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**Perception of service and  
infrastructure delivery under President  
Mbeki**

**Meshack M. Khosa**

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## 1 Introduction

At the heart of the struggle for liberation in South Africa was a promise to replace the white minority regime with a democratically elected government with the mandate to improve the quality of life of all, especially of the disenfranchised. The first democratic government, elected into power in 1994, committed itself to empower the poor and the historically disadvantaged, especially, rural women and blacks. The promise to deliver affordable quality services, create jobs and repeal all apartheid laws played a key role in the election victory of the African National Congress (ANC), which was the leading political force during the liberation struggle.

This chapter analyses perceptions of infrastructure and service delivery by comparing the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) surveys, mainly those conducted in November 1999 and September 2000. The chapter argues that the poor are not in the majority of those provided with quality services. In fact it is the middle- and high-income earners who appear to be major beneficiaries of government's service delivery programme. Moreover, urban and metropolitan recipients are also there in the majority of service recipients.

## 2 Perceptions of Changes in Service Delivery at Local Level

Since 1994 policy analysts have used various yardsticks to measure progress in terms of service delivery (Khosa, 2000ab). For example, *Mail & Guardian* provides a (largely superficial) report card for each cabinet minister, and *RDP Monitor* produces a monthly report on the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. This chapter takes as its starting point the results of the HSRC surveys carried out in November 1999 and September 2000.

According to these surveys, a significant proportion of South Africans assessed the provision of electricity, and education very positively. For example, those who perceived an improvement in the delivery of electricity increased from 46% in November 1999 to 48% in September 2000 (Table 1). Although the perception of the provision of essential services in general appears to have improved over time, it appears as if service delivery perceptions declined during 2000.

**Table 1 'Since the general elections of 1994, how would you say the delivery of the following services has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Service	Improved		Stayed the same		Worsened		Uncertain/ Did not know	
			%				%	
	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000
Running water	39	39	46	35	15	23	1	2
Affordable housing	28	23	37	35	31	35	4	8
Electricity	46	48	39	30	15	21	1	2
Health care	36	36	30	29	32	33	2	3
Local police services	24	24	44	40	29	32	3	5
Tarred roads and Street drainage	29	25	37	32	32	41	2	3
Recreational facilities	20	17	40	35	29	33	12	14
Local public libraries	21	20	44	37	24	27	11	16
Water-borne sewerage	25	20	48	41	21	28	7	13
Public transport	39	32	32	33	25	31	5	3
Education	33	40	33	31	28	24	5	4
Refuse removal	28	29	42	38	24	25	6	8

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000.

The HSRC September 2000 reveals three categories of services. First, services where there are improved perceptions between November 1999 and September 2000. These services include: electricity, refuse removal, and education. Obviously, positive overall figures do not suggest support of all aspects of service delivery, as development is complex and the impacts are often felt several years later. The second category of services is those services, which remained the same in this period. Such services include police services, health care, and running water. The third category of services includes those services where there has been deterioration in the perception of service delivery. These services include recreational facilities, water borne sewerage, public transport, tarred and street drainage and affordable housing.

The improvement in perceptions of service delivery on electricity and education bodes well for the second elected democratic government. However, the decline in improvement ratings on a number of services should be a cause for concern and calls for a fundamental review of the current infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms. As

will be discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter, several aspects such as race, wealth, geography and income affect perceptions of service delivery. A closer analysis of service delivery perception suggests that the poor do not get a fair share of newly delivered services and infrastructure. Moreover, it is metro and urban households, which appear to benefit more than their rural counterparts.

### **3 Perceptions of Changes in Service Delivery by Sector**

The first democratic government elected into power in 1994 inherited high levels of unemployment, huge income inequalities, and astronomical backlogs in services. One of the key programmes introduced by the government was the Reconstruction and Development Programme, which sought to address some of the national problems. Meeting social needs and diminishing backlogs were aimed at kick-starting economic growth, which was negative at the time. Critical sectors identified for improvement were running water, affordable housing, electricity, health and education. In just less than 24 months, the ANC-led government abandoned its radical reconstruction and development programme, and replaced it with a new-liberal development programme. This section of the chapter seeks to provide a critical appraisal of the extent to which government – sponsored development was perceived to be effective, especially between November 1999 and September 2000.

#### **3.1 Running water**

The majority of those who did not have access to water were the poor, and most of them lived in rural areas. Access to water was racially and geographically skewed, with Africans and the rural poor being the most affected, and whites and urban residents being the most privileged. Prior to 1994, 12 million people did not have access to clean drinking water. Seven and a half million people had to walk long distances to fetch water every day (Khosa, 2000ab). The challenges facing provision of running water has been recognised by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. In the words of the Minister recently he said:

The provision of water to meet basic human needs remains one of the biggest challenges faced by our government. We have an enormous challenge to speed up the delivery of safe water to another eight million rural people, who are still without access to safe [and clean] water. (Ronnie Kasrils, Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, 27 November 2000, Opening Address delivered at the Congress of the International Association of Hydro-geologists, Cape Town).

Access to adequate water was recognised in the South African Constitution as a fundamental human right, to the provision of which government committed itself. A framework and policies for efficient and equitable water and sanitation services were established through the White Paper on Water and Sanitation (1994), and the White Paper on National Water Policy (1997). The enactment of the National Water Act of 1998 created the legal context for dealing with the protection, allocation and development of water resources (Khosa, 2000ab).

In November 2000, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry claimed that it had reached 6-million mark, at the total cost of R3.5 billion. In the process 341,434 temporary jobs, including 180,000 jobs for mostly rural women where employment opportunities are scarce, were created in the laying of pipes and other infrastructural development linked to water service in rural areas. However, the number of beneficiaries took precedence over the quality of the water. In addition, although the delivery of water was seen as a success, about 50% of the sub-projects are said to have collapsed (*Mail & Guardian*, 16 May 1999).

