Services, (8.4.3).

strengthened. The SFWS argues that WSAs have the responsibility of putting in place "mechanisms for facilitating, listening to and responding to consumer and citizen feedback on the quality of services provided" (8.4.3). This is a necessary recognition, both where there is an existing service and where access is still awaited, that there are insufficient measures in place to provide a reciprocal relationship between officials and people. In most municipalities these mechanisms and regulation are underdeveloped and one of the tasks of the project is to assess the extent to which these are in place and to suggest how these may be developed.

Regulation in water services depends on greater accountability between officials, politicians and the people. Councils should require municipal officials to report and be accountable both to elected officials and to the people. To what extent is oversight by councillors making municipal management more responsive to local residents as customers and citizens? How do WSAs and Councils listen to, engage and share information with stakeholders? The whole regulatory process is based on the fundamental assumption that the right kind of information is an essential component as it allows various stakeholders to provide regular feedback on service conditions. Where WSAs are in place or other forms of local regulation are being undertaken, such as the development of reporting systems, this should be the impetus leading on to improved services.

In this research the emphasis is on the start of the 'cycle of sustainability' set out in the figure below: on the development of community voice. This should feed community needs, priorities and assessment into the municipal planning and operational processes and should provide the desired result: improved service delivery. In this report there is extensive discussion of the first process with an extended case study on the interface between community and municipality with some remarks about the second and third process in conclusion.

Figure 1. The cycle of sustainability



To meet these objectives, the project has at its centre the development of a tool which would be employed by all kinds of communities to represent their views on water services and to lead towards citizen's input in local regulation. This, in turn, would assist providers and public authorities in responding as required in terms of existing democratic structures and the evolving regulatory framework. All this should conclude in improved water services.

Research objective

In planning the following phases of the project were identified for implementation:

- Firstly to undertake a synthesis of the literature, to identify key concepts and approaches to sustainability, and to explore different types of tools which have been developed and which could have application in the South African context.[8]
- Secondly to prepare a conceptual model and prototype tool. In both a method is developed to include a range of indicators of sustainability from national policy and legislation, assessing their value in practice in relation to water service management.[9]
- Thirdly to undertake case studies of a range of rural and urban municipalities varying in size, in which the tool will be utilised, modified and improved, and
- Fourthly, and finally, to disseminate the tool through workshops.

The research objective was further specified over the life of the project in terms of the development of tools to engage and substantiate community voice. In particular the project was to identify and secure an institutional 'home' for the tools and techniques; a key issue in ensuring that the project and its outputs would not be shelved reports but documents in use.

There has been extensive debate about the conceptual model which places citizen or community appraisal conducted by community members at the centre. This method which assesses water services from the perspectives of poor by active citizens among the

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[8] The literature review is entitled, Sustainability of water services to the poor A synthesis of the literature conducted for the Water Research Commission. . WRC K5/1522/3. Developing an appropriate tool: Voice, measure and intervention in ensuring the sustainability of municipal water services to the poor.

[9] A conceptual model for assessing and ensuring sustainability in water services to the poor. 27 October 2005. WRC K5/1522/3. Developing an appropriate tool: Voice, measure and intervention in ensuring the sustainability of municipal water services to the poor.

poor has occasioned discussion about the exercises themselves, their authenticity, and their value to the final objective of regulation and improved services.

Discussion on the Reference Group (see Acknowledgements) an essential component of the project has ranged over the possibilities of community appraisal itself and whether this approach is scientific or will lead on to fruitful conclusions. Could tools undertaken by ordinary people provide verifiable data providing to valid conclusions? Central to the research has been participatory methods leading to a "bottom-up" approach which could antagonise local authorities. Would such an approach encourage communication and responsiveness and lead on to the development of the two sides of local regulation: community communication and municipal reform? Again questions have been raised about the implications of participatory tools; would rights awareness and participatory methods not simply exacerbate the difficulties of municipalities struggling to gain capacity and undertake the most basic operations? Could they also not lead to perpetual protest as an alternative to engagement official structures which could attract communities but increase the defensiveness and lack of responsiveness of weak municipal structures? Would they take communities on routes eventually proving fruitless which would bypass rather than improve the operation of existing structures?

These were some of the principal concerns raised throughout the research project. They were set within the South African context: that water service regulation is at an early development which implies that municipal routines in responding to complaints and community action are unlikely to be well established or not established at all. Would an emphasis on citizen rights simply exacerbate the evident difficulties of municipal managers? In addition a prime consideration (which influences method and scale) is that on-going support to civil society groups and NGOs to undertake community appraisal is unlikely to be well funded. In this context a pilot engagement in community appraisal would have to have in mind time and costs as well as human resources in considering the question of replication and 'going to scale'. In short there has been an emphasis on tools which could be successfully passed from the research team to civil society and municipality to ensure the better operation of existing procedures to improve services. These tools would also have to be proven to lead on to reliable and verifiable data and to evidence-based conclusions.

Public participation has been at the core of the project and is the subject of increasing interest. There has been an explosive growth in literature in a number of spheres impinging on the development of citizen participation in regulation. There is a substantial literature on citizenship and participation, an overlapping sphere of manuals of tools for appraisal, analysis and practice in rural appraisal, and then there is the substantial writing on regulation of services. This is by no means exhaustive of the literature which resonates with this study; as there is in, addition, the body of research and practice in community development which is the potential starting point theoretically for community appraisal in water services particularly to those communities in rural or informal areas. Most recently there has been a considerable

attention to report cards or scorecards in citizen or consumer assessment of water services.

This literature was reviewed at the inception of the project to grapple with the concept of sustainability of water services provided to the poor (Hemson and Viljoen, 2005). This review of the international and local literature was a preliminary part of the project to explore the sustainability of water services for the poor in the new institutional and social policy context in South Africa. The project objectives involve the identification of the key elements relevant to sustained operations, the development of a diagnostic tool and method through workshops with stakeholders, and a reporting system to highlight appropriate interventions. The synthesis of international and local literature provided was designed to provide a broad but not extensive introduction to the issues in relation to measuring sustainability and the methods which have been devised.

In developing countries where the problem of inaccessibility is acute, poor and rural dwellers endure poor quality service. Water services often function irregularly and inadequately. Sustainability has thus become a key concept in the water sector as in the broad sphere of development, and this has been the focus of many governments, including particularly the post-apartheid South African government.

Sustainability of services and the poor

Before approaching measuring sustainability its meaning has to be explored and then rigorously defined for the task in hand as the definitions are many. The first and most commonly quoted definition is that of the Brutland report of 1997 (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987): sustainable development is here defined as development that meets the needs of the present with out compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs. This followed an era (now returning) in which the earth's survival itself was the preoccupation; the new paradigm of sustainable development offered the positive promise of a better future if appropriate changes were made.

The definition above appears neat and all encompassing. Two key concepts are contained in this definition, that of needs, increasingly related to the essential needs of the worlds poor, to which overriding priority should be given, and the reduction of the environments ability to meet present and future needs by social demands and the state of technology.

In this review a sustainable water service will be regarded as a service operating to provide good quality water to meet the health and social needs of individuals and households, readily available financially and in distance from the household, and operating continuously with minimal interruption. It should be particularly within the range of access of poor people and be sensitive to the particular needs of the aged and

ill, especially those suffering HIV/AIDS. As mentioned above this concept has a dominant social rather than resource component.

There is now much greater emphasis on the concept of *limits* which is now a central feature of the definition of sustainability (see particularly Meadows et al., 1972). A review of sustainability firstly includes characteristics that point to living within the limits, and secondly the understanding of the interconnections among economy, society, and environment and thirdly the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. The environmental dimension seeks the preservation of natural capital for next generations whereas the economic dimension regards the efficient allocation of environmental resources between competitive uses. Social objectives deal with the equal distribution of environmental resources and the right to benefit from basic environmental functions.

The term sustainability in the context of water services, however, is limited in its meaning and its use here will mostly focus on the narrow context of service delivery in the fields of water supply in predominately poor rural areas. However the maintenance and protection of the natural resource base continues to be a prerequisite for sustainable water services and water resource management is inextricably part of water services.

Community surveillance

The span of the review was broad, ranging from the varying notions of sustainability to indicators of access and water service; and involved a search for literature which focused on forms of relatively autonomous assessment by communities of their water services and health. As will be reported on below, this has become the nub of the research project and, it is argued, some innovative practices have been developed and evaluated in this field. The literature search did, unfortunately, not provide direct entrance to an expansive field of study in relation to community surveillance of water services and health and hygiene as could be anticipated. Surveillance of water quality and health (often termed 'sanitation surveillance' in South America) is generally refers to a set of procedures to be undertaken by public health officials rather than a community based activity.[10] Examples have been found of "community surveillance " in the specifically health care field in which community members make the health system aware of suspected cases; examine sick persons, interviewing the family, and doing

[10] Sanitary Surveillance is promoted on a website, for instance, to provide access to the technical scientific literature to professionals.
www.icml9.org/program/poster8/activity.php?lang=pt&id=11

interviews to identify patterns of disease. These generally identify specific health patterns. The Community Surveillance Kit, for example, provides training and tools in the field of polio (Change Project, 2001).

Although there is now extensive reference to "pro-poor" policy such prominence does not ensure that the stated pro-poor stance that many institutions have now adopted is carried into practice. As a study has concluded: "The greatest bottleneck to getting services to the poor is indifference, and even hostility, at local, national, and international levels" (Tova et al., 1993, viii). The question is whether, through accountability achieved through voice, political representation, and official regulation a counter-balance can be established to official power and the poor receive the clean drinking water needed to promote health and alleviate poverty. Tova argues the resolution of community demands (or as is often mentioned here as municipal responsiveness) "is not so simple, and it appears to take time and technical sophistication".

> [M]eeting the needs of informal peri-urban settlements will require significant structural reforms that facilitate and even encourage working with the existing settlements, where the greatest need for water and sanitation exists. It also implies improving our knowledge about the urban poor. Turning around people and institutions takes time, and it takes a few good leaders (Tova, 1993).

Particular attention thus needs to be given to representation of needs in water services in sensitive situations and in communities suffering environmental degradation such as informal settlements.

Voice and accountability

Voice and accountability have become key concepts in the advocacy of good governance, and it has now become accepted in policy and concern by institutions such as the World Bank that ordinary and poor people should challenge or complain about policies that adversely affect their interests. Opinion surveys which gauge opinion in particular areas are also an indirect means of communicating voice. The issue is closely related to class: the middle class generally does not see participation in service issues as important if these are functioning as anticipated; but for the poor who experience lower levels of service and more frequent interruptions,[11] participation is seen as vital to

[11] Research undertaken by one of the authors has revealed that income is closely related to higher levels of service with fewer interruptions. There were few cut-offs at higher levels of income.

securing their access and possibly improving conditions. On other questions which impinge more closely on middle class interests, such as the quality of education, a very high level of participation is exercised, with the poor, unfortunately, at a much lower level. Public participation is thus uneven across class and sector.

An increasing research literature examines the kind of actions that must be taken to expand voice and accountability in such processes as preparation of budgets. In the context of voice, Osmani (2002) identifies three analytical categories: voice in preference revelation, voice in conflict resolution, and voice in impact evaluation. All three categories are important at different stages of the budgetary process, if marginalized groups are to gain more from the budget or, more generally, a share of public resources than they have in the past. Voice is not sufficient in itself, however, to achieve that goal because it alone cannot ensure accountability. The voice of marginalized groups is essentially linked to the notion of participation by the society, but even augmented participation alone is not enough to secure change. Osmani emphasizes three distinct, but inter-related, pre-requisites of accountability: namely, transparency, participation, and knowledge (Osmani, 2002: 8). Effective participation thus depends in turn on more comprehensive and living forms of democracy. In the absence of these factors participation takes the form of open and public forms of opposition to institutional rule.

From the perspective of the service provider there is a literature which tends to see community participation as approximating or appropriate to a demand-responsive approach which could improve customer relations and result in substantial benefits. Management and customer care are argued to be important influences in creating the environment within which cost recovery would be more likely to succeed. According to Marah et al. (2004), this includes good communications with the customers, the involvement of the consumers in project design, and providing good customer care facilities. Participation here bears directly on the recognition of costs; the relation to economic in a service sector rather than to the broader political context.

In the current phase of the water regulation DWAF officials have given priority to what is termed “developmental regulation” in which support and advisory activities to the service provider are viewed as equally important as monitoring and enforcement (Muller, 2003). In practice this approach places greater emphasis on a supportive attitude to municipal officials rather than a critical and distant relationship. The question is whether this top-down management approach is productive in poverty reduction strategies, and whether the Department has the ability and agility to face in two directions: both to the poor and equally to local government which is struggling to meet targets and provide better services. The paper does not mention the strategy of “naming and shaming” municipalities which are not performing credibly. While pre-eminence is given to the activities of the department, the paper does recognise participatory democracy in the management of the water system although usually limited to specific tasks, e.g. setting tariffs and subsidies; defining role of Water Boards and other water service providers (Muller, 2003). Public participation in this view is presented as

confined to the oversight of expenditure of revenue provided by (middle-class) citizens rather than being associated with social mobilisation among the poor.

Citizen feedback and regulation

International NGOs particularly are excited by the possibilities of productive interaction between citizens or consumers and service providers; the articulation of need or grievance with providers is considered to improve the level of service and citizen satisfaction. The most comprehensive analysis of the focus on citizen voice is that undertaken by Goetz and Gaventa (2001), which reviews a wide range of case studies in which poor users have engaged with public service providers. The authors discuss a shift in method from those securing an engagement with the state moves through consultative processes to those encouraging a more decisive influence on policy and spending. The authors advocate greater public involvement in service delivery.

For citizen engagement with public service provider to move beyond consultation to real influence, citizens must enjoy rights to a more meaningful form of participation. This would include formal recognition for citizens' groups, their right to information about government decision-making and spending patterns, and rights to seek redress for poor-quality service delivery (2001:iii). Engagement and participation is linked to greater acknowledgment of rights and to greater municipal responsiveness.

In a classical analysis there are two dominant reactions to inadequate or non-existent service standards; firstly exit and secondly 'voice' (Hirschman, 1970). For the poor with a narrow range of options between alternative products or services there is little possibility of exit and 'voice' is a compound of organized protest, lobbying, advocacy, etc., various forms of pressure which citizen groups can bring to bear on providers. A growing sense of citizenship and participation in decision making is all part of sense of 'voice' in which individuals have expectations of delivery. In a number of studies these expectations, opinions or assessments of citizens are taken into account in surveys which provide feedback to providers and authorities (Deichmann and Lall, 2007; WSP, 2006; WaterAid, 2006). The research outputs in this context termed 'report-cards' or 'scorecards' are seen as instruments which provide citizens with the leverage to provide an improvement in services.

The use of these instruments is growing but so also is a critical appraisal of their worth. Although the two authors (Deichmann and Lall, 2007: 660) state report-cards if "properly implemented" will "provide representative and objective feedback that is hard to refute or ignore by public officials", they also express some reservations. Such surveys may be "counter-productive" if they do not include "objective measures for service quality that are based on clear standards" and if they are framed on an "activists perspective" (2007: 660). They find that such surveys can have "reference group characteristics" i.e. that respondents may measure their satisfaction or dissatisfaction

with services in comparison with a reference group. Although they did not find these influences important, and attitudes generally were closely related to "actual service levels", there are some doubts about how the precise measurements relate to actual conditions.

Although the comprehensive review by Goetz and Gaventa (2001) does not specifically mention regulation the emphasis on responsiveness and accountability does add an additional perspective: that of the assessment of standards in "actual service levels" of providers. The authors argue that state bureaucracies are not responsive to the poor and that promoting responsiveness "can involve counter-cultural reforms in bureaucratic behaviours" (2001: 6); in short to make improvements. They support the argument that responsiveness and accountability are not identical: responsiveness relates to citizen or customer needs while accountability in representative government is to political leadership. Despite this they encourage the notion that there can be a dual role in which local officials providing services can be both responsive to citizens and accountable to elected officials. They do find, however, that there is a dual breakdown: that providers are not responsive to citizen needs and also that elected political leadership does not achieve accountability either (2001: 7).

In a reflection which could relate to the South African context the authors find that citizen initiatives are shaped by the political regime and not independent of the state. The rights extended to citizens, they argue, not only create an environment for citizen voice but also its effectiveness. Between citizen voice and a public sector response (or non-response) is the intervention of politics (2001: 12). In the development of a regulatory regime the growth of a legal and policy framework as well as that of civil society and citizen voice run together rather than apart. Despite this, it is argued in this report that autonomy is essential to genuine citizen voice.

In the discussion on developments in regulation below these are important questions which assist in the development of the appropriate tools for assessment and citizen voice. Rights and regulation, it will be argued, feed off each other: without the establishment of rights to water and sanitation the norms and standards of water services would be local and imprecise. The matter of regulation arises from the rights, entitlements and policies favouring human development in South Africa.

The research questions

Citizen voice has been identified as an important missing factor in the development of a regulatory system in which water services are controlled, operated and directed towards the achievement of a high quality service and satisfied customers.

The research objectives, discussed in the introduction, set out the context and ideas which frame the design of the research and activities. Although the project combines

research, practice and development including measurement of a range of indicators of service delivery derived from national policy and legislation, the results of the use of tools and of interventions have had to be scientifically assessed. The research team has had to act both as a professional practitioner as well as an assessor; two roles which and have necessarily to be separated if professional distance is to be maintained. It has not been sufficient to develop tools for community appraisal alone and to demonstrate their use in the field, but also to evaluate the products. The project has had a problem-solving objective; although this has not been its entire rationale. It has been necessary to trace the development of community voice and the interaction between citizens and public officials to assess the efficacy of tools and strategies.

The terms of the project have been to develop a prototype tool[12] and undertake a range of case studies in a variety of settings to use, modify and improve, the tool and to develop the outputs of community appraisal

The debates and reflections on the projects methods at the Reference Group have helped shape the method and approach adopted and the broad questions mentioned above have become an important aspect of the 'background methodology' adopted. Key to this is the proposition, which accompanies the notion of the development of tools for community appraisal, that communities themselves rather than professional researchers can be capacitated to be able to understand and make use of these to provide sound data on key indicators of water access, health and hygiene.

Along with the primary research questions, a number of specific points have arisen in discussion and these have been reflected on in the assessment of tools and strategies. A number of specific questions arising from these debates are taken up in conclusion as the outputs of community appraisal are contrasted with objectives.

Research questions

The following have been as the leading research questions which could be assessed through pilot studies, tools, and data gathered in the field:

[12] The term tool and tools is used interchangeably; at the inception the singular was preferred but over time the number of tools used and aligned has lead to the plural. At times the term 'instrument' is used to differentiate a particular questionnaire or exercise.

1. Can a set of tools be devised to encourage citizen voice in water services in a variety of poor communities?
2. Can these tools be cascaded from community to community by trained community practitioners?
3. Can these tools lead to the valid assessment and accurate measurement of key service issues and standards?
4. Can such assessment of water services by communities lead to effective engagement with the local regulator and appropriate remedial responses from water services providers?

The over-arching research question taken up in the work is thus the extent to which citizen voice and community appraisal in water and sanitation can be conducted by trained members of the community and lead on to the development of local regulation to achieve improved water services. An important secondary question is the extent to which the cascading of training and activities can reproduce the knowledge and processes from one community to another; does the cascade serialise initial training or is there a fall-off in the effect of initial training. The 'big question' is whether civic involvement through interaction between citizens and municipalities can lead to the improvement of water services.

The discussion of the reshaping of the tools, a human rights-based approach (HRBA), the training of trainers, fieldwork, the cascade strategy and engagement with municipalities follows. To conclude the introduction a brief chronology of key milestones and engagements is provided below to give some conception of the whole.

Assessment through case studies

The literature on participatory appraisal contains a wealth of reflection on contrasts between qualitative and quantitative methods, the validation of qualitative approaches, about the prospects for rapid appraisal in different contexts, about ethics of extracting information, etc. There are numerous case studies which develop participatory methods but do not reflect closely on the validity of data derived from community exercises and submit these results to close scrutiny. Participatory methods also tend to focus on a 'snap-shot' intervention rather than longitudinal social change as involved in developing systems in service delivery. The questioning of the potential results of participatory methods was difficult to answer theoretically and a method has had to be devised to ensure that there was both application in practice and assessment of outputs.

Even though there is an emphasis in literature on participatory methods on greater engagement by community leaders (particularly in the notion of 'passing the stick' in appraisal meetings), implicit in the methods and pilot case studies described is the practice of professional supervision and instruction by external agencies either directly or indirectly. The entire engagement of research teams together with communities is

often measured over weeks rather than days with time and cost implications. The proposal implicit in the project, however, has been the exploration of techniques which do not depend on external agency and higher levels of financial support and which are relatively autonomous.

The research objectives and questions lead on to the sequence of activities and a methodology for assessment on the following lines for the following activities:

- Developing and piloting the tools in case studies;
- Developing the practice of training and cascading in a pilot and assessing the results;
- Assessing the use and effectiveness of tools as used by community trainers;
- Using the scorecard in measuring standards and assessing the results;
- Assessing the responsiveness of municipalities to community appraisal.

The methods are set out below to combine assessment with the initiation of innovative practices to reach the project objective of achieving community appraisal rather than that of professional researchers.

Developing and piloting the tools

The research team put forward a strategy of developing community appraisal tools on an experimental basis; of preparing a prototype tool and assessing its use through a series of pilot studies. This was to be undertaken firstly with the research team acting as practitioners to understand the research environment, experiment with a wide selection of tools, and assess the results. It was understood that even such a set of pilot studies may not be able to answer all the questions but it would be a crucial field in which the usefulness or otherwise of a wide range of existing community appraisal tools could be assessed. In addition efforts would be made to train and engage community members in the practices of community appraisal and this, in turn would be assessed.

In developing tools for appraisal, a number of sources were consulted but the SEAGA handbooks were found most useful and a prototype was developed and a set of tools assembled (see Annexure C: Sources for tools).

Sites were selected for case studies on the basis of some history of social mobilisation, the presence of organised civil society, and accessibility. These criteria would help assess the extent to which NGOs could make use of the assembled tools. The participatory tools were used directly by the research team although attempts were made, as in the practice of participatory appraisal, to stress local initiative in community workshops and to 'pass the stick' in meetings and group discussions.

After these pilots there was general reflection and the strategy was modified. The shaping of tools and strategies has been strongly influenced by interaction with the reference group for the project and by responses from the people, local government politicians and officials in the field.

Developing training and cascading and assessing the results

In this section of the work the appropriate materials to train community members were developed. Since accreditation of training materials and methods is integral to the replication of training schemes, these were prepared within the context of the national training framework in South Africa. The processes are described below and the assessments took place at the following levels: firstly whether the training materials were appropriate to the task, secondly whether they dovetailed with the training framework, thirdly of the interaction with the SETA, and finally of the participants in training.

1. Assessing the use and effectiveness of tools as used by community trainers;

Although the tools have been substantially edited and revised in the previous phase, their final test is in their use by trained members of the community. Various levels of assessment are undertaken firstly at a primary level: of the use of tools by practitioners, if they were successfully completed, of problems in use. At a secondary level the tools are assessed in terms of the results they provide; do they provide accurate measures of access, communication with municipalities, health conditions of infants, etc.?

A fairly extensive assessment is made at these two levels; of the appropriateness of the tools for use by community practitioners and of their effectiveness in capturing and presenting key data in water services.

2. Using the scorecard in measuring standards and assessing the results;

The scorecard presented below has been devised as the centrepiece of the community appraisal; drawing together and summing up the results of the use of the various tools. From the enormous range of possible indicators, ten key indicators are identified for both relevance to the Water Sector Framework and Regulatory Framework and for utility in terms of community practitioners. This is a summation of the logic of the tools. The box of the scorecard provides a concentrated presentation of the citizen voice on key indicators of standards, targets and rights to which the national and local regulator which is their central concern in protecting the rights of citizens and consumers.

The validation of tools and results presents something of a challenge as the research team would have to act as advocate and judge. This has not exonerated the findings

from assessment in terms of validity and reliability. The prescriptions of Chambers (1994) are useful here; validity should be assessed through observation ("the closeness of a finding to the reality") and reliability found in the constancy of findings. These assessments will be returned to in the conclusion.

3. Assessing the responsiveness of municipalities to community appraisal.

Finally a method is set out by which the responsiveness of municipalities to community appraisal is assessed. This takes the form of a case study of the Mbizana Local Municipality in the OR Tambo District Municipality; the basis for this selection and the history of the project's engagement is set out below. In this case study a history is compiled of the most important interventions and the responses to training, cascading and to the presentation of the results of community appraisal.

3 Developing ideas and locating indicators

In South Africa a historic transition is being made in the water sector between a phase of implementation lead by DWAF to one in which the responsibility for delivery and operations has been shifted effectively to local authorities. This shift from a nationally driven community water programme to one implemented locally is meant to have been accompanied by a corresponding shift in emphasis nationally from implementation to regulation (DWAF, 2007, 8.2). Although the policy documents record this shift, the development of regulation at the national and local level is still a policy in formation rather than achieved.

