



**THE ROLE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN  
ACCELERATING SERVICE DELIVERY:  
LESSONS LEARNT FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
BPDM	Bojanala Platinum District Municipality
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Science
CBD	Central Business District
CDW	Community Development Workers
CMC	Central Military Commission
CoCT	City of Cape Town
COGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CPC	Communist Party of China
CPCCC	Communist Party of China Central Committee
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
CTM	Cape Town Metro
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DPSA	Department of Public Services and Administration
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EMT	Executive Management Team
ETU	Education and Training Unit
FBE	Free Basic Electricity
FBW	Free Basic Water
FG	Focus Group
FS	Free State Province
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Plan
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in Africa
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
INT	Interview
LM	Local Municipality
LED	Local Economic Development
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act
MK	Moses Kotane
MKLM	Moses Kotane Local Municipality
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	Municipal Productivity Index
MSA	Municipal Systems Act
NEP	National Electricity Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NW	North West Province
NWA	National Water Act
PC	People's Congress
PRC	People's Republic of China
QMEPUB	Qingdao Municipal Engineering and Public Utility Bureau

QD	Qingdao City
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAPS	South African Police Services
SC	Standing Committee
SDBIP	Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
SX	Shaoxing City
TLM	Tswelopele Local Municipality
UN	United Nations
USDG	Urban Settlement Development Grant
VIP	Ventilated Improved Pit latrine
WC	Western Cape Province
WSA	Water Services Act
WSSP	Water Supply and Sanitation Policy, White Paper
XY	Xinyu City

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project was jointly initiated in 2009 as a collaborative and comparative study of government policies and programmes related to service delivery in South Africa and China. It is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), established between the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS) in 2002, which aims to facilitate exchange and cooperation between the two organisations.

The primary aim of the project was to investigate municipalities whose record in the delivery of basic services stand out as instances of good practice. The particular objectives of the study were to:

- identify and use comparative case studies from South Africa and China to showcase programmes from a best practice perspective;
- analyse policies and programmes at the municipal level;
- engage local officials and recipients of service delivery in order to arrive at a more textured understanding of primary challenges and possible solutions;
- explore the impacts of intangible infrastructure on the provision of basic services; and
- make recommendations based on lessons learnt and best practice interventions in each country in order to accelerate service delivery.

Three case study areas in China and South Africa respectively were selected. The criteria comprised the population size of the municipality, as well as good performance in service delivery. Moreover, the size and specific service area were matched so that a municipality with a population of less than 50,000 and with a good record in the delivery of water services was selected. (For the China case area, a larger district of a city was eventually used due to accessibility.) The second selected area was a municipality with a population between 50,000 and 500,000 and with good delivery in terms of electricity. Finally, researchers chose a metropolitan municipality with a population greater than 500,000 and showing good performance in the sanitation sector.

In South Africa, three municipalities were selected out of the following considerations: Tswelopele Local Municipality for its performance in water; Moses Kotane Local Municipality as an exemplary electricity supplier; and the Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality in the sanitation sector.

In China, three cities were selected out of the following considerations: Xinyu City for its good water service as a provincial pace setter; Shaoxing City as one of the five international first-rate electricity suppliers in China; and Qingdao Municipality as a Nationally Advanced Clean City.

The research methodology comprised primarily of focus groups and in-depth interviews. Focus groups were conducted in the selected communities to understand the complexities and nuances of perceptions on service delivery across different socio-economic communities. Local government stakeholders were interviewed to obtain their views on a wide range of issues and to complement the data collected from the focus groups. Due to limited funding, the fieldwork in each municipality was confined to a few focus groups with residents and limited interviews with selected stakeholders.

### **General findings from the South Africa case studies:**

Residents from Tswelopele Local Municipality and the Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality supported the assessment of their municipalities as good performers with regard to water and sanitation services respectively. Residents from the Moses Kotane Local Municipality, however, strongly disagreed with the assessment of their municipality as a good performer regarding the provision of electricity services.

The study indicated that the residents of the selected municipalities receive different levels of service delivery, ranging from excellent services to no services at all. Residents from Tswelopele Local Municipality have reliable access to high quality tap water and showed significant improvement in access to water over the past five years, including easier access to water and the abolishment of the bucket system.

Residents from the Cape Town Metro have differentiated access to sanitation services. While residents from three areas confirmed proper private sanitation facilities, only some Khayelitsha residents have private access to toilets while others have access to communal toilets.

Residents from the Moses Kotane Local Municipality also reported differentiated access to electricity services, ranging from some households with no access to others experiencing a myriad of problems related to the provision of electricity.

The study indicates that all levels of government, i.e. national, provincial and local government, are involved in the provision of water, sanitation and electricity services. The national government sets a legal and policy framework and technical standards in terms of the provision of the respective services. The provincial government plays a similar role while the municipal government enforces them and administers the services.

Furthermore, public-private partnerships in the delivery of services are important. The City of Cape Town, for example, contracts private companies to assist with recycling and community-based service contractors for refuse removal. Some residents of the Tswelopele Local Municipality also stressed the positive role of external service providers with regard to job creation in the municipality.

With regard to the development strategy of local government, the interviewees of the selected municipalities emphasized the importance of effective service delivery and economic development. Initiatives by the Cape Town Metro to partner with developers and banking institutions to improve access to housing, and a labour-based public works programme aiming for infrastructure-led economic development forms part of the City of Cape Town's development strategy. The importance of provincial funding for sustainable local development and the monitoring role of councillors with regard to effective service delivery were also highlighted by the municipality representatives.

Service delivery in the selected municipalities is primarily financed by national and provincial government grants, loans and user-charges. Paying customers, primarily residing in formal areas, subsidise the services in the informal settlements.

Various challenges with regard to service delivery were identified, amongst others, lack of proper legislation, out-dated legislation, the increasing need of land for housing which is, however, limited and expensive, ageing infrastructure resulting in large capital expenditure to replace and maintain expensive

equipment, in-migration, and the high unemployment rate of the population in the respective municipalities that impacts on the number of households requiring subsidized or free services.

Furthermore, service provision, particularly in informal settlements and rural areas, remains challenged. For example, the City of Cape Town experiences difficulties with regard to service provision in informal settlements, such as high density which impacts on access to service delivery, and unsafe health and hygiene practices causing secondary contamination. Both the Moses Kotane and Tswelopele Local Municipalities reported difficulties with the provision of services in the rural areas of the municipalities.

Within municipal governance and management, challenges include a shortage of technically skilled people, the lack of skills retention, mandatory retirement of skilled employees, and the lack of adequate succession policies in local government.

The selected best practice local governments regarded community consultation and participation as significant for effective service delivery in their respective municipalities. The importance of engaging with civil society and NGOs regarding service delivery was also emphasized. However, only the residents of the Tswelopele Local Municipality positively assessed their relationship and engagement with the local government officials and noted that community consultation and participation processes are well-established, such as through Ward Committee engagements.

Many of the focus group participants in the Cape Town Metro are unfamiliar with the councillors and did not engage with local officials in the past. The participants from the focus group conducted in Khayelitsha especially perceived their area's councillors negatively and complained about the lack of community participation. In Moses Kotane Local Municipality, participants reported the deterioration of the relationship between the community and the municipality, and limited opportunities to engage with the municipality regarding electricity services. However, the interviewees of the Moses Kotane Local Municipality reported a strong and effective community participation process with the residents.

#### **General findings from the China case studies:**

In a broader sense of public service, the three selected Chinese cities have done a good job in improving the people's livelihood. In this respect, again Shaoxing and Qingdao are national front runners while Xinyu is a provincial one. Such results accurately reflect the overall ranking of these three cities in China. Shaoxing City locates in one of the most developed provinces and is a nationally famous cultural city. Qingdao Municipality is one of the five sub-provincial level cities that are not provincial capitals. Its overall development surpasses its provincial capital, Jinan. But Xinyu City locates in a less developed Central China province and is not a provincial capital.

Residents from the three selected cities supported, to different degrees, the assessment of their cities as good performers in terms of water, electricity and sanitation. While Shaoxing and Qingdao residents were unanimous in endorsing the statement, their Xinyu counterparts have some reservation due to low water pressure in some residential areas.

Our study finds that the selected service areas are generally not of things to be worried about by residents in their daily life. Two model cities of Shaoxing and Qingdao have offered the best service possible under the current Chinese hardware and software. For example, the one household one meter, remote electronic reading of meters and payment of bill via bank cards or pre-use purchase cards of electricity as operating in Shaoxing are the most advanced in the country. As a national clean city,

Qingdao's refuse and manure collection and treatment are unequalled by most other cities. For Xinyu, if not because of the large scale construction around the city, water provision is otherwise normal. This also means such a temporary problem will soon be replaced by better service in a broader scale.

The services under investigation have reached almost all residents. The government does not subsidize production prices to companies but waive or partially waive fees for the low income families. The Shaoxing Electric Power Company has introduced different prices for the use during peak and valley times, which is good to residents and also for the local grid.

All levels of government, i.e. national, provincial and municipal government, are involved in the regulation and provision of water, sanitation and electricity services. The national government sets a legal and policy framework and technical standards in terms of the provision of the respective services. The provincial government plays a similar role while the municipal government enforces them and administers the services.

Public-private partnerships in the delivery of services are important. In all three cities, companies instead of the government or its departments are delivering the various services. They are responsible for their own profits and losses. The days when the government was responsible for their existence and operation have gone. But it should be noted that these companies are public holding companies rather than private firms.

In this respect, it is worth noting the Chinese programme of involving enterprises and institutions located in the community in the service provision and cultural and recreational activities of the community concerned. An example is found in the Xitian Community in Qingdao where voluntary services replace the property management company in providing sanitation services free of charge. And a community-based company covers the costs.

The government requires that any price adjustments in service charges must go through public hearings. In the three cities, residents knew about such procedures and the communities sent their representatives. Other channels are also available for the residents to air their opinions on the service, including price adjustments. These include, for example, the mayor's hotline and the government office for receiving people's opinions and complaints.

In China, the government does not provide price subsidies to either the water or electricity supply company. Instead, subsidies are provided to the low-income families who are qualified for the government welfare.

Community representatives serve as a bridge between the residents and the government. As the autonomous organization of the residents, the Neighbourhood Committee represents the local residents in interacting with the government and service companies. It sends representatives to the public hearing on the service quality and price adjustment. It also engages with the service companies including administration of quality surveys and arrangement of lectures on such topics like the scientific way of using water and using water safely.

The majority of the communities have maintained good working relationships with local government. This helps the communities to obtain substantive support from the government. For example, the Hong Kong Garden Community in Qingdao has received funds from the government departments to establish the school for the aged, library and dancing hall.

The good relationship between the Neighbourhood Committee and service companies also results in concrete benefits to both sides. The company business becomes smoother. For example, conversion from shared meters to one household one meter was completed very smoothly. In turn, the Neighbourhood Committee and the property management company run a 24-hour hotline. Any requests for repair will be responded to quickly, and residents are thus better served.

However, there is also the case whereby the relationship between the Neighbourhood Committee and government is abnormal in the eyes of residents. By law the committee is autonomous, but in reality its degree of autonomy is not high.

### **Lessons of best practice:**

Comparison of the findings from each country shows that many cross-country lessons can be drawn. With regard to the theme of service delivery and development, the following lessons are notable:

- Socio-economic development of the local municipal area is important for best practice service delivery;
- The employment of technically skilled workers to implement and manage projects;
- Employee skills development programmes and training contribute to employees' satisfaction and skills retention in the municipalities;
- Public-private partnerships are workable and effective for the provision and maintenance of service delivery as in the selected three Chinese cities water, electricity and sanitation services are actually provided by companies rather than the government-run institutions as it was the case prior to 1980s;
- Public-private partnerships are also important with services that are not the core competency of municipalities, such as recycling initiatives as is done in the City of Cape Town;
- Public-private partnerships are important to facilitate development initiatives of municipalities, for example, to partner with developers and banking institutions to improve access to housing;
- A polycentric service provision model is desirable and practical, under which the government sets the legal and policy framework for and supervises over the business companies and voluntary organizations in running various services; and
- The government should employ community workers to provide a parallel service structure in addition to the property management company as hired by the residents;

In terms of policies and programmes to improve infrastructure and service delivery, several significant lessons can be drawn.

- In China, the national and provincial service standards should be more widely and stringently enforced to equalize various services;
- In South Africa, national service standards and legislation should continually monitor and incorporate changes in service delivery requirements in municipalities.
- In South Africa, adherence to the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) to maintain infrastructure and basic service delivery;
- Long-term planning should address the balance between on-going and future demand for services and land, for example between industrial and domestic use;
- Proper understanding of and planning for in-migration and its impact on the demand for service delivery; and

- National selections of best performers such as “the clean city” should be maintained to raise overall service standard through the emulation of best practice.

The final important theme was community participation and consultation.

- In both South Africa and China, well-established community consultation and participation processes in the municipalities are crucial, as identified by residents and community and government leaders.
- In China, the Neighbourhood Committee serves as a bridge between the government, enterprises and voluntary organization on the one side and residents on the other;
- In South Africa, residents can engage with the local Ward committee at regular meetings, and also with appointed community development workers.
- Standardised processes should be followed for ward committees’ engagement with communities to improve communication and participation with residents;
- Adherence to established reporting structures between councillors and municipal management is necessary;
- Capacity in the local municipalities is optimized through engagement with civil society and local NGOs in the consultation and implementation of projects; and
- In China, the government should empower the Neighbourhood Committee by allowing it to operate with due autonomy as authorized by the law and supplementing its limited sources with the involvement of the community-based enterprises and institutions.

This study found that, notwithstanding their historical and contemporary contexts, cities in South Africa and China face similar challenges with regard to maintaining infrastructure and providing basic services. In both developmental contexts, however, intangible infrastructures such as public-private cooperation and community participation were identified as key aspects in improving and sustaining service delivery. This study identified strategies and programmes of best practice that can be adopted by other local municipalities to assist them to improve their performances across the service sectors of water, sanitation, and electricity. Furthermore, it may be utilised as a pilot study for a larger, comparative project on intangible infrastructure and local governance.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Contextual background**

Service delivery in both China and South Africa is a contentious and complex issue that impacts on the daily life of all citizens. Access to basic goods and sustainable infrastructure are essential to each country's social and economic development and should be prioritised in national policy.

The growing demand for basic services alongside the persistence of severe backlogs in the provision of services is not, however, unique to South Africa and China. Countries in the Asian and Sub-Saharan African regions of the world are found to be especially challenged in this regard, as illustrated by the following statistics on access to basic services:

- In 2008 about 705 million rural and 74 million urban residents in South Asia, and 19 million rural and 22 million urban residents in Sub-Saharan Africa, were practicing open defecation in urban and rural areas;
- In 2006 about 54% of rural households in Sub-Saharan Africa and 16% in Southern Asia had no access to an improved water source;
- In 2005, about 62% of the urban population in Sub-Saharan Africa lived with shelter deprivations and about 43% in South Asia (MDG 2007).

The capacity to provide essential services such as water and energy relies unequivocally on the existence and maintenance of infrastructure. However, the legislative and policy environment, governance structures, procedures and networks, among others, directly impact upon the efficiency, sustainability and expansion of infrastructure, as well as upon the government's capacity to delivery basic services (Bhattacharyay 2009: 2). According to the African Development Bank (ADB 2011: 236) "with sound governance and institutional frameworks the strong linkages between infrastructure and poverty could be exploited effectively to reduce poverty". One of the goals of this study was therefore to explore the experiences and attitudes of relevant stakeholders with regard to the policies, structures and relations involved in the delivery of basic services.

The chosen areas of study, namely municipalities in South Africa and in China, are not exempt from the challenges confronting most municipal governments in developing countries. It is precisely within this context of infrastructure and service delivery backlogs that experiences of success are essential. Through an exploration of exemplary cases, this study illuminates strategies and programmes of best practice that may provide a useful perspective and potential tool for addressing infrastructure and service delivery problems elsewhere.

It is with this in mind that the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS) have conceptualized this collaborative research project, which highlights the need to investigate the significance of intangible forms of infrastructure for service delivery. This was achieved through the identification of comparative 'best practice' municipalities and their respective programmes across the service sectors of water, sanitation and electricity.

### **1.2 Project background**

This project was jointly initiated in 2009 as a collaborative and comparative study of government policies and programmes related to service delivery in South Africa and China. It is underpinned by a

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), established between the HSRC and CASS in 2002, which aims to facilitate exchange and cooperation between the two organizations. It is also the first completed HSRC-CASS project.

The HSRC-CASS research team<sup>1</sup> would like to acknowledge the following people for their contributions to this project: Prof. Li Yang, CASS Vice President; Prof. Zhang Youyun, Director General of the Bureau for International Exchanges and Cooperation; Prof. Huang Xiaoyong, Party Secretary of the Graduate School; Prof. Fang Ning, Director of the Institute of Political Science; Ms. Zhou Yunfan, Assistant Director General of the Bureau for International Exchanges and Cooperation; Mr. Qiu Weili, Director of the Department for International Exchanges and Cooperation of the CASS Graduate School; Dr. Olive Shishana, CEO of the HSRC; Ms. Bridgette Prince, Director of the International Liaison Office in the Office of the CEO at the HSRC; Ms. Zama Koba, former Project Administrator at the HSRC, and Ms. Lesego Mogami and Ms. Fazeelah Hoosen, former researchers at the HSRC.

### **1.3 Goals and objectives of the study**

The primary objective of the project was to investigate municipalities whose record in the delivery of basic services stand out as instances of best practice. More specifically, the project aimed to achieve the following goals:

- to identify and use comparative case studies from South Africa and China to showcase programmes from a best practice perspective;
- to analyse policies and programmes at the municipal level;
- to engage local officials and recipients of service delivery in order to arrive at a more textured understanding of the primary challenges and possible solutions;
- to explore the impacts of intangible infrastructure on the provision of basic services; and
- to make recommendations based on lessons learnt and best practice interventions in each country in order to accelerate service delivery.

Beneficiaries of this study were local government officials, managers and administrators in South Africa and China, but also in other developing countries which face similar challenges in delivering services. Beneficiaries also included recipients of basic services and participants in the kinds of programmes and approaches undertaken by local governments to develop infrastructure and improve service delivery.

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<sup>1</sup> At the inception of the project, Prof. Dong invited the following researchers as the CASS research team members: Dr. Liu Jianxiong, Dr. Li Weiren, Dr. Yun Jie and Prof. Zhou Qingzhi, who took part in the implementation activities prior to the field work in China. Their participation in the project is acknowledged.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Selection of case studies**

#### **3.1.1 Selection criteria**

During the inception phase of this project, a seminar and workshop between the CASS and HSRC team members was held concurrently with the 2010 Shanghai Expo. This seminar provided a platform for the team to conceptualize the project plan and methodological approach, and marked the joint commitment by the organisations to undertake the study.

Three case study areas in China and South Africa respectively were selected. The criteria comprised the population size of the municipality, as well as good performance in service delivery. Moreover, the size and specific service area were matched so that a municipality with a population of less than 50,000 and with a good record in the delivery of water services was selected. (For the China case area, a larger district of a city was eventually used due to accessibility.) The second selected area was a municipality with a population between 50,000 and 500,000 and with good delivery in terms of electricity. Finally, a metropolitan municipality with a population greater than 500,000 and showing good performance in the sanitation sector was selected.

The criterion was thus population size matched to service delivery as follows:

- < 50 000 (constituting a semi rural/urban area) with good delivery of water services;
- 50 000 – 500 000 (constituting a small town) with good delivery of electricity services; and
- 500 000 – 3.5 million (constituting a city or metro) with good delivery of sanitation services.

#### **3.1.2 Selection of South African case study areas**

In South Africa, water, sanitation and electricity are local government competencies, as compared to other service sectors like housing, health and education, which fall under the jurisdiction of provincial government. The selection criteria also ensured that case studies selected represent the different municipal levels, as well as both urban and rural areas.

According to scoring and ranking indices of municipalities in South Africa that have informed our analysis, there is a clear distinction between rural and urban municipalities. Lowest scoring municipalities according to the Munidex report (2009) were completely rural and were also under the governance of traditional authorities. Therefore, the identification of the best performing municipalities was not decided merely on geographical location of cases but also criteria of performance and population size.

The primary sources used to determine municipal performance in South Africa included:

- Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), 2001, Census;
- Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), 2007, Community Survey;
- Municipal IQ, 2008, Municipal Productivity Index (MPI);
- Empowerdex, 2009, Service Delivery Index (Munidex); and
- 2010 Regional Explorer, V559 (IHS Global Insight).

Data from the 2009 Munidex was used to select the top five best performing local municipalities with regard to their improvement in at least one of the service sectors of water, sanitation and electricity

(positive % change from 2001-2007). For metropolitan municipalities, however, data is not broken down by specific service sector, thus overall progress of service provision was examined.

The Muidex data compares the results of the 2001 Census and 2007 Community Survey. These results were further supplemented with municipal ratings from the Municipal IQ database, specifically the 2008 ratings of the best and worst metropolitan and local municipalities according to the Municipal Productivity Index (MPI)<sup>2</sup>. The 2007 Community Survey does not survey all households as in the 2001 Census. And the IHS Global Insight Regional Explorer (2010) database similarly only provides estimates. Although not strictly comparable, for the purposes of this study the various databases were used interchangeably as they provide information for different years, and in some instances important information on different variables.

Of the five municipalities selected in each of the three sectors, two featured more than once in the Muidex report in terms of progress and improvement, thus bringing the total number of municipalities selected to 13. The inclusion of six<sup>3</sup> of the metropolitan municipalities increased the selected number of cases to 19. The sample range of municipalities to select the three case studies is tabulated below.

**Table 1: Sample range of municipalities**

	<b>Municode</b>	<b>Province</b>	<b>Local Municipality</b>	<b>Metropolitan Municipality</b>	<b>Distcode</b>	<b>District municipality</b>
1	MP303	MP	Mkhondo		DC 30	Gert Sibande
2	KZN286	KZN	Nkandla		DC 28	Uthungulu
3	FS191	FS	Setsoto		DC 19	Thabo Mof.
4	NW393	NW	Mamusa		DC 39	Bophirima
5	FS183	FS	Tswelopele		DC 18	Lejweleputswa
6	NW375	NW	Moses Kotane		DC 37	Bojanala
7	NW385	NW	Ramotshere M.		DC 38	Central
8	EC133	EC	Inkwanca		DC 13	Chris Hani
9	KZN214	KZN	Umuziwabantu		DC 21	Ugu
10	NC451	NC	Moshaweng		DC 45	Kgalagadi
11	EC153	EC	Qaukeni		DC 15	O.R Tambo
12	KZN254	KZN	Dannhauser		DC 25	Amajuba
13	NC064	NC	Kamiesberg		DC 6	Namakwa
14	NMA	EC		Nelson Mandela		
15	CPT	WC		Cape Town		
16	JHB	GT		Johannesburg		
17	EKU	GT		Ekurhuleni		
18	ETH	KZN		EThekweni		
19	TSH	GT		Tshwane		

(Source: Muidex 2009; Municipal IQ 2008)

<sup>2</sup> The MPI measures five factors that reflect the productivity of a municipality relating to both residents and investors in that municipality. These are 1. poverty and municipal response to poverty; 2. access to a minimum level of municipal services; 3. economic "intelligence" (infrastructure used by residents to participate in the economy); 4. financial governance and expenditure; and 5. occupancy rates (the converse of administrative vacancy rates) in the municipal administration.

<sup>3</sup> Since the initial selection of a metropolitan municipality, two additional local municipalities (Buffalo City/East London and Mangaung/Bloemfontein) were converted to Metros on 18 May 2011.

Each of the 19 municipalities were categorised (see Table 2) according to the previously stipulated criteria, namely:

- the selected population categories;
- best performing and most improving municipalities (between 2001-2007) in each service sector of water, sanitation and electricity; and
- rural and urban characteristics of municipalities.

The selection process was as follows:

1. The 'best performers' in each of the service sectors were checked against the Stats SA Census 2001 and the Stats SA Community Survey 2007 population statistics.
2. Improvements in water access, sanitation access, and electricity usage, as given in the 2009 Munidex, were considered.
3. The population size of each municipality was considered according to the selection criteria of population categories as outlined above.
4. Municipalities that were listed in the top five worst performing in their category (local, district, metro) in the Munidex and Municipal IQ indices were removed. These are highlighted in green in Table 2. This included any municipality listed as one of the worst five in any of the following categories:

- Overall final score for districts (Ugu District, O.R. Tambo District)
- Overall status index for districts (O.R. Tambo)
- Overall improvement index for districts (Ugu District, Central District M.)

Since there are only six metros, the bottom three in each category were removed:

- Overall final score for metros (EThekweni, Nelson Mandela, Ekurhuleni)
- Status index (Tshwane, EThekwini, Ekurhuleni)
- Improvement index (Tshwane, EThekwini, Ekurhuleni)

5. Possible anomalies in municipalities like Nkandla local municipality, which is plagued by political and environmental factors, and Inkwanca local municipality (racial, spatial and size factors) were considered and these municipalities were eliminated. Furthermore, although Mkhondo local municipality is performing well according to the statistics, it has been the site of major service delivery protests and has been placed under provincial administration. These are highlighted in orange.
6. Those municipalities with an extremely low population (indicating extreme rural areas), coupled with their status on the improvement index, were removed. These are highlighted in blue.
7. **Tswelopele Local Municipality** was selected because it offers the view of a smaller municipality, with a population size of 40,617 people. This municipality is characterised as a semi rural/urban area according to its locality and population size and shows good performance in terms of water provision. Lejweleputswa District Municipality is also the best performing district municipality. This is highlighted in red.
8. The IHS Regional Explorer (2010) database was consulted as a supplement to the Munidex Improvement index to check the percentage of households in Tswelopele with water services. In 2009, an estimated 2.51% of households did not have access to any formal piped water, an improvement from 12% in 1996.
9. Moshaweng and Dannhauser were also removed as the population sizes of each of these are extremely small given the range of the next population category of 50,000-500,000.
10. In order to ensure comparability between South African and Chinese municipalities, the **Moses Kotane Local Municipality** was selected as it is one of the larger municipalities in terms of population.

11. Although the Muidex Report (2009) does not list Moses Kotane as one of the top five performers in terms of electricity, when checked on the IHS Global Insight Rex database, the percentage of households not using electricity is estimated to have decreased from 72.6% in 1996 to 28.9% in 2009. Thus Moses Kotane has shown good performance and improvement in the provision of formal electricity, with an estimated 71.1% of households using electricity in 2009.
12. The Muidex ratings of metropolitan municipalities showed that the Cape Town Metro is ranked as the second best city in the country for service delivery, with the Johannesburg Metro ranked as the third best city.
13. The Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, despite showing the biggest improvement in service delivery performance according to the Muidex, and rated as the best improving municipality, has also been ranked as the second worst metropolitan municipality according to Municipal IQ (2008) and the Municipal Productivity Index. The City of Cape Town, however, was rated as the second top metropolitan area in the country.
14. Hence, the **Cape Town Metro** was chosen as it was rated as the second top metropolitan municipality and is more consistent in the improvement of service delivery as compared to other municipalities (especially the Nelson Mandela Bay municipality).
15. The IHS Global Insight Rex database was consulted as a supplement to the Muidex Improvement Index to check the percentage of households with sanitation services in Cape Town Metro. The percentage of households with a flush toilet is estimated to have increased from 89.5% in 1996 to 94.6% in 2009. Moreover, the percentage of households without access to any toilet is estimated to have decreased, from 5.32% in 1996 to 2.82% in 2009.