Water supply and sanitation is constitutionally a local government function, the DWAF increasing focus is on supporting local government in the execution of its task rather than on direct service provision. The Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry argues that:

The Department is involved in poverty alleviation and helping to create a better life for all South Africans. We intend to integrate water services provision into the overall national rural development strategy (Ronnie Kasrils, 13 November 2000, Annual Meeting of International Donors providing assistance for the water and forestry sector).

In order to assess the perception of government water delivery programmes, respondents were asked in the HSRC September 2000 survey whether running water improved in the areas where they lived. The majority of respondents ranked access to running water as the most important local service in both November 1999 and September 2000, as did government since 1994 through its Working for Water Programme and the Community Water Supply and Sanitation Programme.

In the HSRC September 2000 survey (Table 2) 29% South Africans felt that the provision of running water improved in the areas where they lived compared to 23% who felt that it worsened since 1994. It is significant that the rating for running water remained the same between November 1999 and September 2000 (Table 2). This is contrary to claims by government officials that the year 2000 witnessed improvements on water delivery in rural areas. In fact the year 2000 saw an outbreak of cholera cases reaching over 10,000 people in KwaZulu-Natal alone. By the end of the year 2000 over 50 people had died of cholera, and the primary cause of the cholera epidemic was disconnection of a water scheme in rural KwaZulu-Natal as users were unable to afford user charges (*Business Day*, 27 December 2000).

**Table 2 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [running water] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	2000	September 2000
			%
Improved	39		29
Same	46		35
Worsened	15		23
Uncertain	1		2
Total	100		100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000.

The only noticeable change was an increase on the number of people indicating deterioration in the provision of running water, from 15% in November 1999 to 23% in September 2000. This implies that although the rating for water delivery remains the same, more people were dissatisfied with the provision of running water in September 2000 than they were in November 1999.

### 3.1.1 Perceptions of running water by race

According to official census, twenty-seven percent (27%) of African households had piped water inside their dwellings in 1996, compared with 96% of white households. More than a quarter of African households relied on public taps in 1996, while 17% relied on dams, rivers, streams, or springs for water.

The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that perceptions of the delivery of running water differed by race. For instance, about half (45%) of the blacks felt that there was an improvement in the delivery of running water as compared to 28% who felt that the situation deteriorated in November 1999 (Table 3). The percentage of blacks indicating improvement decreased slightly 47% in November 1999 to 45% in September 2000. On the other hand, blacks indicating deterioration declined from 19% in November 1999 to 15% in September 2000.

The percentage of whites who felt that water provision improved increased from 8% in November 1999 to 18% September 2000. These figures are not surprising as the majority of whites had access to water prior to the 1994 election (Table 3).

**Table 3 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [running water] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?**

Percep- Tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	47	45	30	26	20	45	8	18
Stayed the same	35	54	66	65	74	42	87	73
Worsened	19	28	4	8	4	2	4	7
Uncertain	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.1.2 Perceptions of running water by LSM

The perception of access to and improvement in the delivery of running water differed by wealth. Analysis of data suggests that it is those who fall between LSM 5 and LSM 7 who indicated significant improvement in the delivery of water, and the majority of those who fall between LSM 1 and 4 indicated that the delivery of running water had worsened between November 1999 and September 2000. The higher the LSM the wealthier the people, the lower the LSM the poorer the respondents. This implies that

the poorest of the poor experienced worsening availability of running water, whereas the middle- and rich-income households in society enjoyed some uninterrupted running water between November 1999 and September 2000.

**Table 4 Perception of running water by LSM**

Rating	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	0	5	9	9	14	14	10	3	9
Improved	19	20	26	33	45	39	26	19	31
Stayed the same	37	26	24	25	25	29	54	69	35
Worsened	25	23	23	22	12	12	5	5	15
Worsened substantially	12	22	16	9	4	3	2	2	8
Uncertain	7	4	2	1	1	3	3	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.1.3 Perceptions of running water by area type

Evidence from the HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that the improvements in the delivery of running water largely occurs in urban and metro areas rather than in rural areas. There have been an increasing number of disconnections of water schemes in rural areas over the past two years due to people not able to afford user charges, and connection charges. The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that some 39% of rural households are dissatisfied with running water compared to 9% of metro residents, and 19% of urban households. Even the Minister for Water Affairs and Forestry admitted that:

At present approximately 8 million people in rural areas still don't have clean water. If we continue at this present expenditure rate, it could take up to 20 years to reach our goals with regard to the rural population (Ronnie Kasrils, 13 November 2000, Annual Meeting of International Donors providing assistance for the water and forestry sector).

The findings suggest that the quality of water received by the poor is of low quality than what is received by metro and urban residents. At this rate the poor will have to wait for up to 20 years before they can access clean and safe water.

**Table 5 Comparing perceptions of improvement in the provision of running water, area type**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	10	11	6	9
Improved	28	38	25	31
Stayed the same	50	32	27	35
Worsened	7	15	23	15
Worsened substantially	2	4	16	8
Uncertain	100	100	100	100

### 3.2 Electricity

For many South Africans, electricity is a primary service requirement. Improvement in access to electricity enhances the quality of life, which often has positive economic spin-offs. Historically the majority of South Africans did not have access to electricity. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of households in South Africa had electricity by the end of 1997. It is estimated that between 1994 and 1997 approximately 1,7 million electrical connections were made, with rural areas being the major beneficiaries.

Whereas over 80% of households in urban areas had electricity in 1997, just less than one-third in rural areas had electricity (Khosa, 2000ab). However, the proportion of households electrified in rural areas apparently increased from 21% to 32% between 1995 and 1997. Both the November 1999 and HSRC September 2000 surveys indicated that significantly more people felt that electricity provision improved rather than those who felt it worsened in their areas since 1994.

**Table 6 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [electricity] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999 %	September 2000 %
Improved	46	48
Same	39	30
Worsened	15	21
Uncertain	1	2
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000



Whereas there has been a marginal 2% increase on positive ratings on electricity, there was an increase in the number of people who felt that the provision of electricity had deteriorated, from 15% in November 1999 to 21% in September 2000. The increase in negative ratings was largely from the rural poor who appear not to have benefited like the rest.