The historic shift in the national department from responsibility for delivery to that of regulation raises the perspectives of longer-term operation, quality of service, and responsiveness rather than the immediate imperatives of implementation. These constitute a number of the elements of sustainability of water services. Sustainability as used here in relation to water services refers to the support, maintenance, and provision to keep the existing systems going; the active agency here includes both the service provider and the citizens and 'customers'. The key elements of sustainability in the context of this research are largely social; those relating to a service being designed in response to the needs of citizens with their knowledge and active support. The tools and materials used to provide routes to increasing public participation are designed to focus the attention of citizens on key issues in water services and to generate appropriate data to support arguments for better sustained use.

Post-apartheid citizenship is built on the concept of an active citizenry engaged with public representatives in designing and planning public services to meet, for the first time, the requirements of human development. Citizen voice describes this active involvement. Voice has become a part of the language of public participation in going beyond raising an opinion, to having the distinctive quality of containing feelings and emotions; even to the desire to affect strongly; to emphasize; to stamp, or even to actively negotiate. The latter aspect is captured in the term "voice regulation" which has been used in relation to bargaining between workers and employers in which there is a greater play of initiative than in 'bureaucratic regulation' as mentioned in the report of the Labour Market Commission (June 1996).

In this context the emphasis on citizen voice – the expression of need, grievance or priority by communities is all the more relevant. Although, it will be argued, the structures of regulation still have to be fleshed out, citizen voice in water services does not rest on regulation strategy alone. The right to consultation, participation in planning, and to citizen assessment of performance rests on a number of pillars; on the Constitution and on municipal and water legislation. In a sense the proposed regulatory system gives these rights greater weight, but it does not create them. Somewhere between the extension of services and setting standards and targets, there is a widening

field for citizen intervention: particularly in the assessment of whether targets and standards have been met.

Recent writing on participation in local government stresses the agency of citizens as 'makers and shapers' rather than as 'users and choosers' of interventions or services designed by others (Cornwall and Gaventa, 2000; 2001). In the South African context where the quality of service levels is fairly well defined, citizens may not want a high level of participation to make and shape services, but rather the implementation of existing targets for delivery and adherence to standards. This more advanced conception of participation may be sought by the poorest who need to ensure greater responsiveness to their needs; most communities in South Africa appear to have a more limited view in which their rights are acknowledged and acted on.

The rights to basic services and to good quality services are well established in policy and legislation; the problem of their leading to improvements is two-fold. Firstly these rights are established in separate spheres (municipal, provincial, water, etc.) and their intersections are often not well understood or presented. The right to water services is, for example, a function of cooperation between municipal and national government but not significantly of the provincial. Secondly this lack of express opportunities for participation appears to lead to fuzziness in relation to what courses of action are available.

There are, for instance, a wide range of rights available to citizens in terms of the Batho Pele (People First) policy: for consultation on the level and quality of service, on service standards, on equal access, on courtesy, to information, to openness and transparency, to redress, and to value for money (see Annexure B). If these rights were cascaded down to the local level, as intended, and realised there would be no deficiency in terms of the established policy at any level. The question, however, is how these rights can be realised. There is a substantial gap between rights and realisation most acutely for the poor who need them most; surveys indicate, for instance, very low levels of participation in planning, the process through which services are budgeted for and extended (Hemson, 2007).

The express policies of regulation are thus needed to state and reinforce the link between regulation and rights.

Democratic regulation and the forms of regulation anticipated in the Strategic Framework for Water Services certainly anticipate high levels of participation

> A regulatory monitoring framework should also recognise that consumers are in the best position to monitor the effectiveness of water services provision. They are the first to experience the effects of poor, inadequate or absent services. Therefore, the most important and effective monitoring strategy for the sector is strengthening the voice of consumers (DWAF, 2003:60-61).

The debate is whether the existing representation of needs and issues through formal representative government, with councillors and members of parliament speaking for the people, is adequate or whether sectoral forums and deeper consultation gets the voice of the poor across the table.

Although this is not specifically mentioned in the regulation strategy, the proposals for public participation set out in the regulation strategy are supported in law and policy. The Municipal Systems Act 2000 defines "the legal nature of a municipality as including the local community within the municipal area, working in partnerships with the municipality's political and administrative structures….to provide for community participation". Section 16(1) requires the municipality to develop 'a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance'. Although the emphasis is on consultation and the ward committees built around the ward councillor, in Section 42 provision is made for involvement of community development, and to review the municipality's performance management system. Specifically communities are to participate in setting appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets for municipalities.

This legislative support appears to provide comprehensive support for the review of the implementation of water services and the standards set out in legislation and in the Strategic Framework for the Water Services. The matter seems simple: the policy for such participation is well established above, water forums have been explored, but there is decided opposition at times from politicians. There is often low levels of participation in the structures provided and dissatisfaction with political leadership (even, or even particularly, from those constituents who share the same political affiliation). Councillors at the municipal level, for instance, are at times hostile to community representatives from their own or other parties or who openly express opposition to established practices being given an equal opportunity to speak at hearings.[13] From the perspective of the elected representatives such participation seems unwarranted and unnecessary, but equally community groups complain that their interests and grievances are not being adequately taken up by their political representatives.

Despite the legislation which provides quite forthright acknowledgement of the right and need to participate, this is often not realised in practice. In addition to the

[13] At a Water Forum convened in Durban by the then Minister in 2004, for instance, a councillor protested against the proceedings as they were based on equality between civil society organisations and elected officials which implied councillors did not represent the people and withdrew.

impediments to participation from the side of those in power, there are also those who argue that forms of participation may perpetuate the status quo rather than facilitate more equitable participation and change (Cooke and Kothari, 2002, p.5). Public participation has been, at times, described as a "new tyranny" (Cooke and Kothari, 2002), but there is considerable debate around the theoretical, political and conceptual limitations of participation. New perspectives have been raised such as participation being uneven because communities being viewed as homogenous (Guijt and Shah, 2001), the adoption of a simplistic view of power (Kothari, 2002) and insufficient focus being given to the structural determinants of well-being (Cleaver, 2002; Francis, 2002). Participation, especially in the context of community, is intricately linked to questions of democracy, power and asymmetries that historically exist within communities.

Participation may, indeed tend to reinforce the power of those who are not the poorest who can turn pro-poor programmes to their own advantage. While forms of participation may tend to reinforce existing power relations there are also counter-trends in South Africa. During conflict situations over service delivery, for instance, those participating in official structures may also side with the people in arguing for change.

In South Africa there is a long tradition of public participation by civil society. There is a relatively mature NGO sector, active CBOs, and vigorous and often militant social movements. Participation may not be smooth and procedural and has often taken the form of protests, and outcomes have not always been without cost in one form or another. Although there are surprisingly low levels of participation in official structures for a society which has just come through decades of mass mobilisation (Hemson, 2007) there are also mass protests against the lack or quality of service delivery. Forms outside the rather ineffective official structures can be effective in winning legal battles or securing advances in developing services.

The Strategic Framework for Water Services (DWAF 2003) sets out to include civil society in regulation through engaging civil society organisations in policy development, supporting the development of capacity in civil society, encouraging civil society to monitor performance, and mobilising for civil society organisations. Although the formulations have changed in different versions, these are evidence of commitments to involving the citizenry in the oversight of the management and operation of water services. They are an indication of preparing official society to receive the voice of the poor and to promote accountability. Civic organisations, however, argue this commitment has largely remained in the policy documents and statutes. Given the extraordinarily high level of service delivery mobilisation, the challenge is to make the slowly evolving regulatory structures responsive and accountable.

Regulation arises from rights

Central to regulation, it is argued in the literature review above, is the notion that rights and regulation work symbiotically; the standards reviewed and extended in public services through regulation arise from an acknowledgement of rights. In addition the system of accountability in local government; to access to services provided, standards enforced, access to information, etc., although functioning on a basis of representation, is also finally related to the rights of citizens.

One of the later version of the regulation strategy states that voice has to be encouraged an respected if citizens are to have an effective role in regulation. This, in turn, is linked to education in rights and mechanisms to link the citizen and regulator: "consumers must understand their rights and be empowered to make their concerns known to both the service provider and the regulator…"(DWAF, 2006: 57). It recognises that "many citizens feel disempowered" and that education in rights and an encouragement of citizen voice is needed. The recognition of rights and mechanisms to engage citizen voice is needed to operate a regulatory system and specifically the rights established in the Batho Pele principles and the Municipal Systems Act are referred to.

Assessment of services by the citizen is acknowledged in law and some quite precise measures are required in terms of section 42 of the Municipal Systems Act. Municipalities must "involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the municipality's performance management system, and in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets". Subsequent development of this aspect of the law proposes monitoring through formally documented processes.

The development of the tools and case studies has been undertaken in conjunction with the evolution of a rights-based approach. Without knowledge of rights as citizens, poor people do not have a clear understanding of the obligations of departments and the need to measure and assess access to essential services. Contained within a rights-based approach is the need for rigorous study of the established rights to safe water and sanitation. From this understanding community needs can be compiled, and representation of community needs made in planning and delivery.

Human rights-based approaches have become a growing aspect of approaches to all-rounded human development. The UNDP Human Development Report of 2000 acted to confirm two contemporary aspects of the approach: firstly the recognition by international agencies of poverty having a human right dimension and that development involves governments recognising and fulfilling human rights (UNDP, 2000). In the report it is proposed that the parallel paths of human development and rights should converge and advocated increased emphasis on human rights for the following reasons:

- The development of notions of accountability;
- For bringing legal tools and instruments to bear;
- For raising the issues of social justice;
- To draw attention to the most deprived and excluded; and
- To develop political voice for all people (UNDP, 2000,2).

In a sense this sums up the main elements of a human rights-based approach (HRBA). Although the approach itself does not easily lead to precise definition it can be taken as a strategy linking social and developmental practices to an emphasis on human rights as the fulcrum from which social development can be advanced. Equally it is argued that human development in turn creates the means for the realisation of rights. HRBA lays emphasis on the continual evolution of conventions and international law and on the connection between civil and socio-economic rights. This approach takes forward the concept of 'people-centred development' (in the language of the Reconstruction and Development Programme) in the sense that the expression of claims is an essential component of the development of democratic institutions. The argument for a rights-based approach can be self-contained, as a value in itself; in this project, however, the approach is associated with the setting of community tools and strategies for the realisation of human rights. It is also fundamental to the idea of accountability of government.

The HRBA lends itself to the application of an international human rights framework leading on to participation, empowerment of the poor and the greater accountability by governments (SLSSA, February 2007). From this perspective, the HRBA is discussed in relation to awareness, training, and advocacy rather than to legal action, which is not specifically mentioned in the sources on the subject. The measures which give weight to the claims by poor and which would give specific content to entitlements are also not mentioned in the literature. Legal action is an important aspect in the development of rights and is comparatively weakly developed in South Africa in comparison with other developing countries as social rights are taken up in a defensive manner and court decisions have been characterised as being deferential to government (Varun, 2007).

In the South African case many of these universal human rights are written into the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution and thus have a certain legal standing. Entitlements in a sense can be described as claims to exercise these rights, for instance, in the example of a citizen reaching retirement age and applying for a state pension – exercising a right to a specifically defined entitlement. Rights are universal statements are inherently are abstract formulations and their specific application in a locality and country may be contested in practice. The formal spelling out of specific rights in constitutions and statutes helps to confirm the operation of a right within political, planning, and budgetary processes. It is only in this broader context that the precise nature of a right becomes established and a more concrete relationship between right and entitlement, that is between an abstract formulation of rights as human rights and entitlements as the specific quanta set to access and realisation of these rights.

A simple statement of right such as "Everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water" [14] establishes a right to water (the aspect we are pursuing) but the question of access begs the question of a defined level of service and sufficiency. In the various socio-economic settings of South Africa this ranges from the right to provision at some time in the future[15] (as in some deep rural areas), 200 litres per household within 200 metres (for those accessing communal taps), or virtually unlimited supply for those who have direct connections and multiple taps and who can pay.

Although there is no single, universally agreed rights-based approach, there is growing consensus on the necessary relationship between the realisation of rights and human development. If human rights are an inherent entitlement to every person as a consequence of being human, and are founded on the respect for the dignity and worth of each person, a distinction may be made between this and those specified in statute and policy which constitute concrete entitlements. A rights-based approach appears simple (people universally have the right to life, health and water). This may, however, be somewhat deceptive: the problem in part is the relation between abstract right and concrete entitlement. There are two key concepts here; firstly of rights, and secondly of entitlements and the two overlap but are not identical. Human rights are pre-eminently understood as any basic right or freedom to which all human beings universally are entitled and in whose exercise a government may not interfere.

In the case of this project an effort is made to spell out the approach taken to avoid ambiguities and confusion: rights are closely related to the specific entitlements and a rights-based approach to the procedures set out in the Batho Pele principles, in rules for consultation, and in statutes.

In the debate about developing community appraisal, the rights to water and sanitation in international conventions, constitution, and statutes were documented and summarised as the first step in developing a rights-based approach founded on reference to law, policy, and plan. The right of access to water, for example, is spelt out in law, set out in policy and its realisation covered in plans, such as the Water Services Development Plan, and in national and municipal budgets. A simple statement of right to sufficient water in the Constitution depends on its realisation for the development of public provision in a number of settings. Realisation of socio-economic rights such as

[14] Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996, section (27.1.b).
[15] As developed in the concept of 'redress' in Batho Pele principle Number Seven.

that to water depends on the development of public participation to express priorities, accountability of public bodies, and budgetary provision.

Debating a rights-based approach

There is not universal support of a rights-based approach in the water sector. Among practitioners in water services in South Africa there is a concern that a rights-based approach may exacerbate the problems of access in the sector by compounding the difficulties of municipal officials working to provide water services to the poor. The argument is that the assertion of right by poor people can cut across improving provision by creating a 'culture of entitlement'. Other perspectives are that a rights-based approach may lead to the under-reporting of the resourcefulness of the community in solving water access on their own and the undermining of initiative and innovation.

The 'balancing of rights by obligations' is often mentioned. In water services this could mean the obligation to use water economically and not wastefully; in the case of poor people this is largely met by lower levels of service providing for a lower level of consumption. 'Obligations' are not mentioned in law, but can be understood as the recognition of rights held by others. The matter is probably best met through the extension of the concept of rights from an individual to connected issue of the rights available also a wider group i.e. in the case of water, individual right has to recognise rights of other individuals. Finally there is a broader question of a rights-based approach exciting the expectations when a number of experts in the field are not convinced that the targets for delivery in water and sanitation will be met.

These are important considerations and need to be answered. The first point is that the Constitution sets out a series of rights and associated entitlements which are, in a sense, activated by need and the representation of this need. While it is important to encourage initiative and innovation in access to essential services and in social organisation, the Constitution makes explicit provision for 'sufficient' water and this has to be borne in mind.

The points in relation to the undermining of community initiative need to be acknowledged; but a rights-based approach should accentuate the possibilities for social initiative (although probably not household action to secure water independently of the community) through compiling community needs and participation in planning.

Finally there is the question of the excitement of expectations of delivery where this may be forthcoming. This a serious question as a number of the Water Service Development Plans in districts where there are substantial backlogs do not mention these targets or frankly indicate that they will not be met. If the targets, which were set by the water sector and confirmed by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and accepted by

Cabinet, are not to be met this should be acknowledged and become a part of public debate. Legislation provides explicitly for conditions where there are backlogs by providing for community needs to be assessed and for these to be brought into the Integrated Development Plan; the problem, however, is that there are currently relatively low levels of representation directly from communities. The rising interest among communities in the representation of their needs is thus a positive indication of a political and administrative system showing capacity to absorb express demand. The knowledge of how to represent need (through letters, petitions, and representation) may or may not have the effect of increasing public social mobilisation.

The implications of rights in South African law has been extensively explored in a significant new contribution on the subject by David Bilchitz who argues that the most pressing problem of our time is widespread socio-economic deprivation at a time of relative plenty in the world and in South Africa (Bilchitz, 2007: 133). Rather than exploring the dichotomy between rights and responsibilities, Bilchitz uncompromisingly points to dispossession and continuing disparities and argues that the Constitutional Court, for instance, has failed to act beyond a "vague and general statements" about the state's obligation to make a minimum provision for life.

Rather than acknowledging the limitations of the state in providing basic shelter, food, water, and life-saving health care he states that without evidence that such provision is impossible the Constitutional Court should rather recognise that

> with sufficient will and organisation, the government in South Africa could ensure within a very short space of time that everyone has access to minimum core goods. That would not involve very extensive provision for people, but require at least, for instance, that everyone has access to basic shelter, food, water and much life-saving health care (p 214).

He argues that the acceptance of equality leads on to the conclusion that each society must guarantee its citizens equal rights to the prerequisites for realizing a life of value, satisfying first the threshold level of survival and thereafter the preconditions necessary for the fulfilment of a wider range of purposes.

The conclusion Bilchitz reaches is that the concrete implication of rights, the matter keenly debated in the Reference Group, the threshold level of for survival and beyond set politically and administratively should be reviewed by the courts. Their judgments would constitute what has above been termed entitlements; legally enforceable minimum standards of living. The argument is for stricter, more content-based standards, rather than acceptance of the limited reach of the courts.

This philosophy and approach implies an enlargement and greater specification of the entitlements to which citizens of South Africa could aspire.

Adopting a rights-based approach

The rights-based approach has much to recommend its adoption. It has been identified that poor people are less likely than those better off to know of their rights or how to achieve redress. Surveys show dramatic differences in knowledge of human rights between rich and poor; among the poorest segment 96% had not heard of or did not know the purpose of the Bill of Rights while in the richest segment this applied to only 31% (Habib and de Vos, 2002:157). During the case studies it had been expected that community members would have a good sense of their rights to water and sanitation; this was, however, found to be uneven. There was a general awareness that delivery could be expected, but little knowledge of the measures and standards which could be applied.

There are two arguments in support of adopting a rights-based approach. The first is that in the evolution of regulation in democratic societies human rights are a value in themselves in widening the dimensions to human development, and secondly in promoting a stimulus-reaction interaction. The approach has been adopted for these two reasons: the public education of poor people in relation to their rights (from the right to vote through to socio-economic rights) is a necessary function and is essential to the operation of municipal systems.

The approach does have the advantage of promoting the building of systems of response to complaints and public need which is more sophisticated and developed. The use of HRBA has the advantage of developing greater accountability by governments and other agencies (described as 'duty-bearers') in the sense that a rights approach tends to imply the responsibility of agencies or 'duty-bearers' to directly provide access to a social right or help the poor realise their rights.

Since the Constitution and statutes spell out many of the rights to water, and regulations set out the 'entitlement' i.e. the specific quantities and standards applicable, the right to water and to associated services (as to sanitation, school services, etc.) can be discussed, measured, and methods of representation undertaken.

This approach has helped provide the basis for the tools for community appraisal. Government targets, the specific objectives set out in the Strategic Framework for Water Services, the regulations in terms of statutes, all relate to the realisation of rights to water, sanitation, and to health. Delivery marks the level at which the right to water and sanitation is being realised. These specific measures are unlikely to be known by citizens, but a rights based approach helps to develop the reasonable expectations (or 'claims') of a better life as set out in the Bill of Rights which to some extent sum up the struggles for social inclusion during the apartheid era.

Without these legitimate expectations and concrete recording of need the participation in local government and planning would be limited to notions of consultation rather

than fully conscious participation to pursue common needs as is encapsulated in statutes and policy for planning. The development of systems of accountability and forms of government responsiveness also depend on community engagement at one level or another; community mobilisation helps develop government responsiveness and to put systems in place, for example, to deal with complaints.

Democratic practice depends not on the perfection of rational planning from above but on the aggregation of need (needs analysis) expressed through democratic structures based not on gratitude but on legitimate expectations arising from constitutional guarantees. This helps generate alternatives to the dependencies of clientelism and corruption (which is one of the major features in World Bank analyses of malfunctioning delivery systems) in the form of democratic planning with active and knowledgeable participation from citizens.

Public participation brings the advantage of local knowledge of poor communities to bear on the planning and prioritisation of projects. Poor communities do, however, typically have a limited awareness of larger processes, policies, and the interpretation of entitlements. Critically important, a reasonable working knowledge of the operation of the IDP has been found to be remote at a community level and possibly to the councillor as well. A rights approach helps stimulate the advance of service delivery in terms of the representation of need, engagement, and follow-through. The approach also assists communities explore their existing conditions, compare these to the generalised level of access contained in rights, and stimulate discussion of access, responsibilities, and forms of social action. The key issue in accountability is the realisation of rights through advocacy (voice), participation and the ability to hold officials and representatives accountable.

Responsiveness and accountability

Accountability is a key concept in the extension and improvement of public services and is, for instance, put at the centre of an approach adopted by the World Bank (WBI, 2006). In the context of public services it is the requirement, to expressly address the concerns, requirements or perspectives of citizens and implies good governance in establishing appropriate mechanisms to make service providers accountable to citizens. This implies transparency in the establishment of priorities and goals and in the recording of achievements.

Transparency and openness raises another dimension of accountability; the implication of a public review of performance, the public communication of information about performance, responsiveness to public pressure and of a potential for sanctions or rewards. In particular in the water sector this implies responsiveness or 'answerability' from authorities in planning and achieving progress towards objectives or targets.

Accountability implies assessment which in turn depends on knowledge of goals and the appropriate standards. Since the performance of water service providers and authorities is largely derived from measurements of performance, valid and reliable measures are needed. There is also the implication , are the, do those seeking to hold others accountable have legitimate expertise and authority?

It is this context that the rights-based approach becomes salient specifically in relation to the realisation of access, the standards and quality of access, the possibilities for participation to express community priorities in planning, and the monitoring of the effectiveness of water services. The advantage of such an approach is that rights are established in law and policy and that realisation of these rights can be measured in proportions and quality. In poor communities the right of access to water arises from a combination of the expression of socio-economic rights and the rights to participate, petition, and take political action.

Citizen voice and regulation

At present, engagement with citizens by the national regulator currently takes place on an ad hoc basis in the form of complaints about service provision and communication with some civil society representatives, mostly around water services policy issues. This engagement needs to become more formalised to ensure that information is collected which can be used by the regulator to identify areas of non-compliance.

There are four dimensions to DWAF's role in encouraging and enabling citizens and consumers to play an active and constructive role in the local and national regulation of water services:

- Establish and manage mechanisms for effective engagement between the national water services regulator and organised groupings of citizens (including civil society organisations).

- Ensure that the regulator is accessible to citizens on matters related to the provision of water services, for example through the establishment of a national call centre (see section 6.2).

- Encourage and facilitate the local engagement of citizens in water services regulation by water services authorities.

- Collect, publish and distribute information about the performance and regulatory compliance of water services authorities and providers sourced directly from consumers, including the use of consumer surveys (see section 6.2).

- Educate consumers through advocacy and the extensive use of radio and other media (media campaigns) etc.

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Citizen voice is acknowledged in the latest version of the regulation strategy as essential to a functioning regulatory system (DWAF, 2006: 57-58) although there are changing formulations in subsequent versions.

As in earlier policy documents, citizens are acknowledged as the "key ally" and "eyes and ears" of the regulator; as consumers they are the first to know of problems in services. The document places the regulator at the centre; taking up issues and intervening from the national level. At the critically important level of local regulation the policy document is economic in its views; although engagement with citizen voice is

the "primary responsibility" of municipalities the level where many citizens feel disempowered. The document refers to the preparation of a separate guide on local regulation rather than spelling out its views.

Responsiveness and forms of accountability between the regulator and the water service authorities feature in the four dimensions of citizen voice. While the emphasis is with the relationship between regulator and citizen; the most direct form of accountability still remains between citizen and municipality. The question of redress, for instance, a definite response from government to questions of access to service is only possible from the sphere of government which is responsible for consultation, planning and implementation of services.

On the question of accountability of municipalities in local regulation the document states that the effective mechanism is the local electorate, and citizen voice does not appear in the diagram on local regulation (DWAF, 2006: 9). This, unfortunately, leaves open whether regulation is to guide municipalise in the policies and mechanisms they adopt in response to community appraisal.

Preparing the tools for community appraisal

In preparing tools for appraisal of water services three priorities and practices were in mind; firstly that the most appropriate tools and methods would be constructed for ready and effective community use, secondly the fullest involvement of individuals and the development of their capacity through training, and thirdly that the methods and results would engage with civil society. All of this has been set in the context of establishing tools and procedures to resolve the problems facing poor communities in water services by preparing citizen groups for interaction with service providers and municipalities.

The tools are designed to advance citizen voice beyond expression of need alone to careful measurement and assessment of services. The methods developed have, in a sense, straddled the practices of community development, public participation and community based planning. Community appraisal has a considerable ancestry in rural appraisal, rapid rural appraisal, and several other approaches. The researchers involved in the project have worked from existing tools and techniques which are the stock-in-trade of community appraisal to assess their effectiveness in pursuing the specific objective of assessing water services. The main question was the redefining of contemporary tools used in PRA and the development of new tools for new functions.