Table 2: Selection of case study areas

GENERAL DATA							MUNIDEX REPORT 2009						MUNICIPAL IQ 2008	
	PROVINCE	LOCAL MUNICIPALITY	DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY	METRO MUNICIPALITY	POP. SIZE 2001	POP. SIZE 2007	% INCREASE IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH FORMAL SANITATION	% INCREASE IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH FORMAL WATER	% INCREASE IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH FORMAL ELECTRICITY	BEST PERFORMING DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES	WORST PERFORMING DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES	OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN METROS	TOP METROPOLITAN AREA	WORST METRO
1	MP	Mkhondo	Gert Sibande		142892	106452		5		4				
2	KZN	Nkandla	Uthungulu		133602	127451		1						
3	FS	Setsoto	Thabo Mofutsanyane		123194	102826		2						
4	NW	Mamusa	Bophirima		48366	36533	2	3						
5	FS	Tswelopele	Lejweleputswa		53714	40617	4	4		1				
6	NW	Moses Kotane	Bojanala		237175	244126	1			5				
7	NW	Ramotshere Moiloa	Central		137443	129304	3				1			
8	EC	Inkwanca	Chris Hani		20244	14283	5							
9	KZN	Umuziwabantu	Ugu		92327	104527			1		5			
10	NC	Moshaweng	Kgalagadi		91708	70012			2	3				
11	EC	Qaukeni	O.R Tambo		254480	279795			3					
12	KZN	Dannhauser	Amajuba		102779	91366			4					
13	NC	Kamiesberg	Namakwa		10754	12117			5					
14	EC		Nelson Mandela		1005779	1050930						1		2
15	WC		Cape Town		2892243	3497097						2	2	
16	GT		Johannesburg		3225309	3888180						3	1	
17	GT		Ekurhuleni		2478631	2724229						4		1
18	KZN		EThekweni		3090122	3468086						5		
19	GT		Tshwane		1982235	2345908						6		

**Table 3: Summary of selected case study areas: South Africa**

Case Study Area	Population	Characteristics	Service Sector
Tswelopele Local Municipality	Approx. 40,617 people (less than 50,000)	Semi rural/urban	Water
Moses Kotane Local Municipality	Approx. 244,126 people (between 50,000 – 500,000)	Small town	Electricity
Cape Town Metro	Approx. 3,497,097 people (between 500,000 – 3.5 million)	City (metro area)	Sanitation

### 3.1.3 Selection of Chinese case study areas

China's infrastructure facilitates movement of people and goods, provides adequate safe drinking water, provides energy where it is needed, removes wastes, and in general supports the national economy and quality of life. Judging how well infrastructure is performing these tasks is essential to effective management of the infrastructure. The general measurement framework is divided into two aspects as follows:

**Table 4: The general measurement framework in China**

Inventory System Description	The projects, subsystems, or elements that make up the infrastructure systems being assessed, for example, dwelling houses or water supply, specific transit lines, or landfill operations (See Table 5 below).
Measures of effectiveness	Depicting measures of the various aspects of performance selected by stakeholders and decision makers and measured in the assessment process. Performance should be assessed with the involvement of stakeholders—infrastructure's owners, operators, users, and neighbours—the specific set of measures used may differ from place to place and from time to time.

However, there are also other issues in infrastructure decision-making based on performance assessment. These issues are mainly in three principal areas: (1) dealing with multiple objectives, dimensions of performance, and stakeholders' points of view; (2) dealing with multiple jurisdictions and multiple infrastructure modes to reach conclusions about system performance; and (3) the significance of uncertainty and risk in infrastructure decisions

**Table 5: Framework and measures of system inventory in China**

<i>Public Works Element, Type, Example Goals, Objectives</i>	<i>Scale, Condition, and Geographic Distribution</i>	<i>Scope and Context</i>
<b>Generic: all elements or types</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance economic productivity, opportunity</li> <li>• Improve public health, safety</li> <li>• Protect, enhance environmental quality</li> <li>• Provide jobs and economic stimulus</li> <li>• Reduce income inequalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System size</li> <li>• Condition</li> <li>• System cost</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Area of extent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political jurisdictions</li> <li>• Formal institutions</li> <li>• Informal, community structure</li> </ul>
<b>Water Supply</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adequate, reliable, sources of water</li> <li>• Protect and improve public health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System size</li> <li>- Miles of main distributor</li> <li>- Number of reservoirs, treatment plants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political jurisdictions</li> <li>- System ownership</li> <li>- Rate-setting, financing</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide fire protection</li> <li>• Enable and support landscaping, gardening, agriculture</li> <li>• Provide recreation and environmental amenity</li> <li>• Support biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Area piped</li> <li>- Total storage capacity</li> <li>• Maintenance Condition</li> <li>- Pipe leakage</li> <li>- Reservoir percent of design capacity</li> <li>- Designed supply (treatment) capacity</li> <li>• System cost</li> <li>- Replacement cost (construction)</li> <li>- Annual O&amp;M expenditures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consumers, service area</li> <li>- Supply sources</li> <li>• Formal institutions</li> <li>- Utility</li> <li>- Regulatory authorities</li> <li>- Bonding, financing authorities</li> <li>• Informal community structure</li> <li>- Land developers</li> <li>- Major users (e.g., industries)</li> <li>- Recreation interests</li> </ul>
<i>Public Works Element, Type, Example Goals, Objectives</i>	<i>Scale, Condition, and Geographic Distribution</i>	<i>Scope and Context</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology</li> <li>- Treatment process-Supply main materials</li> <li>• Area of extent</li> <li>- Drainage basins</li> <li>- Catchment areas</li> <li>- Recharge areas</li> </ul>	
<b>Wastewater (Sewage and storm water)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove sanitary, industrial wastes</li> <li>• Control, reduce health hazard</li> <li>• Provide flood control, protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System size</li> <li>- Miles of main collector</li> <li>- Number of treatment plants</li> <li>- Drain Area</li> <li>- Separate/combined system</li> <li>• Condition</li> <li>- Pipe leakage, infiltration</li> <li>- Plant- percent of designed capacity</li> <li>• System cost</li> <li>- Replacement cost (construction)</li> <li>- Annual O&amp;M expenditures</li> <li>- Average unit treatment cost</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>- Treatment process</li> <li>- Main materials</li> <li>• Area extent</li> <li>- Drainage basins</li> <li>- Recharge areas</li> <li>- Ecosystems, biomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political jurisdictions</li> <li>- System ownership</li> <li>- Service area</li> <li>- Rate setting, financing</li> <li>- Receiving waters</li> <li>- Disposal sites</li> <li>• Formal institutions</li> <li>- Construction</li> <li>- Operations</li> <li>- Maintenance</li> <li>- Regulatory authorities</li> <li>• Informal, community structure</li> <li>- Major producers (e.g., industrial concerns)</li> <li>- Advocacy groups</li> <li>- Treatment and disposal neighbours</li> <li>- Recreational interests</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Waste</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove wastes</li> <li>• Reduce materials</li> <li>• Avoid exposure of low income people to toxic materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System size</li> <li>- Number of collection vehicles</li> <li>- Number of collection, transfer, disposal sites, facilities</li> <li>- Landfill design capacity</li> <li>- Labour force</li> <li>• Condition</li> <li>- Incinerator age</li> <li>- Landfill percent of design capacity</li> <li>- Haul distance</li> <li>• System cost</li> <li>- Replacement cost (construction)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political jurisdictions</li> <li>- Collection areas</li> <li>- Disposal sites</li> <li>- Transportation routes</li> <li>• Formal institutions</li> <li>- Municipal agencies</li> <li>- Concessionaires, contractors</li> <li>- Recycling and disposal firms</li> <li>- Regulatory agencies</li> <li>• Informal, community structure</li> <li>- Major producers (e.g., industrial concerns)</li> </ul>

	- Annual O&M expenditures • Technology - Disposal system and processes - Recycling processes • Area extent - Ecosystems, biomes - Air sheds - Groundwater regimes	- Advocacy groups - Treatment and disposal neighbours
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In light of the differences in products and service contents, China's urban infrastructure can be divided into six categories. First, urban energy or power infrastructure. It includes electric power generation and supply system, gas (natural gas, manufactured gas and liquefied petroleum gas) production and supply system, and heating production and supply system. Second, urban water resources and water supply and drainage infrastructure. It covers underground water and surface water resources, reservoir for supplying water to cities, water channel, water taking facilities, water processing and transmission system, drainage channel, network and pumping station and sewage treatment plant. Third, urban road and transportation infrastructure. Fourth, urban postal and telecommunication infrastructure. Fifth, urban ecological environment infrastructure. This includes gardening, forestation and environmental sanitation facilities. And sixth, urban disaster prevention infrastructure.

To date, China does not have separate indicators to assess urban infrastructure and public utilities. But in the evaluation of competitiveness of cities, the selection of habitable cities and criteria for measuring the urban environmental quality, the infrastructure and public utilities services are important sub-category indicators or impact elements. The three items relevant to this project are:

- Per capita use of electricity for daily life indicates the residents' life quality and household possession of electrical appliances. The national average per capita usage is 87.8 kilowatt/hour. The evaluation standard is 100 kilowatt/hour.
- Urban water supply situation measures the rate of normal running water supply (daily/annually) and the rate of standard-obtained for the water quality at the source for drinking water (%). The evaluation standards are 365 days/per year and 100%.
- The rate of urban garbage treated harmlessly (%). The evaluation standard is 100%.

To date, China does not have a specific criterion for assessing the provision of public service in urban areas. For this project, we can only resort to the relevant indexes and factors in the following three evaluation criteria: the Competitiveness Ranking of Chinese Municipalities, the Most Habitable Cities in China and the Chinese Government Index System for Comprehensively Evaluating Urban Environment (1996). The list of the Most Habitable Cities in China (2009) is provided in the table below.

**Table 6: The 10 most habitable cities in China from 2008-2010**

RANKING	2010		2009		2008	
	CITY	POPULATION ( 100 , 00 )	CITY	POPULATION ( 100 , 00 )	CITY	POPULATION ( 100 , 00 )
1	Nanjing	490.71	Qingdao	276.25	Hangzhou	285.11
2	Xiamen	118.58	Suzhou	158.06	Hong Kong	702.64
3	Nantong	87.52	Taizhou	56.82	Shenzhen	228.07
4	Liaocheng	97.02	Xiamen	118.58	Zhuhai	99.48
5	Shaoxing	47.00	Ningbo	132.07	Dalian	264.98

6	Yunfu	29.22	Changsha	187.41	Guiyang	157.02
7	Ganzhou	38.50	Liaocheng	97.02	Weihai	47.86
8	Yinchuan	76.31	Hechi	11.63	Nanning	135.54
9	Xinyang	44.00	Baotou	116.62	Jinhua	31.48
10	Dandong	60.09	Xinyang	44.00	Qujing	25.47

Source: <http://baike.baidu.com/view/3102861.htm>

For the case study city with population between 500,000 to 3.5 million people, we considered Xiamen first by comparing the list of 10 Most Habitable Cities in 2010 and 2009. But we had to change to another city in this category due to difficulty in access, even with the help of the Ministry of Civil Affairs officials who introduced the CASS research team to the Xiamen Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau via the Fujian Provincial Civil Affairs Department. Qingdao is an ideal replacement as it ranked top in 2009 and like Xiamen is among the five out of 15 sub-provincial level municipalities that are not the provincial capitals.

For the case study city with population between 50,000 to 500,000 people, we can select Shaoxing by comparing the list of 10 Most Habitable Cities in 2010.

Since the populations of most counties in China are more than 50,000, it is difficult to select the case study city with population less than 50,000. Based on the data availability and the feasibility of the research, we first considered a town in Beijing with population less than 50,000 as the case study cities. But the local government declined to accept the field visit of the CASS research team. Finally the district that hosts the government of Xinyu City, Jiangxi Province was selected for its marketization of water production and supply.

The largest and politically or economically important metropolises of Beijing and Shanghai are not selected because they may not have comparable South African counterparts. The relevant data of the three cities are provided in Table 7.

**Table 7: Summary of selected case study areas: China**

Case Study Area	Population	Characteristics	Service Sector
Xinyu	Approx. 430,000 people (between 50 000 - 500,000)*	Semi rural/urban	Water
Shaoxing	Approx. 470,000 people (between 50 000 – 500 000)	Small city	Electricity
Qingdao	Approx. 276,250 people (between 500 000 – 3.5 million)	City (metro area)	Sanitation

\* The selected city Xinyu has registered urban residents of 430,000 because of replacement of the first selected town. The city has a total population of 1,000,000.

In sum, Xinyu City is selected for its good water service as a provincial pace setter; Shaoxing City is qualified as one of the five international first-rate electricity suppliers in China; and Qingdao Municipality presents itself as an excellent choice due to its status as a Nationally Advanced Clean City.

Although every effort was made to select commensurable case study areas in China and South Africa, demographic differences remain and will be taken into account in the comparative analysis of data collected. However, such differences may also contribute to a broader understanding of the array of possible approaches and practices in developing infrastructure and delivering services.

## **3.2 Research methodology**

This study employed qualitative research methods, primarily interviews and focus groups to systematically compare selected municipalities in China and South Africa.

### **3.2.1 Focus groups and interviews**

Both focus group discussions with participants and in-depth interviews with key local government stakeholders were conducted for the study. Two interviews and between two and four focus groups (depending on city size), with 10 participants each, were organised in each case study area. Each session was planned for 60-90 minutes.

Focus groups were held in the selected communities to understand the complexities and nuances of perceptions on service delivery in different socio-economic communities. The discussions were conducted to gain insight into: 1) service delivery issues in general, for example, the participants' definition of service delivery, access and quality of the services, free basic services, changes in the provision of services over time and the efficacy of the services; 2) the impact of the specified service on quality of life; 3) community development in general and its impact on their lives; 4) local government issues, such as their relationship with local government officials, opportunities to engage with local government on service delivery issues and the role of private service providers with regard to service delivery; and finally 5) participant perceptions on the identification of their particular municipality as a good performer with regard to a specific service.

Local government stakeholders were interviewed to obtain their views on a wide range of issues and to complement the data being collected from the focus groups. Topics included: 1) service delivery issues in general, for example, the involvement and responsibilities of various parties in the specific service delivery sector (water, sanitation and electricity); 2) development policies and strategies of the local government; 3) policies and programmes, including relevant national policies informing the specified sectors, the implementation and impact of these policies, and financial aspects related to the provision of basic service; 4) challenges to the provision of the specified service, including the impacts of urbanization, migration, commercialization and privatization; and 5) community participation with regard to service delivery issues.

### **3.2.2 Participant characteristics in South Africa**

In South Africa, interviews were organised with key government officials involved in the relevant service sector either within municipal management or in municipal governance.

Two focus groups were organised for the two smaller case study municipalities while four focus groups were organised for the larger metro. Focus group participants were selected according to the following criteria:

- each group should have approximately 10 participants;
- participants should be representative of the local municipality (immediate surrounding area);
- each group should have an equal representation of men and women;
- each group should include an even spread of individuals from 18 to 65;
- each group should include individuals who are employed and individuals who are unemployed; and
- the language in which the focus group is conducted should be determined by the moderator and should be the main language shared by participants.

These criteria allowed for a broad variety of service delivery recipients to contribute to the focus group discussions. The primary goal was to ensure that the immediate surrounding area and the local municipality as a whole were represented. Table 8 below lists each of the focus groups conducted, the language in which the focus group was conducted, as well as the location and date of the discussion.

**Table 8: Focus group details: South Africa**

<b>Group Description</b>	<b>Location and Date</b>
MK FG1: Black, Setswana	Mogwase, 5 October 2011
MK FG2: Black, Setswana	Mabele-a-Podi, 5 October 2011
TS FG1: White, Afrikaans	Bultfontein, 3 October 2011
TS FG2: Black, Sesotho	Phahameng, 4 October 2011
CT FG1: White, Afrikaans/English	Bellville/Brackenfell, 3 October 2011
CT FG2: White/Coloured, English	Central Business District (CBD), 4 October 2011
CT FG3: Black, Xhosa	Khayelitsha, 5 October 2011
CT FG4: Coloured, English	Mitchell's Plain/Portlands, 6 October 2011

### **3.2.3 Participant characteristics in China**

In China, two participant interviews were planned in each city with the vice mayor and director in charge of the service sector. Only in Xinyu City was the plan implemented. In Shaoxing, officials from another government department rather than that responsible for the service sector were interviewed. In Qingdao, the local officials were interviewed with a few weeks interval from the focus groups.

#### **Xinyu City, Jiangxi Province**

Three focus groups were organized in Xinyu City with the theme of the service of water supply. The three locations are representative of the inner city communities, enterprise workers' residential communities and the communities in the area joining the urban and rural territories of the city. Focus group sessions were conducted on October 27, 2011. Interviews were held with a high-level official in the Water Affairs Bureau, as well as another high-level official within city governance, on October 26, 2011 and October 27 2011 respectively.

#### **Shaoxing City, Zhejiang Province**

In Shaoxing City, interviews with the vice mayor in charge of electric power supply and the director of the municipal electric power bureau could not be arranged. Instead, a discussion session was held with the municipal and district civil affairs officials on December 7, 2011.

The fact that this is an international cooperative project with both CASS and HSRC research team members in the city made it more difficult to seek the full support of the local officials to arrange focus groups. Finally, only two were organized with less representative participation as the research team specified. The participants were mostly neighbourhood committee members and the size of the groups was also smaller than the expected 10 each. Sessions were held on December 8 and 9, 2011.

#### **Qingdao Municipality, Shandong Province**

Three focus groups were organized with the assistance of the Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau. They were held at the communities falling into the three categories of 1) inner city communities, 2) peripheral

communities, and 3) remote and rural communities. These focus groups were conducted on December 15 and 16, 2011.

Of the five groups (2 in Xinyu and 3 in Qingdao), a total of 45 participants' age and gender information was recorded. The largest cohort falls on 41-50 age group (12 persons), followed by 31-40 (10), 51-60 (9), 61-70 (7) and 71-80 (5). At the top and bottom are 21-30 and 81 and older age groups with 1 each. Women made up 60 per cent of these participants.

Table 9 lists each of the focus groups conducted in China, the types of communities and the location and date of the discussion.

**Table 9: Focus group details: China**

<b>Group Description</b>	<b>Location and Date</b>
XY FG1: Located in the area joining the urban and rural territories	Shengde Community, 27 October 2011
XY FG2: Located in inner city	Jiyang Community, 27 October 2011
XY FG3: Enterprise workers' residential area	Diandongchang Community, 27 October 2011
SX FG1: Area with large number of migrants	Shuigouying Community, 8 December 2011
SX FG2: Inner city old residential area	Xixiaolu Community, 9 December 2011
QD FG1: Remote and rural are	Taiguang Community, 16 December 2011
QD FG2: Periphery	Xitian Community, 16 December 2011
QD FG3: Inner city new residential area	Hong Kong Garden Community, 15 December 2011

### **3.3 Administration of focus groups and interviews**

#### **3.3.1 Administration of fieldwork in South Africa**

Prior to the commencement of each focus group discussion, all participants were provided with an information sheet explaining the aim of the study (see Annexure A). Issues regarding individual anonymity and the choice to participate were discussed. A consent form was attached and signed by all participants as confirmation that they understood the information sheet and that they were willing to participate in the study. Interviewees were similarly provided with an information and consent form (see Annexure B).

Focus group participants were also asked to answer a few questions in a "Participant characteristics form" (see Annexure C) so that researchers could gauge individual age, employment status, length of time living in that area, etc. Focus group discussions lasted from 60 to 90 minutes, while interviews lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

Both focus group discussions and interviews were recorded and transcribed. Focus groups held in any language other than English were also first translated and then transcribed.

The focus group schedule was structured around four themes: service delivery; quality of life; development; and local government. The interview schedule was similarly structured around the following five themes: service delivery; development; policies and programmes; impacts and challenges;

and community participation. Since each municipality was chosen on the basis of one particular service sector, each schedule was tailored to that sector. Thus, three focus group and three interview schedules were developed in order to address electricity, water and sanitation separately (see Annexure D). However, the schedules remain congruent with one another and the most sector-specific questions appear in the service delivery theme.

The amount of interviews realised in South Africa's case study areas was limited. Five interviews with government officials were sought in Cape Town and three interviews were sought in Tswelopele and Moses Kotane respectively. However, the number of interviews realised was limited by the lack of responsiveness by officials in the two smaller municipalities. Researchers struggled greatly to identify, contact and secure interviews with the relevant officials of these two case areas. In Cape Town Metro, the number of interviews was limited by the intervention of high-level city officials in Cape Town. In this case, researchers were granted permission to interview only two officials assigned by the Metro. These two politically appointed officials were intended as representatives of the two sections of municipal governance and municipal management respectively. However, this meant that researchers were not able to speak to local councillors or anyone else involved with service delivery in the Metro.

### **3.3.2 Administration of fieldwork in China**

Due to the nature of fieldwork of this project, which chooses cities based on the service sector and is an international cooperative project, accessibility turned out to be a problem. For example, the CASS research team sought and obtained full support of officials at the Ministry of Civil Affairs, with whom Prof. Dong has cooperated over the projects on village committee and neighbourhood committee elections for nearly a decade, to contact the Xiamen Civil Affairs Bureau officials via the Fujian Provincial Civil Affairs Department. But the local officials declined to organize focus groups at communities or interviews with government officials. There is an informal line vertical command chain from the ministry in Beijing to the local bureau via the provincial department. It seems this command chain is not as operative as before, at least in the Civil Affairs system. Or it may be that civil affairs officials do not have much contact with officials in charge of environmental sanitation. It is the case even in the replacement city of Qingdao, where the Civil Affairs officials were supportive in arranging three focus groups in communities, but could not make appointments with government officials for interviews with the team. Two interviews there were arranged separately through another channel as late as mid-March and actually conducted on April 12-13, 2012.

The focus groups in Xinyu City lasted from 70 minutes (Shengde Community; 9:40-10:50) to 100 minutes (Jiyang Community; 11:10-12:50) with the remaining 80 minutes (Diangongchang Community; 8:00-9:20). The facilitator, Ms. Jin Ying, PhD candidate at CASS Graduate School, is a Jiangxi native who speaks the local dialect. She strictly followed the schedule and encouraged and allowed the participants to speak adequately.

Ms. Jin also conducted the three focus groups in Qingdao with the assistance of Mr. Tang Liang, a Master's student at CASS Graduate School. Mr. Liu, Deputy Director of the Division of Local Governance of the Qingdao Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau, introduced them to community officials, which smoothed the proceeding of the group discussion.

In comparison, the focus groups held in Shaoxing City were less rigorous in that the community officials did not invite as many ordinary residents as the research team desired. Instead main participants were neighbourhood committee members. The third group was also not organized. It had been one of the logistical problems before the CASS and HSRC teams' departure from Beijing. The field visit of the HSRC

team members proved to be more difficult to be arranged by the local officials than the CASS researchers expected. A last minute effort was made before the teams' departure from Beijing to persuade the local officials to receive the teams.

A further regret with the fieldwork in Shaoxing City is that the interviews with officials in charge of the chosen service sector, i.e. electric power supply, were not organized. Instead, only the Civil Affairs officials met with the team. However, a visit to the Service Hall of the Municipal Electric Power Bureau was made by the teams, which allowed them to get first-hand knowledge on how the bureau and local residents interact regarding all kind of relevant services.

Again, official interviews were conducted well in Xinyu City with the vice mayor in charge of the water supply service and Director of the City Water Affairs Bureau received interviews that lasted 90 minutes each.

### **3.4 Limitations and challenges**

The primary limitation to this study was its scale. Although three municipalities were chosen in South Africa and China respectively, fieldwork in each municipality was confined to a few focus groups and interviews. The number of focus groups per municipality was in large part determined by available funds. Since Cape Town Metro is much larger than Tswelopele and Moses Kotane, four focus groups were held in the Metro while only two focus groups were held in the latter two case study areas. Because socio-economic inequalities across South Africa are reinforced geographically, selecting areas from which to draw focus group participants who are representative of the municipality as a whole proved challenging.

The limited number of focus groups conducted in each municipality also made it difficult to restrict the selection of participants according to certain demographics. Given the fact that service delivery affects everyone, individuals were drawn according to very broad criteria (see Section 1.2 Participant Characteristics). The use of such a broad range of characteristics to select participants for each focus group possibly had an effect on the group dynamic. This often came through in the dominance of one speaker at the cost of the participation of others. Given the scale of the study, any comparison between focus groups can also only provide limited insight on this matter.

The fact that the three types of services fall into the jurisdictions of different government departments posed another challenge as it impacted on the ease of data collection. In some cities, the actual delivery of these services is in the hand of companies. Therefore both the relevant government department and the company should be taken into consideration.

It is necessary here to emphasize that in general the designed research plan and methodology of focus groups and interviews have basically achieved the expected results. The difficulties encountered by the research teams as described previously may partly be due to the specific research questions defined. In China, for instance, limited exposure to researchers of these services may mean that the officials are not used to such publicity activities. Contact with these government departments or service provision institutions was therefore difficult to the researchers.

For future studies, it may be useful to collect data via a questionnaire survey in addition to qualitative research methods of the focus groups and interviews.

## **SOUTH AFRICA COUNTRY REPORT**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Service delivery protest and challenges**

In the run-up to the 2011 Local Government Elections, a survey of 21 municipalities across four provinces, conducted by the Institute for Democracy in Africa (IDASA), found that “only one in 10 citizens (11%) is satisfied with the quality of service delivery provided by local councils” (Van Hoof 1 April 2011). A more comprehensive survey conducted by the HSRC on behalf of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) found that, nationwide, 45% of the surveyed public are dissatisfied with municipal performance (HSRC 2011). These studies reveal that, although there have been marked improvements in economic and infrastructure development in South Africa, backlogs are still a pervasive issue and citizens are increasingly discontent with the lack of delivery in the face of government promises and general expectations.

Social protest has become the main avenue for expressing this dissatisfaction. Although public demonstrations have occurred sporadically since 1994, according to Booysen (2007: 24), an outburst in the Intabazwe township of Harrismith in the Free State Province in August of 2004 “marked the start of a rise in direct and antagonistic action to convey messages of discontent with matters local”. Poor social conditions, continued inequalities and the failings of local democratic institutions have fed into citizen frustrations and are evident in the increased incidence of such action since this time. In 2004, an estimated 900 service delivery protests (according to one count), engulfed the country’s urban and metropolitan areas (Booyesen 2007: 22; Letsholo 2006: 5). Another estimate, for the period of March 2004 to the end of February 2005, reported 881 ‘illegal’ protests and just over 5000 ‘legal’ protests (Booyesen 2007: 23). For Booyesen, this “unprecedented development” unmasked “pent-up anger with service delivery a decade into South Africa’s democracy” (ibid.). Interestingly, the majority (30%) of protests in the first half of 2009 were concentrated in Gauteng, a predominantly urban and well-served province (SAPA 21 October 2009). The continuous outbreak of protests since 2004 have resulted in an effort by municipal officials, councillors, even members of provincial and national government to engage with communities and renew promises of change. This, Booyesen continues, has sent the message that “protest works” (2007: 25), thereby validating this form of citizen action. However, the real effectiveness of such service delivery protests remains to be seen.