### 3.2.1 Perceptions of electricity by race

As with other services, perceptions of service delivery differed by race. The HSRC September 2000 survey reveals that 54% of blacks indicated an improvement in the delivery of electricity, which is the same percentage as it was in November 1999. The proportion of whites who perceived an improvement in the delivery of electricity increased from 10% in November 1999 to 23% in September 2000. Again, stark differences in access to services between the races during the apartheid years accounted for the perceptions of change for better or worse. These figures suggest that even those who beneficiaries during apartheid were the benefiting from the new political order (Table 7).

**Table 7 'since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [electricity] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?**

Percep- tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000
Improve d	54	54	36	33	17	43	10	23
Stayed the same	27	20	56	58	72	43	83	68
Worsene d	18	25	6	8	10	12	6	7
Uncertai n	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Almost all recorded an increase in levels of service deterioration, of 7% among blacks, 2% coloureds, and 1% whites. These figures point to a relative decline in the provision of running water between November 1999 and September 2000.

### 3.2.2 Perceptions of electricity by area type

Perceptions of access to electricity also differed by area type (Table 8). In general people are satisfied with the delivery of electricity than those who are not satisfied. However, ratings from rural respondents are lower than those from their metro and urban counterparts. More often than not, rural residents tended to perceive service deterioration than their metro and urban counterparts. This finding further suggests that

rural neglect is increasing in the delivery of services. And this widened between November 1999 and September 2000.

**Table 8 Comparing perceptions of improvement in the provision of electricity by area type, September 2000**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	10	12	13	12
Improved	27	46	33	36
Stayed the same	47	28	20	30
Worsened	10	10	17	13
Worsened substantially	4	4	15	8
Uncertain	3	1	3	2

### 3.2.3 Perception of electricity delivery by LSM

As with the delivery of water, it is those who fall between LSM1 and LSM3 who experienced the deterioration of services, than those who fall between LSM5 and LSM7. This suggests that although government claims to target the poorest in society in its development programmes, the poor and low-income earners are the ones who are often left out, excluded and marginalized in the delivery of services such as electricity.

**Table 9 Perceptions of electricity by LSM**

Rating	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	0	8	12	16	13	17	13	5	12
Improved	16	25	28	45	56	38	33	21	36
Stayed the same	35	23	20	18	20	28	44	65	30
Worsened	26	18	18	15	10	10	7	7	13
Worsened substantially	15	20	20	6	4	4	2	2	8
Uncertain	7	5	4	1	2	2	2	1	2

### 3.3 Affordable housing

The first democratically elected government inherited not only segregation but also apartheid policies, which resulted in extremely skewed access to housing. The provision of one million houses in five years was an election slogan of the ANC in 1994. Together with health care delivery and job creation, the provision of affordable housing was one of the most central delivery issues since the 1994 election, and a constitutional right. According to the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (ch 2, s. 22, ss. 1), “[e]veryone has the right to have access to adequate housing”. Several policy measures were therefore set in place to create an enabling environment for the provision of affordable housing.

Access to affordable housing declined between November 1999 and September 2000. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of people experiencing service deterioration from 31% in November to 35 % in September 2000. The HSRC September 2000 survey found that 23% of respondents reported an improvement in the availability of affordable housing in their areas, compared with 35% who indicated that the housing situation got worse.

**Table 10 ‘Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [affordable housing] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?’**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000 %
Improved	28	23
Same	37	35
Worsened	31	35
Uncertain	4	8
Total	100	100

*Source:* HSRC, 1999, 2000.

#### 3.3.1 Perceptions of affordable housing by race

Perceptions of access to affordable housing also differed by race. The percentage of blacks indicating improvement in affordable housing decreased from 30% to 23%, while those who perceived a worsening in the delivery of affordable housing increased from 30% to 37% between November 1999 and September 2000.

For example, the percentage of whites indicating a worsening in the provision of affordable housing decreased from 38% in November 1999 to 31% in September 2000 (Table 11). Whites who felt that affordable housing improved increased from 12% to 16% between November 1999 and September 2000. The high percentage of whites indicating that access to affordable housing worsened was in part the result of sky-rocketing interest rates which hit consumers from July 1998 - but interest rates have fallen in the past 24 months to all time low.

**Table 11 ‘Since the general elections of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [affordable housing] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?’**

Percep- tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	30	23	34	28	13	35	12	16
Stayed the same	37	69	31	44	44	37	44	46
Worsene d	30	37	29	23	41	32	38	31
Uncertai n	4	8	5	6	1	7	6	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.3.2 Perceptions of affordable housing by area type

More South Africans felt that the provision of housing had worsened between November 1999 and September 2000 than those who revealed improved access to affordable housing (Table 12). However, the majority who were hit the hardest were rural households, and metro and urban households fared relatively better. Over 44 % of rural residents experienced worsening access to affordable housing compared to 29% of the metro and 31% of urban respondents. The combination of floods, which destroyed infrastructure and services in rural areas in 2000, and the cost of materials for building in rural areas, also contributed to increased in levels of dissatisfaction of services there. In the words of one resident in a rural village in Mpumalanga "This house might fall on me at any time and the ANC I voted into power gave funds to businessmen who run the show here" (Mail and Guardian, 5-11 January 2001).

**Table 12 Perceptions of improvement in affordable housing, by area type**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	3	5	1	3
Improved	22	27	11	20
Stayed the same	37	35	34	35
Worsened	24	23	27	25
Worsened substantially	5	8	17	10
Uncertain	10	3	10	8

Prior to November 1999, people residing on tribal land did not qualify for state housing subsidy. Now the subsidy is extended to them, and people whose informal land rights are protected in the Interim Protection Act. This means that all people who currently occupy communal land do not have to vacate their areas in order to acquire housing

subsidies from the government. The new changes are unlikely to make a material difference in the lives of many rural communities in South Africa.