Community appraisal has to rely to a large extent on voluntarism as individuals and communities have to give of their own time to participate in the carrying out the tools and give of their capabilities to ensure that exercises were done and done well. This

poses a number of difficulties such as an implicit 'tax on the poor' to improve services but also has a certain advantage in the work being conducted relatively autonomously and with community support. Although there were possibilities in terms of community based planning (Goldman and Abbott, 2004) particularly in achieving redress, these were not explored. Such planning has to be built on an extensive engagement and agreement with local and district municipalities, linking the community exercises to the right level of governmental competency (provision of water, for example, is a district competence), and went beyond the remit of the project.

The preparatory work started with the use of a set of prototype tools from the existing community appraisal tools available from previous experience of community organisations and in literature available on community appraisal. These were reshaped to assess the water sector issues in communities.

The strategy has been to produce a set of tools which will enable communities and civil organisations themselves undertake community appraisal and bring together data and assessment. To many observers it appears that the main deficiency in regulation is lack of organised community voice and resources to follow through; the tools were designed to make this possible.

The tools are only as effective as the use to which they may be put. If they are too complex they may not be used and results become dependent on external agencies. While there is a wealth of appraisal tools from PRA and other approaches, tools which are appropriate in one context may not provide the material results needed in water sector regulation.

The effective use of well-established tools has proved somewhat more difficult to achieve than anticipated for many reasons. Civil society organisations often do not have extensive experience with these community appraisal tools or with simple research techniques. In addition there is, at times, reluctance among NGOs to take on additional activities which invariably stretch resources beyond the existing capacity. The successful use of the tools has to overcome any lack of knowledge of the exercises making up community appraisal and of skills through training. These challenges influenced the design and use of the prototype tools. In the early phase the strategy was expansionary – to examine what possibilities there were in a number of tools, in the latter constrictive – to narrow down the tools to the most basic. The pilot stages of the work, training, deployment, assessment and cascading of tools and materials had to follow the rule of simplification.

The pilot communities in which the prototype tools were explored have shown a relatively high capacity in social mobilisation but often relatively poor resources in education, in trained personnel and, sometimes, in community cohesion or commitment. Commitment was mentioned as an issue at times by community leaders in the sense that those with capacity in poor communities tend to migrate elsewhere or complain that

youth is 'demobilised' and disaffected. Despite these points arising largely within the rural communities making up the pilot studies, there has been an eager engagement among young members of civil society organisations particularly in informal settlements.

As the pilot studies progressed it was evident that community appraisal as required to engage in the regulatory framework draws on the practice of PRA, but has a somewhat different purpose.

Table 2. Table Contrasting approaches between PRA and community appraisal

Participatory appraisal (PRA, RRA, etc.)	**Community appraisal**
Continuous professional direction	Led by trained community leaders
Funded	Intense cost constraints
Longer-term engagement at local level	Short term engagements leading to engagement with municipality
Broad focus	Specific water and sanitation focus
Outputs research publications	Outputs feed into developmental processes
Outputs comprehensive and holistic	Partial outputs linked to practical objectives

Over time it became clear that community appraisal arises from the school of participatory appraisal but has a number of important differences. Community appraisal is neither distinctively rural (or for that matter urban) but employs community in the sense implicit in its use in South Africa; of poor communities such as those in low-income formal housing, shacklands, and in underdeveloped rural areas. Community appraisal here is intended to be broader in scale by taking on training and cascading going beyond external professional direction towards engagement with local authorities. It is also, in this case, more narrowly focused on the immediate objectives of appraisal in water services; although the methods could have (and do invite) wider application.

The strategy has been taken forward through the development of the following steps:

- The shaping of tools and exploration of community appraisal through pilot studies
- The development of materials on rights and for training
- Deployment of trainers, monitoring and advising on appraisal and, finally
- Engagement with municipalities for delivery and improved services.

Although there appears to be a clear set of stages, a strategy has developed from a primary role of community appraisal being conducted by researchers, to greater involvement by community leaders, and on to the training and development of trainers to work within a cascade strategy. The initial emphasis has been on encouraging community voice then on training, and finally in focusing on achieving municipal response.

At the inception the research team looked to the widest examination of tools and techniques which could lead to the satisfaction of community needs. Over time the number of the tools was reduced largely because they were difficult to undertake, did not specifically engage with water services, or did not lead on usefully to final conclusion. The design and redesign of the tools has been undertaken to achieve a specific purpose, to serve an essential public policy function which would lead to an institutional home – for the continued use of the tools beyond the life of the project.

In broad outline the set of tools was assembled for the following purposes; firstly to help the research team assess their potential for capturing community realities through use, secondly to assess the ease with which community members could also independently make use of them, and thirdly to assess the outputs and how they provide indicators useful in the water service context.

A detailed review of the redesigned set of tools is presented below, here it is worth summarising the preliminary experience in using PRA tools for the purpose of assessing water services.

Table 3. Table Prototype tools as used by the research team

Tool or instrument	Assessment by research team
Open dialogue; past and present community development	This is a marvellous tool for capturing history and present context but takes time.
Mapping community resources, water services and social mapping	Generates enthusiasm from community to explain features to researchers but often has insufficient focus on WSF
Measuring change over time: trend lines	Excellent but many diverse issues
Community characteristics; socio-economic profile matrix	Time consuming and difficult to use and uncertain results
Health scoring matrix	Extraordinarily difficult to use and ambiguous results
Geo-social profile of community; transect walk	Extensive distances in most communities walk; used to focus attention on poorest and least served area
Identification of priorities; nominal group technique	An excellent tool which provides proportional ranking but difficult to use because of numeracy issues
Identifying actors and encouraging cooperation	Useful but insufficiently WSF focused
Identifying stakeholders - Venn diagrams	Very useful graphic but may not sufficiently focus on WSF outcomes
Stakeholders and institutions chart	Useful analytically but does not necessarily lead on to action plan
Stakeholders conflict and partnership dialogue	Useful analytically but does not necessarily lead on to action plan
Stakeholder communications	Very useful judgement from community on relationships with water service providers
Creation of an action plan and memorandum	The most time consuming and difficult tool as extensive discussion is needed; memorandum very difficult for communities to construct

WSF: Water Sector Framework

In the table the initial set of tools is set out and a preliminary assessment of their use made to be able to improve the set of tools. A range of the reflections about the particular tools is as follows:

- A tools may the community but also lead discussion away from the focus on water and sanitation;
- A tool may be too complex for community members to use;
- It may be useful in understanding community dynamics but does not necessarily lead on to an action plan or water services assessment;
- The tool may gather useful community data but it may be unclear how this could lead on the assessment and scorecard;
- A tool may serve as a direct fit between community use and water rights issues and provide the relevant inputs to the rows of the scorecard.

Arising from these preliminary assessments the prototype was amended and revised, and the pilot studies were conducted by the research team. With each study greater attention was paid to 'passing the stick'; engaging with the community to take greater responsibility for the successful use of the tools, co-facilitating sessions, and recording key points. With each session the team discussed and worked with leading members of the community how each exercise would contribute to an action plan for improvement and to a final summary statement: later termed the scorecard.

Although there is a comprehensive stock of participatory tools in manuals of PRA (see particularly those of SEAGA, 2001 and 2004) they need to be developed to provide ready use by community leaders to focus on appraisal in water and sanitation services. this has required considerable attention; the various instruments had to be manageable by community leaders and designed to lead in sequence to a final scorecard.

Early in the research a lack of responsiveness of municipalities to citizen voice was identified and confirms the key factor ("consumers feel disempowered") in the Regulatory Strategy. To assist in encouraging municipal responsiveness a strategy of community action research has been developed. The tools include the measurement of the most obvious indicators (such as access and the specifications mentioned in the SFWS and Regulation Strategy) but also the policy 'hooks' or 'triggers'. Policy triggers here refer to the set of policy circumstances which illuminate a social problem and direct attention to solutions. These policy 'triggers' are those policy questions in which there is relatively well developed national policy, international commitments, expressed priority from more than one department, and an important public profile. A policy trigger would be one in which an action would cause the automatic invocation of a procedure. In the water services context such policy triggers could involve the health of under-five year olds and the distances children walk to water sources. In relation to the former there is a high level commitment of the Department of Health to reduce infant mortality and in relation to the latter cooperative engagement from DWAF and other departments to campaign to reduce long hours spent in collecting water.

The tools have advanced in response to the framework of rights in water and to policies which bring together social policy and public concern in the field of water services. As set out below, they are now designed to measure key indicators in water services targets and to engage the poor fully in the regulatory framework.

Linking tools to regulation

The tools which have been developed for use by communities for the appraisal of their services arise from a combination of instruments from what could be described as the 'stock and trade' of participatory toolboxes and of tools which have been developed afresh for a specific purpose. A number of toolboxes in PRA, RRA, and rural appraisal generally contain fairly well established mapping, ranking and matrices tools. These are important in establishing a common view within communities about resources, perspectives and services; but the tasks of community appraisal of water services calls for additional tools. The final set of tools includes a combination of well established tools and those specially designed to fit the purpose. Some of these are designed around policy triggers for municipal and other interventions.

The first task in taking forward community appraisal is that of establishing conclusively and in some detail the right to water services in law. A schedule of rights to water services in international convention, statute, regulation and policy was assembled and published. This provided a comprehensive review of law and was compared to other reviews published on the subject. The rights and entitlements established in this review became the standard by which tools were aligned to reflect the realisation of rights. In the South African context the instruments are the provisions of the Constitution, municipal and water statutes, the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the Strategic Framework for Water Services, etc. These rights have been presented in simpler forms and as a pamphlet.

The fundamental question of access to water services is reflected and measured in a number of tools including community and water mapping and trend lines. In the table below the purpose of the tool is set out against the instruments which set rights and objectives and the outputs or indicators described.

The active engagement of citizens in the regulatory system is implicit in regulation itself which aims to protect the interests of the 'consumer' and the 'public'. The distinction is possibly to mark the difference between the two role of the individual who consumes water and the 'public' as those who are both tax and rate payers. The SFWS and Regulation Strategy set out specific goals and targets which commit local and national government to extend access and improve the level of water services.

Table 4. The potential for citizen voice and assessment

	Item in Regulation Strategy and SFWS	Potential citizen assessment
1	Access to a basic water supply service	Proportion of population accessing basic water supply Free basic water policy implemented in all water services authorities by 2005. All people in South Africa have access to a functioning basic water supply facility by 2008.
2	Access to a basic sanitation service	Proportion of population accessing basic sanitation All schools have adequate and safe water supply and sanitation services by 2005. All clinics have adequate and safe water supply and sanitation services by 2007. All bucket toilets are eradicated by 2006. All people n South Africa have access to a functioning basic sanitation facility by 2010. Free basic sanitation policy implemented in all water services authorities by 2010.
3	Drinking water quality	Municipality monitoring water quality.
4	Impact on the environment	Municipality monitoring quality of treated effluent water.
5	Strategic asset management and water demand management	Municipality reporting on quality of management.
6	Customer service standards	Community maintaining records and checking on municipal reports on interruptions in water supply.
7	Financial performance	Municipal report on financial performance.
8	Institutional effectiveness	Citizen appraisal of effectiveness of water supply.
9	Health and hygiene	Hygiene education and the wise use of water are taught in all schools by 2005. 70% of households with access to at least a basic sanitation facility know how to practice safe sanitation by 2005 (and 100% by 2010).

Sources: DWAF, 2003,. Strategic framework for water services, and DWAF, 2006, National Water Services Regulation Strategy.

Note: Lines in italics represent items listed in the Regulation Strategy and those in normal text those mentioned in the Strategic Framework.

Although the key performance indicators listed for regulation have changed slightly through the versions of the regulatory strategy, some changes are significant. The goals

and targets identified in the SFWS tend to be repeated; they key difference being that the water sector document spreads responsibility for targets across a number of departments while the Regulation Strategy identifies each target as the responsibility of the Water Service Authority.

The table indicates that access to water and sanitation still remain a fundamental question along with service standards in the Regulation Strategy. In the indicators set out in the Strategy, however, the same items are often repeated but given less detail, and specifics such as deadlines are not mentioned. For instance, water for all by 2008 is mentioned in the text as an objective but does not appear as the indicator for Access. There are some significant omissions; for instance, the indicator on health and hygiene which involves departments in water, health and education and which is regarded as a key outcome of policy does not appear.

Since objective and deadlines are part of public policy and subject to oversight in the IDPs and WSDPs, a combination of indicators in the SFWS and Regulation Strategy have been considered in focusing the tools on engaging citizens in the regulatory framework.

Setting the indicators for the scorecard

Indicators are essential tools for the monitoring and evaluation of water services management and performance and are series of data or qualitative measures which provide information about a service.

The WHO (2000) describes how performance indicators can be developed and how they can be used. Performance indicators are defined as *variables whose purpose is to measure change in a process or function*. They are normally used in one of two ways. They may be collected at regular intervals to track the way in which a system is performing or an activity is unfolding. Or, they may be used to assess the change resulting from a particular activity or project. In the first case, performance indicators are used to *monitor* the progress of the process; in the second case, their purpose is to *evaluate* the outcome of the project or process.

The WHO provides some key points relating to performance indicators, which are listed in the box below.

Table 5. Key points concerning performance indicators

The following points must be kept in mind when using performance indicators: The indicators should be truly representative of the quantities and characteristics they are intended to represent. They should be verifiable, i.e. it should be possible to check the accuracy of the values of the indicators. The indicators should provide information, which can be used by decision-makers; this will often mean that they are presented quantitatively. The information must be available in time to influence decisions. The indicators should be linked into the system to allow feedback of information for the decision-making process.

Source: WHO, 2000:3

With these pointers in mind the tables below set out the outputs which are required to flesh out the indicators scheduled in policy documents.

Table 6. Assessment: instruments and tools

Purpose of tool to assess	Target/objective/right	Tool	Output/Indicator
Access to clean water	All people in South Africa have access to a functioning basic water supply facility by 2008, SFWS. Right of access to sufficient, safe, water: Constitution, Water Services Act and Regulations. Batho Pele Principle 3: Access.	Water mapping Transect walk Time line Trend line	Areas lacking access marked Map with poorest areas indicated Key dates in access listed Graphical representation of trends
Access to sanitation	All people in South Africa have access to a functioning basic sanitation facility by 2010. All bucket toilets are eradicated by 2006. Right to access to sufficient, safe, water: Constitution, Water Services Act, Regulations. Batho Pele Principle 3: Access.	Water mapping Transect walk Time line Trend line	Areas lacking access marked Map with poorest areas indicated Key dates in access listed Graphical representation of trends

While the methods of community appraisal set out here may not lead to the full enumeration of numbers accessing or not accessing safe water or sanitation the outputs are useful in presenting local conditions. The community and water maps provide graphical representation of water and sanitation conditions which can be used by community members to speak to their achievements and needs and which can be readily comprehended by local councillors and municipal officials and regarded as useful in planning. In the case of water mapping this should reflect access to safe water and to improved sanitation by the proportions of the community with access, distances to water sources, existence of unimproved pit latrines, etc. These graphical representations should be able to provide the data for written reports.

In addition to mapping, the transect walk should lead to the closer examination of areas of the community which tend to be the poorest and the poorest served. The tool is designed to be used to locate areas which tend to be overlooked and where people may not be attending meetings to voice their needs. The time lines and trend lines are tools which help identify key points in terms of delivery and capture people's views on progress and the transitions.

Children's health and wellbeing

Water services are also crucial in terms of the rights, development, and wellbeing of children. A high proportion of child morality from children not accessing safe water, and correspondingly an assessment of the quality and impact of water services can be made through their health.

Table 7. Assessment of child health and wellbeing

Purpose of tool to assess	Target/objective/right	Tool	Output/Indicator
Children's health and vulnerability to water related diseases	The right to life and health; Constitution and Water Service Act	Under 5 health survey and analysis sheet	Tables on diarrhea, worm infestation, and bilharzia
Children not to be subjected to worst forms of labour	The right to life and health; Constitution and Water Service Act ILO's Elimination of the worst forms of Child Labour (TECL)	Water route map and analysis sheet	Final analysis sheet indicates distances walked Distances from water sources
School provide safe water and sanitation Improved health	All schools have adequate and safe water supply and sanitation services by 2005. SWFS Hygiene education and the wise use of water are taught in all schools by 2005. SWFS Safe and healthy environment; Constitution	Questionnaire on school water and sanitation Under 5 health survey and analysis sheet	Numbered assessment of standards achieved or lacking Tables on worm infestation, bilharzia, diarrhea

A tool to measure children's health is included in the set of tools for community appraisal as a prime indicator of the impact of water services. This is a comprehensive tool which is designed to be used by community members and mothers to record the incidence of diarrhoea, worm infestation and bilharzia among children under-five.

The child dimension is also the subject of another key indicator of progress in water services; in the time children spend in collecting water. While women carrying water have been the subject of attention in service delivery and poverty alleviation, there has

been less attention given to children collecting water. The ILO has given particular attention to the numbers of children involved and the distances walked in collecting water (Hemson, 2005; 2007) and children in deep rural areas have been found to constitute a high proportion of those collecting water.

The Child Water Route Map provides for the measurement of the distances covered and the volume of water collected and an overall indication of the water scarcity for the households in a particular community.

Finally there is the assessment of provision for a healthy school environment for children. The questionnaire on school sanitation and water is designed to be used by school learners themselves to assess what the Department of Education and a number of policy documents have set out for a Health Providing School. In a number of the rural schools water and sanitation is either not well provided or in (among in some 2000 schools) either water or sanitation is not available.

The questionnaire serves as a tool to assess interdepartmental cooperation in the achievement of water and sanitation goals.

Community needs and representation

Critical to change in the interests of the poor is a unified view of needs and priorities agreed across the community. Tools are provided below (Venn Diagrams and institutional matrix) which lead to community reflection on structures and power relations to identify what leadership and groupings need to be aligned to achieve internal cohesion and coalitions for change.

Table 8. Assessing community representation

Purpose of tool to assess	Target/objective/right	Tool	Output/Indicator
Community organisation and needs	SFWS and IDP Consultation on community development needs and priorities; Municipal Systems Act 117, 1998 Batho Pele Principles: consultation	Venn Diagrams & institutional matrix Nominal group ranking Press Release, letters and petition	Graphical display of institutions Community rankings Ranking of priorities
Community representation in municipal structures	Community participation and consultation Participation in drafting of the integrated development plan; Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, Act No. 32, 2000	Action plan Integrating action plan into IDP & WSDP Ward IDP forum, councillor and stakeholders	Developed action plan Material supporting representation in IDP

Various modifications of the institutional matrix tools provide for analysis of communications and interaction between community and water service providers.

Most importantly the Nominal Group Ranking Tool provides the basis by which the community can assess its needs in a way which goes beyond simple ranking to weighted ranking; bringing proportion to the ranking of needs. (As in a number of tools this raises issues in relation to the separate consideration of WATSAN and other issues in the community; a tension in community appraisal.)

The identification of need leads on to a community action plan to forward the representation of need in the various official structures which lead on to municipal planning. There is provision made in integrated development planning for such representation broadly through ward committees, consultation over IDPs, and in the annual reviews of progress of IDPs. Explorations are also being made in forms of community based planning in which community representation, on needs and issues across the board, which are thereafter brought into the IDP process.

Community participation in the IDP, referred to as 'consultation' in legislation and in the Batho Pele principles often does not follow a set pattern. In the set of tools assembled for the project the strategy is raised of Ward Forums at which Ward Committee members and representatives from communities come together – the meetings of this type tend to take the form of elements of the action plan around a wider prioritisation of need.

An important question in the planning process is the recording of points and positions. Rural society particularly operates at a verbal level and in some instances there appears to be a succession of meetings at which important community representations are made without being recorded. These activities may be found to be participation in planning.

Monitoring and evaluation

Community appraisal continues beyond the priority of gaining access or improved access to measure the achievement of key performance indicators in water services. These are variously established in statutes, regulation and policy and are summed up in the Annexure to the National Water Services Regulation Strategy on regulatory performance measurement.

Table 9. Assessing water services

Purpose of tool to assess	Target/objective/right	Tool	Output/Indicator
Water services performance and regulation	Community involvement in assessing key performance indicators KPI in the National Water Services Regulation Strategy Municipal Structures Act, Chapter 6, Performance Management, S42.	Score card on water service Monitoring questionnaire Water pressure Consumption needed for vulnerable people	Ranking of key performance indicators Assessment of municipal performance in water and sanitation

The monitoring and evaluation tools are designed to measure the indicators set out in the regulatory framework: access to basic water service, access to basic sanitation, and customer service standards. The other indicators in the original schedule include those such as drinking water quality, strategic asset management, water use efficiency, etc., which are difficult to measure through community tools.

Two tools, however, take the regulatory framework forwards through community tools aimed to help monitor and evaluate in settlements particularly where people are dependent on communal taps: one which helps measure water pressure and another which focuses on the volume of water consumption needed for PLWHA and their treatment.

Elements of the scorecard

The tools are constructed around the need to assemble data for a performance evaluation of the municipality in water services. Each of the ten items are constructed from the key indicators of progress in water service found in the Strategic Framework for Water Services and are thus common objectives for the municipalities operating as Water Service Authorities and for citizens whose rights and entitlements are measured on the same scale. The schedule of the key elements of a 'scorecard' of community appraisal is presented below; each tool has been devised to provide (as far as is possible) the basic data or a balanced and informed assessment which serves as an input into the line item.

While a number of the tools can be used to capture the perceptions expressed through community voice, others provide for the measurement of access and quality, and others in turn work to ensure accountability. The Venn Diagram which captures institutional relations in a community works and creates an awareness of the how key stakeholders should be aligned for change. These steps should lead to more effective participation in local meetings such as those of the Ward Forum. This and the judgements recorded in the scorecard itself, serve as tools to achieve greater accountability.

Table 10. The key elements of the scorecard

1	Communication of municipality with community
2	Water: participation in planning for water services
3	Water: provision of Free Basic Water at 200 litres/household/day
4	Water: access for all or date of access for all is known
5	Water: facilities are working with proper flow
6	Water: quality of water is known
7	Sanitation facilities: access or date of access for all is known
8	Sanitation: public facilities (clinics, schools, courts) have toilets
9	Hygiene facilities: children's needs for hand washing met at school
10	Hygiene: health promotion undertaken and health of under 5s improving

The Scorecard works to sum up the range of tools employed in community appraisal; it helps focus the tools on the essential indicators in terms of the regulatory strategy and also in relation to other key public commitments in water services. It has the advantage of being numerical, standardised but potentially open-ended to variability among different communities, and expressing citizen voice concretely on the key issues.

Its efficacy is in encouraging responsiveness from municipalities. Since the indicators assessed in communities and wards are also those to which municipalities are committed, there exists a basis in comparative approaches. This should encourage public officials to understand and acknowledge the value of assessments and the significance of data from the tools. The Scorecard should thus lead on to remedial action.

Table 11. Tools make up the Scorecard

	Tool	**Key standard and target**
3	Community map	SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		SC 7 Sanitation Facilities Implemented ;
		SC 8 Sanitation: In Public Facilities
5	Community survey of poverty	SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		SC 7 Sanitation Facilities Implemented ;
		SC 1 Communication With Municipality
9	Transect walk	Sc 3 Free Basic Water (Fbw) ;
		Sc 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		Sc 6 Water: Water Quality
8	Community area map	SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		SC 7 Sanitation Facilities Implemented
11	Community water access map	SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		SC 5 Water: Sufficient Flow:
		SC 6 Water: Water Quality
13&14	Water route map and analysis sheet	SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day
16	School water and sanitation	SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		SC 8 Sanitation: In Public Facilities ;
		SC 9 Hygiene: Facilities At School
18&19	Under 5 health survey and analysis sheet	SC 10 Hygiene: Health Promotion
		SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day ;
		SC 6 Water: Water Quality
22&23	Venn Diagrams & institutional matrix	Sc 1 Communication With Municipality
2	Register of participants	Sc 2 Participation In Planning
6	Time line	Sc 1 Communication With Municipality;
		Sc 2 Participation In Planning ;
		Sc 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day
7	Trend lines	Sc 1 Communication With Municipality;
		Sc 2 Participation In Planning
		Sc 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day
20	Nominal group ranking	SC 1 Communication With Municipality;
		SC 2 Participation In Planning;
		SC 4 Water: Access For All, 25 ℓ Per Day

4 A cascade approach to voice and appraisal

The stated primary objective of regulation is the protection of citizen or consumer and it would be surprising if citizen voice (representing the attitudes and aspirations of citizens) was not recognised and encouraged. If there is to be citizen involvement in regulation, particularly among the poorest, there has to be knowledge and awareness of the objectives of regulation and how these can be assessed. The tools needed to measure services and the training and experience from pilot studies need firstly to be embedded in the communities involved and secondly to pass from one community to another. If regulation is to include the tens of thousands of communities in South Africa; such exercises in citizen voice and community appraisal has to spread from those communities initially involved to the wider scale. The results at community level should be able to be aggregated upwards from the 'community' or 'project' level to the scale appropriate to municipal management; to the wards. The following of these successive steps in citizen voice is termed the cascade.