In 2009, Cooperative Governance Minister Sicelo Schiceka called for a local government turnaround strategy aimed to reduce infrastructure backlogs and thus eliminate all such protests by 2014 (COGTA 2009: 35). Any such strategy must take into account why previous policy frameworks and programmes would have failed. Studies and literature on the service delivery and local governance context in South Africa are in general agreement as to the primary challenges that preclude faster and more effective provision of infrastructure services. Corruption, party politics, skills shortages and general mismanagement are key examples of the institutional governance challenges faced at local and other levels (Booyesen 2007). IDASA also identified citizen perceptions and expectations as critical contributors to growing dissatisfaction, and these also allude to some of the systematic challenges within the service delivery context: 1) a growing gap between people’s expectations and what government can realistically provide; 2) a lack of responsiveness on the part of municipal councils; 3) citizens’ knowledge of the link between poor governance and service delivery (Van Hoof 1 April 2011).

In their 2009 analysis of the state of local government, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) also isolated two other “main obstacles” to accelerating basic services: “the lack of critical infrastructure in rural areas and the proliferation of informal settlements in urban areas. Both these obstacles are beyond the capabilities (institutional and fiscal) of powers and functions of municipalities to confront by themselves” (COGTA 2009: 35).

## **2.2 The relationship between infrastructure and service delivery**

The capacity to provide essential services such as water and energy relies unequivocally on the existence and maintenance of infrastructure. In broad terms, infrastructure refers to “the basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society” (Bhattacharyay 2009: 2). It is a tool or mechanism through which services are provided. Sustained service provision not only utilises infrastructure, but is its *raison d’être*. Without the accompanying services (the supply of water for example), infrastructure (water pipes) is useless. However, such a simplified view of this relationship understates the complex, multidimensional nature of both infrastructure and service provision. The term ‘infrastructure’, for example, may refer to physical assets and hardware as well as the policies that inform ‘hard’ infrastructure development and maintenance. In fact, a distinction is often made economic infrastructure and social infrastructure, as well as between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ infrastructure.

Economic infrastructure refers to the capital assets that normally comprise public utilities, works and services. These include electrical grids, gas and oil pipelines, water pipelines, dams, taps, irrigation systems, sewerage systems, sewage treatment plants, latrine facilities, telecommunication or Information and Communication Technology (ICT) lines, as well as roads and other transport systems (railways, airports, seaports) (UN-Habitat 2011: 5; DBSA 2006; MFMA). According to a UN-Habitat report, *Infrastructure for Economic Development and Poverty Reduction in Africa* (2011: 6), economic infrastructure is precisely those things which “facilitate economic production or serve as inputs to production”. Many of the basic goods consumed by households (water, electricity, sanitation) rely on national and local economic infrastructure. These systems also contribute to and are accounted for in measures of gross domestic product (GDP) (*ibid.*).

Social infrastructure, on the other hand, comprises things like housing, hospitals and health care, schools and education services, as well as recreation facilities (DBSA 2006: 20; UN-Habitat 2011: 6). The provision of social infrastructure empowers individuals both socially and economically, enhances human capital and increases employment creation. Since it boosts economic activity and productivity it also feeds into higher economic growth and real incomes. Both economic and social infrastructure thus contribute to economic development and the improvement of quality of life.

Esfahani (2005: 193) argues that economic and social infrastructure must be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality. Both quantity and quality impact on the capacity (of governments) to provide sustainable services and to ensure a proper standard of living. For example, an increase in the amount of taps that supply water to a community is a measurable indicator of infrastructure development and service provision. However, it says nothing about the durability of the taps and water pipes. It also does not furnish any information about the cleanliness of the water, and thus of the quality of the service being delivered. But ‘quality’ must also be further interpreted as referring both to the quality of the product and to the quality of the service. The quality of the service is a broad concept that includes things like the efficiency with which problems are dealt with and the friendliness of staff towards customers, to give but two examples. These kinds of qualitative indicators can also provide an informative perspective on the overall quality of a particular service (*ibid.*: 197). The quality of the

infrastructure and the goods and services provided is therefore especially fundamental due to the importance of such goods to human well-being.

The capacity to develop and maintain durable infrastructure, and to deliver quality products and services is impacted by the intangible networks governing these systems. Intangible infrastructure, in other words, is integral to the proper functioning and sustainability of sound economic and social infrastructure systems. It is in relation to these aspects of infrastructure and service delivery that the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure is made.

'Soft' infrastructure, in contrast to the 'hard' infrastructure outlined above, refers to the regulatory and policy frameworks, as well as the governance procedures, mechanisms and networks involved in the operation and expansion of hard infrastructure (Bhattacharyay 2009: 2; DBSA 2006: 20-23). "Operating procedures, management practices, and development policies interact with societal demand and the physical world to facilitate the transport of people and goods, and the provision of safe water and energy, among others" (ibid.; National Research Council 1987). How services are planned and how infrastructure is managed depends in large part on the regulatory environment, structures of responsibility, internal capacities and network of relations between the relevant bodies and sectors. Policies, governance structures, procedures and relationships thus directly impact upon the efficiency, sustainability and expansion of hard infrastructure, as well as upon the government's capacity to delivery basic services. According to the African Development Bank (ADB 2011: 236), "with sound governance and institutional frameworks the strong linkages between infrastructure and poverty could be exploited effectively to reduce poverty". One of the goals of this study was therefore to explore the experiences and attitudes of relevant stakeholders with regard to the policies, structures and relations involved in the delivery and receipt of basic services.

### **2.3 South Africa's legislative and regulatory environment**

In South Africa, the delivery of basic services falls within the mandate of Local (Municipal) government as set out in the Constitution, the White Paper on Local Government (1998), and the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) (Act No. 32 of 2000). The MSA defines basic municipal services as any service "that is necessary to ensure an acceptable and reasonable quality of life and, if not provided, would endanger public health or safety or the environment" (2000:14). According to the former Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG 2007:2) (now COGTA), "the provision of basic household infrastructure is the central contribution made by local government to social and economic development". Although municipalities have relative autonomy in exercising their distinctive functions, they remain subject to "nationally and provincially set regulatory frameworks" (Layman 2003: 8). Plans, programmes and activities of local government are therefore regulated and supervised from above (Layman 2003: 8).

A plethora of policies regulate the provision of basic services in South Africa. Many are products of national legislation; some apply to the general functions of local government; some are concerned with development in general; and others are tailored to specific service sectors. It is beyond the scope of this study and report to discuss all of these in detail and therefore only the most relevant policies will be mentioned.

National policies that describe the developmental and economic programmes of government and that are relevant to the service delivery environment include, among others, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP 1994), the Constitution (1996), the Growth, Employment and Redistribution plan (GEAR 1996), and the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP 2009). Together, these policies and plans establish a broad framework outlining the goals for social

development and macro-economic growth wherein more specific policies on local government and particular service sectors are embedded. The CRDP especially calls for sustainable rural development, which it defines as improved economic and social infrastructure in rural areas, including but not limited to electricity and communications networks, access to communal sanitation and ablution systems, water harvesting and shedding systems, access to clinics, and cooperative governance (CRDP 2009).

Legislation that provides municipalities with the structure for managing their administration include, among others, the Constitution, the White Paper on Local Government, the Municipal Demarcation Act, the Municipal Structures Act, the Municipal Systems Act, the Disaster Management Act, the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and the Municipal Property Rates Act (COGTA 2009: 8-9). In particular, Subsection 152(1) of the Constitution defines local government objectives as follows: 1) to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities; 2) to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; 3) to promote social and economic development; 4) to promote a safe and healthy environment; and 5) to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government (South Africa 1996).

The developmental role prescribed to local government (in the 1997 White Paper of Local Government and in the 2000 Municipal Systems Act) aims to integrate the efforts to ensure democratic and accountable government, socio-economic growth and development, sustainable service provision, and the improvement of people's lives.

The Municipal Systems Act (2000) also provides a comprehensive outline for the internal structures and operations of local government. One of the key requirements stipulated in the Act is the preparation, by each municipality, of a five-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The IDP is intended as "a tool to plan future development in a way that integrates the efforts of all spheres of government as well as other non-state stakeholders" (Landau, Segatti & Misago 2011: 7). It is a mechanism "to facilitate planning... [and] to achieve alignment" across government spheres (COGTA 2009: 35). The development of an IDP is also supposed to be a collaborative process between the municipality and the community within its jurisdiction.

Sector-specific policies are also determined at the national level. In terms of water and sanitation, the Constitution recognizes access to water as a basic human right. For water and sanitation, these include the White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (WSSP 1994), the Water Services Act (WSA 1997), the National Water Act (NWA 1998), the White Paper on Basic Household Sanitation (2001), and the Free Basic Water (FBW) and Free Basic Sanitation policies. Relevant bodies involved in the management of water and sanitation services include but are not limited to the National Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF), Water Boards and Water Service Authorities (WSAs) mandated to implement the Free Basic Water policy. The Free Basic Water policy requires that 6000 litres of clean water be provided per household per month. The Water Services Act (WSA) states that "a water service provider may not deny a person access to basic water services for non-payment, where that person proves, to the satisfaction of the relevant water services authority that he or she is unable to pay for the basic services" (Tswelopele Local Municipality FBW Policy, nd: 1).

National policies dealing with energy include, among others, the National Electrification Programme (NEP 1994-1999), the Electricity Amendment Acts (46 of 1994 and 60 of 1995), the White Paper on Energy (1998), the Free Basic Electricity (FBE) policy, and the Integrated Energy Plan (2003).

### 2.3.1 Service delivery standards and backlogs

The national policy framework stipulates the different 'levels of access' against which backlogs and improvements in basic services are measured locally. The 1994 DWAF Water Supply and Sanitation Policy White Paper (1994: 15) defines a basic level of water services as access to water within 200m of one's dwelling, and a basic level of sanitation services as access to, at minimum, a well-constructed VIP toilet per household. Otherwise called "RDP standards" to denote the influence of the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme, these measures have informed post-1994 development, as well as monitoring and reporting on service delivery in South Africa ever since. Similar standards have been set for other services (such as electricity and telecommunications, among others) identified as priority targets for national development in the 1994 RDP.

In a 2009 report on basic services, COGTA (2009: 13) distinguishes between access to services in terms of a "basic level of service" and a "higher level of service". Both the basic and higher level of service is outlined for the sectors of water, electricity, sanitation and refuse removal.

For water, a basic level of service includes piped water inside one's yard and piped water within 200 meters of one's yard, whilst a higher level of service refers to piped water inside one's dwelling (COGTA 2009: 13). A backlog in water services may therefore be defined as a "below basic level", and includes "piped water further than 200m, springs, rainwater tanks, dam/pool/stagnant water and water vendors" (ibid.: 15). A high level of sanitation services is defined as access to a flush toilet connected to the sewerage system, whilst the basic level includes "flush toilet with septic tank and pit latrine with ventilation" (ibid.: 19). When access is limited to chemical toilets, a pit latrine without ventilation, a bucket latrine or no sanitation facility whatsoever, it is said to constitute a backlog (ibid.: 21). Refuse removal, a component of sanitation services, has also been defined in terms of basic and higher levels of service. The basic level of service refers to access to a communal skip, whereas a higher level of service refers to "removal by local authorities/private company at least once a week" (ibid.: 31). A below basic level thus includes anyone who has rubbish disposal less than once a week, access to a communal refuse dump, one's own refuse dump, or no removal whatsoever (ibid.: 33). For electricity, a direct connection to a grid network constitutes a higher level of service, and a 10 Amp connection constitutes the basic level of service (ibid.: 25). Any household using gas, paraffin, wood or coal instead of electricity is said to experience a backlog (ibid.: 27). Given this framework, the National Government has purported to achieve universal access to (at least) a basic level of water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal services by 2014.

In 1997, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, otherwise called the Batho Pele White Paper, established "a policy framework and implementation strategy for the transformation of Public Service Delivery" (DPSA 1997: 2). It provides the standards against which the overall quality of goods and services can be promoted and evaluated. According to this White Paper,

[it] is primarily about *how* public services are provided, and specifically about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the way in which services are delivered. It is not about *what* services are to be provided (DPSA 1997: 9).

"Batho pele", meaning "people first" in Sesotho, aims to ensure and improve the quality, rather than just the quantity of government services. It comprises eight principles: consultation; setting service standards; increasing access; ensuring courtesy; providing information; openness and transparency; redress; and value for money. In brief, these standards call for a process of consultation between government and citizens on their needs; a clear indication of expectations, goals and procedures; equal access to be recognised as a right and not a privilege, and access to continually improve across all of

South Africa; citizens to be treated with respect; citizens to be informed about basic services; regular communication between government and communities, and sufficient provision of information on how decisions are made, what the local plans and budgets are, what social grants may be available, etc.; effective and efficient response by the municipality to complaints about problems with services; services provided to be cost-effective and resources not to be wasted (ETU n.d.; Hemson & Roberts n.d.). The purpose of Batho Pele is also to promote greater accountability of public servants to the ideals of the new democracy (Hemson and Roberts n.d.).

### **2.3.2 Municipal structures and intergovernmental relations**

Local government in South Africa constitutes a third sphere of government, alongside provincial and national government. It is also often referred to as municipal government and the entire country is divided into variously sized municipalities. South Africa has three types of municipalities: metropolitan municipalities (Category A); local municipalities (Category B); and district municipalities (Category C). Municipalities are responsible for the provision of basic services such as electricity, water, sewage and sanitation, refuse removal, storm water systems, municipal roads and public transport, as well as the provision of fire fighting and health services, upkeep of parks and recreational areas, libraries and other facilities, and the management of land use, street trading, food markets and local tourism (ETU, n.d.).

A metropolitan municipality (or metro) exists in any city with more than 500,000 voters, and there are currently eight metros in South Africa. Although these are divided into wards, the municipality retains responsibility for all local governance, including service delivery and development throughout the entire area (ETU, n.d.).

Excluding metros, local government is divided into local and district municipalities. There are 231 local municipalities which are broken down into wards and which are also clustered under the jurisdiction of district municipalities. A district municipality thus comprises roughly between four and six local municipalities and shares governance responsibilities with those local municipalities (Empowerdex 2009: 3; ETU, n.d.).

The district municipality's functions and obligations are stipulated in the Municipal Structures Act and, similar to that of Metros, encompasses most aspects of service delivery. According to Mettler (2003), district and metropolitan municipalities are the "driving engines of delivery within a province". However, the division of tasks and the relationship between local and district municipalities is much more complex in practice.

Municipal governments (with varying degrees of exception for some metros) cannot function independently of their respective provincial governments. Chapter 7 of the Constitution gives provincial government very specific obligations and powers in respect of municipalities. The provisions dealing with the issue of provincial oversight (monitoring and support) are found in sections 154(1) and 155(6) and (7). The power to supervise municipalities is found in section 139 (Mettler 2003). Provincial government activities in relation to local government therefore include monitoring, support, regulation and supervision. The provincial government must also coordinate and facilitate the alignment and implementation of provincial development plans and strategies within the municipalities,<sup>4</sup> and as identified in the integrated development planning processes between the province and municipalities (Mettler 2003).

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<sup>4</sup> See sections 31, 32 of the Systems Act.

However, municipal authorities are often frustrated by the relationships between municipalities and other spheres of government. Recent research by COGTA found that municipalities are of the opinion that their capacity to perform effectively is often undermined by gaps in national and provincial government policies and processes. This suggests that the South African government's effort to establish a system of intergovernmental relations in order to coordinate activities and planning across the three spheres of government in fact fails in strengthening accountability towards achieving critical and targeted development outcomes (Landau, Segatti & Misago 2011: 10). According to Landau, Segatti & Misago (2011: 11) these findings support two challenges that COGTA has already identified: "Firstly, they highlight the problem of intergovernmental conflict and competition over powers and functions between provinces and their local governments; and secondly they confirm that national targets for service delivery that apply uniformly irrespective of the economic and institutional differences between municipalities simply set municipalities up to fail." In other words, policies and systems established in order to maintain and develop infrastructure effectively and efficiently and to improve service delivery often become one of the major challenges, especially at the local government level.

## MOSES KOTANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

### 4.1 Background

Moses Kotane Local Municipality (MKLM) is a Category B4 municipality located within the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality (BPDM) in the North West Province of South Africa. It was established through the Municipal Demarcation Act (Act No 27 of 1998) following the December 2000 local government elections. The municipality was named after Moses Mauane Kotane, a leader in the fight for freedom and democracy in South Africa. Its motto “Re Direla Setshaba” in the Setswana language means “We serve the people”. The municipality thus defines its vision and development goal as follows: “A focused municipality that provides services to all its residents in a sustainable manner” (MKLM website: Oct. 2011).

**Figure 1: Map of South Africa highlighting Bojanala District, North West**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

Moses Kotane is one of five local municipalities within the District. As a Category B4 municipality, it is classified as a rural area with communal tenure. Widely dispersed, low density settlements cover approximately 5220 square kilometres. There are 107 villages and two formal towns, Mogwase and Madikwe, as well as two nature reserves and several smaller game reserves. Approximately 50% of land is under the custodianship of various traditional authorities (BPDM 2011/12: 52-3).

**Figure 2: Map of North West Province highlighting Moses Kotane LM**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>).

- **Population and household profile**

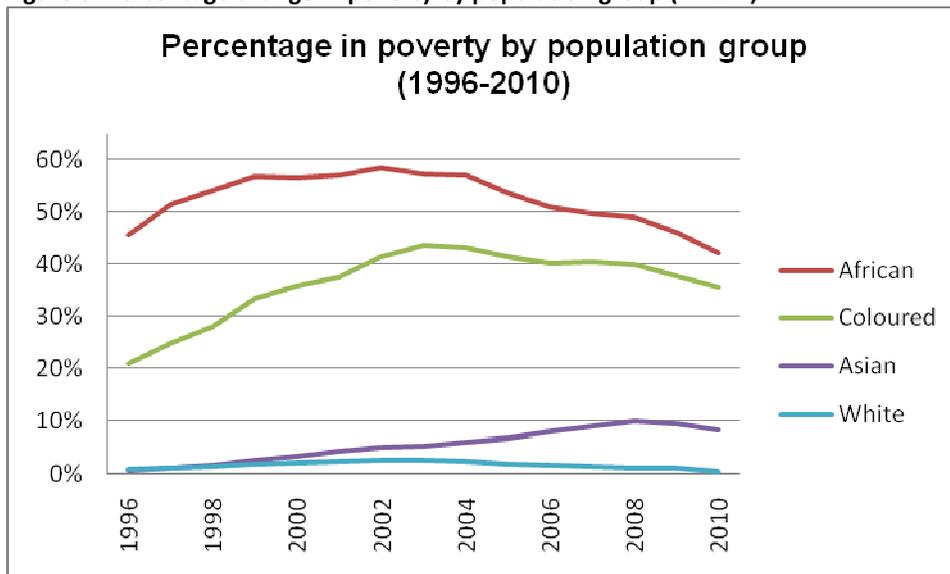
Various sources are available with population estimates, but with no significant differences between the figures. The population of MKLM has increased slightly since 2001. According to the Stats SA 2001 Census, the population in 2001 was about 237,000. According to the IHS Regional Explorer database, the 2009 population was estimated to be 245,000 (Regional Explorer 2009). The number of households is also said to have grown from roughly 62,000 in 2001 to nearly 65,000 in 2009 (Stats SA 2001; Regional Explorer 2009).

The majority of the population is African, with a small percentage of Indian, Coloured and White residents (MKLM 2010/11: 37). In 2007, nearly 52% of the population was female and 48% was male (ibid: 33). Just over one third of the population was between the ages of 15 and 34, with 30% under 15 and 35% over 35.

- **Poverty indicators**

Poverty remains a pervasive problem throughout the municipality. Figure 3 indicates the distribution of poverty across population groups, as well as the change in poverty levels since 1996. Although still low, the percentage of Asians living in poverty increased from less than 1% in 1996 to nearly 10% in 2010. The percentage of Coloureds living in poverty also rose over this period, whilst poverty among the African population decreased slightly.

**Figure 3: Percentage change in poverty by population group (MKLM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer V559, 2010).

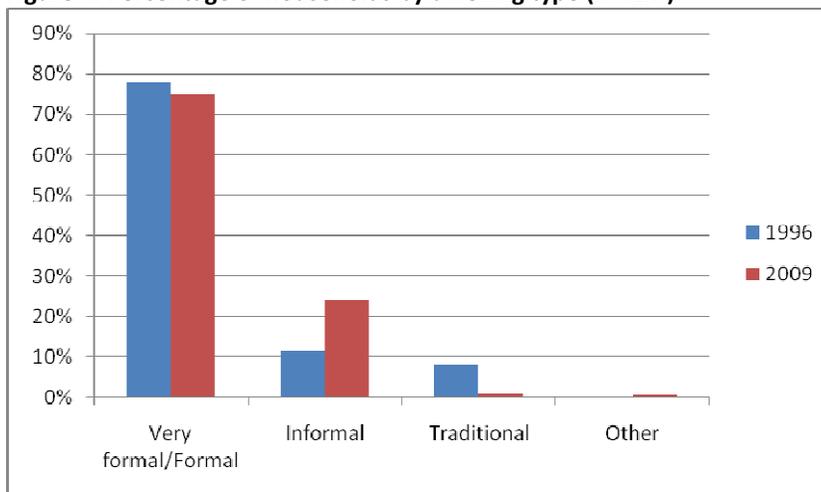
### **Infrastructure and services**

- **Dwelling type**

Data on the distribution of types of dwellings has been sourced from both the Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) 2001 Census and 2007 Community Survey, as well as from the Regional Explorer 2010 database. According to Stats SA, the percentage of households in MKLM that live in formal dwellings decreased between 2001 and 2007, from 77.9% to 71.6%. This was coupled with an increase in the percentage of households living in informal dwellings, from 16.9% in 2001 to 25.6% in 2007.

The Regional Explorer data provides a general perspective on the change in main dwelling type between 1996 and 2009. This data confirms a slight reduction in formal dwellings coupled with an increase in informal types of dwellings, as shown in Figure 4 below:

**Figure 4: Percentage of households by dwelling type (MKLM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer, V559, 2010).

- **Access to electricity**

Moses Kotane was chosen as a good performing municipality specifically with regard to the delivery and improvement of electricity services. The municipality recognises electricity as a key local and national performance area and listed it in its 2010/11 IDP as Priority 3 (43-44). According to the municipality, “more than 90% of all the towns and villages comprising Moses Kotane Local Municipality have electricity supply” (ibid: 57). Electrification projects undertaken in MKLM include the installation of a prepaid metering system, extension of bulk infrastructure and high mast lighting, as well as house electrification. Problems identified in the 2010/2011 IDP include regular power cuts, some houses not being electrified, and an incomplete electrification programme (58).

Although Eskom is the sole electricity supply authority in the municipality and MKLM itself does not hold an Energy Distributing License, the municipality remains responsible for capital projects, including the provision and maintenance of street and high mast lighting (ibid.: 57).

The municipality still acknowledged its role in the provision of electricity services, and listed the following goals as its “key performance objectives” (MKLM IDP 2010/11: 58):

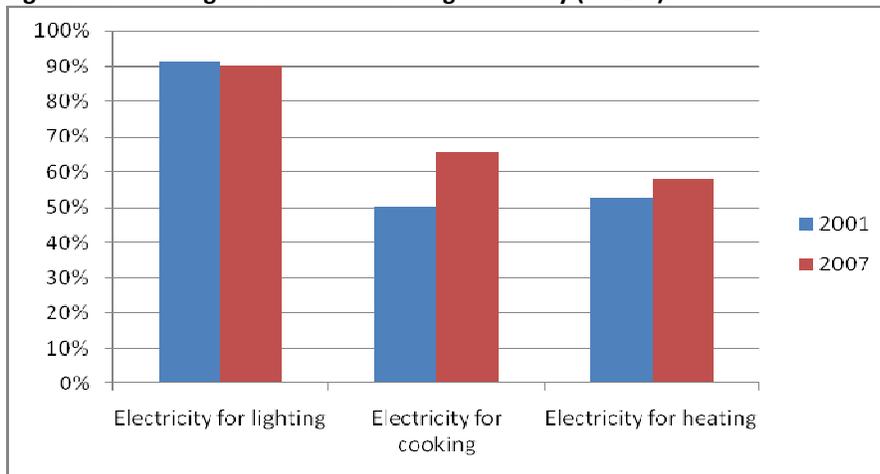
- to electrify all new houses and to complete the electrification programme;
- to ensure electrification is always above 90% supply without regular cut-off;
- to provide all villages with high masts lights;
- to electrify all new housing outstanding developments;
- to provide affordable electricity to everyone at an appropriate service level;
- the Municipality has entered into a Service agreement with Eskom to increase electricity capacity to ensure provision of high mast lighting;
- educate people about safe and appropriate use of electricity;

- to encourage Communities to use other energy supply (NB: Gas, Solar system and Generators); and
- awareness campaign through Ward Councillors and Communities.

According to the Regional Explorer database, the percentage of households in MKLM not using electricity has decreased from approximately 73% in 1996 to 29% in 2009, with an estimated 71% of households using electricity in 2009.

Access to electricity in South Africa is measured according to usage: electricity for lighting only, for lighting and other purposes, e.g. cooking, heating. Figure 5 below depicts the change in electricity usage for lighting, cooking and heating. The percentage of households using electricity for cooking and heating increased between 2001 and 2007. And whilst there was a slight decrease in the use of electricity for lighting, nearly 90% of households still use electricity for lighting.

**Figure 5: Percentage of households using electricity (MKLM)**

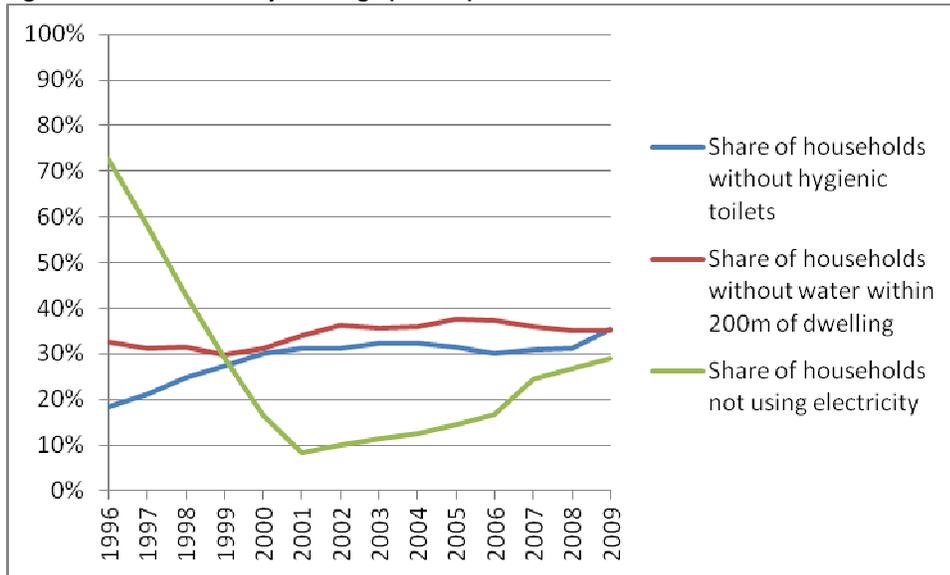


(Source: Stats SA 2007c).

- **Service delivery backlogs**

A service delivery backlog is defined as a below basic level of supply or access to a particular service (see Literature Review). Figure 6 below tracks the changes in backlogs in each of the sectors of sanitation, water and electricity in MKLM between 1996 and 2009. As the figure shows, there was a steep decline in electricity backlogs (and hence a vast improvement in access and supply of energy) between 1996 and 2001. However, the IHS database estimates that backlogs have been steadily increasing again since 2001, and were just under 30% in 2009. Water and sanitation backlogs, on the other hand, are estimated to have increased, with just over a third of households experiencing backlogs in these services.