### 3.3.2.1 Perceptions of housing delivery by LSM

Affordable housing appears to have improved for those who fall between LSM 5 and 8, with those falling between LSM1 and LSM4 indicating worsening delivery of affordable housing (Table 13). As in the case of the provision of running water, and electricity, it is the poor households, which were hardest hit by the declining availability of affordable housing between November 1999 and September 2000. Those who can least afford affordable housing have greater difficulties in accessing housing.

**Table 13 Perceptions of housing delivery by LSM**

Rating	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	0	1	2	2	5	4	4	3	3
Improved	11	5	13	15	29	30	27	17	20
Stayed the same	52	35	27	34	31	30	42	44	35
Worsened	19	23	28	32	23	24	17	26	25
Worsened substantially	11	19	19	13	6	7	5	4	10
Uncertain	7	17	12	5	6	6	6	6	8

Those who have experienced worsening access to affordable housing are the poor, whom government claims should be the major beneficiaries of service delivery.

### 3.3.3 Health care

At the heart of the restructuring of the apartheid health system was the introduction of primary health care through the district health system. During the apartheid years, there were historical racial, class, gender, and geographic disparities in the allocation of human, material and financial resources. One of the key commitments of the RDP was therefore to bring health facilities to rural areas, informal settlements and unserved areas. Health expenditure apparently increased by 45% since 1995 and is bound to increase to R26, 4 billion by 2001 (Khosa, 2000a).

**Table 14 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [health care] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000
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	%	
Improved	36	36
Same	30	29
Worsened	32	33
Uncertain	2	3
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000

The HSRC September 2000 survey found that a third of South Africans (36%) believed that health care delivery improved compared with 33% who indicated that the situation worsened (Table 14). Overall perceptions of health have remained the same between November 1999 and September 2000. However, a closer analysis by race reveals important insights.

### 3.3.4 Perceptions of health care by race

Although overall perceptions of health care remained the same, the percentage of blacks that indicated improved health care provision decreased from 43% to 39% between November 1999 and September 2000 (Table 15). The percentage of whites that indicated worsening health care decreased 74% to 44% between November 1999 and September 2000. This implies that health care accessed by blacks deteriorated, whereas those services accessed by coloureds and Asians improved between November 1999 and September 2000.

**Table 15 Perceptions of health care by race**

	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	43	39	28	40	28	37	28	17
Stayed the same	32	23	33	33	33	25	33	34
Worsened	23	22	35	23	35	35	35	44
Uncertain	1	2	4	5	4	3	4	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.3.5 Perceptions of health care by area type

Health care delivery appears to have marginally penetrated some rural villages, which is not the case in other services such as affordable housing, running water, and electricity provision (Table 16). Although more urban residents felt health care delivery improvements than those who felt otherwise, rural residents appear to enjoy the benefits with 36% rural residents indicating service improvements compared to 34% who felt otherwise. It is health care in metro areas, which appear to have deteriorated relatively

more than urban and rural areas. However, although health care delivery appears to have improved in rural areas, they still walk long distances to access these facilities compared to urban and metro residents.

**Table 16 Comparing perceptions of health care improvement in September 2000, by area type**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	3	6	3	4
Improved	29	34	33	32
Stayed the same	28	28	29	29
Worsened	21	20	20	20
Worsened substantially	14	11	14	13
Uncertain	5	2	1	2

### 3.3.6 Perceptions of health care delivery by LSM

Health care provision received a slightly higher positive rating, with 36% of respondents suggesting that there have been improvement, compared to 33% respondents feeling that health care delivery has deteriorated in September 2000 (Table 17). A closer analysis suggests that the poor were likely to experience service deterioration than the middle- and high-income households. Poor communities often receive shoddy services compared to the wealthier sections of society.

**Table 17 Perceptions of health care delivery by LSM**

Rating	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	1	6	3	5	4	6	6	1	4
Improved	46	28	30	33	37	34	37	16	32
Stayed the same	32	25	26	29	30	24	27	38	29
Worsened	16	23	24	17	17	22	16	26	20
Worsened substantially	5	26	17	14	10	11	12	13	13
Uncertain	1	2	0	1	2	3	2	6	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

As evidence one may point out that those who indicated positive ratings fall between LSM 4 and LSM7, although also those who fall in LSM1 have recorded the highest levels of satisfaction (Table 17). This is the only service in which the poorest (LSM1) have

recorded such levels of improvements. However, those who fall between LSM2 and LSM3 recorded the worst levels of deterioration of health care delivery.

### 3.4 Public Transport

The legacy of apartheid is still reflected in the transport sector. The location of Africans, coloureds and Asians further away from their work places than whites resulted in longer travelling distances for the disadvantaged. Under apartheid, road networks were designed primarily to serve the white minority, and as such access and exit routes to outlying impoverished areas were few.

Over the past five years, there was a shift from spending on defence and transport to spending on social services. However, funds were inadequate and ill targeted. As a case in point, the beneficiaries of the transport subsidies, were not the ultra poor, but middle-income earners. In addition, rail transport was the most heavily subsidised means of transport, but continued to carry fewer commuters. People in rural areas were the most disadvantaged race in terms of access to roads and transportation (Khosa, 2000a).

Access to transport has a daily impact on the quality of life of most members of the population. Travelling times and distances also affect an individual's ability to participate in family and community life and leisure activities. Transport affects society's involvement in economic processes. Workers have to be able to reach the premises of their employers, and in many instances, they can only do this if there is efficient transport provision. Consumers must be able to get to retail stores without difficulty. In other words, transport must be cheap and efficient if these people's participation in the economic processes of production and consumption is to be maximised. In turn, it is this participation that ultimately determines their welfare. It is this participation that creates jobs, enhances economic development and promotes growth.