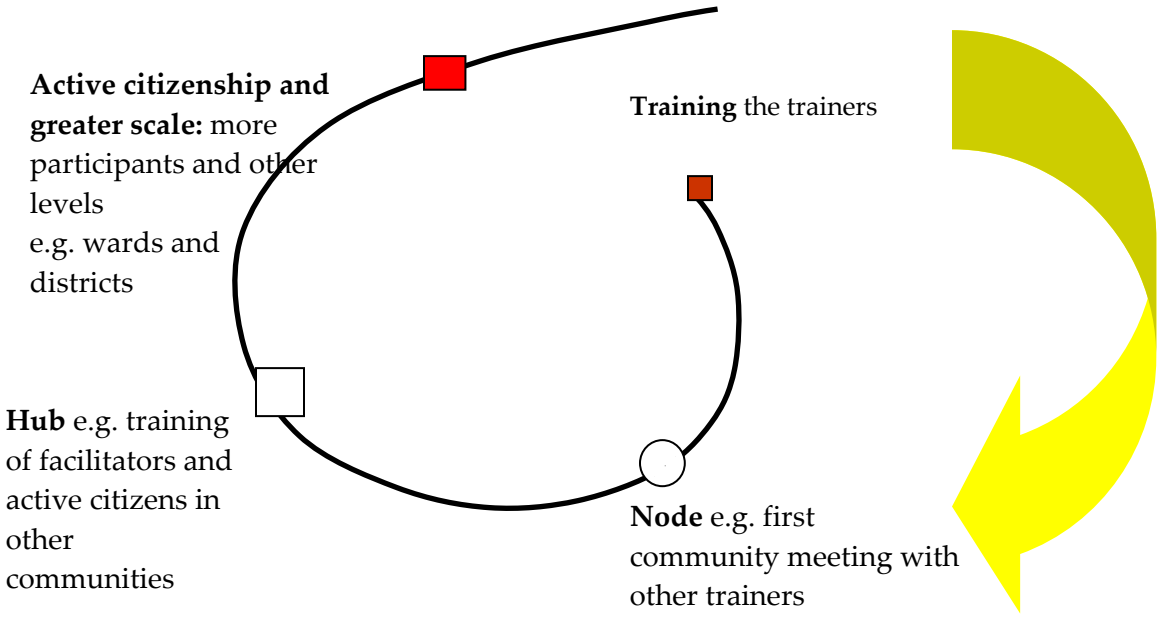
An important innovation within the project has been the exploration of the potential effect of cascading in the training and deployment of water sector trainers. The terminology of the cascade is fairly widely employed beyond the community context. It is utilized in the business context generally to secure the proliferation of new business methods such as the Balanced Scorecard which combines elements of financial and non-financial indicators (Cobbold and Lawrie, nd), in public administration in spreading new concepts linking planning and performance management through across all levels of government (Horwood, 2003) and ICT in the diffusion of information technology to underdeveloped areas (Padayachie, 2005). It is often used in describing the introduction of new methods vertically (through a series of tiers) and horizontally (on an ever-widening geographical scale). Its distinction is of more ready adoption of new ideas and techniques by people; usually in a specific context of innovation outside professional or conventional frameworks in which there is some degree of voluntarism or choice in the acceptance of new ideas. At times a 'top-down' rather than a horizontal approach is followed in which ideas and materials are transmitted from an upper point to the base with different measures of success as will be shown in the discussion below. The vitality of the cascade is the adoption of new ideas and techniques not by compulsion and its success demonstrated by self-adoption and incorporation into everyday work and voluntary activities.

The cascade *effect* which is sought in the wide diffusion of ideas and practices refers to the personal, social and institutional processes that occur in successive stages, each of which is dependent on the preceding one, which may produce a cumulative effect wider than the original impetus. This has been assessed in the potential serialisation of the initial training and orientation through a series of tiers and scales or, alternatively, the falling-off in the effect of the initial training. A successful cascade could have enormous

possibilities in the reproduction of ideas and strategies. Often the analogy is made to electronic networks (such as the spread of internet technology) which demonstrates exponential growth after slow incremental beginnings. Similar possibilities may be expanded in strategies of reproducing knowledge and practices in the field of social change such as developing new social practices in adjusting to environmental change. In each case the power of the cascade effect can be assessed by the extent to which the ideas and techniques spread without compulsion, the ready acceptance of the new, and ability to pass on such techniques.

A cascade strategy in community appraisal opens the attractive prospect of all communities being able to improve their water services by representing the case for improvement and engage autonomously with local government to ensure pro-poor policies. The cascade attempts to maintain depth of knowledge, understanding and awareness while expanding on an ever widening scale. The trainer in a successful cascade in this context, in a sense, becomes an extension of project; initially the trainer and the first community meetings operate as a node for local interaction while in subsequent meetings the trainer operates a hub from which other links can radiate.

Figure 2. The cascade, from training of trainers to wider scale



Progress of cascade: Training, participation and empowerment on an increasing scale

In Figure 2 the concept of a cascade is illustrated from the starting point with the training of trainers, through the first community experience in which all trainers

participate and then on to engagement with other communities. The cascade involves greater scale in numbers of trainers, facilitators, and citizens involved and by operating at different levels e.g. from community to ward, from ward to local municipality or district. Through this sequence of events the cascade effect can be assessed to know whether the diffusion of ideas and practices has a cumulative effect or whether there is a fall-off in these ideas and practices.

The cascade provides possibilities for 'active citizenship'; of training of trainers who become the change agents moving from one community to another, of the training of facilitators with a more local role, and of meaningful participation by all citizens in a village or slum. The cascade can be conceived as networks of trained citizens, extending activities through a range of tiers such as ordinary people, active citizens, and political leadership and at increasing levels of scale; from 'sub-place' to locality, district, region, province and nation. The detail of instruction and deployment in the project presented here is on a smaller scale but possibly has advantages in comparison with other experienced in public participation. In the best practice in communities and states such as Kerala State, India, and Porto Allegre, Brazil there are high levels of participation in planning and oversight of municipalities. The differences between these socio-political innovations and that of the projects will be assessed in conclusion.

The research team had the approach, as mentioned above, of wanting to develop local individual capacity as far as practicable by providing every willing member of the community with an activity and role. Some of these would relate to the immediate context of the community workshops; others would be built around the idea of on-going activities and responsibilities – such as planning, networking, and writing a wall newspaper. These activities and roles would lead to the mobilisation of the fullest human capacity available in the community to represent to their best the community needs and aspirations. In an appendix to this report the following vocations are listed:

> facilitator, advocate, organiser, co-facilitator and rapporteur, group leader, map maker, librarian and recording secretary, community planner, community journalist, editor of wall newspaper, monitor, surveyor/researcher, networker, young scientist, health mobiliser, youth mobiliser, spokesperson for women, spokesperson for children collecting water.

The enormous range captured above and presented more fully in Annexure D as the possible tasks and vocations latent within workshops and communities gives an idea of the possibilities of social mobilisation in a cascade. These extend from the obvious (such as facilitators) to the more ambitious (such as wall newspaper editors); the strategy here was to encourage the greatest possible expansion of the energies within the community and particularly the youth.

The effect of the cascade will be assessed as flowing through these three tiers and scales:

- firstly within the community where the trainers live and will conduct community voice appraisal;
- secondly within another community selected by these trainers who will, in turn, train other trainers, and
- thirdly within additional communities in which the new trainees conduct community voice appraisal.

This model has been conceived around an open-ended engagement by trainers, provides a strong emphasis on training and development, and for the passing on of knowledge and ideas. The approach would be tested in the most deprived areas of South Africa: in communities in deep rural areas and in slums. These are challenging conditions providing a demanding test for the methods. If a cascade was possible in these unsupportive conditions, it would probably have greater prospects where conditions are more favourable.

The first phase of the cascade involved a strong emphasis on training: of the trainers and for all people who attend workshops in water rights and through engagement in the exercises. There would be potentially high levels of involvement of youth and women and the possibility of new roles and tasks. The cascade would culminate in the evolution of coalitions at a local level which could connect to NGOs and national movements mobilizing on water issues and engage with local municipalities.

Possibly by the nature of the concept itself, the cascade has not been subjected to extensive examination in theory, although a number of case studies do exist.[16] A cascade strategy in disseminating knowledge and practices is appealing to social movements, but not necessarily as enthusiastically accepted by educationalists. The idea of cascading knowledge and training through communities is controversial for a number of reasons:

- Past experience in poor planning to meet over-ambitious goals;
- Inadequate training of trainers;
- Poor training of new facilitators by those who have been trained;
- High turnover among trainers;
- A lack of the appropriate materials;
- Materials in English and not the appropriate languages;
- Poor supervision, support and implementation.

[16] The research leader undertook extensive library and internet searches with uneven results.

In addition to the above in the experience of the research team there are three other important considerations:

- There is uncertain support from funding and training agencies such as SETAs as the cascades can migrate across sectors;
- There will be an expectation of a wages both during training and from deployment which could extend costs considerably beyond the budget limit; and
- The cascade strategy with its fluidity and spontaneity may not integrate well with municipal structures.

These are considerable reservations which are derived in part from experience such as the report on cascading training within the Education Department (University of Natal, 1999) which is of an official body engaging the technique. Other experiences are those of generally undocumented community projects in which the technique was explored. For a number of reasons the results have led to a pronounced expression of distrust and hostility both among academics in the educational field and from community project managers to cascading education and training. The conclusion a number of educational professionals and community practitioners have drawn from experience is that cascading is not a productive way of approaching social projects such as community appraisal.[17]

Prognosis for the cascade

The prognosis from experts for the cascade has been almost universally pessimistic and its implementation presented as fraught with difficulties. A meeting between the research team and civil society organizations in January 2006 to exchange ideas as part of the project also raised a number of practical difficulties. The most important one related to a major potential problem in expecting untutored ordinary people to be able to pass on skills and knowledge to others.

The opposition to the concept of cascading was often bluntly expressed, e.g. "forget it". The definite opinions expressed were to a greater or lesser extent supported by argument. A response is reported more fully to expand on the difficulties identified:

[17] Interviews with Valley Trust official and Elda Lyster, 11 May 2006.

> It is difficult when you engage a person who has no passion for the work as you cannot teach passion. You could train but where are you if you don't have life experience and the training is not meaningful?
>
> It is difficult to maintain a participatory method as this requires a huge amount of energy and time and concentrated work over months. This passion has to be passed on and depends on in-built skills which may not be available.
>
> Even good materials don't make a difference. If you come from another village you may not accepted but if you are too well known, on the other hand, there is not an attitude of respect. There are problems of contempt, jealousy, suspicion and a dismissive attitude towards the people known to the community. Empowerment will only result over years and years.[18]

The assumption here was that a commitment to community development is a life vocation which is peculiar to the individual rather than a practice which can be developed by training and engagement. There are community dynamics, it is argued, which would blunt and negate the striving for change. Formal instruction with manuals and training courses would not resolve these issues.

Other educational experts expressed differing viewpoints but arrived at the same negative conclusion. A researcher with experience in the evaluation of educational cascades argued:

> Experience shows that many cascade projects have not worked. Why do it?
>
> Every cascade has been a failure and any new proposal rings alarm bells extremely loudly. My opinion is based on field projects which have not worked; why do it again? It is very difficult to train people to teach, the cascade breaks down in the very first phase.
>
> The fatal flaw is providing someone with a short amount of training and expecting them to be able to pass on everything they've learnt. A nation-wide project in adult education had such negative opinion that the reports were not made available and the department regarded the cascade as nothing to do with them.

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[18] Interview with Richard Haig, Valley Trust, 23 February 2006.

> It is almost impossible to develop leadership through cascade. There is also the problem of quality assurance; people may have the ability to do the training, but afterwards run away from the model. Why not use a roving team of trainers instead?[19]

These were forthright opinions from professionals with the unambiguous conclusion that a cascade in training should not be attempted.

Case studies in cascading

Although reports of attempts at cascades are difficult to acquire (and possibly hidden where there is an experience of project failure), three were located. The first, Sizabhukula Capacity Building Programme, was designed to train end empower community structures to engage with the emerging local government in rural areas. It was implemented by the Rural Consultative Forum (FCF) on Rural Development in 1995. Some 40 community trainers were trained, local task teams prepared and funded and the programme eventually reached over 5 500 people through 165 training workshops (RCF, 1995). An evaluation found that the non-partisan nature of the training was appreciated, that traditional leaders were involved, and that the basis for continued dialogue in a context of violence had been laid. The programme had succeeded in reaching a large number of people over a short period of time, but the community trainers appear to have depended on further engagement from the centre to take the follow-on from the programme.

The programme manager gave further arguments for its success.[20] The programme had reached into deep rural areas that NGOs had not yet accessed; many participants were women who had never had contact with an external development organization; and it was highly praised for the small stipend it paid trainers for each training workshop as a form of income. Organisers had two notable concerns. First, the quality of the awareness training in capacity building and local government was difficult to maintain along the cascade. Even though there was a support team in place this was not always drawn on as trainers did not or could not identify when they required assistance. Second, by its very nature the training raised the hope of trainers and trainees of a follow-up programme or some progress in development. This dynamic expectation had not been anticipated. All trainers were very keen for a follow-up programme which, however,

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[19] Elda Lyster, Interview, 11 May 2006.

[20] Interview with the Sizabhukula Capacity Building Programme manager, Mary Galvin, 2006.

was not fully funded and only reached selected areas. Although a subsequent forum was convened in May 1996 to extend Sizabhukula through the participation of 80 community representatives and 40 NGOs, the project came to a halt.

The case provides some idea of the complexity of the cascade; the extensive possibilities it opens up, the difficulties of maintaining quality with wider scale, and the dynamic nature of expectations.

A much more developed cascade was that instituted by the National Department of Education in Adult Education and Training, in the implementation of the ABET Directorate's "cascade training-of-trainers model". The training began in January 1998 in a number of provinces and was designed to pass on knowledge and skills from one trainer to another. The difficulties encountered were twofold: a lack of clarity about policy and procedures and insufficient direction and administrative support.

The cascade was disadvantaged by a lack of clarity in ABET policy which was reflected in a training manual not being available. The instructors were challenged by the task of creating new materials as they had had little such experience, and were judged as unlikely to produce effective materials. In addition, fewer trainers turned up than anticipated. This interrupted continuity, resulting in the training of each individual being incomplete. The cascading, i.e. the training of other ABET teachers by these trainers, was very uneven and slow. While training in one module was undertaken it was severely delayed in others.

The trainees themselves (who were teachers) were only available during school holidays and were insufficiently assisted, as their supervisors had other activities during these holidays. The trainers also had problems accessing funding for their accommodation and catering.

The experience of problems encountered has deterred further use of cascading techniques. (UND, 1999: 4). Taken as a whole, this cascading experience was regarded as an example of how *not* to undertake the training of teachers and introduce new methods in ABET. According to educationalists there has not been further use by the Department of cascading techniques.

The third case is the training and deployment of paralegals in communities in and around Mbizana in 1995. This was undertaken by an NGO in Stellenbosch and funded by Open Society and provided for the training of 20 paralegal trainers in educating communities on the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Trainers were deployed into communities to provide a one-day education and mobilization of communities and, on completion of the community workshop, were then paid. A number failed to report back on their workshops and were not paid and fell away from further engagement; altogether 12 completed the course and its assignments.

This was not the final conclusion to the exploration of cascading; the communities responded to the experience of mobilization by requesting further assistance to set up an advice office and the Mbizana Paralegal Advice Office was established. The whole experience has been judged as a success as the materials on the Constitution and Bill of Rights are still in use in the community and the project was sustained.[21] In a sense the training and cascading has had a lifespan of over ten years, as it led to greater awareness and new forms of civil organisation.

There are thus some pockets of success in an otherwise negative history. Where there was success, it consisted of a change in consciousness regarding rights; in the generation of awareness and knowledge, and the emergence of new levels of organisation.

Weaknesses in cascades

Among typical weaknesses experienced in various cascade projects are these:

- Poor design of the projects (often with over-ambitious goals), leading to poor support, supervision and implementation
- Inadequate training of trainers, and lack of commitment by trainers, linked to high turnover
- Lack of materials, or use of English instead of more appropriate language
- Lack of response by local officials to the needs expressed
- Poor selection, for example, taking on people in leadership positions who lacked training potential or commitment
- Very uncertain support from funding and training agencies such as SETAs (the South African authorities that accredit providers of training and manage funds for training, in different sectors)
- An expectation of wage earnings both during training and from deployment which could not be met
- Insufficient recognition of learning in the form of accreditation.

We would emphasise two other areas of concern. The one is that a cascade approach would normally assume that some capacities are in place which could serve as a necessary pre-condition. For example, the successful cascading of the Internet must be dependent on a certain level of literacy. But innovations in formal education that assume

[21] Interview with Nobuntu Mazeka, Project Manager of Mbizana Legal Advice Office, 10 July 2006.

that teachers have higher levels of literacy, or depth in subject knowledge, or have training skills, may also prove to have made the wrong assumptions.

These cases may lead to the judgement that such approaches are fundamentally flawed, and that training, and certainly the training of trainers, should be undertaken by an expert group at each stage. However, the implication of this is that "the stick is not passed"; that development is driven by and dependent on the external agent. What may also skew the judgement on cascades is the lack of a record of cascade learning in such diverse non formal activities as bird-watching, sport, traditional healing and political organisation.

There are also major limitations in other approaches to the training of trainers. Take for example the case of teacher education, which endeavours to do for schooling the same task we are setting here for community development, in that both educators train other educators. Teacher education usually consists of formal post-school education (with access limited by success in matriculation), after which the trainee adjusts to the practicalities of the school setting.

The largely negative account of cascade projects indicates the need to plan specifically to address the vulnerable areas of such models. Clearly trainees have to be carefully selected and understand their role in reaching the project objective. There has to be an understanding of the capabilities involved. The materials provided have to be appropriate to the particular context and provide a standard of good practice. The educational process has to be designed to strengthen commitment. Finally an iterative process is need in which practitioners can be involved with external agents to reflect, deepen theoretical knowledge and identify new learning.

The cascade has a certain advantage in the South African context. There is a supportive framework for public participation provided by the Constitution and by legislative policies. However, the South African state has made very explicit commitments to a central role for government (at national, provincial and local levels) in development and delivery. Yet recent years have seen major community upheavals based on what poor people see as a failure in 'service delivery' evidenced in housing backlogs and poor services. The need to link such discontented people with institutions intended in national policy to enable redress and to capacitate rural communities, requires a focus not just on 'the community' but on these inter-relationships. This is where the particular difficulties lie; in getting greater responsiveness from municipalities to incorporate expressed need in the municipal plans, budgets and implementation.

The research team has had this as its central focus; to provide the training and the tools to develop citizen voice to ensure the effective representation of needs and also encourage municipal response. The strategy has been to show the effectiveness of the method and to encourage the transfer of materials and method to institutions which have the responsibility and resources to extend the scale. Access to further resources

such as though linking with SETAs, the Expanded Public Works Programme or the skills development planning of municipalities, and the opportunities for accreditation provided by the National Qualification Framework have been undertaken.

Assessment of previous initiatives

The views of community practitioners and educationalists had an important effect on the research team. There was considerable debate bout the possibilities of cascading and the case studies were well discussed.

There have been a number of successful or partially successful cascades in training and development, such as in the case of the Paralegal NGO, Mbizana Advice Office. In this case which involved the training of community practitioners in human rights youth from local communities were trained and deployed to carry out education and mobilization on the Bill of Rights.[22] The trainers were trained and then required to conduct workshops, report back, receive further funding and then make a final report. They were paid a modest fee for each workshop completed.
This initiative, which provided a simple model of how information and methods could be disseminated through training, through setting limited and clear objectives, and through the use of appropriate materials. It served to provide some alternative to the strongly argued negative assessments of the possibilities of cascading by showing that a well prepared and conducted cascade could lead to the extension of information and methods from trainer to facilitator, and from village to village. The example showed that it would be possible to develop community practitioners to conduct community appraisal, starting with relatively simple tools and exploring more demanding tools such as those in which health conditions are brought under surveillance.

Despite the reservations expressed by professionals in relation to cascading, there remained the imperatives of developing community voice through a set of tools not requiring researchers and external professionals. The research objective remained to develop appropriate tools and train community practitioners and assess their ability to undertake community appraisal. This involved an assessment of the extent to which innovative tools could be effectively used by community practitioners and focus on appraisal of water services rather than on the appraisal of community needs more generally. The latter is an understandable temptation to community practitioners who may want to achieve broad community mobilization.

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[22] Interview with Nobuntu Mazeka, 10 July 2006.

The question was firstly whether innovative tools could be effectively used, secondly whether community appraisal be conducted by community practitioners independently of a research team, and thirdly whether municipal responsiveness could be encouraged and developed to create a form of local regulation. Finally there is the question whether it is possible to undertake good quality appraisal and gather reliable data without the intervention of trained researchers and careful supervision?

Training

The acceptance by public authorities of the priorities of communities and authenticity of data depends on the tools being used effectively. The data derived from expert researchers conducting community surveys may well be less questioned than appraisals undertaken by development practitioners. Quality, in turn, is dependent on the training of development practitioners (rather than researchers themselves) to engage directly with communities, use the tools, and construct reliable reports. The question is how the necessary skills and methods could be passed over to poor communities. It is estimated there are some 22 000 communities in South Africa and a pilot would have to explore the ways in which all communities could engage in the development of water services and their regulation.

Two objectives had to be met: firstly the tools had to be set out as simply and carefully as possible and explicitly link up to the final objective of improved and sustainable services, and secondly appropriate and well edited training materials were needed to spell out the method for their use. The assembly, pruning, revision and final editing of the tools took place during and beyond the first three case studies. This led on to a greater emphasis on training, on discussions with municipalities, and to deployment of trainers in a cascade strategy.

The research team was placed in a dilemma about the expert assessment of the cascade. The deep reservations of educationalists about its prospects could not be ignored, on the other hand the examples of community cascade projects showed some promise. These considerations led on to an exchange of ideas about how tools and techniques could be adapted to explore these possibilities. The strategy for a pilot cascade was devised during and after a set of case studies in which participatory tools were extensively used by the project team to assess their use in the field. At each subsequent site further emphasis was given to encouraging greater leadership among those who received training in participatory skills. A key criterion for selection was that these trainers should pass on their skills and abilities to others.

It was clear that a combination of training and support with an element of voluntary commitment was needed for adequate and independent public participation in regulation from the many thousands of communities. After much discussion about the possibilities of training and cascading community appraisal through training three case

studies were undertaken to test the tools and possibilities for engagement of community members. Through the successive case studies there was greater involvement of youth with some experience in community organisation. These case studies also provided greater confidence and experience to the research team.

Considerable energy has been given to training and the development of training materials for additional reasons. If the idea of community practitioners engaging in the regulatory framework is to succeed it is essential that the training be well based and the assessment credible: it was decided to match the training materials the SAQA qualification framework. This would also ensure that the community practitioners had formal recognition of their training and that local government would appreciate that every effort had been made to ensure quality in training. This course was pursued although there were also strong warnings expressed about the bureaucratic difficulties which would be encountered. The training framework in South Africa is widely regarded as cumbersome and difficult to use.

The training of development practitioners has been essential to this process and has constituted an important part of the project. To pursue the cascading of knowledge and skills it is necessary for the community practitioners to be well trained, to be able to pass on skills, and to be confident in a basic knowledge of water services and municipal policy. To what extent can the tools and the training spread from the pilot communities to others and eventually succeed in improving water services?

The training and cascading strategy described has evolved and developed over three broadly identified phases. Firstly there has been a phase of direct engagement with communities to explore and test a range of instruments, secondly there was an assessment of this engagement and preparation of training materials; and thirdly there has been the deployment of trainers and engagement at a municipal level.

There is a well developed training framework in South Africa and a general expectation among those receiving training that their learning and skills will be recorded and accredited. The HSRC research team has worked to develop training materials to meet specific Unit Standards set out in SAQA qualifications in skills and the learnership: Development Practice. The HSRC has a commitment to developing the community trainers to the fullest and to providing them with relevant skills which can be externally authenticated. This task turned out to be much more intensive than anticipated; although there is a well developed training framework in South Africa the step by step procedures are not well understood and often complicated and require high level support. Good training material writers in short supply and often fully committed. Formal training has required writing materials to specified skills and knowledge, involving educational professionals, and widening the scope of training to include skills in training and facilitation. The very extensive and time-consuming engagement with the relevant SETA (in this case ETDP) has finally resulted in the HSRC being becoming an accredited training provider. This means that the community trainers will now have

the certified training qualifications which will take them forward professionally in the field of community appraisal.

Despite these difficulties the HSRC research team has taken up the tasks of writing materials and carrying out instruction according to the Unit Standards required for the *General Education and Training Certificate: Development Practice*, SAQA #23093. In addition the candidates for training were carefully selected with sufficient educational qualifications and community experience. Procedures for assessment and the recording of individual and group outputs were put in place. The instruction and materials produced have finally led to the accreditation of the HSRC as a training and education provider in the ETDP sector.

Widening possibilities: the cascade

The development of tools for community engagement and (in part) for municipal response has been developed (particularly in the early stages) in a reflexive manner; through preparation, engagement, learning, and further development. There has been considerable reflection on the original conceptual model and methodology employed; and new elements have been added which aim to provide training through a cascade approach.