**Figure 6: Service delivery backlogs (MKLM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer 2010)

## 4.2 Municipal governance and administration

Moses Kotane Local Municipality is divided into 30 Wards. It is led by the Council, the Speaker, the Mayor and the Executive Committee (MKLM 2009/10: 6). The Mayor heads the Executive Committee (EXCO) which is comprised of 10 Councillors. Each Councillor heads a specific portfolio department. In the 2011 Municipal Elections, 62 councillors were elected either as Proportional Representatives or as Ward Councillors in Moses Kotane.

The MKLM Municipal Manager heads six directorates, namely Engineering Services, Finance, Corporate Services, Strategic Management, Community Services, and Local Economic Development (LED) and Housing. Each directorate is further headed by a Director who reports directly to the Municipal Manager.

## 4.3 Focus groups

### 4.3.1 Participant characteristics

Two focus groups were conducted in MKLM in October 2011. Residents of MKLM are predominantly Setswana speaking and the focus groups were conducted in this language and then translated and transcribed into English. The first focus group comprised of residents of Mogwase. Mogwase is one of the main towns in the municipality and the municipal government's main office is located there. The second focus group comprised of residents of the village of Mabele-a-Podi, which is located immediately next to Mogwase. There is no clear demarcation between Mogwase and Mabele-a-Podi and only a small street marks the end of the one area and the start of the next. A focus group was thus held in each area in order to gauge possible differences in service provision between the two areas. Together the two areas provide a view of both urban and rural communities. The Mogwase focus group will hereafter be referred to as MK FG1, whilst the Mabele-a-Podi focus group will be referred to as MK FG2.

Each focus group had ten participants, of which five were male and five were female. All participants were African. Across the two groups participant ages ranged from 26 to 69, with 2 people under 30 years of age, 16 people between the ages of 30 and 65 and 2 people over 65 years of age. Of the twenty participants, half (10 people) have been living in the area (Mogwase/Mabele-a-Podi) for more than twenty years. 7 have been living in the area between 10 and 20 years, and only 3 people have been living there for less than ten years.

#### 4.3.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

The opening question for the focus group discussions asked respondents to explain what their understanding of service delivery is. The question was purposefully broad in order to allow participants to answer without being limited by the moderator or questionnaire itself. Responses were, however, generally congruent, defining service delivery as services provided by the municipality or government, including but not limited to water, waste management and electricity.

- "Service delivery is that its services that are done for the community by the municipality" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "The work of the government for the community" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "Services provided by the municipality...so that our area can look the way we want it to look" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Service delivery implies that the municipality takes care of us; our surroundings are clean" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Service delivery here in Mogwase is satisfactory...everything is going well" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).

When asked about electricity services in particular, responses varied widely within the two focus groups. Some residents confirmed that they have access to electricity, although a myriad of problems related to services, outages and the complaint process were raised. Other participants maintained that they do not have electricity at all. A brief summary of responses is provided below:

- "Electricity in Mogwase is bought from outlets using coupons" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Their units are very expensive; Eskom is killing us" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Ever since we were given RDP houses they promised that they would come install electricity last year but till today nothing has been done." "There is absolutely no electricity in that [RDP] area" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Each house [in Mogwase] has its own electricity" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Our municipality does not give us free electricity, we buy our own electricity whether you are employed or unemployed" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "We are struggling with electricity, we spend a lot of years without electricity" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "We have a problem with electricity outages...at night...the electricity becomes weak...and the main problem that we've noticed is the overloading of transformers" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "It is near impossible to get electricity but we don't know what the problem is or why it is that way" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "The electricity in this area is not reliable and you can't even trust its capacity...I vote non-confidence with regards to the electricity that we have here in Mabele-a-Podi" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).

Everyone with electricity in the Mogwase group confirmed that they do not share and that they have their own well-functioning boxes. Electricity supply is acquired through the use of pre-paid meters, which are paid through coupons. Free units of power is something they "just hear about" (MK FG1: Oct.

2011). Shortages were given as a big problem, with households sometimes left without electricity for two to three days at a time.

Interestingly, when the moderator inquired about household meters, some respondents answered that many people do not have meters in their homes, but will share with their neighbours who do. Another participant also referred to such illegal connections or “pinching”, explaining that “that’s what happens with residents who stayed too long without electricity” (MK FG2: Oct. 2011). Responses to a question regarding the use of pre-paid meters, however, suggest that everyone with direct access to electricity, meaning those with a meter/box in their house, uses the pre-paid system. Of the participants at the focus group, more than half confirmed not having a box in their house. Three participants declared that they have not had electricity for five or more years. Asked whether anyone is supplied with free electricity, one respondent answered that he thinks roughly 200 people get free basic electricity.

Respondents were asked who they think is responsible for delivering and maintaining electricity services to the community.

- “We don’t know, honestly speaking the municipality should be responsible, we don’t know the truth” (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “We are the ones who should communicate with our municipality so that they can help” (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “We must involve Eskom, the municipality and the community and become one thing” (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “People from Eskom say that they need to deal with the municipality because the municipality must have a budget for service delivery” (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “We are in the dark as a community, we are not informed and we don’t know what is happening, who is responsible for the installation...the blame is on both parties [Eskom and the municipality]” (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “Eskom is the main source of electricity” (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).

Asked more specifically about their own roles in the delivery and maintenance of electricity services, one respondent answered that residents are responsible as consumers to buy electricity from the municipality, who in turn should buy in bulk from Eskom (MK FG1: Oct. 2011). Another respondent highlighted the need for the community to suggest new solutions, such as using solar systems (MK FG2: Oct. 2011). However, this person also mentioned challenges in terms of getting “those in higher positions [to] hear us”.

When asked whether electricity services are sufficient or if and how it can be improved, one of the participants reported that the services are not enough since there are still people without electricity and streets that are without lights at night (MK FG1). The need for better communication and feedback from Eskom on decisions was highlighted by another respondent (MK FG2). Others agreed that better communication and engagement between the relevant parties (Eskom, local municipality, and residents) is needed.

- **Quality of life**

Respondents were asked what things they feel are necessary to live a good quality life. Answers involved a range of services, from cheaper electricity to water supply, properly functioning clinics and greater availability of medicine, better education, job opportunities, improved road conditions (potholes) and better services for pensioners.

With regard to the impact of electricity in particular on one's quality life, one participant explained how electricity is essential for her business: "Anything to do with printing involves electricity...the impact of not having electricity is very difficult on me and it's making it difficult for me to survive" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011). Another participant remarked, "If you have electricity and water your life moves on" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).

- **Development**

Questions regarding development asked participants to explain their understanding of community development.

- "Residents here need to be developed; they need to be taken to courses and such things so that they can face economic challenges" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "If they could create areas where kids can go and play and a library so that our children can be safe" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Community development is also associated with job creation and recreational facilities" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "We don't have a community hall, there are a lot of things we want to accomplish, things especially to get the kids off the streets, but now we have nowhere to do all these things; it's a problem" (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "The municipality is making an effort...we can see that they are currently busy with storm water...the budget for the roads is under way and RDP housing. We can't blame them for one thing and then blame them for everything...there is development here in Mabele-a-Podi (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).

- **Local government**

In terms of the relationship between the community and the local municipality, a participant from the Mogwase group explained that the relationship (at least with the previous local government officials) was not good "because sometimes they will hold a meeting at awkward times because some will be at work" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011). Another person confirmed this, stating that "some meetings are held on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. during church times" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011). Participants from the Mabele-a-Podi group concurred, referring to a "communication breakdown" between the officials and the community (MK FG2: Oct. 2011). Some respondents also chided the municipality for not giving jobs, such as contract construction work, to locals (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).

When asked about the chance to engage with the municipality regarding electricity services, members of the first focus group identified two chances: "when they [the municipality] give us feedback on the budget" and "when we have to vote" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).

The final question asked participants to respond to the following claim: "Your municipality appears to be a good performer in terms of the provision of electricity services. Would you agree with this assessment? Please explain your answer." Mostly all participants responded in strong denial of this statement:

- "We don't agree with any of that!" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Where do they get this from?" "They got it from us because we do not fight it" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "The municipality [is satisfied], not the community" (MK FG1: Oct. 2011).

- Ma'am I am going to be very straight. Please take this to them and make them listen....wait a minute let me say this in English so that they can understand me clearly: we disagree with that statement. Don't ever use this area to benchmark it with China and whatever because we cry day and night because of the poor service of electricity here. What they are talking on paper is totally the opposite of what we are experiencing on the ground. So that statement must be changed. If they want to say that then they must come and provide the good service and they can use us as the pioneers, as the benchmark with other countries, thank you (MK FG2: Oct. 2011).

## **4.4 Interviews**

### **4.4.1 Participant characteristics**

Key government stakeholders in Moses Kotane were selected for individual interviews based on the level of their position as well as the portfolio or department in which they worked. Interviews were sought with municipal councillors involved in the utility services portfolio committee or the utility services sector, and with government department heads or municipal managers involved in utility services, especially that of electricity.

In Moses Kotane, two interviews were realised. The first interviewee was a former councillor who had held the position for several years prior. The second interviewee had been elected as councillor in the May 2011 local government elections. The former councillor will hereafter be referred to as MK INT1, and the new councillor will be referred to as MK INT2.

### **4.4.2 Results**

- **Service delivery**

Asked about their role as councillors in relation to service delivery, both interviewees defined it as their responsibility to gather (albeit through ward committee members) information from the community regarding issues, complaints and service needs. According to the former Councillor (MK INT1: Oct. 2011), this would include anything from whether people have running water and RDP housing, to whether they are getting their grants, pension funds, and wheelchairs. For electricity specifically, the new Councillor (MK INT2: Oct. 2011) stated that it is the role of the municipality to "take people's complaints to Eskom and to inform Eskom as to who needs electricity".

When asked what the biggest problems are with regard to electricity service provision, maintenance and load shedding were named: "Holistically speaking the electricity in Mogwase is available, the only problem is the maintenance thereof" (MK INT1: Oct. 2011).

Interviewees were also asked what skills and capacities they believe are essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and deliver basic services. Leadership and communication were highlighted as essential skills for any person involved in municipal governance. According to the new Councillor, leadership entails knowing "how to speak to people" and "understand[ing] their [the community's] problems" (MK INT2: Oct. 2011). The former Councillor also emphasised the importance of proper communication with all stakeholders, including members of the community, National Government and Eskom (MK INT1: Oct. 2011). This Councillor highlighted the need for skills development in engineering and electrical engineering in particular.

- **Development**

Asked to describe the development goals of the local municipality, one interviewee listed the need for jobs for young people, successful reduction of poverty, and provision of RDP housing for people living in shacks (MK INT2: Oct. 2011). The other interviewee made reference to specific development projects underway in Moses Kotane, namely the People's Housing Project (PHP), as well as projects focused on building a library, a sports recreation centre in Mogwase, and community halls in each ward.

The government stakeholders were then asked who all they think should be responsible for local development and why. One of the interviewees explained that local development goals are established during the IDP process, after which they are handed over to the municipal manager (MK INT2: Oct. 2011). Some councillors are also responsible, especially those who deal with Eskom (ibid.). The other interviewee made a clearer distinction between the roles of councillors and Directors in this regard. According to this official, Councillors are

the government's watchdogs; they must oversee and follow up on decisions and see to it that Directors do those things. The main reason why municipalities don't deliver is because when a decision is taken at the council, the directors are supposed to ensure that the job is done...but these directors are failing and that's why municipalities and ultimately the government fail (MK INT1: Oct. 2011).

And further: "the councillors job is only to take the community needs and give it to them [the Directors]" (ibid.).

- **Policies and programmes**

Interviewees were asked to explain what policies guide the municipality in the provision of electricity services. One Councillor explained that the municipality can do nothing since Eskom has jurisdiction, thus there is no particular policy related to electricity services (MK INT1: Oct. 2011). The other respondent admitted that newly appointed council members, of which s/he is one, have not yet discussed the electricity policies and thus s/he does not know (MK INT2: Oct. 2011).

Regarding how service delivery in the municipality is financed, both respondents explained that funding is received from the Provincial Government and COGTA (the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Payment for services (such as water and electricity) by residents from the townships of Mogwase and Madikwe was identified as another source of financing and income: "our municipality is only dependent on Mogwase and Madikwe because there are a lot of rural areas so it's only the two townships of Mogwase and Madikwe that pay for those things" (MK INT2: Oct. 2011).

- **Impacts and challenges**

In terms of the challenges related to the provision of electricity services, maintenance, load shedding, cable theft and performance by Eskom were identified as the primary challenges in Moses Kotane.

Interviewees provided opposing views on the impact of migration on service delivery. According to one councillor, "those [people who come here for work purposes] don't really influence us" (MK INT2: Oct. 2011), whilst the other councillor called migration "a huge problem" (MK INT1: Oct. 2011). The latter explained the issue in relation to housing provision:

Even if we build say 1000 houses you find that there is a lot more people and you can only provide for those who qualify and those who don't qualify come and build their

own shacks and that affects service delivery...we cannot finish the task given by our National Government that everyone should have their own house in their own yard (MK INT1: Oct. 2011).

Interestingly, neither respondent considered the impact of out-migration of younger people and people with skills to the larger cities.

- **Community participation**

Three questions in the interview schedule dealt with issues surrounding community participation. Both interviewees reported a strong and effective community participation process. One respondent was positive of the success of the ward committee system, as well as the appointment of Community Development Workers (CDWs) (MK INT1: Oct. 2011). CDWs are responsible for engaging with various departments and institutions, such as Home Affairs and SAPS, when these do not seem to be assisting people properly (ibid.). CDWs also “spread the information” when the council calls a meeting (ibid.). According to this respondent, “every ward councillor has [a] programme of meetings, [and] a meeting has to be held at least once a month” (ibid.). And further, “service delivery has been better because we know what the community needs”. The other official also noted that outside of the monthly meetings, people also personally call on the councillor at home to address certain problems (MK INT2: Oct. 2011).

Respondents were further asked whether they think the average individual in the community has a role to play in the delivery of basic services. One of the councillors argued against any effective role on behalf of the individual:

they cannot play a role individually that can impact service delivery because even I as a councillor cannot manage on my own and that’s why I have a ward committee that has been appointed because I cannot impact service delivery on my own (MK INT2: Oct. 2011).

But s/he also believed that there are some ways in which the individual can play a role: “the only thing an individual can do is to be part of a structure, perhaps join in the ward committee, that’s the only way he or she can help us...and in a meeting they must talk to us, that is another way of helping us” (ibid.). The other councillor made another suggestion:

they must be knowledgeable enough to know that if they don’t have electricity or experience problems regarding electricity they must not depend on the councillors. They usually call us. There is nothing preventing the individual from calling Eskom directly...why wait on the municipality? That’s why there is no improvement in the service for the community; they must also play a role to assist the municipality by applying individually (MK INT1: Oct. 2011).

#### **4.5 Summary**

Focus group respondents in the Moses Kotane Local Municipality defined service delivery as services provided by the municipality or government, including water, waste management and electricity. When asked about electricity services in particular, responses varied widely within the two focus groups. Some residents confirmed that they have access to electricity, although a myriad of problems related to services, outages and the complaint process were raised. Other participants maintained that they do not have electricity at all.

Some residents acquire electricity supply through the use of pre-paid meters which are paid through coupons, while others acknowledged using illegal connections to access electricity supply. Free electricity is supplied to qualifying residents in the municipality.

A number of participants indicated that electricity services in the municipality are insufficient since some households are without electricity and street lights are lacking in some areas. The Councillors interviewed for the study highlighted maintenance of the electricity infrastructure, cable theft and load shedding as the main challenges with regard to the provision of electricity services. Stakeholder interviewees had opposing views on the impact of in-migration on service provisions, ranging from no influence on delivery to “a huge problem”.

When discussing community development, a variety of issues were identified by both focus group participants and stakeholder interviewees, including the need for training courses for the residents to enhance their skills; the need for a library and a community hall; job creation and recreational facilities; the provision of RDP housing and the construction of roads. One stakeholder noted that projects focussing on building a library, a sports recreation centre and a community hall are underway in Moses Kotane.

The local municipality, specifically the municipal manager and directors, are responsible for local development while councillors have a monitoring role with regard to effective service delivery. There is, according to one interview, no particular policy related to electricity services to guide the municipality in the provision of services.

According to some of the residents, the relationship between the community and the local municipality has deteriorated, with some describing it as a “communication breakdown.” Furthermore, opportunities to engage with the municipality regarding electricity services are limited. The need for improved communication with all relevant parties was highlighted by the residents. Finally, mostly all participants strongly denied the statement: “Your municipality appears to be a good performer in terms of the provision of electricity services.”

The stakeholder interviewees, however, reported a strong and effective community participation process, emphasising the success of the ward committee system, as well as the appointment of Community Development Workers. The latter are responsible for engaging with various departments and institutions, such as Home Affairs and SAPS, on behalf of the residents. Furthermore, the councillors noted that they are well-informed about the communities’ needs through monthly meetings and personal interaction with residents.

## TSWELOPELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, FREE STATE PROVINCE

### 5.1 Background

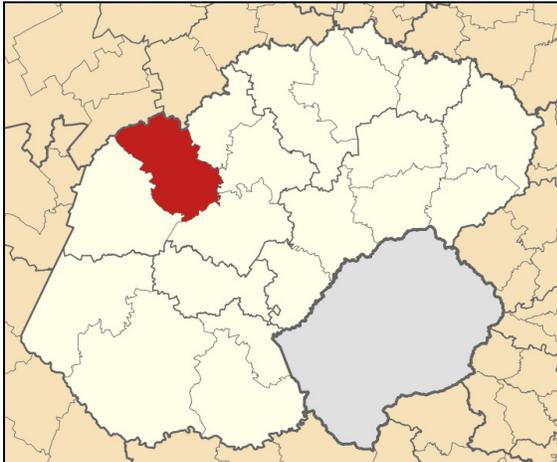
Tswelopele Local Municipality is situated in the Province of the Free State and its name in Sesotho means “progress”. It is one of five local municipalities within Lejweleputswa District Municipality. As a Category B Municipality, Tswelopele is predominantly a rural area. It also comprises commercial farmland and two main urban centres, Hoopstad/Tikwana and Bultfontein/Phahameng, which are 60 km from each other (LDM 2011/12: 7).

**Figure 7: Map of South Africa highlighting Lejweleputswa District, Free State**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

**Figure 8: Map of Free State Province highlighting Tswelopele LM**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

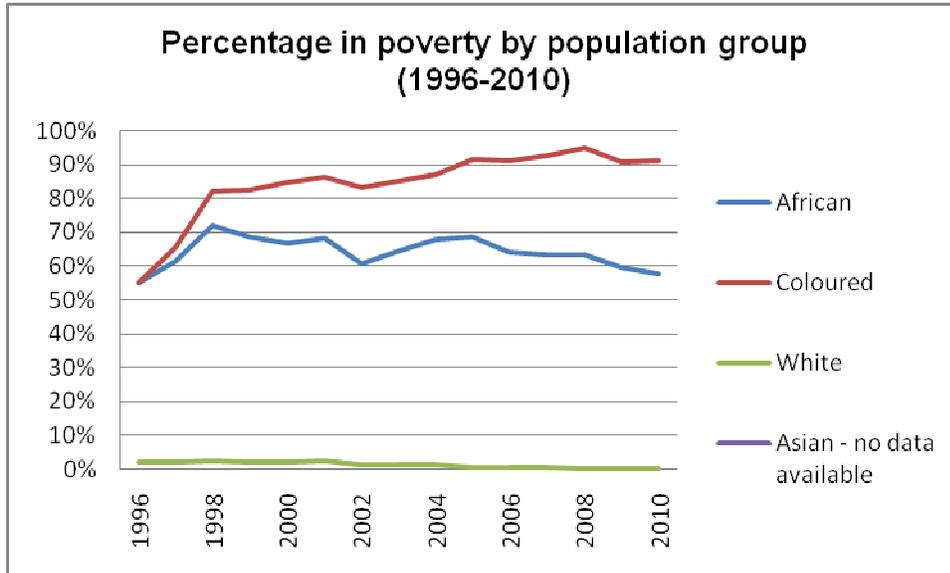
- **Population and household profile**

Population statistics for Tswelopele were taken from the Stats SA 2001 Census and the IHS database. According to these two sources, the population of Tswelopele increased from roughly 54,000 people in 2001 to an estimated 55,300 in 2009. The number of households only varied slightly from just more than 12,000 in 2001 to an estimated 14,500 in 2009.

- **Poverty indicators**

From 1996 to 2010, Tswelopele experienced a rise in overall poverty levels from 51% to 57%. While just over half (55%) of both the African and Coloured population groups were living in poverty in 1996, fourteen years later this figure increased slightly within the African population to 57% in 2010, whilst it nearly doubled to 91% within the Coloured group. The White population group retained relatively low levels of poverty over this time. Figure 9 below shows the changes in poverty levels according to population group:

**Figure 9: Percentage change in poverty by population group (TLM)**



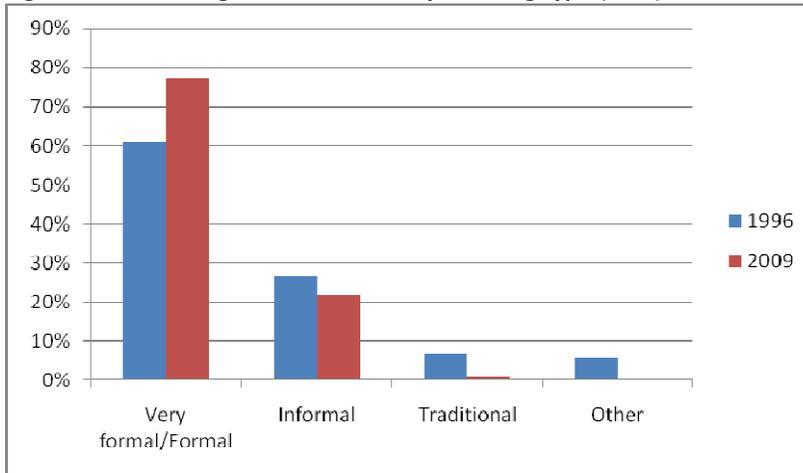
(Source: Regional Explorer, V559, 2010).

### Infrastructure and services

- **Dwelling type**

The number of households in formal or very formal dwellings increased from 7099 in 1996 to 11,127 in 2009 (ReX V559, 2010). There was also a slight increase in informal dwellings from 3,096 in 1996 to 3,138 in 2009. There was, however, a large reduction in the number of households in traditional or other types of dwellings, from 793 to 102 traditional dwellings, and from 652 to 8 dwellings classified as 'other'. Changes in percentage of households by general dwelling type from 1996 to 2009 are shown in Figure 10 below:

**Figure 10: Percentage of households by dwelling type (TLM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer 2010).

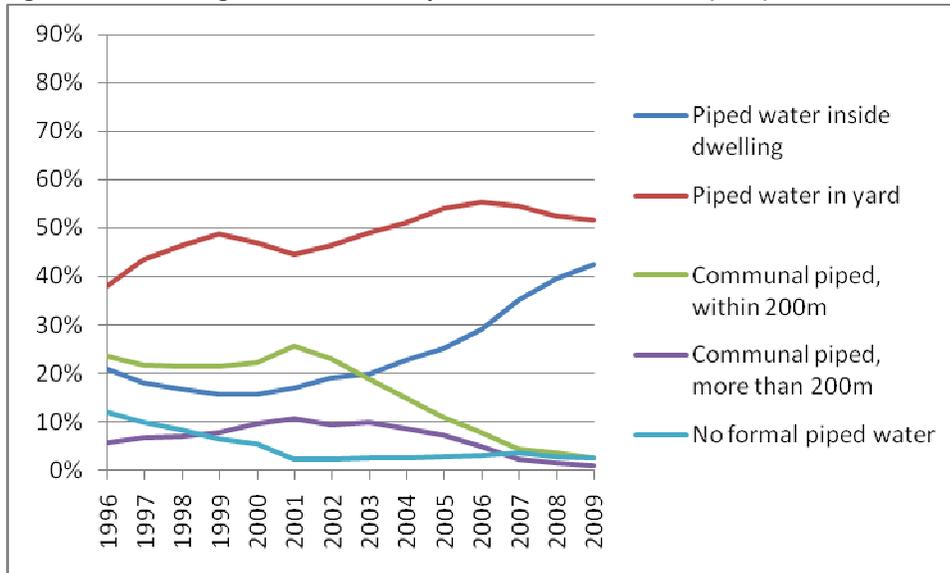
- **Access to water**

Dramatic improvements in access to water are evident in the reduction in the number of households without access to formal piped water, as well as the percentage of households with piped water at or above the RDP-level. The number of households *without* access to formal piped water decreased from 1400 in 1996 to 361 in 2009 (ReX V559, 2010). The percentage of households with piped water at or above the RDP-level improved from 82.4% in 1996 to 96.6% in 2009 (ibid.).

The “RDP-level” of water access is defined as having access to piped water less than 200 metres from one’s dwelling. In 2009, 128 households in Tswelopele only had access to piped water located more than 200 metres from their dwelling, a considerable decrease from 1,426 households in 2001.

Access to water services are also determined according to water source: piped water inside dwelling; piped water in yard; communal piped water less than 200m from dwelling (RDP level); communal piped water more than 200m from dwelling (below RDP level).

**Figure 11: Percentage of households by level of access to water (TLM)**

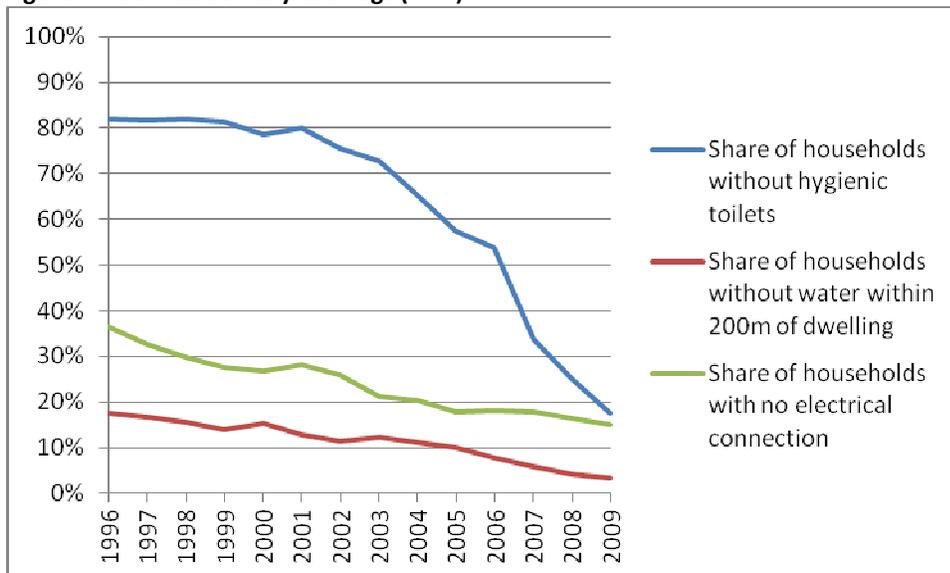


(Source: Regional Explorer 2010)

- **Service delivery backlogs**

A service delivery backlog is defined as a below basic level of supply or access to a particular service (see Literature Review). Figure 6 below tracks the changes in backlogs in each of the sectors of sanitation, water and electricity for Tswelopele between 1996 and 2009. There was a great improvement in access to hygienic toilets, dropping from an estimated 80% in 1996 to just under 20% in 2009. Water and electricity backlogs also decreased, with less than 10% of households experiencing backlogs in water in 2009, and less than 20% for electricity.