Between November 1999 and September 2000 positive assessment of public transport decreased from 39% to 32% in the same period (Table 19). Almost three in ten respondents felt that the provision of public transport improved in the HSRC September 2000 survey. Less than a third indicated that public transport provision worsened in the September 2000 (Table 18).

**Table 18 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [public transport] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000
Improved	39	32
Same	32	33
Worsened	25	31
Uncertain	5	3
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000

Evidence suggests that there are more people who experienced service deterioration in September 2000 than there were in November 2000 (Table 18).



### 3.4.1 Perceptions of public transport by race

Whereas blacks and whites recorded public transport service deterioration, coloureds and Asians recorded public transport improvements (Table 19). Reasons for white perceptions have more to do with the previous public transport privileges, especially when municipalities still provided basic transport. Whereas the percentage of blacks who indicated a deterioration increased 18% to 31%, that of whites also decreased 41 % to 30 and that of coloureds from 30% to 23% in the same period (Table 19). Blacks were however the major users of public transport with the majority of whites owning private motor cars (Table 20).

**Table 19 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say the delivery of [public transport] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Percep- tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	48	37	23	26	23	42	23	11
Stayed the same	32	31	42	48	42	33	42	34
Worsened	18	31	30	23	30	21	30	41
Uncertain	2	1	5	3	5	4	5	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

This implies that the major users of transport - who are mainly blacks, the majority who are also poor - indicated reduction in the levels of improvements between November 1999 and September 2000.

### 3.4.2 Perceptions of public transport by area type

Public transport improvement appears to be more evident in urban and metro areas than in rural areas. Some 40% of rural residents experienced worsening services compared to only 25% who felt that there was service improvement. This suggests that public transport improvements largely occur in urban and metro areas than in rural areas.

**Table 20 Comparing perceptions of improvement in the provision of public transport, by province**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	5	6	2	4

Improved	25	35	23	28
Stayed the same	30	36	32	33
Worsened	21	15	27	21
Worsened substantially	13	6	13	10
Uncertain	5	4	2	3

Poverty is more evident in rural areas, with the majority of residents forced to walk long distances to access basic services. The worsening of public transport in rural areas is a major blow for them as it is central to accessing services, a link to hubs of commercial concerns. This is yet another pointer to the differential access to services experienced by rural, urban and metro residents.

### 3.4.3 Perception of service delivery by LSM

Almost the same number of people feels that transport has worsened as those who felt that it had improved. Those who can afford to pay transport fares largely use public transport. However, it is far cheaper to use public transport than to use a private car. Evidence from the HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that those who believe that transport has improved are those who fall between LSM4 and LSM6, and the rest claimed to have experienced worsening in the provision of the service (Table).

**Table 21 Perception of public transport delivery by LSM**

Rating	LS M1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	2	2	4	7	6	6	3	1	4
Improved	8	19	26	29	41	37	29	15	28
Stayed the same	43	32	28	32	30	32	42	31	33
Worsened	37	26	28	22	15	15	15	24	21
Worsened substantially	10	18	14	9	7	8	6	15	10
Uncertain	1	3	1	1	1	3	4	14	3

### 3.5 Local police services

Asked in September 2000 whether the provision of police services changed since 1994, 32% of respondents indicated deterioration since 1994. Twenty-eight percent indicated an improvement in the delivery of local police services. There were proportionally more respondents indicating deterioration in the provision of local police services in

November 1999 than in September 2000 (Table 22). Even the Minister for Safety and Security, Steve Tswete admitted that:

We concede that the public outcry about the perceived inability of the entire security establishment to arrest these rogues is justifiable (11 September 2000, Media Briefing in Cape Town.

Although the Minister was referring to the widespread urban terrorism in the Western Cape, this sentiment is true for crime situation throughout South Africa.

**Table 22 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [police services] have changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000
		%
Improved	24	28
Same	43	40
Worsened	29	32
Uncertain	3	5
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000.

### 3.5.1 Perceptions of local police services by race

The role of the police during the apartheid period was associated with human rights violation against those who were opposed to the state. The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that, as with other services, the perception of police services varied by race (Table 23). For example, more than a quarter of blacks (28%) discerned an improvement in the delivery of local police services in September 2000, and 27% discerned deterioration in this service. Only 7% of whites felt that police services improved since 1994, as compared to nearly half (46%) who felt they deteriorated. The relative improved access to police services enjoyed by blacks after 1994 explains their more positive perception of these services compared to that of whites (Table 23). However, more blacks have now witnessed police service deterioration in September 2000 than it was the case in November 1999.

**Table 23 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [police services] have changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Percep- tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	28	26	24	27	11	34	7	11
Stayed the same	43	38	48	45	54	34	40	45
Worsened	27	32	22	25	34	26	46	38
Uncertain	2	4	6	4	2	7	6	7

Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
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Whereas there was an increase in those who perceived deterioration, many blacks and coloureds, this was not the case for Asians and whites, whose negative ratings declined.

### 3.5.2 Perceptions of local police services by area type

More people feel that local police services have deteriorated between November 1999 and September 2000 than those who feel otherwise. However, the deterioration is felt largely in rural areas, with 34% indicating deterioration, compared to 23% of rural residents who feel improvements. Significantly more improvements have been noticed in metro and urban areas than in rural areas (Table 24).

**Table 24 Comparing perceptions of improvement in the delivery of local police services, by area type**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	2	4	4	3
Improved	21	22	19	21
Stayed the same	36	42	40	40
Worsened	26	19	21	22
Worsened substantially	9	9	13	10
Uncertain	6	4	4	5

### 3.5.3 Perception of police services delivery by LSM

Proportionally more people feel that local police services have worsened than those who feel otherwise. The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that, it is largely the poor who feel this than the middle- and high-income households. These findings may also be related to the area where the poor reside in. Generally the poor tend to be poorly provided by basic services such as police services. As a result, the poor are excluded from adequate provision, which the Constitution prescribes.