The cascade also provided a challenge to develop in practice and to assess over time. During the pilot community studies in Trustfeed, KwaMpande, and Impendle, the enormous enthusiasm among poor people for education and training in the field of community appraisal, community needs analysis, advocacy and other essential forms of public participation was identified.

There has been a shift in the project from the exploration of tools by the research team to their revision, amendment and general use by community trainers.

With experience in the field and confidence in the considerable volume of information on water services revealed by relatively short interventions a decision was made to take up the possibilities of working in the Mbizana local municipality in the Eastern Cape. Mbizana offered certain advantages: a network of NGO contacts, a potentially supportive municipality, and the challenge of meeting the needs of a desperately poor and underserviced municipality.

The training and development of community practitioners has been conceived within the context of a cascade strategy. This involves the following elements: the practitioners training others, moving from one community to another, and directing community appraisal in each community. The cascade was designed to position trained practitioners in communities and provide for their training of facilitators to undertake appraisal in their communities.

The real challenge in education and training is helping trainers learn and then pass on knowledge and skills. This includes group teaching and learning. Since the work of community appraisal is to be conducted largely without the benefit of supervision and easy reference to a centre, training is crucial to provide community practitioners with the skills and abilities to manage the work.

The effective use of tools for the monitoring and evaluation of water services is dependent on the education of communities and the training of those who will directly undertake the necessary tasks.

The training of trainers which is essential to the notion of cascading community appraisal at different levels of facilitation and on a wide scale has required some innovation in instruction. Materials and methods of instruction have been prepared in terms of the following principles:

- Training the trainers should incorporate teaching and learning skills.
- Materials should be written to provide a specific course for Village Facilitators.
- Materials should be simple in language and style, translated and have appropriate level of accessibility ranging from modules to posters.
- Training should focus on learning/teaching techniques.
- Everybody attending workshops should have some level of training.
- Tools should be designed to become embedded in local government and civil society practices.
- Materials and the training programme should lead on to certified skills and qualification

A distinction has been made between a trainer, facilitator, and active member of the public in terms of materials and methods. A trainer is regarded as a community practitioner who has been given specific training in teaching and learning and in particular the application of cascade methodology. A facilitator is a practitioner who has experience in community development and who provides skilled assistance to the trainer. Finally an active citizen is regarded as an individual with interests in meeting the needs of the community. They are provided for with materials such as posters and pamphlets which present basic information on rights and processes in the provision of water services.

Selection, training and deployment of trainers

The training of trainers through well prepared and presented materials in some depth has been essential to the strategy of conducting community appraisal through a cascade. These trainers were selected from the top of the list of candidates for the positions on a

scoring scheme weighted on the basis of academic qualification, community commitment, and personal qualities.

The strategy in training has been closely linked to that of deployment in the cascade; in moving from the trainers to other active citizens and from the home areas of trainers to other wards and communities. Initially it was intended to work with between 20-30 participants who were representative of communities (which would enable all wards in Mbizana local municipality to be involved), engaged in community development, and knowledgeable about civil society and NGOs. Applications were invited from all members of society and councilors and traditional leaders were involved in circulating the news about the project and in nominating trainees.

To ensure a fair selection process there was the full involvement of the civil society, the local municipality, and traditional leaders. A set of selection criteria was adopted and marks entered at the conclusion of each interview; there were not great differences in the assessment of the various interviewers. The only complaint at the conclusion of the process was from the traditional leaders who felt that there had not been sufficient time for applications to be submitted by candidates they had nominated.[23] There was also disappointment that not all wards could be included in the process, as originally planned, because of the cost of training and deployment.

Materials were written within the context of the Unit Standards required for the General Education and Training Certificate: Development Practice. These materials were built around the tools which had been used and improved in the pilot studies and set within the syllabus of the Unit Standards to ensure quality, development of skills, and the required assessment. The instruction which took place in late June 2006 used innovative techniques to instruct and orient trainers to the tasks ahead.

The teaching methods included a trial run of tools applied to the home community, the further modification of materials and tools through interaction with trainers, and the development of skills in teaching. It also involved the development of personal skills, group leadership skills, facilitation skills, and the use of the full range of tools. A variety of teaching methods were used including formal instruction, group learning through

[23] This complaint was followed up and it was found that the traditional leaders had had the same time as other groups to invite candidates to apply; they did, however, have greater problems in communications. The problem in delaying the selection of candidates was in finding another date at which all interviewers could be present.

exercises in training other groups, and learning by doing. Most of the tools were taught by the trainers themselves undertaking exercises on their home areas e.g. community mapping, water mapping and exploratory exercises in surveys and analysis.

In setting out to meet the need for preparation for high quality participation in official structures by poor people the educational materials developed for the training of trainers have become successively simplified. A set of training modules have been prepared for the trainers themselves, a further set for the use of instruction of facilitators, and for community members there are posters explaining rights, ways of realizing these rights, and planning processes. This has been undertaken specifically to avoid the problem identified in both the ABET and Sizabhukula projects of trainers having to develop their own materials ad hoc.

As the project involved so methods have become more established. The cascade idea, for example, was initially designed to be open-ended i.e. leading from the trainer in a number of possible directions – to new areas, involving fresh layers, potentially bringing in new organisations. The original idea put forward was to train trainers who would activate their own networks (social, church, CSO, etc.) beyond their own community to draw in a range of communities into the exercise. Originally it was also envisaged that everybody attending the community workshops would be trained and at the level of knowledge and awareness this was planned and accomplished. The original conception was for 4-8 community members being trained specifically as scribes, rapporteurs, youth group leaders, facilitators, etc. This was the task seen as necessary to an ever-widening cascade strategy and has important democratic possibilities.

However it encountered two problems; firstly of the growing complexity of the model which was placing an increasingly heavy demand on the trainer and secondly as it demanded fairly advanced skills (e.g. rapporteur), and thirdly because it also raised the possibility of expanded expectations of financial support which had not been planned. The ever-expanding and free-rolling cascade of training others was circumscribed as the cascade model was refined in discussion with municipalities.

The idea encapsulated in this strategy was to allow a wide range of possibilities to arise from initial training and deployment. The evolving cascade strategy as developed during the Training of Trainers was, however, extensively modified after discussion with municipal representatives and traditional authorities and does seem to meet local conditions and expectations. It possesses, in addition, an additional advantage that the results of community appraisal are much more likely to be accepted by local authorities.

Discussions were initiated with the Mbizana Local Municipality about the prospects for cascading training and community appraisal between April and June 2006. Key officials in local municipality endorsed the idea of training and the cascade as a means of developing communities. They did, however, have definite alternative views about the cascade in opposition to the idea of an open-ended spread of activity. The alternative

proposal was that the cascade should operate within a ward where there was a defined field of activity and that the councillors and ward committee members should be integrated in the approach.

These were vital discussions as they worked to anticipate the acceptance of the results of the cascade project and the responsiveness of the authorities to the potentially (and almost certainly) unfavourable results. In discussion the cascade strategy was presented to Madam Speaker of the Mbizana Local Municipality. She was initially sceptical although very pleased to hear of greater prospects for training in the municipality. Her scepticism spoke to open-ended nature of the cascade as initially presented; this, she felt, would make it difficult for the trainers and communities to engage with the ward councillors. On the other hand if councillors were informed and involved from the inception, this could lead to conclusions not only drawn by village (as proposed) but also finally (and most usefully) by ward. She made two important points; firstly that there should be a strong emphasis on the community practitioners conducting most of the work, and secondly that other community workers should be trained at a simpler or 'lower' level as facilitators.

What followed was a set of engagements with the municipal leadership. Key local government officials were surprisingly enthusiastic about the possibilities of cascade; and wanted local engagement, comprehensive coverage through the cascade, and full knowledge of procedures and materials. The strategy of providing training to members of the local communities, developing appropriate materials, and working within the SETA framework were particularly attractive, and helped locate the project as genuinely developmental in terms of the training of local individuals and development of communities.

The discussions were vital to the direction of the work, it reinforced the idea that the cascade was more than possible; that it was feasible and could also be productive of good working relationships with the municipality. More than that, the discussions involved the municipality in the strategy which implied that it would also have to take responsibility for the potentially unwelcome results such as the community concluding that the municipality had not met their service delivery targets.

Taking into consideration the question of municipal responsiveness and the need to sustain the cascade without over-extension, it was decided to concentrate on the training of Village Facilitators (rather than the wider range of responsibilities) in each village and the strategy to work along ward structures; taking up two innovations which arose in discussion. A course designed for facilitation was developed and the facilitators received limited financial support in travel and subsistence to be able to visit other villages and to participate in ward-wide consultations with the trainer.

A total of six trainers were selected on the basis of the results of supporting written material written by potential trainers and the selection interview. Trainers were paired

into three teams according to their respective wards to ensure the greatest possible inter-personal support and learning in the field.

Through the engagement of the Mbizana Municipality a number of possibilities were discussed; of trainers engaging largely in training facilitators to carry out the village appraisal, of community workshops to bring these initiatives together and other combinations. The advantage of the 'controlled' cascade has been that the local municipality has been involved in something of an oversight role; passing advice and some encouragement for councillors to participate and taking responsibility for the results of the process. This involved a certain loss of autonomy (although not in the perception of the trainers who were to be isolated in deep rural areas with fairly little direct support from the research team) for a gain in coherence and acceptance by the local authority. A wide range of possibilities were still possible building on the idea of voluntary association through NGO and political networks established at the ward level.

Figures: Village facilitation at the Ward level

The final approach is presented in the figure above. The cascade has been designed to start at a ward level by the training of village facilitators and other community workers. This would start in a village with which the practitioner was most familiar and lead to the formation of a task team to undertake many of the community exercises including mobilisation, mapping and surveys. All facilitators from throughout the ward were to

participate in a 'circle of learning' by watching others who were possibly more experienced, participating, and reading the learning materials provided.

Assessment of training

These considerations led on to an exchange of ideas about how the tools and techniques could be spread. A pilot cascade strategy was devised to encourage those who received training to pass on their skills and abilities to others.

The written materials and training have lead to the instruction of 6 trainers in community appraisal, their training of 23 village facilitators, and community workshops in 26 villages in three wards in Mbizana local municipality which have involved at least 500 citizens. The trainers and facilitators have used the set of tools which, taken as a whole, have made up the 26 village reports: the village, water, community maps; diagrams showing the relations of important groups and institutions within the community, schedule of priorities (Venn Diagrams), and action plans. These reports could more appropriately be described as 'big book' or collection of materials; very useful in being used by community leaders as instruments to illustrate points or as field materials to remind spokespersons of conditions. Although this was a pilot this was a considerable exercise and made a significant contribution to knowledge about these areas; both in the local residents coming to understand their conditions and also in recording data to pass on to others.

The experience gained in training and field studies has proved attractive to a range of civil society organisations. In response to a request from a local civil society organization representing people in informal settlements, Abahlali baseMjondolo, training of eight facilitators in social facilitation and the use of the tools developed in the project has also taken place.

The real challenge in education and training is in working to help trainers become teachers, to develop group teaching and learning. This has required assistance from professional educators in adult and further education to work to achieve and the modules relating to the training of trainers reflect these concerns.

Training people who have been out of a learning environment for some time can be challenge; in a rural context there is an absence of reading as materials are not readily available and there is often no effective lighting nor a quiet environment. The demands of learning were possibly one factor in the dropping off of two of those selected. The tradition of learning is also one which is not necessarily conducive to teaching – passing on knowledge and experience. The trainers were found to respond readily to group work in learning, and this often became the main activity in learning. The pursuit of

learning in a quiet environment, through reading, note taking, and writing generally was a challenge.

Time management in the beginning of the fieldwork challenged the trainers. Many people in the community have a variety of roles to play and people often come to workshops quite late, but this was overcome by planning the meetings in advance. In addition the trainers managed to involve the Community Development Workers, headmen, civil society and community workers. This and securing venues with the relevant people proved lead to success.

The lack of a continued experience in post-school reading and writing has been an impediment in the trainers being able to compile full reports on their own; and as importantly to their achievement in terms of the Unit Standards in Development Practice. While reports have been made of each village where appraisal has taken place, the writing of reports and essays for assessment has been difficult. This has been an important constraint in the assessment of Unit Standards being limited to those relating most directly to the role and skills of facilitators (see annexure below) rather than the comprehensive set which could lead to the full qualification. Even though many of the skills and knowledge of the other Unit Standards were developed and covered in instruction, the anticipated time and cost of assessment was a powerful disincentive.

Group learning tended to build on an exchange of interpretations of ideas presented verbally and was probably an important factor in the trainers readily taking to the hard work of travelling from one village to another, engaging with village leadership, training facilitators, and undertaking the appraisals.

Assessment and moderation in the SETA context is laborious and exacting and has taken considerably more time and demanded considerably more funding than was initially anticipated. The costing of training itself was hard to achieve, and each step more expensive than rough estimates could establish. The trainers have been accommodated and supported during their assessment and the additional cost of moderation by registered practitioners was not anticipated.

The experience of training in the SETA context would mean that in the future there could be a much quicker assessment through continuous exercises and more additional support and remedial assistance being planned in advance. The costs of assessment could also be reduced as the exercises and support would be more efficiently planned.

Table 12. Schedule of training and assessment

Date	Item
30 Jan 2006	Gaining voice: tools and strategies to develop community voice. Workshop with civil society: report
10-13 Apr, 2006	Impendle, Ingwe Local Municipality. Pilot involving training of community members and NGO officials.
Apr 2006	Planning for extensive training to support cascade model in Mbizana LM, Eastern Cape
10 May 2006	Selection of trainers in Mbizana
19-23 June 2006	Course in Development Practice: Training of trainers
14 Sept 2006	Accreditation site visit by ETDP
9-10 Oct 2006	Further training and assessment of trainers
11-12 Oct 2006	Training of facilitators from Abahlali
31 Oct – 1 Nov 2006	Assessment of trainers
Dec 2006	Receipt of accreditation certificate from ETDP as an education and training provider

5 Findings on case studies, tools and pilot

The findings presented here are drawn from the following sets of engagements:; from the exploratory phase in which the community appraisal was conducted by the research team and the use and selection of the tools was undertaken to the assessment of the cascade strategy as a whole.

The preliminary findings from the exploratory case studies have been written up to illustrate the use of the tools, their graphical outputs, and analysis. These are separate reports and are listed below the bibliography. The general findings on the state of water services available from the exploratory case studies are also included. These findings from the exploratory case studies formed the basis for the selection of tools and the early development of the cascade strategy.

The set of tools, as utilised in the pilot study was assessed over the cascade in terms of their usefulness, ease of use and the results assessed in detailed analysis. Analysis is also made of specific tools such as aspects of health of under-five children and other tools. Further analysis is made of the data from this tool to assess the picture it creates of the health conditions associated with different levels of water service; in this case largely that of no access or access to a non-functioning water infrastructure.

Finally findings are drawn on the whole experience; the tools, their use, training, and the operation of the cascade.

General findings from the exploratory phase

As described in greater detail in the reports themselves, three exploratory case studies were undertaken in Trustfeed, KwaMpande and Impendle, peri-urban and rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal; full reports are available on these communities.[24] In these case studies the research team tested an extensive range of participatory tools in eliciting responses and information essential to an assessment of water service. These case studies also provided the opportunity to explore the possibilities of using (and reducing) the extensive local information gathered during the participatory exercises to reports presenting the graphical material, matrices and notes.

[24] Reports are available either from the author or from the Water Research Commission.

The reports were drafted according to a set of headings which brought together the outputs from various tools. The style of the reports is engaged i.e. works to directly provide the community voice adding, where possible, direct quotations expressed at the community meetings.

Table 13. Headings, case study reports

Where this report comes from Summary Statement This is our community Geography and resources Transect Walk Community representation Socio-economic conditions Trendlines	These are the stakeholders in our community These are our top community development priorities These are our priorities in water and sanitation Our successes and our struggles This is how we plan to achieve our goals We participated in the workshop and support its conclusions

The exploratory exercises and reports were at one level a considerable success; the research team working with a community and using many of the well established participatory tools generated a considerable amount of information about a community in a very short period. The whole exercise led to many important outcomes; communities were fully engaged and focused in assessing water services, the research team mastered the tools and were increasingly effective in using them, the community leaders felt the exercise had been very helpful.

The details of the first three case studies were reported on, reviewed, and assessed. These case studies demonstrated that a great range of community issues could be assembled, water service data captured, information on priorities and possible action gathered, and other important facts could be recorded. The tools for citizen voice and appraisal were made available by the research team and community leadership given a basic practical training in their use. Three reports were written up and disseminated to the communities, to NGOs involved in the community, and to local government.

Findings were made at the level of technique, approach, and community engagement. Conclusions on the broader questions of actual findings on the operations of community participation in local government and planning and on the operation water services were also derived.

An analysis of the case studies at the time of the interventions found the following types of issues in service delivery, representation, and local government. The issues occurred

unevenly (in evidence in some cases and not in others) and the original material from which these findings have been drawn can be consulted, but the types of issues are worth recording:

The appraisal is data rich but reports take time to complete. The direct engagement was short but the writing up of the report from the mass of flip charts and notes from the meetings took considerably longer. Taking photographs of the flip charts helped in saving the material in a fairly compact form. The charts and table, however, needed to be reproduced in word processing program and this was a challenge. Writing up did open further possibilities for engagement with the community to clarify some points and get feedback on the whole.

Citizen voice was elicited but a final report depended on the research team. These exercises demonstrated that the tools introduced in community exercises largely conducted and supported by the research team could elicit citizen voice, but that the final assembly of community appraisal was still dependent on the team itself.

There was no official municipal engagement in appraisals. Although the research team approached the local municipality in each instance, municipal engagement either during or after the appraisal was not achieved. The reasons for officials not being involved were difficult to probe as fairly standard responses such as "had another meeting" were made despite specific arrangements being made for transport to sites, etc.

Communities were empowered to take up water service issues. The community was empowered to the extent that the tools were made available for use in other and different contexts, an action plan was prepared, and materials stayed in the community. In a number of cases the perspectives of the research team had an effect on community leadership e.g. in identifying groups which were not serviced, or particular problems in managing access (as in the case of the service provider not providing taps leading to ad hoc and wasteful adjustments).

The appraisal provided additional impetus to community representation on key issues. There was impact. A number of initiatives taking further the engagement with the municipality or service provider were taken even if these were not conducted specifically as set out in the action plan tool.

A relationship of continued support was sought by the community. A further finding was that the community saw the intervention by the research team as just the beginning of a series of interventions which would resolve the issues afflicting them. Although this was expressly stated not to be the case on several occasions during the community appraisals themselves, there was not an entirely successful transfer of identified priorities either back to community leadership or to the NGOs involved with the community. The NGOs tended to be already over-stretched in tasks and in a number of communities and rather wanted to limit their commitments.

Difficulties between ward committees and communities: In the three pilot studies there was, for a number of reasons, alienation between community and ward committees. The communities did not feel that the ward committees were effectively representing their interests or achieving improvements. Some of the ward committees were functioning while others had not met for some time. Effectively the ward committees were not providing the linkage between people and provider to ensure adequate service delivery.

Problematic relationships between stakeholders. Municipal officials were engaged before the interventions were undertaken and many were found to be defensive. Although invited and agreeing to participate none attended the community appraisal exercises and it was difficult to find out why. There was an unfortunate lack of knowledge of plans for the communities concerned. Although the results of the appraisal were communicated there was no direct response to the issues raised.

Conflict or incapacitation of councillors In two of the three pilot studies there were poor reciprocal relations and tension between councillors and communities. In these two cases municipal officials and councillors who were invited were not present in at appraisals.[25] There were also poor relations between councillors and community structures. The situation did vary; in KwaMpande the councillor did attend and mentioned that he did not understand rights and planning framework and would have liked further training. He did not feel empowered to raise and resolve community issues at the municipality as he was not sure how relationships were handled with the service provider.

A lack of capacity in community organization In all the pilot studies there were developing working relationships between communities and NGOs leading to forms of community empowerment. Community organisations and local political groups extended across communities and wards and raised needs with authorities. Although there were high levels of social mobilisation there were also low levels of training and a tendency for educated people to leave the community. One of the problems in reciprocal communication between community structures and municipalities was that there was not a clear responsibility assigned within the community for such communications.

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[25] In one instance the research team made three visits to the home of the Councillor to invite him to attend and left messages as he was not present. Despite these attempts communication was not achieved.

Institutional complexity in delivery A complex of frameworks for the resolution of a range of water service issues was identified e.g. the responsibility for sanitation was, at times, separated from water management, health promotion not linked to water issues, etc. Although communities felt that their issues in relation to water services were known, there were unknown or extended timelines for improving service delivery. Poverty alleviating programmes were not available.

Following the assessment of the interventions of the research team and the case studies which made up the first phase of project, a basic strategy was set out to turn the work in a new direction. It was agreed to work towards the displacement of agency from the research team itself to community agents or trainers who would train facilitators and create awareness, undertake the community appraisals, and explore ways of engaging municipal government.

Longer term community scepticism These issues, identified in pilot studies, tended to the conclusion in the workshops that (with some partial exceptions) progress towards a resolution of community issues was not expected by the community. The exchange between communities and municipalities is irregular or non-existent. In all communities approaches had been made to municipal officials and councillors to inform them of the research, to invite their participation during the appraisal, and to prepare for the results of the appraisal. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, municipal officials who agreed were not available during the appraisal or after and opportunities were missed for continued engagement between community and municipality.

This, in turn, led on to the repeated request from communities for a longer-term intervention with extensive support and communications from the research team. This would go well beyond the research brief, create relations of dependency, not encourage the initiatives being undertaken by civil society, and limit possible intervention to a few case studies. The research team did, however, pass on materials and information which would be of use to the NGOs in continuing support to these communities.

The key question from the community perspective was that these exercises should lead to a resolution of the issues identified and the confirmation of community priorities in planning for development. This has remained an outstanding issue.

Despite the difficulties in communication between community and municipality in the areas in which case studies were undertaken, there were improvements resulting from community appraisal. All the material generated from the workshops was found useful as leading on to a greater understanding of what was needed for comprehensive and satisfactory water services to be provided to these poor communities. In each case the community appraisal led to some form of remedial action: to highlight only the most immediate—in Trustfeed a community tank was repaired, in KwaMpande a sanitation project discussed, and in Impendle the community took action in to highlight their dilemmas (although this was wider than the issues of water and sanitation alone).

Even though in each study there was some form of remedial action arising directly or indirectly from the intervention, the primary difficulty remained. This was the necessary alignment of local government activities in terms of need: for ward committees to effectively represent these needs and ensure a responsive municipality, for councillors to take up community issues and ensure they were resolved, and for municipal officials to construct services around the identified needs. All this, in short, would be evidence of a well functioning delivery and regulatory system.

Impact on planning for the pilot, training and deployment During and following the writing up of the case studies an assessment was made of the tools and methods from the perspective of passing them over to community members. The strategy was increasingly directed in each case study from appraisal by the research team with the assistance of community practitioners to appraisal by community practitioners with support from the research team.

Findings on use of the tools

The validation of the tools and approach in the exercise of community appraisal is crucial to their adoption by both civil society and by municipalities working to develop a system of regulation in water services. To what extent have the strategies set out above and for the training of trainers, deployment in a cascade achieved what was planned? Have the tools been appropriate, useful in going beyond community voice, and provided the data and maps necessary to the community making effective representation of their needs?

The tools are designed to capture community voice and register issues and data in as simple a way as possible. Despite this intention the tools may not have operated quite in this manner and the research into their use has evaluated their use and effectiveness. The strategy and tools are here evaluated at two levels; firstly whether the tools are well designed for the task and are effectively used and the quality of their use, and secondly how their outputs contribute to the final Scorecard.

In the sections which follow the effective use of all the tools will be assessed generally and then specific attention will be given to the use of two: that of the Health of Under-fives and the Child Water Route exercise. Both have been devised for the context of appraisal of the impact of delivery or non-delivery of water services on children's health and could lead to important indicators in the prioritisation of water projects. Both provide data on access and health promotion which are line items in the Scorecard.

Reports and records

Participatory appraisal tends by its nature to be public and verbal and many of its results, such as the feeling of greater empowerment and inclusion, are social and unrecorded. Its material outputs are generally graphic and large, befitting public settings, and difficult to compress into reports. At times the reader is overwhelmed with the visual material and seeks bearings in landmarks such as roads and rivers, and finds the text also difficult follow. The volume of visual material is large; in each appraisal there is as many as 12 large sheets of maps, lists, matrices, and diagrams. This material is often more immediately recognised and assimilated by people who know the context, such as the local councillors and officials. They also act as excellent mnemonics to community practitioners in engaging with planning officials and external observers.

There is, however, something of a challenge in reducing the expansive material and data to reports from which systematic findings can be reported. Much work has been undertaken to enable the utility of the tools and the validity of their readings to be assessed. A number of reports of the use of tools and findings have been written:

- Review of Four Villages, Mbizana. Appraisals by trainers compiled by Robyn Shirley.
- Community Appraisal: Madadana Village, Ward 20, Mbizana. Appraisal undertaken by Mbongwa Ngaleka and compiled by Robyn Shirley.
- From the Community: Mbizana Ward Reports. Appraisals by trainers compiled by Robyn Shirley.
- Report on Children Under Five Health Survey.
- Report on Children Collecting Water Route Maps.