**Figure 12: Service delivery backlogs (TLM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer 2010)

## **5.2 Municipal governance and administration**

Tswelopele municipality is governed by the Mayor and the Council. The Mayor directs the town departments and appoints the municipal manager and department heads, with the advice and consent of the Council ([www.tswelopele.gov.za](http://www.tswelopele.gov.za)). Local councillors are elected either as ward councillors or through proportional representation (TLM IWMP 2008: 6). 15 Councillors were elected in May 2011.

Municipal administration is headed by the Municipal Manager and the Executive Managers of four key departments: Corporate Services, Financial Services, Community Services and Technical Services. Utility services such as electricity, water, sanitation and sewerage all fall within the Technical Services department.

## **5.3 Focus groups**

### **5.3.1 Participant characteristics**

Two focus groups were conducted in Tswelopele. Participants were primarily drawn from Bultfontein, one of the main towns in the municipality, and from Phahameng, one of the formal townships neighbouring Bultfontein. Bultfontein represents a more developed and predominantly white area whilst Phahameng is a predominantly black, less urban settlement. It is important that these two types of towns are represented. Although beyond the scope of this study, it is also important to look at farming areas much further removed from the municipal offices.

The Bultfontein group comprised mainly white, Afrikaans speaking residents. There were 10 participants in total, of which five were male and five were female. Ages of participants ranged from 19 to 69, with five participants less than 30 years of age, three participants between 30 and 65 and two participants over 65. Within this group only four have been residents of the area for ten or more years, with three participants having lived there between five and ten years, and three having lived there for one year or less.

The second focus group included residents of Phahameng and all participants were Africans. Five members of the group were male and five were female. Five members of the group were under 30 years of age, whilst the remaining five were between the ages of 30 and 65. Of the younger group, four were male and one female, and of the older group, four were females and one was male. All but one participant have been living in the area for over ten years, with the remaining resident having lived there for five years. Hereafter, the focus group from Bultfontein will be named TS FG1 and the focus group from Phahameng will be named TS FG2.

### **5.3.2 Results**

- **Service delivery**

All focus group participants were in general agreement regarding what service delivery entails, listing water, toilets, sanitation, as well as anything “concerning the services that we get and how the local community is maintained” (TS FG2). Participants were then asked to describe their access to water services specifically. Everyone from the first focus group confirmed that they have access to water through the taps in their homes (TS FG1). It was also noted that some people have boreholes. Access is regular and reliable, except when the pipes are broken or when water usage is limited (“when we’re not allowed to water our gardens”) (TS FG1). One respondent added that she filtrates the water before drinking as it is not clean.

Respondents from the second focus group provided similar answers, confirming that they all have taps in their yards and homes, and that the quality of the water “is clean and ready to be used” (TS FG2). Lack of access is due to the inability to pay for the services, although it was added that those people can get water from their neighbours, as well as from public places like the police station or community halls (TS FG2). An interruption in water supply sometimes lasts for the whole day. Members of the second group did experience a big change in access to water over the past five years. “Yes there is a change and a big change, because now the access to water is easier than before. In the olden days we used the bucket system, and for our toilets as well as big holes” (TS FG2).

When asked if the municipality provides them with free water, all respondents from both groups confirmed that they do not get any water for free:

- “No, in fact, I stay in a house with business rights, and I need to pay a fee before I can use a drop of water, I don’t know why, maybe it is just for premises that have business rights, but I have to pay a fee, and then pay for what I have used” (TS FG1).
- “We pay for the water that we use. If you don’t pay, municipality will cut your water supply” (TS FG2).
- “In some areas the municipality cut water supply completely, while in some areas they let the water-meter to run very slowly” (TS FG2).
- “Even if we don’t pay for the services we received, [the] Municipality must give us water. The people from Hoopstad do not pay [for] the services but they receive better services than we do. All the people from Hoopstad do not pay [for] the services. With that point we regard being treated unfairly. The Municipality must treat us equally” (TS FG2).

In the second focus group, participants disagreed on how the amount for water was determined, with one person stating that the municipality takes into account what each person can afford depending on whether they are employed or not, and other respondents stating that “the money to be paid is fixed” (TS FG2). When the moderator probed further, asking whether “the people who are paying less money, are they receiving less amount of water?”, respondents answered “no”, suggesting that there are indeed government subsidies in place for the provision of water (TS FG2).

Asked about what the procedure is for reporting problems, one participant from the first focus group explained that if the problem is “in your own yard, then municipality will not help you...but if it is in the street, then the municipality can help” (TS FG1). Most participants agreed that when the municipality is contacted they respond quickly to fix the problem (ibid.). In the second focus group, participants agreed that the municipality’s response time is good. However, one participant recalled an incident where the municipality came to look at a blocked drain pipe but simply said “that is beyond their control” and he had to fix it himself (TS FG2).

Interestingly, respondents from group one believed that the municipality is responsible for delivering and maintaining water services to the community, whilst those from group two recognized their own role in terms of paying for services: “The services are very important to us therefore it is our responsibilities to pay for the services that we receive” (TS FG2). One participant in the first group also denied that s/he had a role in the delivery and maintenance of water services: “The guys, they do their job; they must just do their job. The people are getting paid to do it. If they do their job, then there won’t be a problem” (TS FG1).

All respondents answered in the affirmative when asked whether they think the provision of water in their municipality is sufficient. The issue of the drinking quality of water came up in the first group, with members of the group noting that there are too many chemicals in the water (TS FG1).

- **Quality of life**

Questions around quality of life asked participants what things they feel are necessary to live a good quality life. Responses varied widely and included the following: proper accommodation (TS FG2); to be updated on community matters (TS FG2); money (FG1, FG2); food (FG 1, FG2); clothes (FG2); basic needs like water (FG1); a religious life (FG1); be happy with yourself (FG1).

Participants were further asked what the impact of water services has on their quality of life, as well as on their personal and family health. All agreed on the importance of water for life in general, and for cleaning and drinking in particular: “water is life” (TS FG2); “some people make [a] living from their garden so without water they won’t be able to make a living” (TS FG2); “you cannot be without water...until they close the taps, then you realize what water really is” (TS FG1); “it is really a primary need” (TS FG1). Responses were similar with regards to health, admitting that there are more cases of illnesses when the water is dirty (TS FG1), that all family members are affected (TS FG2), and it is necessary to drink a certain amount of water every day “to keep our life in a good shape” (TS FG2). One respondent from Focus Group one described the state of affairs in the location where s/he teaches:

...I see kids who physically do not have taps at the homes that need to carry water and do not have baths and need to wash in basins, so for them it is sometimes very difficult, it is not just for opening a tap, they do come to school clean, it is just a longer process for them... Sometimes I see that some of the small ones use a wheelbarrow... so it is not easy for them, they get up at 4 o’clock in the morning to get wood and so on (TS FG1).

A person from the second focus group concluded the theme with a positive remark: “We don’t know how water is cleaned and transported to us, however we are thankful for the service we receive” (TS FG2).

- **Development**

All participants were asked how they understand community development, whether their community has developed over the past five years, and how this has impacted on their personal welfare. According to one respondent, community development entails:

The improvements of services everywhere, not just in our town, where it is the whole community, in other words, the whole neighboring of our town is our community, the location, the town, everywhere, that is for me, the community (TS FG1).

Across the two groups, other responses confirmed a sense of development in terms of access to certain services and goods that meet community needs (TS FG2). This included things like water, power, food, jobs and housing (TS FG1). Improvements in sanitation services were especially noted in the second group, with one person explaining that “Initially we used the bucket system; that was unhealthy to our life. With that point I see the development in our community as the life saver to our community” (TS FG2).

- **Local government**

In the final theme of the questionnaire, participants were asked what the community's relationship with officials of the local municipality is like. Overall, a positive assessment was made of the local government officials and the engagement between them and the community.

- "We know their faces. We have spoken to them. I do not have a problem with them. They help us a lot" (TS FG1).
- "They are very friendly... I went to one of the guys, one of the directors; my child got SA Netball and he sponsored her fully from the municipality's side" (TS FG1).
- "One time they accidentally cut off our power after hours...and my husband phoned one of the guys and he said he was sorry and he came and switched it on at night" (TS FG1).
- "It is easier when it [the town] is smaller, then things can be resolved quicker. The city is too big, there are too many people" (TS FG1).
- "If you have a problem, or you want to give an inset for something, then you can go and see somebody" (TS FG1).
- "They [the officials] are the people responsible to highlight [to] the community about the important things that are to take place, or about the new development in the community. Local government use loud speakers to inform [the] community about new developments i.e. elections or the electrical cut that will take place sooner or later" (TS FG2).
- "We as the community, we give our support to the local government by attending to their meetings and giving them our inputs" (TS FG2).

Asked about the role of other service providers in assisting municipalities with the provision of water services, the responses from the two groups were quite different. In the first focus group the respondents stressed that it should remain the responsibility of government: "The municipality can do it themselves. They are getting paid to do it. If they get other people to help them to do it, then it is a waste of money" (TS FG1). In the other group such assistance was seen as a positive: "the service providers must create a lot of job opportunities" (TS FG2);

All respondents also agreed with the assessment that their municipality is considered a good performer in terms of the provision of water services, although the response in the second group was somewhat ambiguous as they answered that they were "not aware" that they are a good performer (TS FG2).

## **5.4 Interviews**

### **5.4.1 Participant characteristics**

Interviews with government officials and councillors were difficult to secure in Tswelopele Local Municipality and only two interviews were realised. Officials were chosen based on the significance of his/her position with regards to the provision of utility services, especially that of water. Officials were sought from both municipal governance and municipal management, namely local councillors and high level persons within utility and water services departments.

One interview was conducted with a high level person within municipal management, and another interview was conducted with a Councillor. They will hereafter be referred to as TS INT1 and TS INT2 respectively.

## 5.4.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

The first interviewee explained that he “is responsible for planning and directing the operations of branches and departments within the municipality, and for providing administrative and clerical support to the Office of the Mayor.” He is thus not directly involved in the provision of water services, but stays informed through his department heads (TS INT1). The second interviewee (TS INT2) is a supervisor and “in charge of the water department taking care of water purification and the allocation to different departments.”

The interviewees noted that, apart from the municipality, the Department of Water Affairs and non-governmental organisations are involved in the provision and maintenance of water services. Explaining the involvement of the Department of Water Affairs, the municipal official (TS INT1) commented as follows: “They educate me on the different needs and things that have to be done in order to provide good clean water.” Both interviewees indicated that the Tswelopele Local Municipality owns the water treatment plant in their area.

When asked what skills and capacities are essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and deliver basic services, the Councillor stressed the importance of the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) which is linked to targets and performance indicators to ensure that targets are reached by the end of each financial year. “My advice would be to stick to the SDBIP because it is a key management, implementation and monitoring tool which provides operational content to the service delivery targets set in the budget and in the Integrated Development Plan. It determines the performance agreements for managers and the performance can be monitored through monthly and annual reports” (TS INT2). He also noted that it is important for a local municipality to acquire skills and capacity to implement and manage projects (TS INT2). The interviewee within municipal management listed quality control, employee satisfaction and efficient communication as important for effective service delivery (TS INT1).

- **Development**

Interviewees were asked to explain the development goals of their local municipality. For the interviewee within municipal management (TS INT1), development is about “the provision of a decent standard of living for every individual in the community, thus good service delivery.” The Councillor mentioned that the development goals of all directorates within the municipality are identified in the SDBIP and are financed accordingly (TS INT2).

When asked who should be responsible for local development, the interviewee within municipal management indicated that it is the responsibility of the municipal manager “since he/she controls most of the municipality” (TS INT1). For the Councillor, “the local municipality has a responsibility to the residents of the town, because the main aim is to serve the community and provide effective service delivery”, however, s/he continued, the provincial government also has to provide adequate funding and support to the local municipality (TS INT2).

In terms of the local government’s development strategy, effective service delivery and economic development were listed by the interviewees. “Good service delivery is an essential part of a municipality’s development. If service delivery is poor, we will not have the community’s support” (TS INT1). The Councillor (TS INT2) discussed the economic development strategy of the municipality “that

will enable key economic sectors to develop and build confidence of local, national and international investors. It will also promote local products and services and co-ordinate a renewal programme of the central business district.”

- **Policies and programmes**

When asked what policies guide the municipality in the provision of water services, the interviewees mentioned that the alleviation of poverty is important “to ensure that poor households are given free basic services” (TS INT1). Furthermore, the municipality aims to provide water to every household in the town and surrounding areas, and citizens with proof of an income of less than R1 500 per month may apply for water subsidies. However, only one person per dwelling may apply for the water subsidy (TS INT2). An interviewee mentioned that the municipality’s policies and programmes cohere “completely” with [national] government policies and programmes on water delivery (TS INT1).

The interviewees differed on the financing of services in their municipality. According to the one interviewee, the municipality is not externally funded for services and has to rely “solely on the payments of accounts” (TS INT1). However, the other interviewee indicated that apart from income generated from municipal customers, the government and NGOs also contribute to the funding of municipal services (TS INT2).

According to the interviewees, price adjustments for water services are implemented in July of each year and are advertised in the Government Gazette and local press.

- **Impacts and challenges**

In terms of the challenges related to the provision of water services, the interviewees identified large capital expenditure to replace and maintain expensive equipment for the provision of clean drinking water, and difficulties in providing water services to households in rural areas as the main challenges in the Tswelopele Local Municipality. An interviewee also mentioned that the rise in unemployment levels in the Tswelopele Local Municipality resulted in fewer people being able to pay for water services (TS INT2). With regard to the impact of migration and urbanization on service delivery, an interviewee noted that outdated migration figures hampered the municipality’s planning of water provision (TS INT2).

- **Community participation**

Respondents were asked about processes of community consultation and engagement, and the role of the residents in the delivery of basic services. Both interviewees reported an effective community participation process: “We consult regularly with the community to know what grievances there are and what solutions we can provide. We also make sure that they know exactly what we are doing in order to provide a better standard of service delivery” (TS INT1). “Ward Meetings are held regularly to get input from the citizens. The Office of the Speaker plays an essential role in ensuring Ward Committees operate effectively as links between community and municipality and involving the citizens in the decision-making process of the municipality” (TS INT2). The interviewee also added that Councillors who represent the residents of the local municipality are provided with suitable and reliable information “to enhance their ability and capacity to influence meaningful decision-making” (TS INT2).

Both stakeholders agreed that community consultation and engagement facilitate more effective service delivery. One interviewee commented as follows: “Our community and municipality are working together as one” (TS INT1). Furthermore, the stakeholders noted that all individuals have a role to play

in the delivery of basic services, stating that, “If everyone does their bit for the community and save water and electricity, and report the misuse of water and electricity, it could increase the standard of basic services” (TS INT1).

## **5.5 Summary**

The focus group respondents agreed with the assessment that the Tswelopele Local Municipality is considered a good performer in terms of the provision of water services. All participants indicated that they have reliable access to good quality water through taps in either their homes or yards. Some of the focus group participants experienced a huge improvement in access to water over the past five years, including easier access to water and the abolishment of the bucket system. Water subsidies are available for qualifying residents in the local municipality. The participants also generally agreed that the municipality’s response time is good when contacted to fix a water related problem. Interestingly, respondents from one focus group believed that the municipality is responsible for delivering and maintaining water services to the community, whilst those from the other group recognized their own role in terms of paying for services.

For the focus group participants community development entails, amongst others, access to services such as water, sanitation, electricity, food, housing, and employment. The stakeholders interviewed noted the importance of an acceptable standard of living for everybody in the community, which entails effective service delivery. Although the municipality is primarily responsible for local development, the provincial government has to adequately fund and support the municipality to fulfil its objectives. In terms of the local government’s development strategy, effective service delivery and economic development were highlighted by the interviewees.

In Tswelopele, the municipality, the Department of Water Affairs and non-governmental organisations are involved in the provision and maintenance of water services. TLM owns the water treatment plant in their area.

The focus groups had different opinions about the role of external service providers in assisting municipalities with the provision of water services. In the first focus group the respondents stressed that it should remain the responsibility of government while the other group positively viewed the role of external service providers, including potential job creation.

The stakeholder interviewees indicated that adherence to the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan is essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and deliver basic services. Furthermore, it is also important to employ skilled workers to implement and manage projects. Quality control, employee satisfaction and effective communication were identified as essential aspects of municipal governance.

When asked what policies guide the municipality in the provision of water services, the alleviation of poverty, the provision of free basic services to poor households, was highlighted. Since the municipality aims to provide water to every household in the municipality, water subsidies are available for qualifying households. The municipality’s water policy is in coherence with the water policy of the South African national government. Services are financed through payments by residents, subsidies from the government and NGOs. Price adjustments for water services are implemented in July of each year and advertised in the Government Gazette and local press.

Challenges related to the provision of water services in Tswelopele include large capital expenditure to replace and maintain expensive equipment for the provision of clean drinking water, the provision of water services to households in rural areas and rising unemployment levels impacting on the number of paying customers. Furthermore, outdated migration figures hampered the municipality's planning of water provision.

Community consultation and participation processes are well-established in the local municipality. Regular Ward Committee Meetings act as links between the community and the municipality, and involve residents in the decision-making process of the municipality. The focus group participants positively assessed their relationship and engagement with the local government officials.

## CAPE TOWN METRO, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

### 6.1 Background

Cape Town Metro, in the Western Cape Province, is one of eight metropolitan municipalities in South Africa. Although Cape Town has the oldest municipal structure in the country, the Cape Town Metro as it is structured today was established in 2000 (CoCT 2011: 4). The City of Cape Town is also the largest in the country, with an area of 2455 square km. It is also the second most populous, with an annual growth rate of 3%. Its major economic sectors are 1) finance, insurance, property and business services, 2) manufacturing and 3) wholesale and retail trade, catering and accommodation (CoCT 2011: 5).

The Muidex Report (2009) ratings of metropolitan municipalities rank the Cape Town Metro as the second best city in the country for service delivery. It also shows a more constant improvement in service delivery as compared to other municipalities, with progress especially being made in sanitation.

**Figure 13: Map of South Africa highlighting Cape Town Metro, Western Cape**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

**Figure 14: Map of Western Cape Province highlighting Cape Town Metro**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

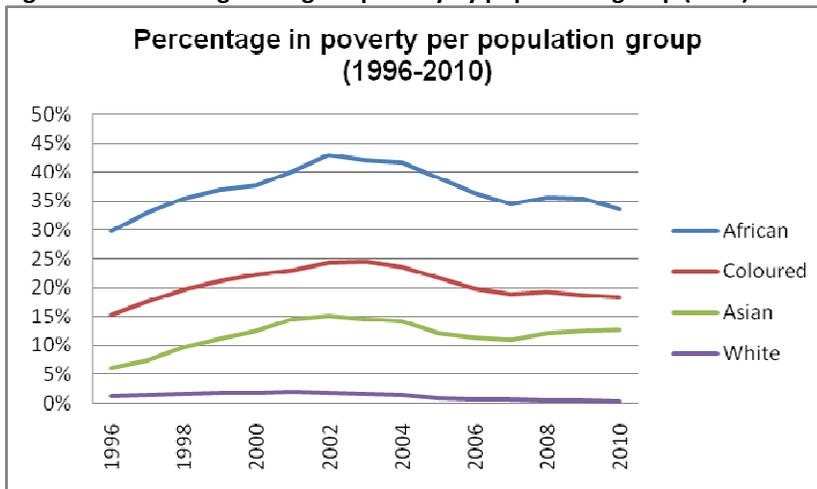
- **Population and household profile**

More than half of the population of the Western Cape Province reside in the Cape Town Metro (Stats SA 2007 Basic Results: 7). The Metro itself has experienced a 20% increase in population size, from 2,892,000 in 2001 to 3,231,000 in 2009 (Regional Explorer 2010).

- **Poverty indicators**

Overall, the poverty level in the City of Cape Town has decreased slightly from 19.6% in 1996 to 15.9% in 2010 (Regional Explorer 2010). The percentage of people living in poverty peaked at 25.2% in 2002. Disaggregated by population group, the percentage of people living in poverty declined in both the African and White population groups, but rose in both the Coloured (+3%) and Asian (+4.5%) groups (ibid.). Figure 15 below traces the changes in poverty between 1996 and 2010 according to population group:

**Figure 15: Percentage change in poverty by population group (CTM)**



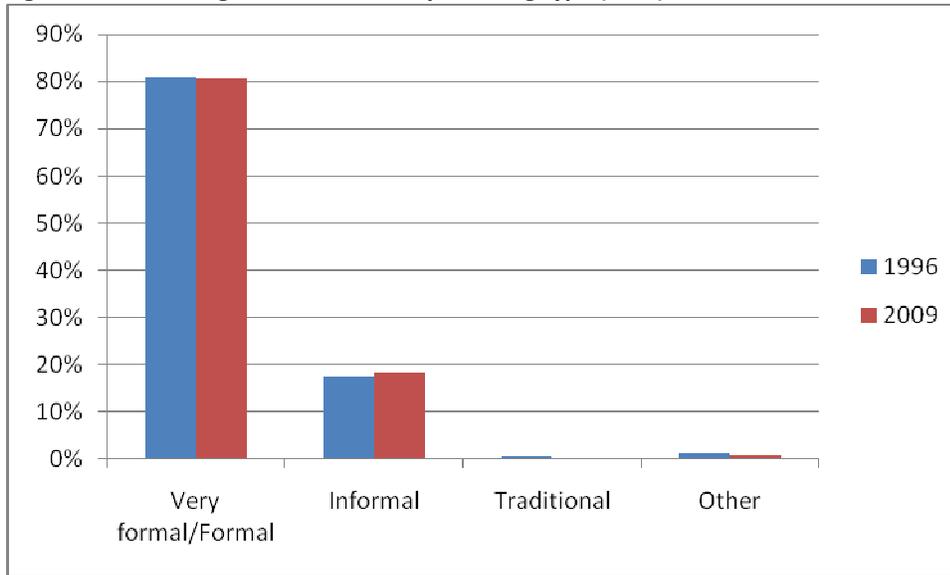
(Source: Regional Explorer 2010)

### Infrastructure and services

- **Dwelling type**

The percentage of households disaggregated by dwelling type (formal, informal and traditional) shows the majority of Cape Town Metro residents live in formal dwellings (about 80%), with less than 20% living in informal dwellings (Regional Explorer 2010). This trend appears to hold over time, as shown in the comparison between 1996 and 2009 in Figure 16 below:

**Figure 16: Percentage of households by dwelling type (CTM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer 2010).

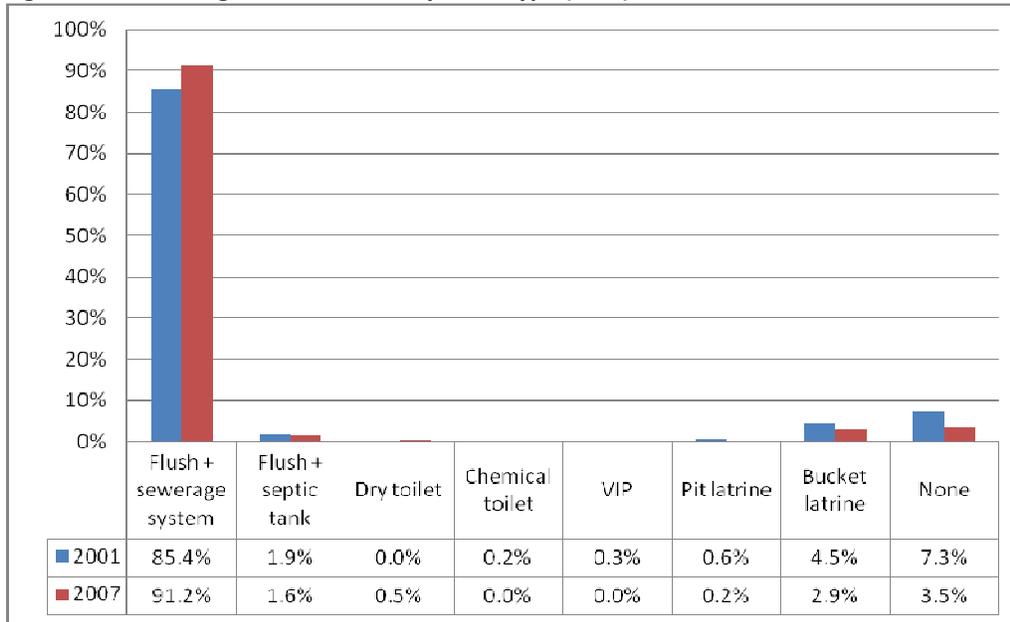
- **Access to sanitation services**

The provision of sanitation services is a complex and contentious issue in South Africa. Sanitation refers to a number of diverse services, from sewage infrastructure, treatment and waste management, to refuse removal, recycling and access to toilet facilities.

In South Africa, backlogs in the provision of sanitation services in terms of toilet access are charted according to different toilet types. Municipal performance is thus measured against household access to one of the following types of toilets: flush toilet connected to sewerage system; flush toilet with septic tank; dry toilet; chemical toilet; Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP); pit latrine without ventilation; bucket system; or no toilet.

The majority of the Cape Town Metro population have access to a flush toilet connected to the sewerage system. There has been a further increase in the percentage of households with flush toilets since 2007 (Regional Explorer 2010). The second most common type of toilet facility is the bucket system (2.9%), although 3.5% of households do not have access to any toilet facilities, as is indicated in Figure 17 below.

**Figure 17: Percentage of households by toilet type (CTM)**



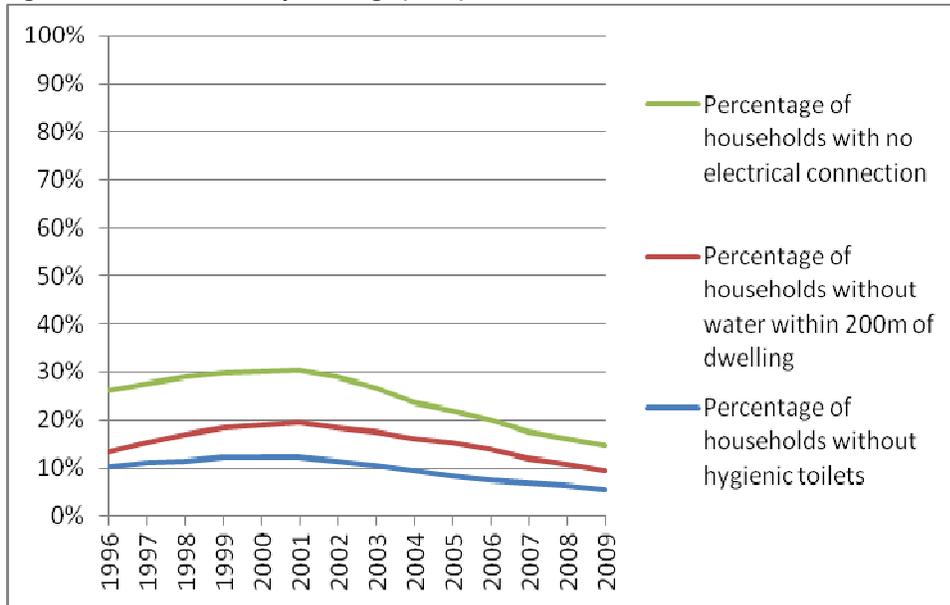
(Source: Stats SA 2007a).