**Table 25 Perception of police services delivery by LSM**

Rating	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	4	5	2	5	4	3	4	1	3

Improved	24	13	20	21	25	23	25	11	21
Stayed the same	49	43	33	41	37	38	37	47	40
Worsened	14	21	24	20	21	21	23	26	22
Worsened substantially	7	15	16	11	10	9	6	8	10
Uncertain	3	3	5	2	4	6	6	6	5

It is those who fall within LSM4 and LSM7 who have more than national average positive rating. This further suggests that the middle-class have experienced improved access to the police services than the poor and the rich.

### 3.6 Education

The provision of inferior education to the disenfranchised was one of the central pillars of the apartheid system. This was made possible through under-funding, under-resourcing and control of what was taught in the school system. In brief the majority of those who were disenfranchised were provided with an education to prepare them for manual labour in white-owned firms, industries and commercial concerns. During the 1970s and the 1980s, the struggle around education assumed national and international prominence and galvanised various sectors (both domestic and international) against the apartheid system and regime.

In 1994 a new national education framework was set in place. During the period May 2000 and September 2000 officials from the Department of Education monitored the state of readiness of all nine provincial departments to administer the 2000 Senior Certificate Examination and found that provinces were progressing according to schedule.

In the HSRC September 2000 survey, four in ten of the respondents indicated that there was an improvement in the provision of education while 28% indicated deterioration (Table 26). Although encouraging, there was an apparent disjuncture between public perceptions of education and the performance of the education sector. Until 2000, the Matric results had not improved since 1994 and there was consensus that nothing short of a major revamp of the education sector would alleviate the current education crisis.

#### 3.6.1 Perceptions of education improvements by race

Perceptions of educational improvements differed by race, income and province (Table 26). Forty-five percent 45% of blacks indicated an improvement, compared to 5% of whites and Asians and 33% of coloureds. There were proportionately more blacks than any other race who indicated an improvement in education. The majority of whites (47%) indicated deterioration in the education system (Table 26). This negative rating has more to do with previous educational privileges enjoyed in the past. Virtually all have indicated some improvement in the delivery of education between November 1999 and September 2000.

**Table 26 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [education services] have changed in the area where you live, if at all?' (September 2000)**

Perception	Black		Coloured		Asian		White		Total Population	
	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000
Improved	42	45	19	33	6	45	6	15	33	40
Stayed the same	36	31	33	32	16	25	19	35	33	38
Worsened	18	20	44	30	78	25	66	47	28	25
Uncertain	5	4	4	6	1	3	9	5	5	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.6.2 Improvement of education by area type

The education system appears to have undergone a significant improvement between 1999 and 2000. As evidence, one may point to the overall improvements of the Matric examination results in 2000. Although improvements are evident in metro, urban and rural areas, rural areas appear to be lagging relatively behind in terms of service improvements. Even the 2000 Matric pass rates do indicate that schools, which continue to under-perform are largely in rural areas used mainly by black kids.

**Table 27 Comparing perceptions of improvement in the delivery of education services, by area type**

Rating	Metro	Urban	Rural	National Average
Improved substantially	5	6	4	5
Improved	33	38	33	35
Stayed the same	29	33	31	31
Worsened	20	14	15	16
Worsened substantially	6	5	13	8
Uncertain	7	4	3	4

### 3.6.3 Perception of education service by LSM

Anecdotal evidence in newspapers suggests that the overall improvements in the Matric results in 2000 were surprises. However, as early as September 2000, over 40 % of population had indicated that the education system was improving, compared to 24% who felt otherwise. However, closer assessments suggest that it is the poorest and the richest who believe that the education system has not improved. The implication is that

the national improvement aggregate does not reveal zones where there has been deterioration within the education sector (Table 8).

**Table 28 Perception of service delivery by LSM**

Rating	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Improved substantially	1	3	6	8	6	5	4	3	5
Improved	6	33	34	38	44	40	32	16	35
Stayed the same	45	29	27	33	32	31	32	35	31
Worsened	32	15	15	12	10	15	24	29	16
Worsened substantially	10	16	12	6	6	5	4	13	8
Uncertain	6	5	7	2	2	6	5	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

In fact 42% of the poorest (LSM1) experienced educational deterioration, with those who fall within LSM3 and LSM7 indicating educational improvements.

### 3.7 Tarred roads and street drainage

Lack of funds impacted on the implementation of road policy in South Africa. In September 1999 the Department of Transport indicated that there was a R43 billion backlog in terms of road maintenance, repair and upgrading. Most of South Africa's road network had exceeded its 20-year lifespan, which could result in hazardous road conditions. Eighty five percent (85%) of roads to rural villages were inadequate, compared to 32% of roads to farming communities. Significant numbers of respondents believed tarred roads and street drainage deteriorated. The HSRC September 2000 survey revealed that 29% of South Africans indicated an improvement in the provision of tarred roads and street drainage in their areas, compared with four in ten (41%) who discerned a worsening. The percentage of respondents indicating an improvement remained the same at 29% from November 1999 to September 2000. However, there was an increase in the percentage of those indicating a deterioration in tarred roads and street drainage from 32% 41% in the same period (Table 29).

**Table 29 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [tarred roads and street drainage] have changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000
	%	%
Improved	29	29
Same	37	32
Worsened	32	41
Uncertain	2	3
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000.

### 3.7.1 Perceptions of tarred roads and street drainage by race

As with other services, perceptions of tarred roads and street drainage differed by race. A higher percentage of whites and blacks, than coloureds and Asians discerned a deterioration in tarred roads and street drainage. However, the percentage of whites who noted an improvement increased from 8% to 18% between November 1999 and September 2000. Conversely, the proportion of whites indicating deterioration in tarred roads and street drainage decreased marginally from 44% to 40% in the same period (Table 30).

**Table 30 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [tarred roads and street drainage] have changed in the area where you live, if at all?', by race**

Percep- tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	33	24	33	25	27	54	8	18
Stayed the same	34	29	43	48	61	30	46	41
Worsened	31	44	20	25	10	13	44	40
Uncertain	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.8 Water-borne sewage disposal

The HSRC September 2000 survey found that one in five (20%) of respondents indicated an improvement compared to 28% who indicated deterioration in water-borne sewage disposal after 1994. (Table 31). These findings have major implications on the health of those who live in informal and rural settlement areas who do not have access to better sanitation.