In first two reports the maps and other visual materials which have been photographed are presented and analysed to demonstrate how tools have been used and the broad 'report' from the community. Since the material is extensive a single case study is made of Madadana in Ward 20 to show how data and findings can be drawn from maps other graphics.

In the Madadana report the timeline presents the past "There was no development at all" with the post-1994 expectation, "There was a hope to get something". The maps identify, for example, the main features of water resources such as rivers and streams, and taps are indicated with a cross through them to show non-operational infrastructure, and the eight self-constructed toilets are marked. The trend line on water identifies the fact that taps were installed and water flowed between 1999-2001 and thereafter ran dry. The line on sanitation shows that some initiative was undertaken in 1992 when there was a local outbreak of cholera and there a community project (apparently of pit latrines without ventilation) which ended in 2001. The water priorities are firstly the long distance to source, secondly a 'dirty water' source shared with

animals, and finally water being unavailable when rivers don't flow. The sanitation priorities follow this order: the unhygienic nature of the toilets, that they are unsafe, and new toilets unavailable. These are really rankings of the impact of the problem of non-access rather than indications of priorities for delivery, but capture the most direct responses on the issues.

The third report provides a comprehensive summary of the key points from each Mbizana village. The four and fifth report focus on tools measuring the impact of access to water and health in children and will be extensively discussed below.

These reports and the extensive collection of photographed graphical material constitute much of the data from which the utility and validity of the tools can be assessed.

Findings on use of tools

The cascade has required appropriate tools which are simple, effective, and which also lead on to important conclusions about health, water services, and community conditions which can be simply summed up. The tools provide materials for the use of community practitioners in the form of matrices, lists of priorities, and maps. As the research team found when acting as facilitator, these have to be simple enough to memorise and use in the context of community workshops as there is often not an opportunity to refer to notes. The project has had practical needs in mind; of materials for training, for facilitation, and for assessment together with community members. Posters have been prepared for the education and promotion of awareness within the community on rights to water services and to ways in which these rights can be realised.

Apart from the education of practitioners and facilitators knowledge is also passed to the community as a whole on the need for improved water services, of the rights to health and wellbeing for children and adults, of the possibilities of appraisal providing the facts for advocacy, and of the possibilities for civil action in ward forums leading on to the setting of projects in municipal plans.

The method of community appraisal is designed to engage local people to help bring together the facts of the existing situation and the possibilities for change through surveys and other exercises. A number of the tools serve both to encourage reflection on the conditions of poverty as well as to represent these conditions and the facts generated through social action to the planners and those in authority.

Over time the research team became aware how much time is required to undertake many of these tools and that community facilitators appeared to take longer. Communities were often not willing to sacrifice whole days at meetings to undertake the appraisal unless there were meals and refreshment. This has led to the proposal for

facilitators, youth and women's groups to be involved in a number of the surveys and mapping exercises *before* the community workshop.

The table below provides a record of the completion of tools. Many of these are designed to be undertaken before the workshop, a change introduced during the project when the customary time available for participation in community meetings has been found to be limited while active members of the community have also been found to be eager to learn new techniques and tools. The community workshops have acted, in turn, to provide oversight and control over these preliminary exercises.

Table 14. Use of the tools by trainers and facilitators

Status	Name of tool
All completed	Plan flow chart Attendance Register Community Mapping Timeline Trend line Water access map Youth task Team Priority Ranking Venn Diagrams Ward Forum Questionnaire/checklist
Most undertaken and completed	Scorecard Under 5 Health Survey Under 5 Health Survey analysis sheet Child water route map Child water route map: analysis sheet School water and sanitation survey
Not undertaken	Institutional communication Problem tree Community Survey

The table indicates that most of the tools were used as designed across the communities. Those which were not taken up were the community survey of poverty which demands a well-organised centre and careful collection of data on a similar basis to a 'mini-census'. This would provide reliable local information on access to services but demands a good level of supervision, data capturing and analysis. The other tools which were not reported on are those of problem tree and institutional communication. The former takes considerable time and reflection and the latter which builds a table of communications

could have been considered undertaken during an earlier tool; the Venn Diagram. In this case there appeared to be duplication.

All the community tools listed in the table were conducted by the trainers and facilitators without direct external support. These included use of the materials for training the facilitators, the undertaking community and water mapping and surveys, community priorities and timelines to development and advocacy and preparing input into planning processes.

Some of these were completed more comprehensively than others; mapping was undertaken enthusiastically, the survey work was completed, and the timelines and trend lines undertaken at community workshops. Reports have been written on the use of the Children Water Route Map and the Health of Under-Fives and the latter will be expanded on below.

There were difficulties with some particular tools such as the Nominal Ranking of Priorities; which, when properly used, provides ranking of priorities and also gives a weighting of each item. It does, however, require careful implementation and some arithmetical skills in totalling the various items. On reflection matrix scoring and ranking which involves meticulous comparison of issues, one against the other, until a ranking is complete would have been useful in the field (even if it would have been much more time consuming).

Each of the tools are designed to provide information on an indicator identified in policy as part of the water sector's target. Some of the tools have involved surveys which demanded the undertaking of a high level of competence and cooperation on a voluntary basis; in measuring the achievement of health promotion in a school. The government's program of action states that water and sanitation will be provided at all schools – this is assessed around the issue of sanitation and hand-washing. The tool proposes a 'school task team' of community members and learners to undertake the exercises which are then integrated into Scorecard line items, Sanitation: in public facilities, Hygiene: facilities at school, and Hygiene promotion. A questionnaire of the following headings is undertaken:

Table 15. Indicators relevant to school toilets

Water available Privacy (door) Separate toilet for girls and boys Cover on pedestal in place No excreta or urine around pedestal / floor/ walls	Soap in or near latrine for hand washing All learners using facility No openings for flies to enter Ventilation with flue cover No rubbish in latrine.

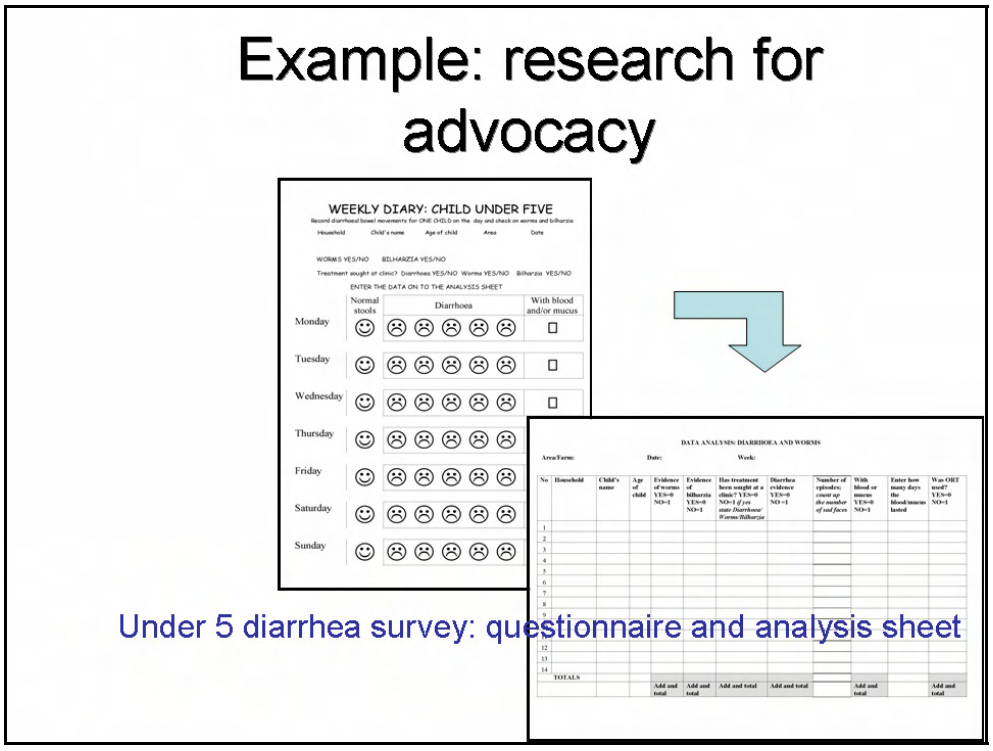
To complete the tool the community practitioner worked to assemble a group which would help provide the data. The survey was largely undertaken by the community practitioner assisted by active community members (89%) rather than as a specifically school group. The remaining 11% of the school water surveys were undertaken by a dedicated school team.

Focus: the Health of Under-fives tool

The tool on school conditions has attracted most interest, as it measures whether water services are achieving the outcome of health, will now be examined to give some idea of the operation of the tools in the field.

An example of the engagement of community groups in surveys is provided, for example, in the questionnaire and analysis sheet on the Health of Under-Fives. The combined questionnaire and analysis sheet has been designed to combine a level of monitoring to that of analysis, by moving from the recording of data to the presentation of key facts. Once the analysis has been undertaken, a picture of children's health is brought together which is vital in assessing water and health services. As shown in Figure 3 the analysis of the data is transposed from the questionnaire to the analysis sheet which provides tables of data on key indicators of water related health issues. This data is then available to advocate health service intervention and improved water services.

Figure 3. Research for advocacy



The Health of Under-Fives tool provides a Weekly Diary to record health conditions is an innovative tool which provides community members, particularly mothers or guardians with the opportunity to take part in the community appraisal process. It is conceived of as a community tool ancillary to the broader indicators of child health such as the mortality rate of under-five children indicator (U5MR) which reflects the achievement of general development standards and children's rights. The U5MR is an indication of how very young children are progressing in terms of life, survival and development. It further reflects the socio-economic status of a population, firstly in terms of access to basic household services as well as secondly being a sensitive indicator of the effectiveness of health-care. It is a baseline indication of how a country is progressing in implementing rights to health-care, water, nutrition and social security. It is also a key indicator in terms of the Millennium Development Goal 4 to reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

The focus on the use of the tool is on the health of under-five children is in relation to the quality of water and domestic hygiene. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child specifically obliges all states to take appropriate measures to reduce the child death rate; in South Africa and other African countries, death caused by water related disease is still at a high level. The incidence of water related disease among children is a powerful indicator of inequalities in access to water services, health-care and of general socio-economic conditions.

The core of the questionnaire is a diary made up a seven day row of unhappy faces which represent stool movements. The infant's condition is recorded is continued over a period of seven days and the data then captured on an analysis sheet.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the tool lies in the analysis sheet which is designed to provide for community members themselves to enter the data and tabulate information based on the findings in their own villages. The data is entered systematically from the questionnaires under the appropriate headings.

The tool itself and the analysis sheet are designed to be used at a local level, allowing communities to assess their own situation through the gathering of information and statistics.

The tool is particularly useful in tackling health issues facing communities where there are higher numbers of children under-five suffering diarrhoea, worms or bilharzia. It provides a means for communities themselves gathering information and also undertaking some preliminary data analysis and presents some means of assessing the impact of the implementation of water services particularly in poor rural or shackland populations.

The tool was undertaken in 93% of the sites and was generally undertaken by the facilitators who assist the trained community practitioners. Although there is something

of a challenge in transferring data from the questionnaires to the data analysis sheets to summarise, at a considerable number of the communities (81%) this was undertaken. The adding of numbers in columns to get a proportion of parents seeking treatment, severe diarrhoea, etc., was not so well undertaken and was achieved at only 15% of the sites.

Findings on the under-five health tool

The most difficult part of the tool appears the need to maintain observation over time. In dispersed communities this meant a considerable distance to be covered to distribute the questionnaire, provide guidance about recording as used, and get it returned. Some of the questionnaires were not completed over the full seven days and the quality of recording varied.

In some villages it is positively recorded that the village facilitators went door to door, explained and distributed the tool to mothers and requested them to record the seven day period. In other villages the questionnaire was distributed to mothers at the workshops. In other cases the village facilitators themselves visited and completed the questionnaire on the basis of information received. These adaptations of the method can help explain the differences in the number of days being completed. In most questionnaires the complete seven days were completed and in the remainder a few or only one day.

Altogether there was a total coverage of 371 children aged under-five with the questionnaire. The intension was to cover the entire under-five population rather than construct a sample. Although there was not full coverage in each village, a fairly high proportion of the under-fives were involved.

Analysis of the questionnaires was conducted by the trainers and facilitators themselves.[26] The findings indicate high levels of water related diseases in all Mbizana wards involved. This could be evidence of an "exaggeration effect" in capturing the incidence of diarrhoea, worms and bilharzia: of trainers and community respondents

[26] Although a review of the analysis sheets found some arithmetic errors, these were not substantial and all trainers succeeded in aggregating the data from questionnaires into the analysis sheet. This implies that there are sufficient skills in many communities to undertake a "ready reckoner" of the impact of water services on child health. The analysis would indicate whether there is a severe, serious, or low impact from deficiencies in water services.

wanting to expand the numbers of children suffering from water related diseases to stress the urgency of intervention. These results were, however, checked against local observation. From fieldwork it was found that the teachers of the entry classes of primary schools did report high levels of diarrhoea. At one school most of the children were absent and reported to be ill with diarrhoea. The data does indicate important variances in incidence of certain diseases as could be expected; bilharzia (for example) is not reported at all in some villages while high in others.

These variances appear to indicate that while there could be some unevenness in reporting of the incidence of disease, anticipated variances in incidence are found.

In the Mbizana field work the questionnaires were completed in each of the villages assessed. An example is given below of the evidence gathered:

Table 16. Analysis of Mlambondala Village, Ward 2

Mlambondaba Village, Ward 2

Total: 17

All cases reported evidence of worms.
A high number of cases sought treatment at clinic for diarrhoea and worms
The majority reported cases of diarrhoea with blood/mucus.
ORT was used my most carers in the treatment of diarrhoea.
A full week was not completed with most questionnaires range from 3-5 days.
Number of questionnaires does not coincide with number on data analysis sheet.

In each of the villages involved a similar overview has been made of conditions and any difficulties with the use of the questionnaire recorded. The two questions raised in this case are identified as a full week not been recorded and not all questionnaires being entered into the analysis sheet.

In the table below the data is presented at the level of one of the wards involved in the cascade.

Table 17. Analysis of data, Ward 2, Mbizana

	No (n)	Percent
Reported incidence of worms	132	67%
Reported incidence of bilharzia	21	11%
Reported incidence of diarrhoea	171	87%
Reported incidence of blood/mucus in stools	98	50%
Mothers' knowledge of ORT	166	84%
Total number of questionnaires = 197		

A reasonable number of questionnaires were completed in the 10 villages, approximately 20 in each from the population of under-fives. The results show a very high incidence of diarrhoea recorded (87%) and of worm infestation (67%) with a lower reported incidence of bilharzia (11%). It appears there is generally a high level of knowledge of Oral Rehydration Therapy.

Statistically there are some difficulties in assembling data from uneven reporting periods (not all questionnaires covered the seven days as set out) and there could be problems of 'over-reporting' of incidence of diseases, but the tool does have the advantage of helping local communities to understand their health problems. During the citizen voice exercises there were frequent requests for health promotion and further information and the focus on children is helps engage assessment with an interest in improvement.

Trainers indicate that the relatively high coverage of under-fives in the survey showed a keen interest in the tool as people were interested in knowing more about health issues facing their children and learning what could be done to secure their health. Certain issues can, however, be identified after an assessment of how the tool was used. The questionnaire was designed to be used over seven days; however some have only been filled in for a number of days. This leads one to question whether the tool was taken home for a week or whether a single call to a household was made and the questionnaire completed through recall.

The data analysis is therefore a little uneven as it reflects incidence of diarrhoea over differing periods. The completed questionnaires do, however, reveal a range of strong cases of diarrhoea and no evidence of diarrhoea. Generally the data was gathered for one child under-five per household, although there could be more children under-five in each household.

The questionnaires indicate a high level of access to clinics for treatment sought for diarrhoea or bilharzia or worms. Although the questionnaire was designed to reflect whether a visit to a clinic during the seven day period, the data may reflect visits during a previous period. The question should be rephrased for future use. Although there

appears a high level of knowledge of ORT, the questionnaires do not ask whether any Oral Rehydration Solutions were used.

Information on the clinic, although not asked was added in some cases revealing a lack of medication available for diarrhoea. For example, in Ethridge Village in Ward 20, some respondents added to the survey by stating that they had taken their child to the clinic, but there was no medication at the clinic so they had to take the child to the hospital. There were frequent additional comments on the quality of service at clinics.

Findings: use of the health of under five tool

The research interest of this project is whether the tools can be readily used by trained community practitioners and produce relevant and valid results. Although this is the research focus rather than the precise results of the assessments themselves, the interest of public officials is often on these results. The results of community surveys are, however, important in validating the tools. The analysis of the data on child health, for instance, can serve to indicate not only the conditions existing in the community, but a critical assessment can lead on to the validation of its use, its strengths and limits. In this regard comparison with other tools used in communities and further assessment is needed.

The research team assembled checked and reported on the use of the tool in each village. Although it is possible to aggregate the data from the various questionnaires, the finding on the under-five tool is that the community practitioners find difficult to undertake the systematic analysis in the field. Despite this a surprisingly high number of questionnaires were completed and in all villages the data was transposed on to the analysis sheet. It was found that there were problems in reaching all under-fives in a community but that a high proportion appeared to have been reached. While it is difficult for households to consistently to enter the information over 7 days generally more than 3 days are captured. Errors in transposing data and addition were found but these did not change the broad conclusion on whether there was a high or low level of incidence of water related disease.

During the engagement with the OR Tambo District Municipality there was strong interest in the findings as a tool to help in the coordination and prioritisation of health interventions.

Information collected in a survey of under-fives has a substantial advantage over the data collected at clinics if it is well conducted. This is largely due to the fact that data collected at clinics is of visits rather than general incidence and may reflect variations in access to clinics. The data is also often not available over a longer period of time and that it specifically focuses on recording complaints and may not reflect severity of the health

issue in question. The clinic data also does not reflect other possibly associated diseases such as worm infestations or bilharzia.

The surveys were undertaken by the communities themselves, which is an added advantage in bringing about both awareness and advocacy. There is a considerable accomplishment in the fact that some of the poorest communities in the country without external direction or supervision completed 371 questionnaires at a reasonable quality on the conditions of under-fives.

The unevenness in data collection and recording (although far from being unknown in large-scale surveys) points to the need for greater attention to be given to supervision by trainers and facilitators and quality control. This needs to be exercised at an early stage so that remedial measures can be introduced and further errors avoided. Although there are always problems of sufficient time, a check on the questionnaires after a few days recording would help identify problems and correct them.

Apart from initiating mobilization within the community the tools have been useful in obtaining key trends in relation to an important range of child health issues facing these communities. The focus of issues of water and sanitation were not only limited to access, but involved the assessment of rights to water and sanitation as well as health-care.

The tool was able to achieve the mobilization of people to record health conditions of under-fives, whilst not directly being under supervision by an external agency. An important spin-off of this intervention has been a keen interest in the communities in learning more about how to defend the health of their children and to learn more about making water safe for consumption.

The combined tools are built around the strategy of empowering local people to be able to understand their own conditions and advocate for better services as needed. Health surveys, for instance, are often conducted at a level not accessible to communities and through such instruments crucial health information is available to the people and to authorities.

The tools lead on to forms of advocacy in a broader sense; in preparing communities to go beyond voicing their concerns to those in authority to reviewing community structures, documenting their conditions, assessing water services, and preparing to represent their priorities to planning and regulatory authorities.

The extensive use of the tools in fieldwork has demonstrated that they are accessible to community practitioners, are fairly readily used, and provide assessments and data as planned. While further verification of the data which results from their use is required, there is evidence that communities are prepared to learn techniques to assess their situation and this can lead to a number of improvements. For instance, knowledge of problems of water quality and hygiene and their measurement does appear to lead to a greater interest in health promotion and remedial action.

Scorecard findings

There appears to be growing popularity in the use of scorecards and record cards as instruments to assess the quality of water services and certainly a growing literature of analysis (Deichmann and Lall, 2007). Such critical analysis has been limited to the precise statistical validity of attitudes to measure 'actual service levels' and potential variances rather than the utility of such exercises. In urban areas the main instrument through which the scorecards are constructed is the social survey usually conducted through a civic organisation; in other communities a participatory methodology through which the issues and people's attitudes are captured.

The question raised in these studies is the extent to which the scorecard exercise acts as a spur to both civil society to be able to act autonomously but to engage and to public officials respond. There are other methodological issues at stake; surveys are expensive and usually cannot be disaggregated down to local levels or the appropriate political level. In South Africa, for instance, the SASAS survey conducted annually by the HSRC asks appropriate questions of service delivery, but cannot, unfortunately be broken down to municipal level or below. There is a problem of reference point and of scale; attitudes to services should be measurable at the level felt appropriate by the people and the service provider.

Participatory methods such as those employed in the case studies cited in the WaterAid (2006) study leading to record cards are relevant to community and locality – this may or may not be at the level appropriate to a service provider (if indeed a service provider is available). The issue here is to aggregate – to add up – the responses at lower levels to get a broader picture while not losing the detail of the local appraisals.

The method adopted in this project has been innovative in a particular sense—to build on two structures. Firstly the relatively autonomous activity of communities and civil organisations and secondly to make the appraisals relate as closely as possible to public officials. Although the motor for community appraisal has been the trained community practitioner or civil society member, and the first steps in appraisal have been conducted at the community level, the needs and priorities have been scaled up to the level of ward and councillor. The appraisals have concluded, as intended, in Ward Forums where the results have been presented and strategies devised. This level was selected to synchronise the two conditions: voice and response, to use official structures to the fullest to secure an improved outcome.

Standards and assessment

The results of the scorecards are presented here; 24 were undertaken – and not all were completed at each site (2 were not successfully completed). The 'line items' of the

scorecard table are those indicators and targets taken from the SFWS and Regulation Strategy; they constitute the key elements and standards which broadly would apply to any water service. Exact levels of service do, however, vary considerably in different areas; the measures which are needed in an urban context may not be relevant in the rural.

The scorecard has been prepared to represent the standards spelt out in the various policy statements and, as such, represent a minimum standard and one which is most pertinent to rural and shack areas. The precise detail of service and local relevance can, however, to be filled out by the people in other communities as relevant standard which is being assessed to contribute to the line item. To some extent the tool could be further developed to combine judgement with established scaling and suggest a figure to be entered on the line item, but there will always, and legitimately, be the social exercise of assessment.

Table 18. Scorecard indicators and variables

Scorecard number	Indicator	Variable mentioned
SC1	Communication with municipality	Only through councilor
		With councilor and officials
		No effective communication
SC2	Participation in planning	No participation in IDP
		Consultation through WC
		Participation in imbizo on IDP
SC3	Free Basic Water (FBW)	No charge
		Some contributions
SC4	Water: access for all, 25 ℓ per person per day	No piped water, no target date
		No piped water, target date set
		Piped: not working
		Piped: Less than 25 ℓ pppd
		Piped: Equal or greater than 25 ℓ pppd
SC5	Water: sufficient flow	Low pressure, long queues
		Adequate pressure
SC6	Water: water quality	Unsure of quality
		Poor quality
		Satisfactory quality
SC7	Sanitation facilities implemented	No VIPs: no target date for all
		Some VIPs: no target date for all
		All have VIPs or better
SC8	Sanitation: in public facilities	Clinics, schools, courts have no accessible toilets
		Clinics, schools, courts have inadequate toilets
		Clinics, schools, courts have sufficient toilets
SC9	Hygiene: facilities at school	Water adequate and hand washing basins
		Water inadequate and no hand washing basins
		No water
SC10	Hygiene promotion	Received hygiene education in community
		No hygiene education

In the adjoining table the detail of the standards from key policy statements are set out as well as some local components and termed 'variables'. As explained previously the tools provide the data by which assessments (in ranking from 0 to 10) are made against each line item. The exact number is not 'read off' from the data itself but is (or should be) a combination of the data and judgments made by the community. Issues such as 'quality of water', for instance, can largely be judged only subjectively by people, although the line item critically includes knowledge of whether the water service provider tests quality and gives out results.

The scorecard carried the community's evaluation of 10 critical issues as seen below in a combination of attitude and objective measurement. The research was applied in communities in deep rural areas of the Mbizana local municipality and in shack areas in the eThekwini Metro and conducted by facilitators nominated by Abahlali baseMjondolo.

The community results were added up according to wards and are presented at this level. The results, the 'raw scores' are the totals out of the potential of 100 in each community. These scores show marked differences between areas (urban and rural) and between the different line items.

Table 19. Total scores of Scorecards

Ward	No communities	Area	Raw scores
Ward 23	1	eThekwini shack	7/100
Ward 25	1	eThekwini shack	46/100
Ward 69	1	eThekwini shack	46/100
Ward 2	10	Mbizana rural	25/1000
Ward 20	5	Mbizana rural	60/500
Ward 19	9	Mbizana rural	26/900

Despite the scorecards being conducted in poor and insecure shack areas in eThekwini, generally much higher ranks are awarded and reflected in the total scores above. While Ward 23 has a ranking similar to the undeveloped rural communities, Wards 25 and 69 from the Abahlali area have much higher scores for all their key indicators and provide a total score each of 46/100. The range within the ranking suggested that considered judgements are being made from the data gathered through the tools and the results of community meetings.