Available statistics also indicate that in 2009, an estimated 93% of households in Cape Town Metro had a refuse removal service provided either by a local authority or private company (Regional Explorer 2010).

- **Service delivery backlogs**

A service delivery backlog is defined as a below basic level of supply or access to a particular service (see Literature Review). Figure 18 below tracks the changes in backlogs in each of the sectors of sanitation, water and electricity for Cape Town Metro between 1996 and 2009. Backlogs in water and sanitation increased slightly between 1996 and 2001. However, this was followed by great improvements in all three sectors between 2001 and 2009, with less than 20% of households experiencing backlogs in any of these services.

**Figure 18: Service delivery backlogs (CTM)**



(Source: Regional Explorer 2010).

## 6.2 Municipal governance and administration

Executive and legislative powers and authority reside in the City Council, comprising 221 councillors who are elected through local government. 111 are ward councillors representing specific areas, whilst 110 are proportional (party list) councillors (CoCT 2011: 10). The council is responsible for appointing the Executive Mayor, the City Manager, as well as the chairs of Section 79 Committees, amongst other positions. The Mayor also appoints a Mayoral Committee (MayCo) whose members are allocated specific portfolios.

Given the critical role of service delivery within any city or community, the governance responsibilities accompanying service delivery begin with the head of local government, the Mayor. The Mayor contributes to the plans and programmes for administering services through the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), and also monitors and oversees service delivery in the City (CoCT 2011: 10).

Section 79 Portfolio Committees are the mechanisms through which the City fulfils its specific obligations and functions. These are oversight committees which develop policy and monitor implementation (Pollack 2011). In the City of Cape Town, the Utility Services Portfolio Committee falls within the Economic Growth, Development and Infrastructure cluster and oversees the work of the relevant City Departments, municipal entities and mayoral committee members.

Administration of the City is the mandate of the Office of the City Manager and the Executive Management Team (EMT). Executive Directors comprising the EMT head specific “Directorates” which are monitored by their respective Portfolio Committees. The Utility Services Directorate, for example, is responsible for municipal infrastructure and services and includes the following Departments: Water and Sanitation; Solid Waste Management; Service Authority; Service Regulation and Logistics; and Electricity Services (CoCT 2011: 65). The Office of the City Manager governs the EMT and Directorates, ensures compliance with legislation and oversees the implementation of the IDP (ibid: 13).

## 6.3 Focus groups

### 6.3.1 Participant characteristics

Given the size of Cape Town Metro relative to Tswelopele and Moses Kotane, four focus groups were conducted throughout the Metropolitan area. In selecting focus group areas, researchers tried to take into account the disparities in living standard and provision of services across the Metro. However, given the (geographic and population) size of the Metro and the limited scope of this study, this was extremely difficult. Although the groups reflect the wide range of experiences of a cross-section of Cape Town Metro residents, these can not necessarily be taken as representative of the population as a whole. Indeed, the responses from the four groups do illuminate the diversity of challenges and experiences throughout the Metro.

The four residential areas chosen for the focus groups were Bellville/Brackenfell, the Cape Town Central Business District (CBD), Mitchell's Plain/Portlands, and Khayelitsha. The Bellville/Brackenfell area was chosen as representative of the (northwest) suburbs, which is a predominantly white, Afrikaans, middle-class neighbourhood. The Cape Town CBD was selected in order to include the more cosmopolitan dynamic of the inner city. Mitchell's Plain represented the predominantly Coloured neighbourhoods with a potential range of living standards and service delivery. Finally, Khayelitsha, an area of roughly two million people, is known for very poor service delivery. It is an area comprising mostly African migrants from the Eastern Cape.

The Bellville/Brackenfell focus group comprised ten participants, of which five were male and five were female. All participants were white, with a mixture of Afrikaans and English speaking people. Participant ages ranged from 23 to 55. Only two people were under 30 years of age, with eight participants between 30 and 55. Of the ten participants, four have been living in the area between ten and 30 years and three have lived there for more than 30 years. The remaining three people have been residents of the area for two years or less.

In the group from the Cape Town CBD area, there were eight people who took part in the discussion, of which six were white and two were coloured. Only two out of the eight participants were residents of the area for more than a year. However, these two residents said they have been living in the CBD for 13 and 15 years respectively. The other six members of the group all resided for less than one year in the area. This may be indicative of the nature of inner city living, which often attracts young people looking for temporary residence while studying or working. This was confirmed by the fact that three out of eight participants were students, whilst four were working full time and one part time. Four participants were also between the ages of 30 and 35, with the remaining four being less than 30 years old.

The characteristics of the Khayelitsha focus group participants varied greatly from that of the CBD group. Five African males and five African females took part in the discussion. Ages ranged from 24 to 55, with three people under 30 years of age and the remaining seven between 30 and 55. Nine of the ten participants have been living in the area between eight and fifteen years. One person said he had been living in the area for two years only.

Nine people took part in the focus group discussion in Mitchell's Plain (Portlands). Four were male and five were female; all were Coloured. Two respondents were younger than 30, five were between 30 and 65 and two were over 65. One person did not disclose her age but did indicate that she is a pensioner. Interestingly, all participants have been residing in the Mitchell's Plain/Portlands area for more than 20 years, and five reported living there for more than 30 years.

Hereafter, the Bellville focus group will be numbered CT FG1, the CBD focus group will be CT FG2, Khayelitsha will be CT FG3 and Mitchell's Plain will be CT FG4.

### 6.3.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

Participants across all four focus groups understand 'service delivery' in terms of the following items: sewerage; refuse removal; water; public toilets; electricity; street lights; keeping streets and parks clean; safety (the police); health services and education. Some participants specified that service delivery is rather about *how* the services are provided:

- "Keeping it to the standards" (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "[Doing] the best they can do out there" (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "Things that you pay for so that the environment that one lives in does not go backwards" (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "To see that the residents get their services in a right way" (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "I think I pay for a service; that is why you pay, to get a good service" (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).

The Bellville, Mitchell's Plain and CBD Focus Groups all confirmed access to toilets in their homes. In Khayelitsha, on the other hand, access varied:

- "They are inside to some people and outside to others" (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "There are more disadvantages to informal settlement people as they all use one toilet" (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "Green Point toilets are very dangerous and risky" (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "Some toilets are far from people and those that are close give unbearable stench" (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).

In terms of sewage removal and treatment services, residents of the Bellville area confirmed having such services, although mostly because everything works and there are no problems, so the services must be provided (CT FG1: Oct. 2011). The few incidents of blockages or burst water pipes were fixed very quickly (ibid.). ("My toilet's contents flush away and the bath's water also goes down so there is no problem"). Only a problem with refuse bin removal was mentioned (CT FG1: Oct. 2011). Members of the CBD group were similarly satisfied and assumed that the lack of sewage related issues shows that the systems are in place and working (CT FG2: Oct. 2011). Although the Mitchell's Plain group mentioned continually blocked street drains, sewage pipes not being cleaned and people dumping refuse wherever, they were generally satisfied with the sewage removal and treatment service (CT FG4: Oct. 2011). For the Khayelitsha group, however, sewage removal and treatment was understood in terms of the cleaning of public toilets, which either does not happen or does not get done properly (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).

Participants were asked if access to sanitation has changed over the last five years, and if so, in what ways. In the CBD, one participant noted that since the 2010 World Cup there are garbage bins available everywhere (CT FG2). Both Mitchell's Plain and Khayelitsha residents denied that there have been any changes in their area (CT FG3; CT FG4).

When asked who they think is responsible for delivering and maintaining sanitation services, respondents listed the following parties: municipality or local government (CT FG3: Oct. 2011; CT FG1:

Oct. 2011); Councillors (CT FG3: Oct. 2011); “Helen Zille, the Mayor” (FG2: Oct. 2011); a town committee, a board or town council (CT FG2: Oct. 2011); Cape City Council (CT FG4: Oct. 2011); and everyone in the community (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).

The next question asked respondents what they think their role should be in the delivery and maintenance of sanitation services. Responses overall indicated a need to be conscientious about how one makes use of particular services, about being clean and keeping the local environment clean, and about teaching others, especially children, to do so.

- “We cannot throw just anything into the toilet” (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- To put the rubbish bin out on the right day, to not throw anything in it that shouldn’t be there (CT FG1: Oct. 2011); to get a recycle bin (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- To throw things away rather than litter and to pick litter up (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).
- “We should close our taps” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “You must always do your part...if you see something lying around, do the effort, pick it up, drop it in the bin” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011); call someone whenever you come across a problem (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “If you see something going wrong to try and stop it” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).
- Teach children to keep the area clean, to throw things away (CT FG3: Oct. 2011); “Charity starts at home” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).

- **Quality of life**

When asked what things do you think are necessary for one to live a quality life, basic services and more work opportunities were mentioned in all four groups.

- “Basics....food, sanitation facilities, safety”; clean water; work; education; a roof over your head and something to eat every day (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “Fresh running water”; “healthy environment”; “hygiene”; “a flushing toilet”; “exercising also”; “happiness”; “we asking money!”; “good relationships, oh my word, there’s many things”; “the value of things around you. And people, not just things” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “Municipality must employ people”; “we want job”; “our areas must be clean”; we need skills so that we can get good jobs”; Money, is why we need and ask for work, we need jobs” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “The first thing is security”; “we need more jobs”; better health care facilities; security, especially for schools; better police services; “water is a necessity” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).

A follow up question asked participants what impacts, if any, sanitation services has on their personal health, as well as on the health of members of the household. One of the participants remarked that their quality of water is quite good and clean and that water is essential for good health (CT FG1). This was confirmed in all the other groups, where participants singled out clean water as essential. One person summed it up nicely: “I think everybody here will agree you can live without electricity but you can’t live without water” (CT FG4).

- **Development**

Asked to explain their understanding of ‘community development’, respondents’ answers also both varied and overlapped, with a strong social element appearing in many answers:

- Sewerage; electricity; improvement of circumstances, like schools, libraries, health services; work to improve roads, potholes; social development, taking care of previously disadvantaged

and old people; “I think it is also about teaching people how to make use of services”; upbringing and education (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).

- “It depends on what the community wants to do, how they want to do it”; education; community life; soup kitchens and stuff like that; planting trees; other community projects” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “All the important needs must be close to us, for example shopping malls, schools, taxis and busses”; good roads; “to be close to the road for ambulances”; “the fire station to be close to the community” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- Education; “transport in our area, the busses and trains”; “I think a good thing for them to do [will] be to have more workshops and awareness programmes that they run for youngsters...with regards like AIDS...and teenage pregnancy”; upgrading of the sports fields (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).

Respondents were asked what impacts there have been on development in the community over the last five years. In both Mitchell’s Plain and Khayelitsha, specific projects were cited: new hospital, new library and new police station in Mitchell’s Plain (CT FG4: Oct. 2011); more RDP houses, geysers and bathrooms added to some RDP houses, new hospital and new court, college in Ilitha Park, and an extension of the railway to Makaza (CT FG3: Oct. 2011). Residents of the Bellville/Brackenfell area were also happy with the development of the community, some even commenting that they may live in the best municipality in the country (CT FG1: Oct. 2011). Close proximity to a multitude of shopping centres, growth of the area without subsequent problems with the provision of services were given as reasons for this response (CT FG1: Oct. 2011). Participants in the CBD group voiced concern over the lack of community in the city area, as well as the need for cleaner surroundings (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).

- **Local government**

Under the theme of local government, focus group participants were asked about the community’s relationship with local officials, as well as the extent to which they are given the opportunity to engage with the municipality over the provision of sanitation services. An overwhelming majority of all respondents noted that they do not know or engage with local officials.

- “You don’t know who the people themselves are. It is always the negative stuff that comes out” (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “As long as we can go on and the services are delivered, then you don’t really care who is in control as long as the services are delivered” (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “It is your right to know the guy [municipal manager]...it is your responsibility to go to him” (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “I don’t really have problems so I’m not going to put in the effort [to get information or speak to officials] (CT FG1: Oct. 2011).
- “Something major has to happen so if you go to the news, then somebody will address you” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “They can’t really say who they are cause the people will bombard them” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “Like for instance I said I wanted to go to the municipality and lay a complaint, you don’t know if, well I don’t know if that complaint is going to get to the right person or if it’s going to be checked” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).
- “I think social media for a municipality, so the whole world can go online and see what’s going on, could work” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).

- “Once they get chosen you don’t ever see them”; “I don’t even know who they are”; “There is definitely no relationship between our community here and our local council” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).
- “Many people don’t go to meetings” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).
- “...Overall once a person is elected in a position they don’t bother because it’s about money that’s a problem, they now have a status, they are not the same as the people on the ground. I think that’s a problem. They run” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).

One respondent from the Bellville/Brackenfell group did indeed confirm having spoken with an official and that they had listened positively to what the respondent had to say about how things can improve (CT FG1: Oct. 2011). This was in stark contrast to the responses of the Khayelitsha group:

- “I don’t even want to know these councillors because they are *skelms* [crooks]” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “They only look after their own needs, not caring about us and they can kill you. They think they own the world” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “They sift everything the community says and use what they like that suits them” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011). “They only...forward the information that is suitable for them to the top management” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “They can burn your house if you talk too much in meetings” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “We know nothing about our rights. They don’t involve us in their meetings” (CT FG3: Oct. 2011).

The final question asked participants to respond to the claim that their municipality is a good performer in terms of the provision of sanitation services. Respondents from the Bellville/Brackenfell group accepted this statement and made reference to the efficiency of the municipality whenever they experienced problems (CT FG1: Oct. 2011). The CBD group also agreed, with one person stating that “It’s good, but there’s room for improvement” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011). Other responses were as follows:

- “When I moved to Mitchell’s Plain all the roads were sand but now it’s tar roads and it’s just been improved and improved, I can’t complain” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).
- “If the police service could work the way our municipality service does, we won’t have a problem” (CT FG4: Oct. 2011).
- “I think the whole country can learn from Cape Town in a way. From where I’ve been in South Africa, the people really care about their city in Cape Town. And they, you know, they do care more than the rest of the country, so it’s really good” (CT FG2: Oct. 2011).

## 6.4 Interviews

### 6.4.1 Participant characteristics

Two interviews were held with key government officials from the Cape Town Metro. Officials were chosen based on the significance of his or her position with regards to the provision of utility services, especially that of sanitation. Interviews were realised with a councillor and a high-level person in municipal management. They will be referred to as CT INT1 and CT INT2 respectively.

## 6.4.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

The first interviewee explained that s/he plays an integral role in relation to the provision of utility services in the City of Cape Town. “Utilities basically deals with electrification, but electricity as well in terms of the distribution of electricity to the entire City of Cape Town. It also deals with water and sanitation and also deals with waste removal... with solid waste and the collection of waste and the disposal thereof” (CT INT1: Oct. 2011).

The second interviewee works within the Directorate of Utility Services and thus is more involved in the implementation of utility services. Both noted the importance of distinguishing between service delivery in formal areas, where there are roughly 600,000 households, and service delivery in informal settlements (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). There are 220 informal settlements comprising 220,000 households under the jurisdiction of the Cape Town Metro. In the informal areas, many sanitation systems are in place, including chemical, bucket and waterborne communal toilets and systems (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

In terms of the parties involved in sanitation services, one of the interviewees identified national, provincial and local government, as well as NGOs and service delivery recipients (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). The national government provides the guidelines in terms of the provision of pipes, water and toilet facilities per household. The provincial government has a mandate for providing housing. Finally, the municipality is reliant on the national and provincial government for funding through the Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG) which, according to the other respondent, “forces directorates to plan together” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). Thus, water and sanitation upgrades must be linked to housing developments (*ibid.*).

The involvement of local government was described by the councillor as a “matrix approach” across sector departments, as well as across municipal governance (portfolio committees) and municipal management (directors and directorates). The second interviewee confirmed the significance of intergovernmental relations, adding that the Departments of Agriculture, Water and Housing are major stakeholders, but also that the City of Cape Town has level one and two accreditation and thus can govern and manage independent of Provincial and National government (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

The two interviewees were asked about the ownership and operation of water and sewage treatment plants. According to one, ownership and supervision of water treatment plants vary and the City of Cape Town utilizes different mechanisms. Dams are regionally owned, while there are catchment and treatment areas owned and operated by the City of Cape Town. Other such facilities, for example Zandvliet, are operated by external organizations (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). The other respondent also confirmed that all operators and controllers must comply with the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). This respondent further elaborated on the details regarding such plants: there are 27 wastewater treatment plants and 11,000 water treatment plants, 10,000km of piped sewage network and 11,000km of water pipe distribution (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

When asked what skills and capacities are essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and/or deliver basic services, the councillor answered that skills retention and the growth of skills is primary (CT INT1). “Education at the right level” is required, especially in engineering, technical fields, and communication (*ibid.*). For the official from the Directorate, the ratio of technical or professional staff versus administrative staff within municipal management is unbalanced (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). This respondent also believed that individuals are often fast-tracked into management level positions soon

after completing their studies, but that this is often to their own detriment as they struggle to cope (ibid.). The ageing of the workforce in the Directorate also proves to be a problem since there is not an adequate succession policy in place. Finally, s/he said that all Executive Directors must be engineers.

- **Development**

Interviewees were asked to explain how they understand the development goals of their local municipality. For the councillor, development is about “increasing the quality of lives of people”, both of individuals and of institutions (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). And further, economic growth must impact on people’s lives (ibid.). The second respondent answered this question in terms of the development challenges: “the biggest challenge for the city is unemployment, for me it is education” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

When asked who all they think should be responsible for local development, the councillor defended a notion of an “open opportunity society” where people create opportunities for themselves with what government can provide (CT INT1).

In terms of the local government’s development strategy, the councillor cited efforts by the City of Cape Town to partner with developers and banking institutions in order to improve access to housing as an example of the kinds of projects the City has undertaken to develop the metro (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). The second respondent also made reference to a labour-based public works programme that aims for infrastructure-led economic development (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

- **Policies and programmes**

The theme on policies and programmes asked respondents to discuss the policies that guide the provision of sanitation services, whether these facilitate effective service delivery, how they are implemented, and to what extent municipal, provincial and national policies cohere.

Both Cape Town respondents insisted that the policies guiding service delivery are outdated. The White Paper on Sanitation “is still just a white paper”, whilst “the MFMA is silent on certain issues” that leave “grey areas” specifically with regard to informal settlements (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). Furthermore, the mandate to provide toilet facilities on the basis of a 1/25 ratio is only achieved on average, but it is also not a good enough goal. As one official explained, “we have gone as far as we can legally go” (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). We need to work “towards ownership of land” and “need to cause capitalization” (CT INT1: Oct. 2011).

Asked about how services are financed, the official from the Directorate of Utility Services listed grant funding, loans and user-charges as the primary sources of funding for service delivery in the municipality (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). According to this interviewee, “utility services generate the most revenue for the city” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). Details were also provided: Grant transfers are determined based on the determination of a local government’s equitable share, which derives from the number of informal dwellings in the municipality. The City of Cape Town is provided roughly R45 per dwelling (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). Further, paying customers are primarily from the formal areas and their payments thus subsidise the informal settlement services (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). This informant also confirmed that the City invests R1.5 billion per year in informal settlements (ibid.).

The process for budgeting for and distributing funds to various service sectors was outlined by the Directorate official as follows: it begins with the development of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which happens every five years through “public consultation”. The IDP determines the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP), which informs annual targets and key performance indicators (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

- **Impacts and challenges**

One of the respondents cited a broad range of challenges with regard to service delivery (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). For him, the “biggest challenge is the visible difference between formal areas and informal settlements in relation to service delivery” (ibid.). Challenges with informal settlements are as follows:

- High density in informal areas which impacts access; “no structure to informal settlements” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011); people just invade; people are not willing to move to more established areas; this affects the ratio of toilets to households.
- Health and hygiene practices are not observed in informal areas and this causes secondary contamination.
- The service contractors used by the City do not always keep to their responsibilities. Sometimes only 50-75 out of 300 communal toilets are serviced.

Other challenges included:

- “Land is scarce and expensive [and] land use needs [go] beyond housing” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011);
- Ageing infrastructure such as pipelines.
- High unemployment rate.
- According to national law, private and provincial land invaded by people cannot be serviced by Cape Town Metro.
- There is “no enabling legislation” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011); the grey areas in legislation are limiting.
- “The strategy for providing free housing to communities, I don’t believe it’s sustainable” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).
- Municipalities are too big in terms of its administration; the capacities in number outweigh the capacities in skills.
- Ageing of skilled people; there are huge knowledge gaps in the young people joining the municipal workforce.
- Retirement policies of the Metro need to be reconsidered since experienced people with scarce skills are forced to retire when they can still make a valuable contribution.
- Security of supply.

A follow-up question asked about challenges or impacts related to migration. One interviewee noted that since 2006, rapid urbanization has taken place due to in-migration from the Eastern and Northern Cape. This resulted in the increase in households in informal settlements by approximately 16,000 persons.

In terms of the impact of commercialisation, marketisation and privatisation on the provision and maintenance of sanitation services, the councillor explained that The City of Cape Town does use private companies, and there is a move towards public-private partnerships, but the impact is not immediately clear (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). The official from the Directorate also added that the Municipal Systems Act “requires municipalities to look at alternative service delivery mechanisms” (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). S/he used recycling as example: it is not a “core competency” of the municipality thus they engage private companies to assist.

Community-based service contractors are also utilized by the Metro for refuse removal. However, an interviewee remarked that some of the contractors, especially in informal areas, are not reliable service providers. In some instances they do not collect the rubbish as scheduled, but are still paid due to bribing of community officials responsible for monitoring refuse removal.

- **Community participation**

Respondents were asked about any process of community consultation and engagement, and the role of the average individual in the delivery of basic services. Both interviewees agreed that public participation is crucial. For the councilor, engaging with members of the community is “needed from inception” (CT INT1: Oct. 2011). The other interviewee stressed the importance of engaging with NGOs, and explained that in Cape Town there is a strong NGO lobby (CT INT2: Oct. 2011). NGOs mentioned included Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), Sanitation Coalition and the Backyarders Association.

## **6.5 Summary**

The focus group participants in the City of Cape Town Metro understand ‘service delivery’ in terms of the following items: sewerage; refuse removal; water; public toilets; electricity; street lights; keeping streets and parks clean; safety (the police); health services and education. Some participants, however, specified that service delivery is rather about *how* the services are provided. The stakeholders noted the importance of distinguishing between service delivery in formal areas and service delivery in informal settlements since the challenges for service delivery are quite different. There are 220 informal settlements comprising 220,000 households under the jurisdiction of the Cape Town Metro.

The focus group participants generally agreed that the City of Cape Town Metro can be considered as a good performer with regard to sanitation services. Apart from the residents of Khayelitsha, all participants from the other focus groups confirmed private access to toilets on their property. In Khayelitsha some people have access to private toilets while others only have access to communal toilets. The stakeholders noted that in informal areas, many sanitation systems are in place, including chemical systems, and bucket and waterborne communal toilets.

In terms of sewage removal and treatment services, residents of Bellville, the CBD and Mitchell’s Plain were generally satisfied with the services. The Mitchell’s Plain group, however, mentioned continually blocked street drains, sewage pipes not being cleaned and people dumping refuse in open areas. For the Khayelitsha group sewage removal and treatment was understood in terms of the cleaning of public toilets, which either does not happen or does not get done properly. For the focus group participants access to sanitation has not increased over the past five years. Apart from identifying local government and councillors as being responsible for the maintenance of sanitation services, focus group participants also recognized their own role in the maintenance of sanitation services.

National, provincial and local government are involved in the provision of sanitation services. While national government provides guidelines in terms of the provision of water and toilet facilities per household, the provincial government has to provide housing. According to the stakeholders, water and sanitation upgrades have to be linked to housing developments. The municipality relies on both the national and provincial government for funding through the Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG).

According to the stakeholders, ownership and supervision of water treatment plants vary and the City of Cape Town utilizes different mechanisms. Dams are regionally owned, while there are catchment and

treatment areas owned and operated by the City of Cape Town. Other such facilities, for example Zandvliet, are operated by external organizations. All operators and controllers have to comply with the regulations of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

When discussing the skills and capacities that are essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and/or deliver basic services, the stakeholders noted the importance of technically skilled people and skills retention. The ageing workforce in the Metro proves to be a problem due to the lack of an adequate succession policy.

The stakeholders insisted that the policies guiding service delivery are outdated: . The White Paper on Sanitation “is still just a white paper”, whilst “the MFMA is silent on certain issues” that leave “grey areas” specifically with regard to informal settlements (CT INT2: Oct. 2011).

Service delivery in the Cape Town Metro is primarily financed by grant funding, loans and user-charges. Paying customers, who primarily reside in formal areas, subsidise the informal settlement services. Furthermore, the Metro invests R1.5 billion per year in informal settlements. The process for budgeting for and distributing funds to various service sectors involves the development of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) every five years through public consultation. The IDP determines the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP), which informs annual targets and key performance indicators.

The respondents cited a broad range of challenges with regard to service delivery in the Cape Town Metro, amongst others, the visible difference between formal areas and informal settlements in relation to service delivery. Challenges with regard to informal settlements includes high density, unsafe health and hygiene practices causing secondary contamination, and poor service by contractors resulting in sometimes only 50-75 out of 300 communal toilets being serviced. Other challenges include limited and expensive land, ageing infrastructure, high unemployment rates, lack of proper legislation, ageing of skilled people in the municipality and mandatory retirement of skilled people. Furthermore, rapid urbanization since 2006 due to in-migration from the Eastern and Northern Cape resulted in the increase in households in informal settlements.

The City of Cape Town enhances public-private partnerships with regard to the provision and maintenance of sanitation services. Private companies, for example assist with recycling while community-based service contractors are contracted for refuse removal. However, an interviewee remarked that some of the contractors, especially in informal areas, are not reliable service providers. In some instances the refuse is not removed as scheduled, but the providers are still paid due to bribing of the responsible officer.

For the focus group participants community development entails, amongst others, access to services such as sanitation and electricity; improvement of schools, libraries, roads, transport and health services; and social services taking care of the elderly and previously disadvantaged people. They cited various examples of community development projects in the past five years, for example, new hospitals, libraries, police stations, more RDP houses and shopping centres.

The stakeholder interviewees explained that development “has to increase the quality of lives of people” with economic growth impacting on all people’s lives. Education was identified as the most important development challenge of the City of Cape Town. When discussing local development, a stakeholder indicated that people have to create opportunities for themselves with what is provided by

government. In terms of the City of Cape Town's development strategy, the stakeholders cited initiatives by the Metro to partner with developers and banking institutions to improve access to housing and a labour-based public works programme that aims for infrastructure-led economic development.

With regard to community consultation and participation the majority of focus group participants noted that they are unfamiliar with the councillors and that they have not engaged with local officials in the past. However, a respondent from the Bellville/Brackenfell group reported positive interaction with a councillor. This was in stark contrast to the responses of the Khayelitsha group who had negative perceptions of their area's councillors and complained about the lack of community participation.

The stakeholders indicated that community consultation and participation is crucial in the delivery of basic services. Furthermore, the importance of engaging with NGOs, for example the Treatment Action Campaign, Sanitation Coalition and Backyarders Association was also emphasized.

