

ARE YOU LOOKING TO EMPOWER YOUR COMMUNITIES AND IMPROVE THE RESPONSIVENESS OF YOUR MUNICIPALITY?

If yes, then consider the use of community-based planning (CBP) and its implementation to make the requirements for participation a reality.

Why the community-based planning and development approach?

The Municipal Systems Act entrenches participation as a central concept of IDP. The CBP methodology provides municipalities with the means to meet the participatory requirements of the IDP as specified in the MSA. The CBP approach does not simply improve participation in the IDP. It ensures that wards develop and implement locally owned ward plans, which build on local strengths, focus on local action, as well as identifying support needed externally through the IDP and from sector departments.

The CBP/IDP **objective** is to improve municipal-level plans and to provide a platform for community empowerment. This means that CBP is a stepping stone for strengthening developmental local governance and community action. This approach requires commitment from the municipality to enable citizens to move from being passive consumers (beneficiaries?) of services to active partners in development that are able to participate in meeting their priorities.

The CBP process developed

A 5 day process has been developed for ward-based planning. The process involves 3 days of situation analysis, 2 days on planning, using participatory tools to understand differences within the community, identify and prioritise outcomes and key risks, and plan how to address these. The planning process is innovative and empowering. It is facilitated by facilitators from the ward committee who are trained, as well as municipal and other facilitators.



Group in Ward 2, BelaBela feeding back on their plan

After planning **process funds** must be made available to the wards to take forward their plans and to promote community action. The wards plan how to use these funds. A minimum of R25 000 per ward is suggested. Wards manage implementation of voluntary action supported by these funds and have to develop skills for monitoring and managing their own activities. The ward plans are used to inform the IDP and wards suggest larger projects for consideration within the IDP.

Assuming a municipality of 30-40 wards, the process is likely to take around:

- 3 months for planning in all the wards, from the initial briefing of wards, training of facilitators, to acceptance by the Municipality of the ward plans, starting as close as possible to 1 July so that this is

- completed prior to the start of the IDP Review process;
- Enough time needs to be allocated for pre-planning;
- Around 3 months on implementation of the ward plans by communities;
- Analysis and incorporation of the information from wards for use in the IDP;
- The next 6 months carrying forward plans, receiving feedback on IDP, and enjoying the benefits!

This is an on-going process which should continue year after year. In year 1 the process is intensive. In years 2 and beyond, the planning is less intensive planning but implementation is at least as intensive.

The benefits of CBP/IDP

The key benefits of the approach are:

- Assistance to municipalities to give effect to the requirements of the Municipal Systems Act;
- Taking the meaning of participation beyond consultation to effective community empowerment, encouraging ownership of local development, the releasing of local community energy for action, thereby overcoming dependency;
- The use of relatively small amounts of process funds by local government to harness local energy and resources;
- Obtaining a sophisticated understanding of the assets, vulnerabilities, preferred outcomes and livelihood strategies of different groups within the community, including the most vulnerable;
- Planning from outcomes not problems leads to more realistic and creative planning, valuable for the ward plan but also for enabling practical implementation of the IDP;
- The plans are more targeted and relevant to addressing the needs of all groups, including the most vulnerable;
- The municipality empowers its ward committees to start to be effective,

- based around a ward plan which they need to support and monitor implementation;
- The municipality develops a cadre of trained facilitators who can be accredited;
- Sector departments within the Municipality gain a much better understanding of their clients;
- The experience in Mangaung demonstrates that CBP plays a key role in reconciliation and mobilization by bringing together white and black communities and created much better understanding of each other.

This is only relevant to Municipalities who are genuinely committed to maximising participation by residents, deepening democracy, and promoting the active involvement of citizens in the development process.

People voting on priority outcomes in Ward 19, Mangaung Local Municipality



What is involved

CBP is not a simple process. It requires facilitation of a plan per ward, the analysis of information to use in the IDP and support to ward-based implementation. A decision to undertake the process should not be taken lightly. For those committed to deepening democracy the rewards are tremendous. In order to support this empowering participation process the municipality will require training:

The municipality must:

- Allocate someone to manage CBP full-time (CBP Coordinator) during the planning process, and part-time during implementation
- Establish a CBP/D steering committee, including those responsible for planning, participation and implementation, councillors, and ward committee members
- Ensure the training of 2-4 lead trainers who then train local facilitators (around 1 per 8 facilitators to be trained) in a 10 day experiential training, and to ensure quality
- Provide municipal facilitators drawn from different sectoral departments, for training
- Commit to training 1 ward committee member per ward, and support them with travel and meal costs during implementation
- Run 1-2 training of facilitators in the municipality (depending on numbers), the first of which would be supported by a an external trainer
- Ensure the documentation of the plans in a suitable form to be used for the IDP;
- Allocate people to undertake on-going monitoring of planning and implementation;
- Allocate R25-50 000 per ward to support local action (process funds), and allow wards to decide on what they wish to fund.

Costs

Implementation of CBP costs about R375 000 for a 40 ward municipality, including:

- R160 000 for training 40-50 facilitators;
- R92 000 optionally for accreditation of the facilitators;
- R27 000 for a learnings workshop; and
- R30-40 000 for the direct costs of doing the planning.

The Municipality must also allocate some funds to each ward to implement each ward plan and provide an incentive for ongoing community action, as soon as the ward plan is finished. R25-50 000 per ward is

recommended, or 1-2% of the Municipal capital budget.

Costs would vary according to the number of wards. For a 10 ward municipality the figure is likely to be around half this.

Further information

- Joseph Leshabane of SALGA on 083 326 8072, 012 338 6700, email jleshabane@salga.org.za.
- For **discussion of the benefits** contact Tankiso Mea of Mangaung Local Municipality on 051 405 8643, mea@civic.mangaungcity.co.za or Teboho Maine at 051 405 8382, E-mail: maine@civic.mangaungcity.co.za
- For **technical information** about CBP/D, contact the CBP/IDP Project Manager, Ian Goldman at goldman@khanya-mrc.co.za

Clr Zumane, Speaker of Mangaung Local Municipality who drove CBP in Mangaung. A driver is essential!