In the three wards of the Mbizana local municipality there are, however, uniformly very low ranks indicating considerable dissatisfaction at each assessed level of water service. This is explained by the fact that in each of the communities there was no piped water; the infrastructure was either not functioning or infrastructure was not in place.

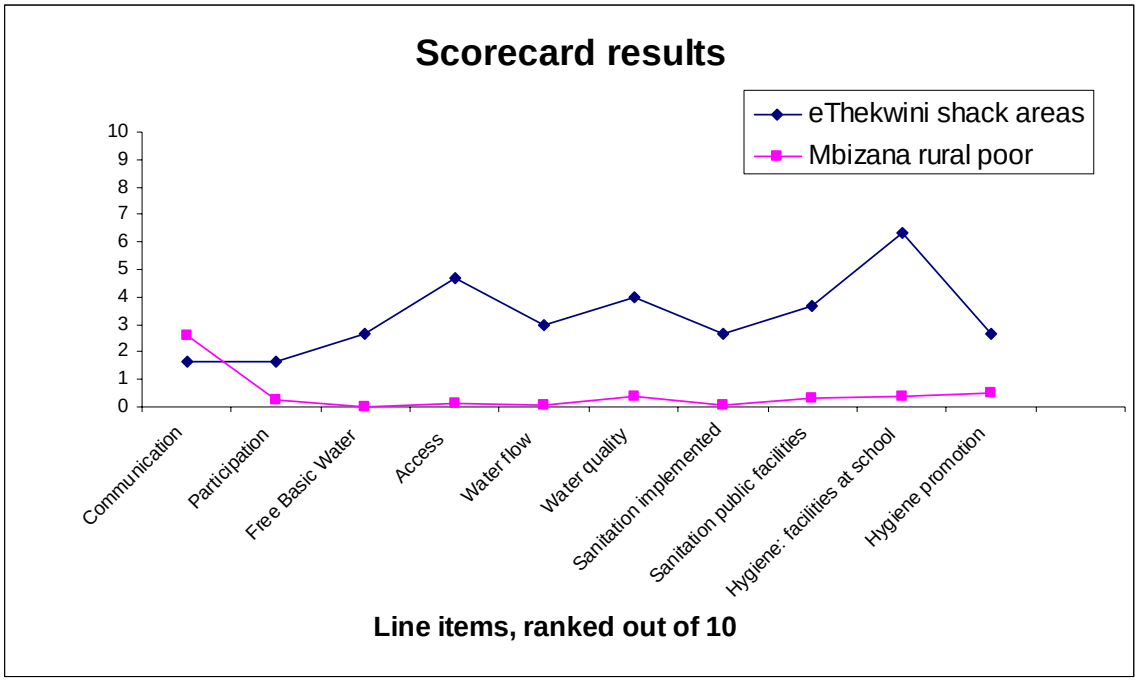
Table 20. Mbizana villages: water access

Variable	No. villages	% of total
No piped water, no target date	16	62%
No piped water, target date set	0	0%
Piped: Not operational	5	19%
Piped: Operational	5	19%

In Table 20 some of the background reasons for the low scores are presented. Among those villages reporting no access to piped water (62% of the total) the people reported that there was also no target date set for piped water to be implemented (where no infrastructure exists). Only half of those reporting piped infrastructure had an operational system. Among those reporting that infrastructure existed but was not operational the people reported that they had no information on when maintenance and repairs would be undertaken.

In figure 4 the scorecard results are aggregated to urban and rural level; for reasons of space and analysis the individual scorecards are not presented here. More usefully instead the data is presented line item by urban and rural area. These rankings are supplemented with some of the explanations captured on the scorecard and from general observation.

Figure 4. Scorecard results, urban and rural



The line items are discussed reading from left to right: both areas report low levels of communication with the municipality and in public participation – rural communities giving somewhat higher ranking to communication and lower to participation. All 27 communities remark in their scorecards that they considered there has been no participation in the IDP process. In relation to free basic water, access and water flow, and water quality the urban rankings are higher while the rural areas award a zero. In 21 areas it is reported there is no free basic water as no piped water is available and no target date set for the access of water for all at 25 litres per person per day. The urban/rural differences are greater in relation to access and quality, although in relation to water flow urban communities record low pressure and queues.

There are similar differences in relation to sanitation and hygiene with the rankings by area moving in different directions. In the 24 rural communities a zero is awarded for sanitation with only a slight increase in relation public sanitation in schools, clinics and courts. Hygiene facilities at schools are reported insufficient since the water provided has been indicated as inadequate and there are no hand washing basins being provided in majority of the communities. By contrast the highest ranking is given to facilities at school in the urban areas.

In relation to the final item health and hygiene promotion both areas record low ranking, and only two communities report have received hygiene education while the other 24 have not. Possibly arising from the appraisals, a number of communities registered a request for health and hygiene promotion.

These scorecards were assembled and presented to ward councillors at the two Ward Forums. Since it was difficult for the community practitioners to undertake these initiatives on their own these forums were achieved through the intervention of the research team rather than through independent community initiative. A further step was taken from the local to the district municipality, again on the initiative of the research team the Mbizana local municipality participated in a workshop which communicated the general conclusions from these scorecards to the district municipality.

Some preliminary findings on cascading

A strategy of cascading training and knowledge through communities is an attractive idea but difficulties arise particularly in relation to training: the extension of training through an open-ended cascade is difficult to operate. By definition a cascade works to pass on knowledge without limit from a trained to an untrained person from one sector to another and from one geographical area to another. Training in a cascade takes place at different levels of professionalism or formality; beginning with the instruction of the trainers by well-qualified educators and moving stepwise from the partially accredited

trainers[27] to other trainers or facilitators and, in turn, to others again. There are financial implications as training should involve support to those receiving instruction.

An open-ended cascade in the South African context will certainly raise an ever-widening question of funding; of support for the first phase of trainers and for a constantly widening number of trainers and facilitators. There are also the considerations of quality of instruction of other trainers or facilitators, of on-going assessment, and of how accreditation can be passed on for the cascade to be regarded a success. At the level of social networks and movements these are not as significant, but in the context of public participation in official structures, these can become critical.

In a sense the cascade described was a 'controlled cascade' in which the impetus for an open-ended expansion of the method was met by an alternative proposal by the local political authorities to accommodate it within the ward framework. The limits to the possibilities of the cascade have been set not only by organisational and educational constraints but also decisively by the costs which could accrue in the provision of travel and subsistence to facilitators if expansion was taken forward in an open-ended manner. In the South African context salary and subsistence costs could be met by drawing on the resources of the Expanded Public Works Programme and other employment programmes. In addition public funding for training in community appraisal could also become available if the resources of the relevant SETAs and Department of Labour could be accessed.

The project has led to the continuous engagement with and assessment of the trainers. Debriefing of trainers has been undertaken on three occasions; through the assessment of outputs which have been copied and stored, and in part through photographing and recording of materials. In addition there has been continuous assessment of individuals in the progress of the cascade, in the use of tools, and towards educational goals.

Central to the community appraisal have been village workshops at which the trainers and village facilitators present reports, use tools to conduct appraisal, and receive the assessment of community members. A well trained and experienced trainer or village facilitator should be able to generate information and conduct elementary analysis of the data on access to water sources, the health of under-fives and distances walked by

[27] The accreditation of trainers is a key impediment to training taking place within the SETA framework as training should be only be provided by accredited trainers within this framework. A cascade has, however, to engage each person who has had some training with an initiative or the responsibility for training others.

children collecting water for the community to keep. The workshop should culminate in the review of all the information available and in the development of an action plan (including what communities can do themselves). How far this strategy works depends on the quality of training, the commitment of trainers and facilitators, their successful deployment through wards, and finally the response of Councillors and municipal officials.

These activities and the final reports which were widely distributed are described by councilors and officials as accelerating public participation in planning, improving accountability in local government, and laying the basis for regulation of water services. The field studies were designed to culminate in the Ward Forums at which the ward councillors met with representatives of the community, trainers and facilitators to assess the reports and plan a way forward. Two Ward Forums were convened, a development which led on to the identification of the general priorities of the Ward and further challenges at the councillor and local municipal level.

6 Municipal responsiveness: closing the circle

If community voice can be achieved, tools properly used, and scorecards generated; what prospects are there for municipal responsiveness and redress? Through the project, as advanced by the ward cascades in the Mbizana Local Municipality, a strategy has been put forward of the engagement with councillors, ward committees, and municipal officials. Municipal government is specifically bound by the Water Services Act and Municipal Structures Act to consult and plan on the basis of people's inputs. The various spheres of government are bound by the Constitution and statutes to provide sufficient water and adequate sanitation, and by the Batho Pele principles to consult and provide redress.

Such is the legal framework for delivery, but municipalities have very uneven capacity and commitment to providing these services. Certainly the mechanisms for consultation and incorporation of people's views into planning are not yet well developed and there are very low levels of participation in planning forums (Hemson, 2006).

These issues have been extensively explored towards the conclusion of the project; but certainly the underdevelopment of local regulation of water services which was found is a function of the relatively low levels of democratic participation in municipal government. The question of regulation returns, again and again, to the prior issue of democratic structures and participation (Hemson, 2006; Benit-Gbaffou, 2006; 2007) to secure the adequate accountability implied in all forms of regulation.

An important conclusion in a review of citizen voice is that its advocates tend not to be sufficiently aware of the difficulties in ensuring accountability from government. Indeed Goetz and Jenkins (2004) argue that community voice is "being over-sold", particularly as a means of securing accountability to the poor, as formal institutions are profoundly biased against socially excluded groups, denying them access and meaningful participation. Their view is that more is needed. Although public officials may be informed about the issues, it is argued, there are few obligations to respond with answers, accounts or information. The lack of accountability tends to frustrate the people's ability to secure change. From the perspective of these authors, voice regulation needs to be strengthened to have greater impact.

Despite this judgment, citizen's accountability initiatives are credited with setting up scrutiny processes independently of official regulation and have increased the capacity of public oversight institutions.

To pursue an analogy introduced earlier; the cycle or circle of sustainability which starts with citizen voice should lead to municipal responsiveness and end with improved delivery. The project has started with the encouragement of community voice and developed tools to capture data and to represent community priorities. In a sense this

has been the easier part. The key component in achieving accountability and an improvement in services is that of the service provider and water service authority; in short, in the South African context, the municipality. If the main gap in water regulation is the lack of clear, consistent and well prepared community voice, the key issue in achieving successful outcomes has to be the responsiveness and quality of municipal management. The achievement of the goals and targets set out in the Strategic Framework for Water Services and those in the evolving system of regulation depends very largely on the municipal factor.

Despite clarity in policy and law, there are considerable challenges in the efficiency and effectiveness especially in rural and small town municipalities. Criticism has also been made of poor leadership and corruption in as a major threat to service delivery in some of the key and strategic municipalities (Makwetla, 2004). These weaknesses are widely acknowledged but not always given priority in their resolution. The operation of democratic practices such as councillors reporting back on decisions reached in council, and the proper functioning of ward committees, is also uneven.

The community appraisals have certainly focused attention on the gaps in water services and concentrated attention on the need for improved delivery. These expectations were undoubtedly already present, but the education on water rights, the exercises and the tools on representing community priorities certainly will have accelerated expectations. The question is whether these legitimate expectations would lead to frustration as the poorest municipalities are generally found to have the lowest level of delivery (Makgetla, 2007). The workshop with the O.R. Tambo District Municipality on 11 January 2007 confirmed what is generally believed by practitioners to be the case; that the target of water for all by 2008 would not be achieve in the district.

The research team responded to some of these difficulties and attempted a strategy which would make the municipality integral to the community appraisals without impinging on the necessary autonomy of community activities. The original strategy was to have municipal officials and councillors present at the community workshops to hear the debate, assess the tools, and to provide an explanation of municipal procedures and plans.

The WaterAid study mentions that local government officials and service providers were invited to participate to "avoid potential confrontation". By way of contrast they were also invited in this project but for a number of reasons did not participate at the early stage of community appraisal. This project has worked over time to continue engagement with municipal service structures to help ensure (but not to guarantee) that the issues raised in appraisal would be resolved over time. Unfortunately in the pilot studies and in the cascade in Mbizana which has followed, no municipal officials have been present, although there has been some participation by councillors. In short, the low level of municipal participation at the community level is clearly inadequate to resolving the questions raised about water services or lack of delivery. The problem in

Mbizana was compounded by poor communications and reciprocal relations between the local municipality, which is well aware of water service issues, and the district municipality, which appears struggling to maintain existing services and unable to extend new services. Communications between the two levels of municipal government are poor.

The research team was very aware that a lack of responsiveness from the municipality would complicate and frustrate the extensive exercises in community voice, issues and priorities. Municipal indifference to community voice and representations could lead to the fraught polarisation between municipality and community anticipated and feared by those who felt that a rights-based approach was not appropriate.

How could the problem of a lack of response be overcome? In preparing the training and deployment of community trainers in a cascade strategy, the research team approached the Mbizana Local Municipality on a number of occasions. As has been described above, the Speaker of the Municipality was enthusiastic about the possibilities of the cascade, particularly as this would involve a wider range of villages in the appraisal and assist the Council in a project in more community involvement in planning.

This endorsement did, however, not resolve the question of how to bring the village by village cascade to a head and establish a fruitful dialogue between communities, ward committees, councillors and officials. The matter was resolved through the idea of Ward Forums; to ensure there would be participation from all villages in a Ward, from the facilitators and trainers, and that the councillor should be present to hear reports, to accept the Community Scorecard and to work together with the communities to realise their needs. In this way the tools help in the preparation of data, maps, and tables to assist in the representation of people's needs in the Integrated Development Plan.

The objective of the project has been to plan and pilot forms of community participation and expression of community voice leading on to engagement with municipalities and to the solution of problems identified in water and sanitation services. In undertaking the first part of this process, encouraging and recording community voice, a number of tools have been employed to support this process and to provide the measurement of progress towards the goals spelt out in the Strategic Framework for Water Services. Village by village the cascading of community appraisal was undertaken in the Mbizana Local Municipality in three wards, but, as is often mentioned in discussion with communities, the key question which then arises is the next step: the meeting of needs.

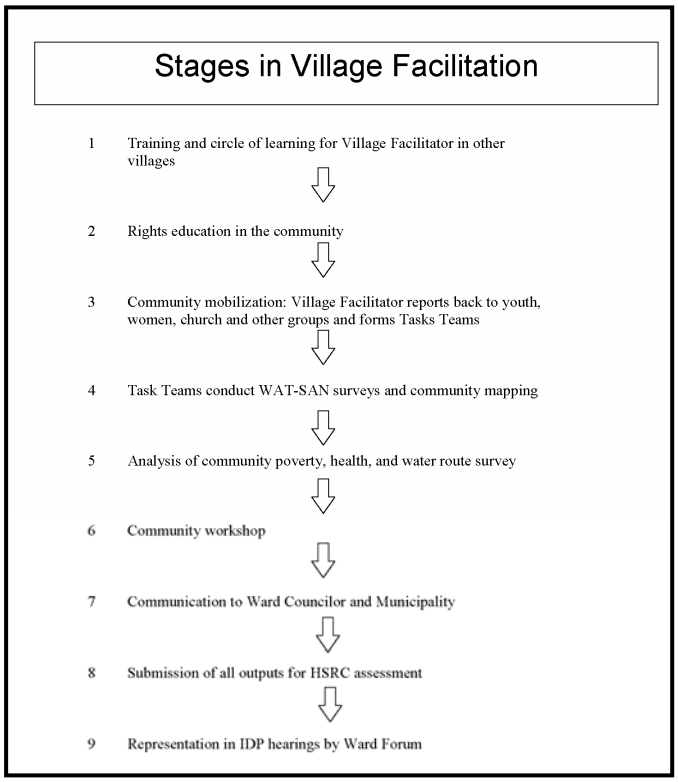
Despite the planning process being designed for democratic and open participation, the representation of need in the planning process (through direct participation as opposed to surveys and other tools) is not well established. The IDP process is characterised by planning at the centre being followed by 'road-shows' at which these plans are presented rather than through the evolution of planning through representation 'from

below'. The published objectives and scheduled projects in IDPs and WSDPs tend not to be available to communities, ward committees or even councillors (at times). In addition the commitments to delivery in IDPs are often broad and schematic often without reference to projects and areas of intervention. There is often the use of different scales and it is difficult to see the representation of community needs clearly reflected in plans for delivery.

There is some confusion over the relationship between IDPs and the WSDPs; in most communities these are not perceived as distinctly separate processes. The IDPs are required to provide a chapter on water and in practice most of the significant details of planning for water and sanitation delivery appear in the IDP. As mentioned above each municipal level has its own spheres of competence and even councillors were often unaware of who or which institution should take responsibility.

The tools work towards closing this gap by providing detail of community priorities and engaging with authorities. What is to happen to this information, what communication can be expected from municipalities or national departments, and what is the culmination of the forms of social mobilisation which have taken place? In short are the hopes and aspirations for better water services for the poor to be realised? In the figure below, the nine steps from the primary step of training village facilitators are listed.

Figure 5. Stages in community facilitation



The last step is that of a Ward Forum at which the information gathered in the communities can be tabled and discussed with the Ward Councillor and officials involved in planning and operations of water services.

The Ward Forum should be able to meet three objectives:

Firstly to bring together the facilitators from the villages making up the ward with the representatives of the people;
Secondly to consolidate the village reports and present a picture of conditions as a whole; and
Thirdly to present the priorities identified in community appraisal and to explore the ways in which these can be realised.

A limited strategy has been followed in the project that of concluding appraisals in Ward Forums. These could be effective in focusing on water services, useful as creating the setting at which reports can be tabled and discussed, and appropriate in scale in not involving extensive transport and organisation. They are, however, vulnerable to a lack of support from the municipality (or more particularly the Water Service Provider) and there can be scepticism about their potential for achieving the desired change. Within the current institutional arrangement in which there are Ward Councillors, Ward Committees, and municipal planning based at the ward level, they appear well placed to highlight gaps and problems in delivery and to activate Councillors and municipal officials to respond.

As proposed, Ward Forums were held in two of the wards in Mbizana. These were attended by councillors and local traditional leaders, and at these meetings the evidence of the village appraisals was presented. The main question was, however, how there could be redress; the community assessments confirmed the high level of backlog. In Mbizana Local Municipality, from the 2001 census figures, 78% of the population do not have access to basic water and 93% have no formal sanitation services; one of the highest levels of backlog in the country.

There were a number of difficulties here in citizens achieving basic access and improved services. This is largely a problem of municipal response and planning, at the ward level, local municipality and district municipality. A succession of breaks in the chain of responsibility were identified: councillors were unsure of their power to effect change, local municipal officials explained that water services (and some other services keenly affecting communities) were not their responsibility, but that of the Water Service Authority and Provider (the District Municipality). The issues of ending the backlog or in improving water services where they exist could be tackled without engagement with the O.R. Tambo District Municipality.

The key point is how the all the links could be established between community, ward, Local Municipality through to the District Municipality. From the beginning there had

been contact with officials at the Water Service Authority and the project had been outlined; during the implementation of community appraisal the focus had been on relationships with the Local Municipality. The lines of communication between Mbizana and Mthatha are fairly extended and are difficult to keep up to date: there were important changes of personnel during the project's life. Towards the conclusion of the project the engagement at the Local Municipality level meant that the village appraisals were understood and supported, but that this raised even more acutely the need to have answers to questions raised from the community.

Since the Local Municipality does not have competence for water delivery it could take up the questions and community materials and use these in advocating improved services; an unusual role. Still there was growing frustration from communities that the appraisal would not take the communities forward: as was stated by a participant at a Ward Forum: "Please we need water now, no more papers and research!"

Answering the question of delivery

Since there appeared no easy route to secure an answer to the concrete questions from local to district municipalities, the project leadership took the initiative to convene a workshop with the District Municipality on 11 January 2007. At this meeting, attended by a municipal official from Mbizana and personnel from an active UNDP planning project, the difficulties in improving water services and securing accountability were extensively discussed.

There were some important points made at the meeting:

- The community appraisal project was warmly received, the methods and tools could also be used in the projects on Credible IDPs and Community Based Planning leading on to 'mini-IDPs';
- There is a concern that with the closing of the project, the HSRC's engagement with the municipality would fall away;
- There was a keen interest that the advantages of training and accreditation should be continued in future work;
- The combination of community appraisal and community planning could help both the Local and District Municipalities in developing sector plans;
- The Under-five health tool was particularly valuable and could help in the prioritising of projects in planning.

The project leader explained that the project could not continue in its present form not only because funding was ending, but because the project was a pilot. It had developed a package of materials and approaches: the tools had been developed and tested, training materials written, and accreditation achieved. A role for municipalities had

established in helping select community trainers, in the Ward Forums, and in working with the project to achieve 'people-centred planning'.

It has been explained that the package is now available to all municipalities who needed to engage to make the project more than a pilot. There were real possibilities in providing forms of job creation through developing community participation in regulation and development; there should be a link between the Expanded Public Works Programme, the municipalities, and the SETAs. This involved some planning but if this could be started the HSRC and WRC would be supportive and help pass the accreditation achieved over to qualified service providers to make the project an enduring success.

At a subsequent meeting of the stakeholders on 23 March some additional problems were identified in achieving improved delivery.

There were major technical and unusual geological problems in implementing water projects in Mbizana area:

- The difficulty in responding to the needs and priorities of specific communities is that implementation is being planned on a regional basis with no effective communication between people and the different levels of municipal government;
- While finance is no problem (there is a budget of R207 million unspent up to 31 March 2007), there appeared no implementation plan because, it was stated, major technical problems because of the geological character of Mbizana have been identified;
- The District Municipality recognized that it would not meet the target of providing water to all by 2008 and had informed the Presidency to this effect;
- There were extremely poor communications and exchange on a planning and technical basis between Local and District Municipality;
- The Local Municipality had applied to become a Water Service Provider;
- Although a lack of professional capacity had been identified, the UNDP project had found there were seven water engineers accessible in Mbizana.

Although many of the points were well established, a number of these issues (such as the unusual geological problems) were new. It appears that it will take major time-consuming institutional realignment to get final synchronisation of all the roles and responsibilities in service delivery (from water to electricity, etc.). There does not appear to be the prospect of an early reply to community voice and priorities as each problem identified at a municipal level appeared not to invite a solution.

7 Conclusions and recommendations

At the time of writing there are a number of initiatives setting out to capture community voice and present a community scorecard on water services are being reported. These projects have employed either community participation or surveys to drive a concise final assessment of water services in scorecards or record-cards; with the idea of providing greater accountability. There are similarities: both work to encourage citizen voice and plan for scorecards to lead on to engagement with public authorities, and aim to strengthen civil society. In the case of the Nairobi reports the survey was conducted in cooperation with civil society groups; where more direct participatory methods are employed and community groups are involved. There is also a combination of assessment with a rights-based approach.

There are possible differences as well; this project utilizes national indicators and a wide range of measures of regulatory standards at local and ward level, while the others appear to measure satisfaction with services alone. This project also has taken on the development of capacity in civil society through training, the provision of appropriate tools, and guidance and advice from a distance.

Although the other projects clearly were committed to the involvement of civil society in surveys or in "passing the stick" in community appraisal, it appears that the training of community members for to conduct the appraisal independently of a research team and to engage in on-going monitoring is a particular feature of this project. It appears that this project has gone further towards the training of community practitioners and in developing a full set of tools for use by trained community members as step by step to provide the basic elements in the scorecard. The training of trainers and the cascading of training to facilitators and other community groups is a key feature of this project. This allows a level of relative autonomy from an external agency (in this case the research team) although it also poses questions, at times, about validation. The scorecard developed here also has the advantage of developing the regulatory framework by putting the emphasis on on-going community-based monitoring and assessment and engaging to the full the local forms of representation in the form of ward committees and ward councillors. The strategy here is to take advantage of the local regulatory mechanisms for citizens to engage to the full in the municipal consultative structures and in planning for better services through the IDP of the District Municipality.

This research and development has been undertaken with a view to the development of initiatives to strengthen communities by building the human services, forging and strengthening social ties, and developing civil society. The main deficiency of civil society in improving local regulation lies in the lack of organised community voice and resources to follow through on the interests and priorities of the poor. The tools of community appraisal may not be immediately to hand and there is often a lack of knowledge of techniques which could lead to improved services. The communities of

the poor in South Africa as elsewhere lack sufficient resources in education, trained people and, to some extent, in community commitment.

In the table below the main activities involved in the project are set out by time (reading from left to right), starting with the exploration of a variety of tools and, on the right, the 'follow through' issues of the representation of priorities in municipal processes and planning.