## **DISCUSSION ON COUNTRY FINDINGS**

Water, sanitation and electricity were chosen as the three service sectors for the case studies because these services are local government competencies in South Africa, as compared to other service sectors like housing, health and education, which fall under the jurisdiction of provincial government. Each case study was selected according to good municipal performance in at least one of these services, and also according to the population size categories. This ensured that case studies include different municipal levels (i.e. metropolitan municipalities, local municipalities and/or local municipalities) as well as both urban and rural areas.

The Moses Kotane Local Municipality was selected as a good performing municipality with regard to the delivery and improvement of electricity services and is one of the larger municipalities in terms of population. The Moses Kotane Local Municipality is mainly a rural area with communal tenure. The percentage of households not using electricity in Moses Kotane has decreased from approximately 73% in 1996 to 29% in 2009, with an estimated 71.1% of households using electricity in 2009. Although Eskom is the sole electricity supply authority in the municipality and MKLM itself does not hold an Energy Distributing License, the municipality remains responsible for capital projects, including the provision and maintenance of street and high mast lighting.

A smaller municipality, the Tswelopele Local Municipality, was selected as a good performing municipality with regard to the delivery and improvement of water services. This municipality is characterised as a semi rural/urban area according to its locality and population size. Huge improvements in households' access to water are evident in Tswelopele. The percentage of households without access to formal piped water decreased from 12% in 1996 to 2.5% in 2009, while the percentage of households with piped water at or above RDP-level improved from 82.4% in 1996 to 96.6% in 2009.

The Cape Town Metropolitan municipality was selected as a good performer with regard to the delivery of sanitation services. The metro was rated as the second top metropolitan municipality and has a more constant improvement in service delivery as compared to other municipalities. The percentage of households with a flush toilet is estimated to have increased from 89.5% in 1996 to 94.6% in 2009.

Moreover, the percentage of households without access to any toilet is estimated to have decreased, from 5.3% in 1996 to 2.8% in 2009.

As each municipality is matched with a specific service area, a comparative assessment is better reserved for cross-country analyses. However, some general observations derive from the selected case studies.

### **7.1 Service delivery and development**

Residents from Tswelopele Local Municipality and the Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality supported the assessment of their municipalities as good performers with regard to water and sanitation services respectively. Residents from the Moses Kotane Local Municipality, however, strongly disagree with the assessment of their municipality as a good performer regarding the provision of electricity services.

Our study indicates that the residents of the three best practice municipalities receive different levels of service delivery, ranging from excellent services to no services at all. Residents from Tswelopele Local Municipality have reliable access to high quality tap water and some residents indicated significant improvement in access to water over the past five years, including easier access to water and the abolishment of the bucket system. Water subsidies are available for qualifying residents in the local municipality.

Residents from the Cape Town Metro have differentiated access to sanitation services. While residents from the three areas confirmed private sanitation facilities, only some Khayelitsha residents have private access to toilets. The other residents have to use communal toilets which are not always hygienic. For most of the focus group participants in the Cape Town Metro, access to sanitation has not increased over the past five years.

Residents from the Moses Kotane Local Municipality reported differentiated access to electricity services. Some households do not have access to electricity services while others experience a myriad of problems related to electricity services. The municipal councillors attributed these problems to an incomplete electrification process and difficulties regarding the maintenance of the electricity infrastructure, cable theft, and load shedding. Electricity services are subsidized for qualifying residents.

All spheres of government, i.e. national, provincial and local government, are involved in the provision of water, sanitation and electricity services. National government provides guidelines in terms of the provision of the respective services while both national and provincial government subsidise the various services.

Public-private partnerships in the delivery of services are important. The City of Cape Town, for example, enhances public-private partnerships with regard to the provision and maintenance of sanitation services. Private companies assist with recycling while community-based service contractors are contracted for refuse removal. Some residents of the Tswelopele Local Municipality stressed the positive role of external service providers with regard to job creation in the municipality.

For the focus group participants in the selected municipalities, community development entails, amongst others, access to service delivery, food, housing, employment, improvement of schools, libraries, roads, transport, health and social services, and skills training. With regard to the development strategy of local government, the stakeholders noted the importance of effective service delivery and economic development. Initiatives by the Cape Town Metro to partner with developers and banking

institutions to improve access to housing, and a labour-based public works programme aimed at infrastructure-led economic development forms part of the City of Cape Town's development strategy. Interviewees from the Tswelopele Local Municipality stressed the importance of provincial funding for sustainable local development. In addition the interviewees from the Moses Kotane Local Municipality noted the importance of the monitoring role of the councillors to ensure effective service delivery.

## **7.2 Policies and programmes**

In compliance with the Local Government Municipal Systems Act (MSA 2000), all municipalities have to develop a five-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP) through public consultation. Developing an IDP plan ensures the following: the maximum involvement of all communities and stakeholders; that integrated and sustainable development is focused on service delivery; and that the least serviced and impoverished areas are identified for services. Furthermore, in compliance with the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA 2003), a municipality has to compile a detailed Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) for implementing municipal service delivery and the annual budget. This plan informs annual targets and key performance indicators of the municipality.

Some of the municipal interviewees noted that the policies guiding service delivery, for example the White Paper on Sanitation and the MFMA, are outdated and need to be revised. Furthermore, grey areas in legislation, specifically with regard to informal settlements, impact negatively on effective service delivery of the municipalities. Interviewees from the Cape Town Metro also noted that the mandate to provide toilet facilities on the basis of a 1/25 ratio is inadequate and have to be adjusted according to the needs of the population. Land ownership in the Cape Town Metro has to increase in future, which requires additional policies to facilitate it.

The Moses Kotane Local Municipality does not hold an Energy Distributing Licence. Since ESKOM is the sole electricity supply authority in Moses Kotane, there is not a separate municipal electricity policy. An Electricity Forum has been established by ESKOM and the municipal infrastructure department to co-ordinate electricity issues in the municipal area. The municipality is, however, responsible for capital projects, such as the provision of street lighting and high mast lighting, as well as the maintenance of these projects.

According to the Tswelopele Local Municipality, their policies and programmes are in coherence with government policies and programmes on water delivery. The alleviation of poverty was also highlighted as an important policy consideration in providing free basic services to poor households.

Service delivery in the selected municipalities is primarily financed by national and provincial government grants, loans and user-charges. Paying customers, who primarily reside in formal areas, subsidise the services in the informal settlements. Price adjustments for services are annually implemented and advertised in the local press and government publications, such as the Government Gazette.

## **7.3 Challenges**

Various challenges with regard to service delivery in the three best practice municipalities include, amongst others, the increasing need of land for housing which is, however, limited and expensive; ageing municipal infrastructure resulting in large capital expenditure to replace and maintain expensive equipment for service delivery; and the high unemployment rate of the population in the respective municipalities that impacts on the number of households requiring subsidized or free services. The lack

of enabling legislation regarding service delivery, as noted above, is also an important challenge for local municipalities and inhibits effective service delivery.

Service provision, particularly in informal settlements and rural areas, remains challenged. For example, the City of Cape Town experiences several difficulties with regard to service provision in informal settlements, such as high density which impacts on access to service delivery, and unsafe health and hygiene practices causing secondary contamination. Furthermore, poor service delivery by contractors in informal areas results in poorly serviced communal toilets with associated health risks. Both the Moses Kotane and Tswelopele Local Municipalities also reported difficulties with the provision of services in the rural areas of the municipalities.

Migration impacts negatively on service delivery. For example, the City of Cape Town has experienced rapid urbanization since 2006 due to in-migration from the Eastern and Northern Cape resulting in the increase in households in informal settlements. The local municipalities of Moses Kotane and Tswelopele also experienced in-migration which impedes on the achievement of their service delivery targets. Furthermore, outdated migration figures hamper proper service delivery planning in the selected municipalities.

Within municipal governance and management, challenges include a shortage of technically skilled people, the lack of skills retention, mandatory retirement of skilled employees who can still make a valuable contribution to the municipality, and the lack of adequate succession policies in local government.

#### **7.4 Community consultation and participation**

The selected best practice local governments regarded community consultation and participation as significant for effective service delivery in their respective municipalities. The importance of engaging with NGOs in the respective municipalities was also emphasized. However, only the residents of the Tswelopele Local Municipality positively assessed their relationship and engagement with the local government officials and noted that community consultation and participation processes are well-established in the local municipality. Regular Ward Committee Meetings act as links between the community and the municipality, and involve residents in the decision-making process of the municipality.

Many participants of the various focus groups conducted in the Cape Town Metro are unfamiliar with the councillors and did not engage with local officials in the past. The participants from the focus group conducted in Khayelitsha especially perceive their area's councillors negatively and complained about the lack of community participation.

In Moses Kotane Local Municipality, participants reported the deterioration of the relationship between the community and the municipality, and limited opportunities to engage with the municipality regarding services. Most of the participants strongly denied the statement: "Your municipality appears to be a good performer in terms of the provision of electricity services." The stakeholder interviewees of the Moses Kotane Local Municipality, however, reported a strong and effective community participation process, emphasising the success of the ward committee system, as well as the appointment of Community Development Workers responsible for engaging with various departments and institutions, such as Home Affairs and SAPS, on behalf of the residents. Furthermore, the councillors indicated that they are well-informed about the communities' needs through monthly meetings and personal interaction with residents.

## CHINA COUNTRY REPORT

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 8.1 Service delivery complaints and challenges

In China, citizens' complaints over the past decade or so focus on the illegal demolition of houses without sufficient compensation, as well as the un-affordability of seeing a doctor, going to school or purchasing housing. As far as infrastructure and public utilities are concerned, the main problems are an unbalance between demand and supply and lack of transparency in price increases. Therefore the literature review in this section is mainly devoted to challenges.

According to Qin Hong and Qian Pu, the challenges facing the public utilities in China include reducing the gap between demand and supply, alleviating the financial burden on the government and improving the efficiency of public utilities enterprises (Qin & Qian 2008). More specifically, they can be summed up as the following points:

Firstly, there is a gap between rapid urbanization and inadequate infrastructure. In the planned economic system functioning from the 1950s to early 1980s, a government-enterprise integrated management structure was applied to the public utilities sector. Under it, all investment came from the government and the state-owned enterprises enjoyed a monopoly. Such a system was effective in concentrating resources to ensure stable services for economic activities and people's daily life. The reform and opening up policy initiated in 1978 has accelerated socio-economic development, which in turn increased the demands for infrastructure. The government's increased inputs fail to keep pace with the growth in economy, urbanization and population. More channels should be opened for the investment in infrastructural construction and the public utilities sector should be marketized.

Secondly, the public utilities enterprises have to improve efficiency and services. Under the planned system, these enterprises did not have power over their own operations. The government played the role of decision-maker, supervisor and provider of services. The administrative monopoly resulted in a heavy burden on government finance, low efficiency and poor service. They tended to operate in a specific area. With a monopoly, they did not face any outside competition and the pressure to reduce costs. The losses due to policy factors usually covered real operational losses. The weakness in management and operation became invisible. Internally, they had a weak sense of service to the public. As a result, the shortages in infrastructure coincided with the low efficiency of the existing facilities.

Thirdly, the public utilities sector was a heavy burden on the government finance. Under the planned system, China adopted a policy of low price and high subsidies by the government. The government's control of prices meant that they were not influenced by the relationship between demand and supply and neither by changes in costs. Such prices deviated seriously from the value of public utilities. In the era of reform and opening up, the economic nature and characteristics of the public utilities have been re-considered and explorations have been made in marketization.

Many scholars conducted research on the pricing of the public utilities. The following problems are identified (Leng 2005: 1):

Firstly, the problematic price setting procedure. Under the state monopoly, the prices of public utilities are set or approved by the government. In reality, this becomes a bargaining process between the enterprises and the government. The prices are fixed based on the method of costs plus a certain amount of profit. The cost that the government refers to fixing the prices is that reported by the enterprises. Such cost is specific to certain enterprises in a given area rather than the reasonable average social cost. This means the higher the cost the higher the price, discouraging enterprises to reduce the cost and on the contrary allowing them to inflate the cost.

Secondly, the prevalent additional charges on top of the set price. As public utilities concern the basic needs of citizens' life, the government that is responsible for their investment sets a relative low price level. The ensuing problem is a lack of funding. In order to maintain and expand the sector, the government levies construction funds on electricity, sewage and other infrastructural undertakings. Therefore the purchasers and consumers actually pay for two or three components of charges: price proper, construction fund and surcharges. In other words, the price of public utilities seems low but actually it is not the case.

Thirdly, the uniform price failing to reflect the complex relationship between demand and supply. More specifically, factors such as amount of electricity or water usage per household and timing of usage are not taken into consideration.

Fourthly, incomplete legal system concerning the public utilities pricing. Their special characteristics require separate laws and regulations, which are non-existent. The principles and methods of price setting for public utilities refer to the "PRC Price Law" that is too broad to be effective.

Fifthly, inadequate supervision mechanisms over the price setting procedure. Insufficient internal and external supervision results in the government price departments giving up to the pressure exerted by enterprises and other departments. Further, information asymmetry between the government price department and the enterprises also tend to lead to mistakes in decision-making.

Cao Yuanzheng deplors the lack of the voice of the third party, i.e., the consumers in the price setting process. The government that is presumed to represent the consumers may not possess adequate information (Yang 2004).

Some scholars (Zhang, Wu & Chen 2004) add that no matter the price setting is based on the average social cost or the cost of a certain enterprise; it must not be decided according to the actual cost of enterprises. The reasonable components of cost should be identified to spur enterprises to improve management and reduce the production cost.

They call for establishing an information network on the price fluctuations. As noted previously, the monopoly of the public utilities is confined to a given area or city. So is the incomparability of operation cost. But at national level, comparable scales of public utilities of different cities vary in operation cost. If information is collected on the cities' population size, public utilities sector composition, local economic development level and operation cost of enterprises in the recent decade, the price setting can be based on more adequate and reasonable standards.

Their view on the supervision over the price setting and adjustment is to improve the public hearing system. The first step is to engage the independent institutions to examine and check the cost data submitted by the public utilities enterprises. The second step is to ensure the representativeness of

participants. A certain number of scholars and experts should be invited to guarantee the quality of the public hearing, preventing it from being dominated by the enterprises concerned or downgraded as a free-wheeling discussion session. The third step is to gather the reactions and comments of the public. A pre-condition for this is that all information on the public hearing must be published. If necessary, the second or even third round of public hearings should be organized to increase the transparency of the price setting and adjustment process.

Zhou Hanhua agrees with the previous opinions and adds that without the voice of the third party, the marketization of public utilities tends to result in structural imbalances and the formation of the alliance between the government and enterprises. Low standard regulation and lack in the effective control over the price setting authorities mean the privatization leads to price hikes. Almost all public hearings in recent years have approved the demands for price rises by the enterprises. It is important to specify the scope of public utilities and the fundamental responsibility of the local government in providing these services at certain prices and in certain quantity and quality (Yang 2004).

## **8.2 The relationship between infrastructure and service delivery**

In China, infrastructure and public utility is a very close pair of concepts (Sun & Zhou 2007). Public utility undertakings refer to the activities or industry that have a defined target, scale and system, have an impact on social development and provide products or services for the public or an unspecified group of people. More specifically, they have the following characteristics: First, publicness. The users of the public utilities are the public or an unspecified large number of people and therefore they concern the interest of many people in a given area. Second, common sharing. The public utilities are shared by users rather than for certain individuals exclusively. Third, economy of scale. The minimum scale for their operation carries with it the character of a monopoly.

Infrastructure or urban infrastructure covers running water, sewage, electricity, central heating, gas, public transportation, waste disposal, sanitation, urban forestation in the first category and roads, bridges, canals, harbours and airports in the second category.

Thus, public utilities and infrastructure tend to be identical as far as the facilities and equipment are concerned. Service delivery emphasizes the activities in the provision of public utilities.

## **8.3 China's legislative and regulatory environment**

In China, the state policy for building a socialist country of rule of law was made in the latter half of the 1990s. However, as a country under the rule of the Communist Party, policies still play an important role together with laws. In the recent two decades, market-oriented reform experiments usually precede the policy formulation and law and regulation enactment in China. But popular implementation is impossible without the making of policies. As early as 1994, for example, Shanghai experimented on the marketization of the public utilities by leasing the operation right of Nanpu and Yangpu Bridges to a Hong Kong company. But only after 2003 has it been implemented on a large scale.

In October 2003, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China made the "Decision on Several Questions Regarding the Improvement of the Socialist Market Economic System." As the new basic guideline for economic construction and reform, the document has paved the way for the market-oriented reform of the public utilities undertakings.

The Decision requires the establishment of the mixed ownership system of economy to realize the multi-entity investment system, in which the share-holding system is the main form of public ownership. It creates the opportunity for the private sector and foreign investors to enter infrastructure projects and public utilities enterprises. The mixed ownership makes it possible to introduce public-private partnership to the infrastructure and public utility sector (Central Committee of the Communist Party of China 2003).

At the next level of authority are regulations and implementation methods, as there are no national laws on infrastructure and public utilities.

In December 2002, the Ministry of Construction issued the “Opinions on Accelerating the Marketization Process of the Public Utility Sector.” The document is formulated to implement the CPC 16th National Congress’s call for “promoting the reform of the monopolies industries and actively introducing the competitive mechanism.” It encourages the Chinese and foreign capital to invest in the public utilities construction in the forms of one-entity investment, joint venture or cooperative operations. It allows for the first time cross-region and cross-industry engagement in the public utilities. The design, construction and supervision, and equipment production and marketing involving the public utilities sector must be separated from other businesses of the companies concerned. A unified construction market is to be created that adopts the public tendering system. The infrastructure and public utilities are to be divided into two categories of operation and non-operation. The former applies the franchise, under which the government resorts to the contracts or other forms to lay down the rights and obligations between it and the enterprises awarded the franchise. The latter applies the public tendering process.

This document has had great repercussions in that many provinces and cities issue similar decisions. The investment in infrastructure and public utilities has seen a boom. The sector that used to depend on government investment has become diversified in sources of investment. The Chinese private investors and foreign investors are attracted by the prospect of the development of this huge market. However, as the document puts forth some principles only, the cities that are eager to push the public utilities into market but lack in experience have made some mistakes. The complicated marketization is dealt with lightly. When the supervision and regulation mechanism has yet to be designed, the state-owned assets are sold to the private or foreign investors or the franchise contracts are signed out of reality. The main defect is the inadequate protection of the interests of consumers (Ministry of Construction 2002).

Other central government departments have also issued relevant regulations. For example, in March 2002, the three ministries jointly issued the “Guiding Catalogue of Investment Industries for Foreign Investors” (State Planning Commission, State Economic and Trade Commission and Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade 2002). It lists the construction and operation of running water plants, urban roads, subways and light-track railways, sewages and garbage disposal plants, hazardous waste disposal plants and pollution treatment facilities on the encouraged items of investment. For the first time, the gas, heating, running water and sewage pipelines are opened to foreign investors but must be with Chinese majority holding.

Accompanying the central regulations, local governments have also issued policies and methods. For example, following the “Management Methods of Franchises of the Public Utilities” (Ministry of Construction 2004), Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hebei have enacted their own methods.

### **8.3.1 Service delivery standards and achievements**

China is actively making national standards of public service while some cities have been implementing local standards. In November 2009, the Guidelines for Public Service Standardization formulated by the State Standardization Administration came into force. A month later the Administration convened a meeting to examine and finalize the Public Service Evaluation Standard. It includes three parts on organizations, staff and facilities evaluation. In 2010, the Administration held a meeting to discuss the publicity manuals of the Guidelines. In August 2011, the Administration gathered together a group of experts and scholars to discuss the draft Action Outline of the Standardization of the Social Management and Public Service during the Period of the “12th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development (2011-2015).” Prof. Lisheng Dong was invited to these meetings. Of a dozen of sub-categories of the scope defined by the Administration, the three service areas of water, electricity and sanitation chosen by this project fall into the infrastructure and public utilities sub-category and environmental protection public service sub-category. According to the Administration, the former covers the basic livelihood facilities of water, electricity, heating and gas; basic postal and telecommunication services; public transportation facilities and services; and internet and broad-band services. The latter includes sewage treatment; air quality maintenance and pollution control; noise, electromagnetic radiation and ray radiation pollution treatment; garbage collection, transport and treatment; and maintenance of public spaces such as squares, parks, lawns and lighting.

The Tianjin Municipality was the first to implement the public service standardization. In 2011 the Municipal Government began to apply it to seven administrative law enforcement departments including public security and local tax bureau, 10 comprehensive management departments such as education and civil affairs and five public service sectors including electricity and water. The uniform service standard covers 10 sub-categories such as quality, transparency, effectiveness and form. Each department or industry can add higher requirements or wider scope of service promises (CNTV 2011).

An incomplete search finds that a number of provinces including Beijing, Tianjin, Henan, Jiangsu and Shandong have issued the local water provision service standards. A summary of the Shandong Provincial Urban Public Water Provision Service Standard follows:

The comprehensive indicators of water quality must be above 95%. A daily publishing system is administered. The pressure at the pipe network ends must not be lower than 0.14MPa and general pressure must be 96% up to standard. The water companies should set up a service hotline that is in operation 24 hours daily. They should also set up a customer service centre to provide “one stop” service with the publication of range of services, business procedures, handling deadlines, service promises, telephone number for lodging complaints and fee charge standards.

The first contact responsibility system, conclusion of business within a time limit system and AB reception system should be established. The customers whose requests have been rejected must be informed of reasons. Water companies must publish their operation report annually. They must strictly implement the items and rates of fee charges as approved by the government pricing authorities. The accurate rate of meter reading must reach above 99%. The companies must provide the service for customers to check the bill. To those users who have violated the “Regulations on the Urban Water Provision,” notice should be issued three days before the suspension of water supply.

After receiving a request for repairing the meter, the company employee must arrive at the spot within 24 hours. For any construction and repairing projects that may cause the lowering of pressure or suspension of water supply, announcement should be made 24 hours in advance. The customers should

be notified for any stop of water supply caused by natural disaster or accident while the repairing is underway. The temporary water supply measures should be taken for the area where water provision has been suspended for more than 72 hours. After receiving reports on leaks or bursts, the company should dispatch repairing workers to the spot within 2 hours. For any emergencies or accidents involving the water facilities, the companies should organize repair timely. The pipes with a diameter below 300 mm should be repaired within 24 hours; those between 300 mm and 800 mm within 36 hours and those above 1,000 mm within 48 hours.

The water companies should employ community supervisors to collect and analyze the feedbacks of the users. Questionnaire surveys or discussion sessions must be organized twice a year to listen to the opinions of users.

When handling the complaints of the users directly or relayed by other departments, the water companies must conclude the ordinary cases within 2 days and complicated cases within 7 days. For any problems of water provision as exposed by the media, facts must be verified within 2 working days and feedback given to the society and media. The complaint cases should be handled 100% (Shandong Provincial Quality and Technology Supervision Bureau and Shandong Provincial Construction Department 2007).

In reference to these stipulations, the Xinyu City in Jiangxi Province that is selected by this project for the case study has done fairly well. The Xinyu City Water Company provides “one-stop” service to users. The application for installing running water facilities in a community or household will be handled without delay. The location survey will be conducted within five days and budget made in two days. It runs a 24-hour hotline for repairing out-door pipes. In-door pipes and taps are the responsibility of the users, who normally are helped by the community service staff (Xinyu Government 2008).

In order to make it easier for the users to pay the bill, the water company keeps upgrading the software and negotiating with more banks to receive the payment on its behalf. It promises the “one household, one meter” service. It was the first water company in Jiangxi Province to receive ISO9001 certification. It acquired 100% qualifying rate out of the check-ups by the sanitation and anti-epidemic station (He & Wu 2005).

In 2009, the National Electric Power Supervision Commission issued the “Standard of Performance on Electric Power Supply” that covers services to both enterprises and residents. It comprises 13 chapters (on scope of application; application of the regulations; technical terms and definitions; general performance standard; quality of electric power supply; handling of electric power usage business; meter reading and bill collection; handling of electric power failures; power interruption, restriction or disconnection; service for the safety of electric power usage; information disclosure; handling of customer complaints; and service channels) and three annexes (on measurement and calculation method of the voltage qualification rate; calculation method of 10 (6,20) kV reliability on service in total; and basic requirements of functions of the voltage monitor).

Those stipulations concerning resident users include: the electric power supplier must perform the duty of popular service to the society; implement the state price policy without any items of fee charged without authorization; can provide service to customers in the forms of business office, hotline, station, self-service terminals, authorized service spot and “first contact responsibility system”; introduce renovation project of “one household, one meter” in the rural and urban areas to realize household-based meter reading and bill preparation (National Electric Power Supervision Commission 2009).

Shaoxing Electric Power Bureau is one of the five international first-rate suppliers in China and the provincial civilized unit. It leads the country in per capita productivity, rate of delivering service promises and reliability of services in total (Shaoxing Website 2008). In 2009, the Shaoxing Electric Power Bureau was rated among the top by the local residents' performance assessment of the 46 departments and industries (Xinhuanet Zhejiang 2010). In 2010, Shaoxing together with other cities in Zhejiang Province became the first in China to make it available to customers to pay electric bills through Zhifubao, an internet payment service. In this way, customers have had a dozen of options to pay the bill including creating automatic monthly pay function with the banks, paying via banks or the business halls of the electric power bureau, POS machine, supermarkets and internet banking (CIO360 Net 2010).

In 1992, the state Council issued Regulations on Administration of City Appearance and Environmental Sanitation. The regulations have 45 articles in five chapters (general principles; administration of city appearance; administration of city environmental sanitation; fines; annex) (State Council 1992). Almost all provinces and municipalities have enacted local regulations or implementation methods.

The relevant Qingdao Municipal regulations were first adopted by the Municipal People's Congress Standing Committee in 1989. Three amendments have been made with the current version in effect since 2002 (Qingdao Municipal PC Standing Committee 2002). The contents of the relevant articles can be summed up as the following:

The municipal people's government shall strengthen leadership and establish responsibility system to guarantee the work of city appearance and environmental sanitation.

The work of city appearance and environmental sanitation shall be implemented under the principle of "localized management, hierarchical responsibility and combination of professional management and popular management".

The sweeping and cleaning shall meet the quality standards of environmental sanitation as specified by the state, Shandong Province and Qingdao City.

The household garbage shall be packed in bags, removed every day and implemented with centralized disposal.

The household garbage of the residents and individual businesses shall be collected on site by the civilian-run sanitation workers organized by the sub-district offices (the District-dispatched Office to Street) and town (township) people's governments; and the household garbage of the residents and individual businesses that have implemented property management shall be collected on site by the property management units at regular times. The residents and individual businesses shall be required to pay service fees according to relevant rules. The household garbage of a working unit shall be collected by itself.

The household garbage of the residents and individual businesses shall be removed by the professional units of environmental sanitation; the household garbage of a working unit shall be removed by the unit itself or by entrusting a professional unit of environmental sanitation.

The house decoration garbage and the big-sized domestic wastes shall not be poured or thrown away randomly and they shall be removed by entrusting a professional unit of environmental sanitation; a working unit with proper capacity can also remove the garbage itself.

Nobody is allowed to pour wastes onto either side of the railway and road for the trains and long-distance buses that are entering urban districts and pour wastes into navigation water with ships that are entering inner port area of urban districts.

It is prohibited to raise chicken, ducks, geese, rabbits, sheep, pigs and other domestic animals and fowls within urban district; Any working unit or individual that needs to raise such domestic animals and fowls due to special reasons like teaching and scientific research must obtain approval from the city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department of the municipal people's government and must rear them in pens so as to keep the environment clean. The city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department of the Municipal People's Government shall make a decision on approval or disapproval within 3 days from the day of receiving the submission. It shall be deemed as approval or agreement if no decision is made when the time limit expires. Anyone who raises a pet must abide by relevant regulations so as not to pollute the environment.