**Table 31 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [water-borne sewage disposal] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000
		%
Improved	25	20
Same	48	41
Worsened	21	28
Uncertain	7	13
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1998, 1999.

### 3.8.1 Perceptions of water-borne sewage disposal by race

Perceptions of access to water-borne sewage disposal differed by race. The percentage of Asians who indicated an improvement increased from 14% to 43% between November 1999 and September 2000. The comparable figures for blacks decreased from 30% to 20%, for coloureds remained the same at 21% and the increase among whites from 2% to 18% in the same period. As blacks constitute a significant proportion of those who are poor, it is the poor who experienced deterioration in the provision of water borne sewerage. Slightly more blacks have experienced worsened water-borne sewerage disposal in September 2000 than in November 1999.

**Table 32 'Since the general elections of 1994, how would you say [water-borne sewage disposal] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Percep- Tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept 2000
Improved	30	20	21	21	14	43	2	18
Stayed the same	39	34	68	64	71	47	86	66
Worsened	25	32	7	11	7	6	6	10
Uncertain	7	15	4	5	7	5	6	7
Total	100		100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.9 Waste removal

During the period November 1999 to September 2000, there was a marginal improvement in the perception of waste removal services from 28% to 29%. The proportion of those who felt the provision of waste removal increased marginally from 23% to 25% during the same period (Table 33). At face value, no significant changes took place between November 1999 and September 2000 in the provision of waste removal. However, analysis of data by race, wealth and area type suggests some important shifts.

**Table 33 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [waste removal] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?'**

Perception	November 1999	September 2000
		%
Improved	28	29
Same	42	38
Worsened	23	25
Uncertain	6	4
Total	100	100

Source: HSRC, 1999, 2000.

### 3.9.1 Perceptions of waste removal by race

Proportionately more coloureds and Asians were satisfied in September 2000 than whites and blacks were. The percentage of blacks who noted an improvement in waste removal decreased from 33% in November 1999 to 30% in September 2000. The percentage of whites who indicated deterioration in waste removal increased marginally from 17% to 20% during the same period (Table 34).

**Table 34 'Since the general election of 1994, how would you say [waste removal] has changed in the area where you live, if at all?', by race**

Percep- Tion	Black		Coloured		Asian		White	
	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000	Nov. 1999	Sept. 2000
Improved	33	30	27	35	18	50	5	15
Stayed the same	33	32	57	54	67	42	73	62
Worsened	27	29	13	10	15	6	17	20
Uncertain	7	10	4	1	1	2	5	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

## 4 Critical appraisal: winners and losers

### 4.1 Significant improvement by LSM

When the HSRC September 2000 survey is further analysed by LSM, considering only those who indicated substantial improvement in service delivery, important insights emerge. In virtually all services, those who fall between LSM1 and LSM3 constitute a minority of those experiencing significant service improvements. It is the middle- and high-income households, which constitute the majority of those indicating significant service improvements. Those experiencing significant service improvements are largely those who fall between LSM4 and LSM7. In general, the losers are the poor, and low-

income households, whereas the middle- and high-income households are generally on the winning side in the service delivery game.

**Table 35 Services, which have improved significantly, September 2000**

Service	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Nat. Ave.
Water-bone sewerage	0	0	5	9	26	26	27	7	3
Local libraries	0	1	4	18	18	24	26	10	3
Recreationa l facilities	0	3	4	23	13	28	19	11	2
Tarred roads and street drainage	0	4	10	8	27	27	14	11	3
Rubbish removal	3	6	15	23	18	21	13	2	4
Health Care	2	13	8	20	16	20	18	3	4
Education	5	5	15	27	17	15	9	7	5
Public transport	3	4	11	28	22	20	10	3	4
Police services	6	13	8	26	19	13	13	3	3
Running water	0	5	13	17	25	23	13	5	9
Electricity	0	6	13	23	18	21	13	5	12
Affordable housing	0	4	10	10	29	20	16	5	9

The year 2000 experienced a significant slow down in the government service delivery. The perceptions of significant improvements were only in two services, namely education and electricity. In a significant number of cases, service levels remained the same. Nonetheless, it is in the majority of cases that there has been a significant deterioration of services.

#### 4.2 Significant improvements by area type

Analysis of respondents who had revealed that services had significantly improved by area type further suggests that it is the majority of metro and urban households who are significant beneficiaries. Rural households constitute a minority of those who had experienced substantial service improvement. It is only in the health care and education provision that there are marginally more rural people than metro residents who have experienced substantial service improvements. However, urban residents have

consistently commanded a larger proportion of those who witnessed significant service improvements.

**Table 36 Substantial improvements by area type**

Service	Metro	Urban	Rural	Total significant improvement (national)
Water	30	44	29	9
Electricity	23	38	39	12
Affordable housing	24	61	15	3
Water borne sewerage	26	66	7	3
Local libraries	34	58	8	3
Recreational facilities	36	53	11	2
Tarred roads	45	50	5	3
Public transport	33	47	19	4
Local police services	17	47	36	3
Rubbish removal	38	59	3	4
Health care	22	54	24	4
Education	25	48	28	5

Of all service delivery areas, it is only in the delivery of electricity that there are proportionally more rural people who constitute the majority of those who indicated significant improvements in service delivery. In all other services, urban residents command the majority, signifying bias against rural areas in terms of service delivery.

### 4.3 Significant worsening of services by LSM

Considering only those who indicated that there have been substantial service deteriorations also points out important messages. Poor households constitute a considerable proportion of those who indicated service deterioration. This further confirms evidence elsewhere by the mainstream perspective (Bond, 2000; Hemson, 2000). In large measure, the poorest in society do not constitute a significant proportion of the bulk of beneficiaries. In the majority of cases their joy is short-lived as no sooner are services than they crumble. The insistence by government for cost recovery and user charges further excludes the poor from material benefits accrued in the post 1994 period.