Table 21. Activities in developing community appraisal

Preparing tools and materials	Engagement with communities and municipalities	Training and deployment	Following through
Development of community appraisal tools	Entry point work to secure wider engagement	Development of materials and training of trainers	Ward forums and community participation in planning processes
Engagement with communities to learn what works	Engagement beyond the community level, i.e. with ward structures and municipal officials	Deployment of trainers and the training of village facilitators	District workshops and discussions about further engagement
Reworking of these tools and development of new tools		Community appraisal working village by village	Final assessment of training
Writing up of case studies		Support to community trainers and facilitators	
Preparation of training materials		On-going feedback to council and municipal officials	

At each stage of the process the interventions were written up and the voluminous results of community appraisal photographed and saved; the originals remained with facilitators and communities. The use of tools and the findings of conditions in communities have been captured in spreadsheets and analysed. The training as well has been assessed at a number of stages; during training in terms of formative assessment used as feedback to improve the process of learning and summative assessment used to measure the learning that has taken place. The training materials were also assessed

against the Unit Standards as part of the process of accreditation by the ETDP. Following training there has been moderation and verification of results and procedures.

Even with an exemplary development of appraisal and recording of voice there is no guarantee of a successful realisation of the people's aspirations. The expression of need even with clarity and commitment, at the right time, and within the right institutional framework may not bring about change. The process of research and the provision of the tools is intended to build capacity and lead to community empowerment. Through the engagement with a community and the expression of community voice there should be added capacity: of individuals and community groups who are able to go beyond their former limits and undertake actions previously circumscribed.

Key questions in method and results

At the inception of the project, and keenly debated at the various Reference Group meetings, a range of theoretical and practical issues were brought before the research team. In addition to the original research brief the project has taken on board the questions of assessing the cascade strategy, the production of a training manual, and the exploring an institutional home. These initiatives are aimed at leading to improved management of water services by municipalities and Water Service Providers.

The project has been an exercise in research and development and has involved a somewhat difficult combination of roles. As the project has advanced, the tools and strategies have had to be analysed and assessed; the data gathered has been at two levels – that of the operation of the tools and secondly of the water service conditions measured through the tools in communities. The reports which have arisen from this project, the narrative of its progress, and the data itself have enabled the various hypotheses to be tested and conclusions drawn.

The research questions are set out as follows:

1. Can a set of tools be devised to encourage citizen voice in water services in a variety of poor communities?

The tools developed and employed have readily elicited citizen voice. The evidence from the three pilot community studies in which appraisal was lead by the research team have been followed by appraisals in 26 village and 3 informal settlement conducted by community practitioners. Although there is some variation in quality, the tools can be used and properly completed relatively autonomously by the practitioners.

The project has succeeded in providing a set of tools for community appraisal and engagement with the evolving regulatory system. New tools appropriate to the situation have been developed and existing community tools reshaped. These tools and community materials on water services are supported by an established training programme and strategy for spreading their use and techniques. The methods and materials have been developed in deprived and remote communities with the greatest challenges in water services and the tools have been shown to add data and value to community advocacy for better services.

2. Can these tools can be cascaded from community to community by trained community practitioners?

An open-ended cascade as discussed above offers great possibilities but is extremely demanding on community practitioners who need orientation and a set field of work.

Such strategy of cascading training and materials from community to community is theoretically possible but, it is concluded from experience, that the more limited model of a 'controlled' cascade operating within Wards provides the depth within an appropriate institutional scale which makes communication and resolution of issues more probable.

In the more precise context of the cascade provided through engagement with the Mbizana Local Municipality the tools have been used and the strategy cascaded through a number of villages and wards. The practitioners generally worked in wards where they stay and there was close knowledge of communities and key individuals. In one case a practitioner travelled from her ward to work in another ward. Generally this approach allowed practitioners to use their initiative to the full in undertaking the protocols involved in gaining access and in completing the tools.

The question was whether the practitioners were able to pass on the ideas, materials and strategies to two layers; firstly to an active group within the community termed facilitators, and secondly to the community as a whole. In the Mbizana cascade the practitioners achieved the selection and training of facilitator in each of the communities; in Ward 2 there were 7 facilitators, in Ward 20 another 7, and in Ward 19 a further 9. The training materials for facilitators were used as planned in the cascade and the facilitators were able to undertake the tasks linked to a number of the tools. Trainers, facilitators and community members undertook a high level of the tools and successfully completed them. In the case of two of the tools which had analysis sheets, these were completed in the field, a considerable achievement. Although there were checks on progress and response to particular problems from the research team this work was conducted through the autonomous action of the practitioners. They succeeded in making the initial approaches to the local leadership (such as the traditional leaders, councillors, and ward committee members), explained the purpose of the appraisal, and

had the commitment to follow the strategy for cascading through the villages making up a ward.

Although the practitioners generally had to act alone there was, however, intense interaction at key points of the project. The trainers were brought in on three occasions for the recording of outputs, debriefing, and, later, assessment of their performance in the field. In addition there was also telephonic support and advice from the research team. The trainers, were, however, largely on their own and did express that they felt somewhat isolated and (although they had an allowance for subsistence and transport in addition to basic remuneration) had transport and other difficulties in the field.

The research team certainly found there was a keen interest in learning about community appraisal among young individuals in the community; although older members tended to argue that their time was limited. The community workshops themselves were conducted in a single day and, for reasons of cost, did not lead on to lunch.[28] This meant that they generally lasted for three or a maximum of four hours, much less than has been recorded in participatory exercises elsewhere. This has meant that much greater weight has been placed on a active community members to undertake many of the exercises with the community meeting acting as a body of oversight and authority rather than being the key source of information.

Although most of the tools were undertaken, some (such as the community survey) were not and were dropped from the set of tools. Those which were not undertaken were found by practitioners and facilitators difficult to undertake (such as those of a survey of the community) because they demand a high level of commitment, good organisation, and greater analytical ability. Others, such as the Nominal Ranking Tool, were not undertaken as they were found to be generally too difficult to complete as suggested. The problems encountered in use of the tools were found not always to be predictable; some have been undertaken well and accurately, others not. Many well-known participatory tools were used enthusiastically. Generally the tools were completed as proposed and difficult tasks, such as the entering of data in analysis sheets were undertaken.

[28] In South Africa as often elsewhere there is an expectation that a meal will be provided by the organizers of workshops. For poor people this is not a small consideration and as some reward for the loss of time in other activities. This feature may help explain why, in their absence, the time taken in workshops in the Eastern Cape (not in KwaZulu-Natal) has been limited.

3. Can these tools lead to the valid assessment and accurate measurement of key service issues and standards?

The Scorecard works to sum up a range of tools and assessments on line items which have been drawn from local government; each of the tools used provides the data and context for which a number could be generated. This provides depth to the numerical judgement which relate directly to standards, goals and targets in the SFWS and Regulation Strategy. The Scorecards were successfully completed in 24 communities and provide the most concrete assessment of these communities.

The numbers provide in a highly compressed form the combination of data and voice on a line item. There is a value element: as a recent article argues, "satisfaction….is a subjective measure that is not easily benchmarked on an objective scale" (Deichmann and Lall, 2007). The numbers combine a combination of assessments of standards and values, an assembly which is hardly unique to participatory methods. These can be questioned as well as the data and evidence gathered provided to substantiate them; despite this there will always be an element of social judgment (the assessment). Despite this the project has worked on a suggested ranking of issues according to the evidence gathered, but, if the autonomy of community appraisal is to be respected, this can only operate as advice rather than prescription.

In the Mbizana cascade the formal ranking of community needs was found to be not significantly different from community to community as similar conditions pertained. The significant differences between rural communities and those in informal settlements are clearly marked in the scorecards; on each line or row of the scorecard. This indicates that the measures and judgements making up each line of the scorecard have validity and that communities (even when feeling disempowered) are sensitive to variations in service delivery and levels of interaction with local government.

As was raised at discussions at the Reference Group there were found to be difficulties in measurement, although these were not conclusively examined.

There is very little challenge to the view that the community appraisals accurately reflected the views of community members; that they captured valid data and assessments. The councillors involved, NGO officials and independent observers feel that the tools help capture and record these views. There are, however, differences about the accuracy of specific measurement of distances, volumes, time, etc. The data captured through a number of tools appears consistent but specific measures could be improved. One of these is the distance taken to water; in the absence of pedometers the appropriate tool asks for the number of steps taken to be recorded. (Although this appears a great burden, this method was preferred against the use of pedometers in another research project.) Unfortunately this was not undertaken and the distance to water was estimated. Greater precision could be achieved if some key distances were benchmarked and, possibly, a method devised to mix well established distances and estimates.

A greater question is that of potential 'self-seeking' or 'community-serving' practices leading to an exaggeration of the data. Individuals could, for instance, overstate the number of diarrhoeal episodes experienced by a child or provide longer estimates of distance to water than valid to strengthen the argument that improved water services are urgently needed. The data derived from the surveys does, however, show a range of data which appears to indicate that any inconsistencies were not the result of a group mindset. The high level of reported diarrhoea reported from villages has, for instance, been confirmed from other sources; but the high level of severe diarrhoea reported may reflect differences in observation. There are two recommendations which could follow from experience in the field: firstly that the CHW be more formally involved in the processes and help correct any misunderstandings, and secondly that there be more formal checks on the use of tools at an earlier stage. Trainers should be able to identify any misunderstandings and undertake quality control checks at the earliest stage.

4. Can such assessment of water services by communities lead to effective engagement with the local regulator and appropriate remedial responses from water services providers?

As identified in the literature review, the follow-through after public participation is the most significant measure of the resolution of problems and a 'closing of the circle' which opened with no service or unreliable service, continued through municipal process and would conclude with improvements. Undertaking the Mbizana cascade located a significant anomaly in local regulation: although the Water Service Authority (the District Municipality) operates as the local regulator, the first line of impact of citizen dissatisfaction is with the local municipality. Local regulation, it appears, has to combine processes and lines of communication and redress through a number of levels: from the community, ward, councillor, local municipality, to the district municipality. At present the issue of redress which make up the substance of citizen voice have been found difficult to resolve as the public officials with whom most contact is maintained do not have competence in the sector.

Since the line items of the Scorecard have been aligned to the requirements of municipal practice, the SFWS and the Regulation Strategy, the municipalities should be directly engaged. In the field difficulties were, however, encountered; firstly the local municipality involved does not have competence as a Water Service Provider which lies with the OR Tambo District Municipality. Although the councillors, officials, and ward committees at the local municipal level were well engaged at each step of the process, the district municipality was not as involved and had to be separately engaged. The tools and strategy of citizen voice was not negatively assessed.

The cascade at the ward level appears to encourage engagement with municipalities on what has to be done and lead to the gathering of personnel and financial resources to ensure better delivery. In the absence of effective delivery systems, the pressure of expectations from community appraisal leads to improvements in communication and

planning. In many ways local municipal officials do not feel empowered and the appraisals tend to increase their possibility for advocacy in the interests of their constituents. Although conflict is not welcome, rising expectations meeting poor systems of delivery will lead to some level of conflict; the critical question is whether some form of resolution of the issues is simultaneously opened up. In the Mbizana case the potential conflict led on to closer engagement by the research team and the final workshop of both local and district municipalities.

The clear expression of community priorities focuses on municipal planning. In rural municipalities there is often imprecise planning and basic information such as the original documents of the IDP and WSDP may not be accessible. These plans as presented often do not relate communities or wards to sectoral objectives, e.g. it is difficult to read off from the IDP or WSDP whether or not there will be a sanitation project or not in a community. In addition there may not be a specific commitment to meet national objectives such as water for all by 2008 or sanitation by 2010; indeed there may be alternative plans based on the recognition that these targets will not be met. These are problems faced by councillors as well as by individuals in communities. The solution to these questions it would appear, is more possible once the problem is clearly expressed, rather than not engaging with community voice.

One of the questions raised in following a rights-based approach was whether the community appraisal exercises would create expectations which were not likely to be met. There have been two responses from the rural communities in relation to the appraisal; firstly expressions that exercises in community appraisal were (on the basis of past experience) not likely to succeed and secondly questions asked of the practitioners when change could be expected. These responses were not necessarily contradictory; the exercises in citizen voice located the expressions of disempowerment noted in the Regulation Strategy, but also a rather sceptical expression that alternative methods might succeed. The complex layers of officialdom between the ward and the service provider and authority in OR Tambo district municipality have been exceptionally difficult for councillors and the community practitioners to transcend. The research team has intervened beyond its brief to organise a workshop of the local and district municipality to present the results of the community appraisal and to seek ways in which redress could be achieved. As the project draws to a conclusion the issues of inadequate services have yet to have an adequate response.

Recommendations

The method of training of trainers has succeeded at a number of levels; in their deployment in rural communities, conclusion of community exercises, and engagement with municipal structures. Although was some dropping out of the programme which can be demanding on time and energy, this is inevitable and appears to be at an

acceptable level. The formal assessment and accreditation of their learning of new knowledge has been undertaken and the integration of instruction within the training framework widely welcomed. The **method and materials are now available for scaling up** from pilots to new areas in a number of different contexts.

There are indications that there are **challenges** in meeting some of tasks of accurate measurement in relation to distances to water, health of infants. The solution to this problem appears two-fold; firstly to adapt the particular tool to achieve the same purpose without the same difficulty in numerical skills and secondly for a more integrated approach to be adopted – for CDW and CHW to be directly involved. Although there have not been major problems identified in the recorded data there should **be greater attention paid to quality assurance** in training materials, training, and in checking and supervision by the more experienced community practitioners. This has now been undertaken.

There is a need for further research in three particular areas.

Firstly there is a need for further research and development of tools in relation to the encouragement of greater municipal *responsiveness* to citizen voice which goes beyond the management of complaints and forms of "customer care". This has been identified as one of the deficiencies of local government in South Africa and is critical in two aspects: in terms of providing for democratic practice and also in achieving greater efficiency. Research is needed into ways in which the representation of community needs through ward committees and other "non-official" mechanisms can be better aligned and responses to community rather than individual concerns become part of municipal practice. The tools required here are those which would help municipalities to build systems routinely integrating community needs more effectively into planning and developing more reflexive management. An example could be the recording and evaluation of complaints and service breakdowns to anticipate what changes need to be made before protests take place over service delivery. Other examples could include the more effective incorporation of community representation into implementation structures.

Secondly there would be benefit in working to achieve greater precision in the toolkit. This could be achieved through further research into further reducing the subjective factor by calibrating the scoring of the results of a number of tools and judgements against a scoring sheet of established values. The final scoring of each line item at present involves the weighing up of measurements from a number of tools and of judgements made by the community. It is difficult to achieve uniform scoring where different tools appropriate to conditions in deep rural areas, informal settlements and formal settlements in poor urban areas need to be used. At the same time greater standardization needs to be achieved. This question, the solution of which would add value to other such scoring mechanisms, needs further examination.

Thirdly further research is needed into the strategy of cascading which opens wide opportunities for the replication on a widening scale of ideas, policies and practices. This is of particular importance to civil society as the cascade approach opens opportunities for the voluntary adoption of strategies for social change through horizontal association rather than through top-down direction. In the absence of effective national coordination of civil society (not necessarily desired by civil society), the cascade may be instrumental in developing associational linkage around issues such as health and hygiene education as well as campaigns for delivery and service improvements. The cascade could also be an important strategy in, for example, helping to entrench awareness in poor communities for the conservation of water resources: issues which are difficult for communities to accept and adopt when they have historically had limited access and when the issue is presented in a top-down manner.

The project has succeeded in providing a set of tools for community appraisal and directed action. New tools appropriate to the situation have been developed and existing community tools reshaped. These tools and community materials on water services are supported by a well established training programme and strategy for spreading their use and techniques. The methods and materials have been developed in deprived and remote communities with the greatest challenges in water services and the **tools have been shown to add data and value to community advocacy** for better services.

In addition to this, there **should be greater initiatives to secure wider cooperation from municipalities in implementing these activities** to help bring to bear greater interaction between those working in the field, municipal initiatives on health, and CHW and staff in clinics. Greater interaction and an exchange of views about health conditions would certainly encourage greater attention to detail in these surveys.

While the main emphasis of regulation of water services has been on the development of the national framework, many of the most important issues are raised most directly at the local level. The recourse to activities constituting local regulation is the first step for communities. Unfortunately there is a lack of alignment as yet between regulation and municipal legislation. In law provision is made for community involvement in setting indicators and reviewing municipal performance targets. The work undertaken in identifying the most important indicators of performance in the poorest communities and in measuring of these through well-prepared public action is an important initiative. **These techniques should be taken up more widely if public participation in performance appraisal is to be given effect.** The work undertaken in this project provides key mechanisms for the development of service standards, access targets, and oversight and should be integrated into the Regulation Strategy. **It should also be considered in the monitoring and evaluation of substantial initiatives such as that of the Masibambane water services sector support programme to ensure the full engagement of communities and of civil society organisations to effect continuous community monitoring to achieve the best use of resources.**

Despite some reservations on the part of the research team because of the time and energy it absorbs, the utilisation of the training framework has gained considerable credit for the project both by the trainers and by the significant observers and partners such as the municipalities. Intensive training was not, however, provided for in the project budget. The extension of the work of citizen voice and community appraisal in the future by municipalities could be achieved through appropriate projects designed to provide sufficient time for training and deployment such as those available in the Expanded Public Works Programme. There are a growing number of possibilities in terms of these and other programmes to provide short term employment in community development which is interlinked with training institutions. The materials, methods and strategies are available to be transferred to take up these opportunities. A greater intensity in training and a greater time-span is necessary if community appraisal is to reap the full benefits of the cascade approach while also addressing its potential drawbacks.

It is recommended that this initiative in developing community tools and in training in community appraisal of water services be taken up in municipalities to create the citizen engagement needed in regulation and developing responsive management of water services. In the State of the Nation address of February 2007, the President spelt out goals which (although not conceived to this purpose) would assist this process; the rolling out of the Batho Pele campaign at local government level, greater outreach activities and the expansion of more Multi-Purpose Community Centres.

The development of community appraisal in the form outlined here, with full participation by communities and civil society on a non-dependent basis, opens up new possibilities for genuine consultation, for redress of service standards and for delivery by municipalities as provided in the Batho Pele principles. This report shows, among other things, how the Batho Pele principles apply in relation to key indicators in water services. The project shows how, in the interaction between citizen and municipality around concrete goals, gaps can be identified and municipal systems developed to provide more effective responses.

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Pilot training materials (manuals): Course in Development Practice (Water Services)

MODULE 1: Training of trainers:

MODULE 2: The overview –development through community participation

MODULE 3: Rights in water and sanitation

MODULE 4: Community appraisal

MODULE 5: Uplifting the community

Pilot training materials (manuals): Course in Training Village Facilitators

MODULE 1: Starting community appraisal, Stages 1 and 2.

MODULE 2: Forming task teams for action research. Stages 3 and 4.

MODULE 3: Village priorities and planning. Stages 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Posters:

Your rights in water and sanitation
Realisation of rights
IDP and WSDP opportunities for participation

Outputs related to Field Manual:

Exercise guide for facilitators of community water service assessment. Prototype Tool: 25 November 2005. HSRC.

Final training materials

The following modules have been finalized within the framework of the course, Development Practice SAQA QUAL ID 23093 and edited and developed to meet all its objectives:

MODULE 1: Introduction and scope
MODULE 2: Training of trainers
MODULE 3: Water and development
MODULE 4: Health and hygiene
MODULE 5: Structures and group work
MODULE 6: Voice and assessment
MODULE 7: Advocacy and change

Annexure A: Key Targets set out in the Strategic Framework on Water Services (p6-7)

Access to services

	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY (to achieve target)
1	All people in South Africa have access to a functioning basic water supply facility by 2008.	Water services authorities supported by DWAF.
2	All people in South Africa have access to a functioning basic sanitation facility by 2010.	Water services authorities supported by the DWAF and the National Sanitation Task Team.
3	All schools have adequate and safe water supply and sanitation services by 2005.	Provincial Education Departments supported by National Department of Education and Department of Public Works.
4	All clinics have adequate and safe water supply and sanitation services by 2007.	Provincial departments of health supported by National Department of Health and Department of Public Works.
5	All bucket toilets are eradicated by 2006.	Water services authorities supported by DWAF.
6	Investment in water services infrastructure in the sector totals least 0.75% of GDP.	National Treasury.
7	Hygiene education and the wise use of water are taught in all schools by 2005.	National Department of Education.
8	70% of households with access to at least a basic sanitation facility know how to practise safe sanitation by 2005 (and 100% by 2010).	Water services authorities, supported by DWAF.

Free basic services

9	Free basic water policy implemented in all water services authorities by 2005.	Water services authorities.
10	Free basic sanitation policy implemented in all water services authorities by 2010.	Water services authorities.

Annexure B: The Eight Principles of Batho Pele

Consultation
Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.

Service Standards
Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.

Access
All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

Courtesy
Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.

Information
Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

Openness and Transparency
Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.

Redress
If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

Value for Money
Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.

Annexure C: Sources for tools

Tool	Assessment
Plan of work in village appraisal	Developed from standard
Flow chart of community plan	Developed from standard
Community dialogue	Absorbed into method
Community map	Standard
Community survey of poverty	New
Transect walk	Developed from standard
Community area map	Standard
Community water access map	New
Water route map and analysis sheet	New
School water and sanitation	New
Under 5 health survey and analysis sheet	New
Register of participants	Standard
Time line	Standard
Trend lines	Standard
Nominal group ranking	Standard
Venn Diagrams & institutional matrix	Standard
Press Release, letters to Council, Ward Committee, DWAF	New
Score card on water services	New
Action plan	Developed from standard
Integrating action plan into IDP & WSDP	New
Ward IDP forum, councillor and stakeholders	New but links to community plan
Monitoring questionnaire	New

Annexure D: Potential Vocations and Activities in Community Appraisal

Tasks within workshops and communities	Activities
Facilitator Advocate Organiser	Encouraging workshop participation; Ensuring women's participation; Conflict resolution; Using the community appraisal tools; Framework of municipal planning; Regulation and communities; Mastery of dominance, saboteur, and other techniques for better communication; Communications with councillor, chief, municipality.
Co-facilitator and rapporteur	Action plan to report to constituencies Developing projects from the problem tree
Group leader	Venn diagrams Matrices on stakeholders
Map maker	Undertaking accurate mapping of community Mapping sections/areas in need Map infrastructure and ASBUILT of water reticulation system with dates
Librarian and recording secretary	Note taking, gathering of outputs, circulating key readings and information
Community planner	Put forward ideas by which community can make inputs into the IDP and other planning processes
Community journalist	Write up report of discussion about water and sanitation issues
Editor of wall newspaper	Write up and present issues in discussion
Monitor	Proficient individual able to assess quality and performance of water services
Surveyor/researcher	Plan transect walks, survey number of people not within 200 m, poorest in community
Networker	Building water alliance/caucus
Young scientist	Assessing quality of water; measuring water consumption in households
Health mobiliser	Gathering statistics from clinic on water borne diseases Handwashing issues
Youth mobiliser	Carrying forward ideas on how to involve the youth Action plans in part of the community/constituencies
Spokesperson for women	To mobilise and liaise with women collecting water
Spokesperson for children	To mobilise and liaise with children collecting water

Annexure E: General Education and Training Certificate: Development Practice SAQA QUAL ID 23093

UNIT STANDARDS:

	ID	UNIT STANDARD TITLE	LEVEL	CREDITS
Core	110044	Collect information to support a community needs assessment	Level 1	12
Core	110050	Facilitate group work in development practice	Level 1	8
Core	110047	Support advocacy campaigns and workshops	Level 1	12
Core	110045	Support the facilitation of learning in a development practice project	Level 1	12
Core	110042	Understand the foundations of transformative development practice	Level 1	12
Fundamental	7451	Collect, analyse, use and communicate numerical data	Level 1	2
Fundamental	7449	Critically analyse how mathematics is used in social, political and economic relations	Level 1	2
Fundamental	12462	Engage in a range of speaking and listening interactions for a variety of purposes	Level 1	6
Fundamental	12471	Explore and use a variety of strategies to learn (revised)	Level 1	5
Fundamental	12473	Identify and respond to selected literary texts	Level 1	5
Fundamental	12469	Read and respond to a range of text types	Level 1	6
Fundamental	7450	Work with measurement in a variety of contexts	Level 1	2
Fundamental	7448	Work with patterns in various contexts	Level 1	4
Fundamental	7447	Working with numbers in various contexts	Level 1	6
Fundamental	12470	Write for a variety of different purposes	Level 1	6
Elective	9826	Assist community members to access services in accordance with their health related human rights	Level 1	5
Elective	9822	Engage in basic health promotion	Level 1	10
Elective	113966	Identify security, safety and environmental risks in the local environment	Level 1	6
Elective	8494	Demonstrate an understanding of HIV/AIDS and its implications `	Level 2	4

Elective	11816	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the individual under the South African Constitution	Level 2	2
Elective	11817	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the structures that reinforce and support human rights in South Africa	Level 2	3
Elective	8420	Operate in a team	Level 2	4

Annexure F: Unit Standards assessed

	ID	UNIT STANDARD TITLE	LEVEL	CREDITS
Core	110044	Collect information to support a community needs assessment	Level 1	12
Core	110050	Facilitate group work in development practice	Level 1	8
Core	110047	Support advocacy campaigns and workshops	Level 1	12
Core	110045	Support the facilitation of learning in a development practice project	Level 1	12
Core	110042	Understand the foundations of transformative development practice	Level 1	12
Fundamental	12471	Explore and use a variety of strategies to learn (revised)	Level 1	5
Core	110057	Conduct a self-evaluation of own progress and development	Level 4	2