**Table 37 Services, which have worsened significantly, September 2000**

Service	LSM1	LSM2	LSM3	LSM4	LSM5	LSM6	LSM7	LSM8	Total worsened significantly (national)
Water	7	24	28	21	13	12	4	3	8
Electricity	10	23	36	14	5	8	3	2	7
Affordable housing	5	17	26	22	10	10	6	5	10
Water borne sewerage	8	22	30	24	8	4	2	2	9
Local libraries	7	19	27	20	11	8	4	4	10
Recreational facilities	6	19	24	20	12	12	8	5	12
Tarred roads	7	15	19	21	15	10	5	10	16
Public transport	5	15	18	15	11	11	7	18	10
Local police services	3	12	21	18	15	13	7	10	10
Rubbish removal	6	16	29	22	10	8	5	5	10
Health care	6	16	29	22	10	8	5	5	13
Education	2	11	18	20	12	8	6	13	8

Those indicating significant service deterioration ranged from 7% (electricity) to 16% (tarred roads). Service deteriorations were most evident among those who fall between LSM2 and LSM6.

#### 4.4 Significant worsening of services by area type

Evidence further suggests that rural households experienced substantial worsening of almost in the majority of services, followed by urban residents. With the exception of the delivery of police services, metropolitan residents appear to have scored better than their rural and urban counterparts. No doubt the economies of scale in metro and urban areas work to their benefits as the cost of establishing services are cheaper there than in rural areas.

**Table 38 Substantial worsening of services by area type**

Service	Metro	Urban	Rural	Total significant worsened
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				(national)
Water	9	20	72	8
Electricity	13	20	66	7
Affordable housing	13	29	58	10
Water borne sewerage	7	18	75	9
Local libraries	11	20	69	10
Recreational facilities	13	27	61	12
Tarred roads	15	29	57	16
Public transport	35	20	45	10
Local police services	23	33	45	10
Rubbish removal	14	19	67	10
Health care	29	32	39	13
Education	23	23	54	8

The theme, which emerges from this analysis, is that the rural poor are among the most dissatisfied with service delivery. It is also the poor who constitute the majority of those who indicated worsening of services. Referring to the recent cholera epidemic in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, an editorial in the *Business Day* captures how government systems were not able to respond to the crisis "The cholera outbreak has also highlighted government's slow pace of service delivery of potable water and hygienic sanitation in rural areas" (*Business Day*, 4 January 2001).

Although the new government has brought about political stability, it is in social delivery especially in the fields of land and welfare that is the new government has not acted promptly. Only 2% of agricultural land has now been transferred to blacks over the past six years, a far cry from the 30% promised by the ANC in 1994. A policy document aimed at promoting commercial farming among blacks has been released, but not implemented. In welfare, for example, thousands of deserving beneficiaries are out of the welfare net because of bureaucratic bungling and budget cuts. An example of this failure was in the Free State government to give pensioners their money before Christmas (2000). They had to settle for food parcels. The biggest failure has been on the job fronts. In 2000, the Reserve bank said that 162,000 formal jobs were lost in the months up to the end of March 2000 (*Business Day*, 3 January 2001).

## 5 Conclusion

A number of observations can be teased out from this chapter. First, positive ratings of service delivery reached a peak in 1999 and the past year has experienced a slight decline in the ratings. The only exception is on the areas of education; refuse removal, and electricity, where there were positive improvement ratings. In the case of education, rating improvements have a phenomenal increase from 33% in November 1999 to 40% in September 2000.

Second, the worst areas affected by the decline in service delivery are rural areas. Virtually all services, rural residents indicated negative ratings, indicating that services in their areas have worsened. As evidence, one may point out to several disconnections of services in rural areas, and the collapse, especially during the floods of 2000, of some infrastructure, which were created in the post 1994 period.

Third, the majority of service improvements appear to have occurred in metro and urban areas rather than in rural areas where the majority of the poor live. The only exception is the provision of health and electricity in rural areas, which seems to have enjoyed a slight improvement. Rural residents constitute the majority of those who are most dissatisfied with the delivery of services, whereas the majority of metro and urban residents are proportionally in the majority of those who are satisfied with the delivery of services.

Forth, class appears to be a critical aspect in the delivery of services. The poorest of the poor do not appear to be the major beneficiaries of service delivery. In fact, it is those who fall between LSM4 and LSM7 who appear to constitute a number of most satisfied, and happy recipients of service delivery. These findings suggest a need to review the current delivery mechanisms to ensure that the poor are the primary beneficiaries.

The HSRC September 2000 survey suggests that the beneficiaries of better service delivery are not the poorest of the poor, but the middle- and rich-income earners who are also able to afford to pay for the services. The findings challenge the mainstream perspective, which suggests that government's programmes are largely benefiting the poor and the marginalized. Until recently, the contributing factor to the current state is the government's insistence on cost recovery and user pay principle which pervades most of development projects. The trade union movement, and elements of the radical social movements have consistently challenged government's neo-liberal approach to managing the economy and in the delivery of services. It is however too early to speculate about the success of the recently introduced free electricity and water services as the ANC only proposed this during the municipal government elections which took place in December 2000. The implementation of free water and electricity programme for the poor will only take root during the course of 2001.

The assessment of the current neo-liberal approach to development suggests that nothing short of a fundamental review of the current mainstream framework to service and infrastructure delivery will significantly benefit the poor. The Mbeki regime will ignore this to its peril, as there has been a continuous radicalization of the trade union movement and organs of civil society discontented at the poor quality of services provided, and government's newly found zeal to promote outsourcing, privatization and deregulation of economic activities. The social costs of such neo-liberal global processes have unfortunately not been costed, and these costs are likely to undermine some of the core benefits accrued in the post 1994 period.

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