The environmental sanitation facilities shall comply with the establishment standards of urban environmental sanitation facilities as specified by the state, Shandong Province and Qingdao City.

The environmental sanitation facilities refer to public toilets, refuse containers, fruit peel boxes, refuse transfer stations, refuse disposal areas, excrement disposal areas and the special marks, vehicles, parking lots and work places for the environmental sanitation as well as other public sanitation facilities and the special facilities used for maintaining the operation of environmental sanitation.

The engineering construction site or the working unit that builds temporary living space shall set up necessary domestic refuse container and excrement container according to practical needs.

Any working unit that needs to set up a temporary toilet and refuse containers at the activity venue due to preparation for a large outdoor activity shall contact the city appearance and environmental sanitation of the municipal people's government for approval 3 days before the opening of the activity, and shall clear the venue when the activity is over.

Any building, structure or other facility that violates these regulations and does not comply with the city appearance standards or any environmental sanitation facility that does not comply with the environmental sanitation standards shall be ordered to be improved or dismantled within a given period by the city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department jointly with the urban planning administrative department. If no improvement or dismantlement has been done within the given period, with approval of the municipal people's government, the city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department or the urban planning administrative department shall carry out mandatory dismantlement, with a fine between 500 Yuan and 5,000 Yuan. The expenses in need for such mandatory dismantlement shall be borne by the responsible unit.

Any working unit or individual that violates the provisions of the regulations and commits one of the following acts shall be ordered to stop the unlawful act and make clearing or dismantlement within a given period or take other remedial measures and may be fined according to the rules below:

(I) Anyone who piles up materials at either side of the street or at the public place or sets up non-permanent building, structure or other facility which affects the city appearance and environmental sanitation without authorization shall be imposed a fine between 500 Yuan and 2,000 Yuan;

(II) Any one whose signboard, direction board, sunshade or other facility set up at either side of the main or secondary road is damaged or defaced or has not been repaired, cleaned or removed within specified time limit shall be fined 200 Yuan;

(III) Anyone who sets up a large-sized outdoor advertisement that affects the city appearance without authorization shall be fined 10,000 Yuan; and

(IV) Anyone who removes or dismantles the public sanitation facility or change its purpose of use without authorization shall be imposed a fine of 1 time up to 3 times the value of the facility.

Any unit or individual that violates the provisions of the regulations and commits one of the following acts shall be ordered to make a correction and given a warning and may be fined according to the rules below:

(I) In case that the cleaning responsibility for the environmental sanitation is not performed or the cleaning fails to meet specified standards or the household garbage is not collected in time, a fine between 200 Yuan and 1,000 Yuan shall be imposed on a unit and a fine between 20 Yuan and 100 Yuan shall be imposed on an individual;

(II) Anyone who plays mah-jong, poker, chess or other activities that hinder the city appearance at the sidewalk of the main or secondary road shall be imposed a fine between 10 Yuan and 20 Yuan;

(III) For the outdoor advertisings, placards, galleries, newspaper boards, public advertising boards, bulletin boards, notice boards, propaganda columns, show windows, sculptures, news stalls, telephone booths, security stalls, peel boxes, mobile public toilets and other facilities that are defaced, rusted, incomplete or which paints drop off thus to affect the city appearance, their respective owner or operator shall be imposed a fine between 200 Yuan and 1,000 Yuan;

(IV) Any unit that fails to report to relevant administrative department for removing the building wastes, engineering dregs or removing the household garbage or the house decoration garbage by the unit itself or fails to remove them according to specified time and routes or fails to pour them into appointed locations shall be imposed a fine 500 Yuan and 2,000 Yuan; and

(V) Any unit whose household garbage, building wastes, engineering dregs or other bulk materials found leakage or drop when being transported thus to pollute the environmental sanitation shall be imposed a fine between 200 Yuan and 1,000 Yuan.

Any unit or individual that violates the provisions of the regulations and commits one of the following acts shall be ordered to correct the unlawful act and given a warning and may be fined according to the rules below:

(I) Any unit or individual that piles up or hang any article that hinders the city appearance in front of the door, outside the window and on the balcony of the buildings along the main and secondary roads or piles up materials on the public stairways and roof shall be imposed a fine between 10 Yuan and 50 Yuan;

(II) Any unit or individual that installs the stove and water tap on the street and public place or let the stove mouth, exhaust port of oil smoke, sewage exhaust port and other sewage draining exits facing to the street shall be imposed a fine between 50 Yuan and 100 Yuan;

(III) Any unit or individual that scribbles, engraves on the building, structure and other facility as well as the tree or puts up or hangs outdoor bulletins, notices, advertisements and/or promotional materials without authorization shall be imposed a fine between 300 Yuan and 500 Yuan;

(IV) Any unit that fails to set up washing facilities for the vehicles at the construction site and remaining soil dumping site so that the vehicles carry dregs or mud to pollute the urban road, or fails to set up fence for the construction site beside the street or fails to clean and cover the stand-down site promptly or fails to clean and level the construction site in time after the project is completed thus to affect the city appearance shall be imposed a fine between 1,000 Yuan and 2,000 Yuan;

(V) Anyone who spits or urinate randomly shall be imposed a fine between 10 Yuan and 50 Yuan and shall be imposed a fine between 5 Yuan and 10 Yuan for throwing fruit peel, stump, wastepaper, chewing gum, plastic bag or snack box;

(VI) Anyone who pours or throws away rubbish, excrement or discharges sewage randomly, or throws away big-sized domestic wastes or animal body randomly, or landfills or burns rubbish and other wastes anywhere shall be imposed a fine between 50 Yuan and 100 Yuan; Anyone who causes serious harm due to pouring a large amount of such things shall be imposed a fine between 500 Yuan and 1,000 Yuan;

(VII) Anyone who burns or throws ghost money freely on the street or public place shall be imposed a fine between 200 Yuan and 500 Yuan; and

(VIII) Anyone who occupies the street for the purpose of washing motor vehicles shall be imposed a fine between 200 Yuan and 500 Yuan for each vehicle.

Anyone who, in violation of these regulations, raises domestic animals and fowls without approval and affects the city appearance and environmental sanitation shall be ordered to make a disposal within a given period and may be imposed a fine between 10 Yuan and 200 Yuan; if no disposal has been made within the specified time limit, the domestic animals and/or fowls shall be confiscated and the owner shall be imposed a fine of 2 times the value of the domestic animals and/or fowls. Anyone who raises pets and pollutes the environmental sanitation shall be fined 50 Yuan for each spot.

Anyone who violates these regulations and occupies and damages the environmental sanitation facilities shall be ordered to restore them and shall be imposed a fine of 1 time up to 2 times the value of the facilities.

Anyone who steals or damages the environmental sanitation facilities shall be given a public security administration punishment by relevant department according to the PRC Regulations on Administrative Penalties for Public Security; where any crime is constituted, criminal responsibilities shall be investigated.

Anyone who violates these regulations and sets up refuse disposal areas or excrement disposal areas without approval shall be ordered to stop the unlawful acts and take remedial measures by the city appearance and environmental administrative department of the municipal people's government jointly with relevant administrative departments and shall be imposed a fine between 10,000 yuan and 50,000 yuan by the city appearance and environmental administrative department of the municipal people's government or relevant municipal administrative department.

Anyone who violates these regulations and causes damage to the environmental sanitation facilities shall bear civil liabilities in accordance with the law.

The authorities of administrative penalties or administrative measures as stipulated in the articles from Article 39 to Article 42 and the Clause (I) of Article 43 in these regulations shall be performed by the city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department.

The authorities of administrative penalties or administrative measures as stipulated in the preceding paragraph can be performed by the city appearance and environmental sanitation management organization entrusted by the city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department other than the Clause (III) and Clause (IV) of Article 39 and the Clause (I) of Article 40 in these regulations.

Anyone whose acts violate these regulations and fall within the scope of the management responsibility of other relevant department shall be punished by that relevant department.

Anyone who insults or beats the city appearance and environmental sanitation workers or obstructs them from performing their duty functions according to law shall be punished according to the PRC Regulations on Administrative Penalties for Public Security; Where any crime is constituted, criminal responsibilities shall be investigated.

If the workers of the city appearance and environmental sanitation administrative department and its management organization fail to perform their responsibilities according to these regulations, or fail to exercise effective management or severely affect the city appearance and environmental sanitation, the persons directly in charge and other liable persons shall be investigated for administrative liabilities according to law. Anyone who constitutes a crime due to neglecting duty, abusing authorities or practicing favouritism and committing irregularities shall be investigated for criminal liabilities according to law.

Qingdao is the 25<sup>th</sup> Nationally Advanced Clean City named in 1996 since the award began in 1990. The criteria include the following five points with the pre-condition that the applicant city must be a

provincially advanced clean city: 1) harmless disposal of garbage from residents' daily life; 2) treatment rate of the urban sewage water is  $\geq 30\%$ ; 3) ratio of vegetation in the urban built-up area is  $\geq 30\%$ ; 4) the annual daily average value (TSP) of the total micro-particles in the air in cities in Northern China is  $\leq 0.350$  mg/m<sup>3</sup>, in cities in southern China is  $\leq 0.250$  mg/m<sup>3</sup>; 5) three items reach the national standard for eliminating the four pests (i.e. rats, bedbugs, flies and mosquitoes). In 2010, the Ministry of Public Health revised the criteria and changed the assessment to every three-year cycle. Of the 77 nationally advanced cities awarded since 1990, only 63 cities were endorsed and Qingdao is on the list (Chinanews 2010, 2011).

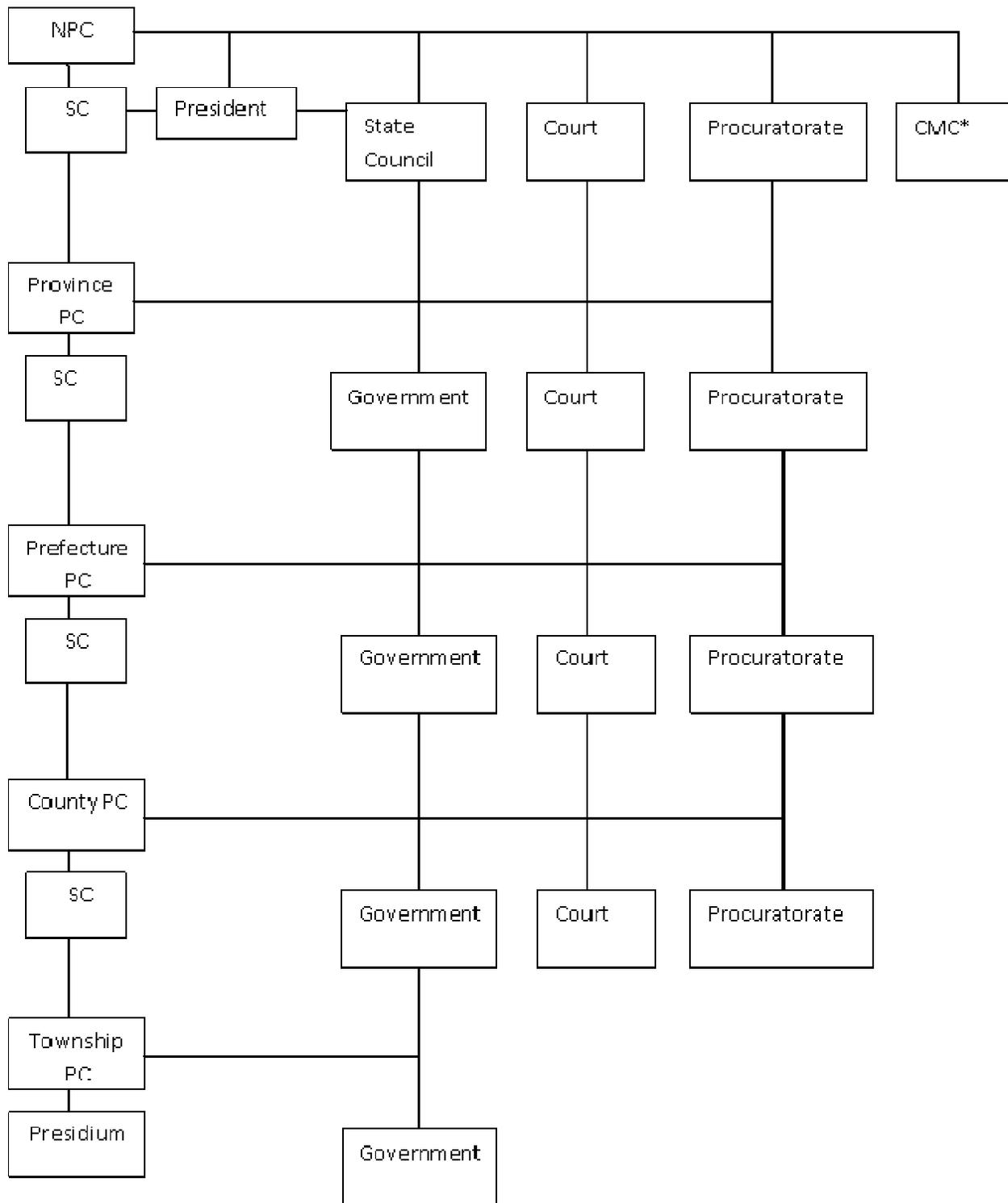
### **8.3.2 Municipal structures and intergovernmental relations**

As a unitary state, the PRC shares the general features of centralization of unitary states in general, namely, in principle, all power belongs to the central government and the local government is empowered by the central government (Dong 2009).

While the PRC form of state structure safeguards its territorial integrity and sovereignty, it has also developed three arrangements for different localities, namely, the system for ordinary administrative divisions, the system for ethnic autonomous regions and the system for special administrative regions. The three systems are inter-related yet distinct from each other. Due to such arrangements, under the PRC unitary system, the central-local relations are diversified. The relationship between the central government and the 23 provinces and four centrally-administered municipalities manifests the basic characteristics of the centralization-category of the unitary system. The relationship between the central government and the five autonomous regions shows some features of local autonomy-category of the unitary system. The relationship between the central government and the two special administrative regions is unique in the world, carrying some features of a federal system. Further, each arrangement is flexible enough to accommodate special needs. For example, a province or a centrally-administered municipality can designate special economic zones.

With its evolution since 1949, China currently has four levels of administrative divisions of provinces (autonomous regions, centrally-administered municipalities and special administrative regions), autonomous prefectures (prefectural level cities), counties (autonomous counties and cities) and townships (towns). At each level, there is a People's Congress and government with a structure and operational pattern similar to the central level. China's state power structure based on the Constitution is shown in Figure 19.

**Figure 19: China's state power structure**



(Source: Pu 1992: 544)

\*Notes: CMC stands for the Central Military Commission.

This description of China's political institutions according to the Constitution, as many studies have done, fails to locate the real source of political power in China. Actually, the Communist Party of China has established committees and branches from the top at the state level to the grassroots at the urban streets and neighbourhoods and rural villages. The CPC's leadership over other institutions is guaranteed organizationally by the CPC Core Groups in them. The operation of the centralized administration is inseparable to the CPC leadership. The CPC organizational principle is that the subordinate obeys the superior and the whole party obeys the centre. China's actual political power structure is shown in Figure 20 below:

**Figure 20: China's actual political power structure**

Level	Party Organisation	Government Autonomous	Military	Judiciary	Grassroots
Centre	Ctr. committee, Ctr. Discipline Inspection committee	President NPC State Council CPPCC	Central Military Commission	Supreme Court and Procuratorate	
Province	Provincial committee, Discipline Inspection committee	People's Congress Government CPPCC		Higher Court and Procuratorate	
Prov. Adm. City	City committee, Discipline Inspection committee	People's Congress Government CPPCC		Intermediate Court and Procuratorate	
County	County committee, Discipline Inspection committee	People's Congress Government CPPCC		Primary Court and Procuratorate	
Town or Township	Town committee, Discipline Inspection committee	PC Presidium Government CPPCC Group#		Tribunal*	
Street	Street committee	Dispatched office*		Tribunal*	
Community Neighbourhood	Party branch				Committee
Village	Party branch				Villager's Committee

Notes: The institutions marked with sign # perform coordination functions. Those with sign \* are dispatched agencies of the higher-level institutions. For example, the Administrative Agency of a prefecture is the dispatched office of the provincial government. At this level, there is no People's Congress.

The CPC leadership over all other government and public organizations is guaranteed by the enforcement of the Soviet type *nomenclature* system, which was adopted in 1953. The principle of this system was the management of cadres at the same level and the next two levels by the CPC Central Committee and local committees (Burns 1987, 1987-1988). For the CPC Central Committee, the immediate next level covers the ministers of the State Council, secretaries of the CPC Provincial Committees and governors of the Provincial Government. The second next level covers the director

generals of the State Council ministries, provincial governments and the secretaries and commissioners of the provincial dispatched offices to the prefectures. On the *nomenclature* lists are not only the CPC officials but also the other four major institutions (People's Congress, government, court and procurator's office) plus mass organizations like the trade union, the communist youth league and the women's federation. The CPC leadership over them is ensured by the Party Core Groups in these organizations. For example, the Party Core Group of a State Council ministry is composed of the minister, vice ministers and one or two director generals. The central arrangement is copied at the local levels. In a province or city, the top leader is the secretary of the CPC Committee. Governor or mayor is normally deputy secretary of the CPC Committee.

The basic principle guiding the central-local relations has been "unified leadership and level by level management." The unified leadership refers to the leadership of the centre. Although the term "centre" has many connotations, such as the CPC Central Committee, the State Council and the departments of the CPC Central Committee or the State Council, it should be taken as meaning the CPC Central Committee. The leadership of the CPC Central Committee is not only political but also administrative in nature while the State Council focuses on economic and social management (Wang 1995).

As noted previously, China's government administration is performed by five levels from the State Council to the township. But the State Council ministries and provincial governments play the main role in the level-by-level management. In other words, the level-by-level management is mainly carried out by the State Council ministries and the provincial governments.

The ministries and the provincial governments are equal in terms of administrative rank. Therefore the former cannot issue orders to the latter. Instead the ministries issue orders to the relevant departments of the provincial government, creating a vertical control line. It is relative to the horizontal block management based on the provincial government. In this context, the provincial government refers to the first level of administrative division under the central government. There are currently 23 provinces, five autonomous regions, four centrally-administered municipalities and two special administrative regions. The principle guiding the delegation of authorities to the provincial government as laid down in 1956 contains the following points: First, the provinces are given certain power over planning, finance, enterprises, social undertakings, materials and personnel. Second, except those of importance to the whole national economy, other enterprises and social service institutions should be delegated to the local government. Third, the local government should be given some discretion over the key planning indexes and establishment size quotas related to the management of enterprises and social service institutions. Since the 1980s, the Provincial People's Congresses and their Standing Committees have been authorized to make local regulations.

In order to elaborate on the inter-government relations, the administration of franchise of the public utilities can be taken as an example. The then Ministry of Construction issued "Management Methods of Franchises of the Public Utilities" in May 2004. The regulations stipulate that the State Council's construction administration (namely the Ministry of Construction) is responsible for the guidance and supervision of the operation of franchises of the public utilities throughout the country, and the local departments as authorized by the government of the centrally-administered municipalities, cities and counties are responsible for the actual implementation of the franchise of public utilities in the territories under their jurisdiction. The specific responsibilities include supervision over cost and price, operation, quality, safety and complaints of customers. The document provides overall and principled stipulations to administration of franchise, leaving room to the local government to formulate detailed management methods. There are some exceptions such as stipulations on the conditions for enterprises

to be eligible to franchises in response to some cases of enterprises' speculation by making use of the opportunities of the local government's blind attraction of investments (Ministry of Construction 2004).

Of the three case study cities of this project, two (Xinyu City and Shaoxing City) are ranked prefectural level and one (Qingdao Municipality) is a sub-provincial level city.

### **8.5.1 Xinyu City**

The Xinyu City administers one county and four districts. The city government has about 40 functional and general departments. The Bureau of Water Resources, the formerly the Xinyu Municipal Bureau of Water Resources and Electric Power, is the administration of municipal water resources, concerning the management of municipal water resources, river ways and reservoirs, flood control, drought prevention and water and soil conservation citywide. Its principal functions include:

(I) To organize and supervise the implementation of the PRC Law on Water, PRC Law on Water and Soil Conservation and PRC Law on Flood Control; to formulate municipal water-related policies, development strategies and medium and long-term development plans; to draft relevant municipal regulations and rules, and supervise their enforcement.

(II) To implement integrated management of water resources, including atmospheric water, surface water and groundwater; to formulate municipal development plans of water supply and demand and schemes for water allocation; to supervise the execution of the above plans and schemes; to assess water resources and flood risk and flood mitigation measures in relation to the overall planning of the municipal economy, urban planning and major construction projects; to implement the water-drawing permit system and the water resources fee system; to publicize municipal water resources bulletin.

(III) To draft municipal water conservation policies, compile water conservation plans, organize, direct and supervise the implementation of water conservation.

(IV) To formulate water resource protection plans in accordance with related national laws, regulations and standards concerning resource and environment protection; to demarcate functional water areas and control the discharge of wastewater to potable water areas and other water areas; to monitor the quantity and quality of water of rivers, lakes and reservoirs, review and approve the pollution loading capacities of water bodies with proposal for the limit of the total wastewater discharge.

(V) To organize and direct the supervision and practice of water resources administration; to mediate and arbitrate inter-sector and inter-municipality water disputes.

(VI) To formulate economic regulatory measures for the water sector; to exercise macroeconomic regulation on the utilization of funds within the water industry; provide guidance to economic activities related to water supply, hydropower and diversified development within the water sector; to provide recommendations on economic regulation of water pricing, taxation, credit and financial affairs; to coordinate the collection and management of municipal flood control security funds and hydro project construction funds.

(VII) To draft and review proposals and feasibility study reports on construction projects in the water sector; to supervise the execution of technical standards for the water sector and specifications and

codes for water works; to implement key hydro science research projects and the popularization and dissemination of water-related technologies.

(VIII) To organize and direct the management and protection of municipal hydraulic facilities, water areas, dykes and coast lines; to take charge of the examination and approval of municipal construction projects related to water and the management of municipal sand collecting in river beds; to direct the reclamation and development of municipal rivers, lakes, beaches and shoals; to organize construction and management of key controlling and inter-municipality hydro projects; to organize and direct the monitoring and management of the safety of reservoirs and dams of hydropower stations.

(IX) To provide guidance to activities related to rural water resources; to organize and coordinate capital construction of farmland drainage and irrigation, and water supply for townships, villagers and domestic animals.

(X) To direct the water and electricity management of the water sector; to organize and coordinate the construction of rural electrification.

(XI) To organize the municipal water and soil conservation work; to formulate the engineering prevention measures for water and soil conservation; to organize the monitoring and integrated prevention and control of water and soil losses; to take charge of imposing fees for water resources protection; to take charge of the reclamation and development of four-dilapidated resources in rural areas.

(XII) To take charge of the construction, maintenance and management of urban hydro projects.

(XIII) To be responsible for the activities concerning science, technology and foreign affairs related to water resources, including provision of guidance to the development of a competent work force for the water sector.

(XIV) To be responsible for the routine work of the Xinyu Municipal Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters, organize, coordinate, supervise and direct citywide flood control, and execute operations of flood control and drought prevention for major river basins and key water projects; to take charge of the municipal flood control and drought relief system and its informationization.

(XV) To undertake other tasks assigned by the municipal government (Xinyu Municipal Bureau of Water Resources 2008).

The Xinyu Water Co. Ltd is the running water enterprise operating under the franchise of the city government. The Municipal Bureau of Water Resources supervises over its operation.

### **8.5.2 Shaoxing Municipality**

The Shaoxing Municipality is also ranked at prefectural level and administers one district, two counties and two county-level cities. The Municipal Electric Power Bureau does not belong to the functional and general departments of the municipal government but is a municipally run service institution. Under the dual leadership of the Zhejiang Provincial Electric Power Company and the Shaoxing Municipal Government, the bureau formulates and implements the citywide plan of the development of electric power, administers the industry in terms of electricity generation and facility construction, and is

responsible for the production and operation of the subordinated enterprises (Shaoxing Government, 2009).

### **8.5.3 Qingdao Municipality**

The Qingdao Municipality is one of the 15 sub-provincial level metropolises in China and one of the five cities specifically designated in the state plan and granted with provincial level authority over economic administration. It administers seven districts and five county-level cities (Qingdao Government 2012). The Qingdao Municipal Engineering and Public Utility Bureau (QMEPUB) is one of about 60 municipal government departments. It is responsible for city infrastructure, public utility and environmental hygiene. The bureau has seventeen sections, including General Office, Planning Department, Department for Legislative Affairs, Finance Department, Auditing Department, Safety and Service Supervision Department, State-assets Administration Department (Foreign and Economic Department), Science and Technology Department, Urban Environmental Hygiene Department, Organization and Personnel Department, Publicity and Education Department, Correspondence and Visitation Department, Off-work and Retirement Department, Discipline Inspection Commission (Supervision Office), Bureau Party Committee, Labour Union and the Youth League Committee.

The bureau's services are delivered by the following subordinate institutions: Municipal Wastewater Treatment Company, Municipal Garbage Treatment Company, Municipal Manure Treatment Company, Municipal Water-supply Company (Qingdao Municipal Water-saving Office), Municipal Heat supply Company, Municipal Projects Maintenance Company, Municipal Gas Supply Company and Municipal 96111-hotline Service Administration. It also has the following subsidiary units, including Qingdao Municipal Public Utility Toll Centre, Municipal Public Engineering Quality Monitoring Station, Qingdao Public Infrastructure Design and Research Institute, Qingdao Environmental Hygiene Research Institute, Municipal Public Utility Funds Management Office, Business Affairs Hall, Qingdao Hairun Water Supply Group Co., Ltd., Qingdao Taineng Gas Group Co., Ltd., Qingdao Heat & Power Group Co., Ltd., and Qingdao Solid Garbage Disposal Co., Ltd. The whole system has 7,909 cadres and staff in all.

The QMEPUB takes its functions mainly in the following two aspects: firstly, trade management for water supply, gas supply, heat supply, wastewater treatment, public infrastructure and environmental hygiene; secondly, providing society with water, gas, heat and dealing with the waste treatment. The QMEPUB allocates a business affairs hall in the yard of the bureau at No.7 Yishui Road, serving for the examination and approval of various trade management and dealing with businesses involved with water supply, heat supply and gas supply.

In recent years, under the leadership of Qingdao Communist Party Committee and Municipal Government, the QMEPUB conscientiously follows the important thought of "Three Represents", intensifies reform, initiates new concepts, and has gradually cultivated a series of service brands with 96111 as the lead. Among them the 96111-hotline service, which is also the first public service hotline in China, is identified as one of the six service brands in the first batch by the Qingdao Municipal Government, and it has been awarded "State model unit of civilized trade construction" by the CPC Civilization Committee. Besides, the "Yuming Service" of the Qingdao Taineng Gas Group and the "Warm Every Home" of Qingdao Heat & Power Group are respectively listed in the second and third batch of service brands by the municipal government. Qingdao always takes the lead in water saving in China. In October 2002, the Ministry of Construction and the State Economic and Trade Commission identified Qingdao as the "Water-saving city" and hence Qingdao becomes one of the first ten such cities in China. (Qingdao Municipal Engineering and Public Utility Bureau 2012). The city has been awarded this title three times since then.

## XINYU CITY, JIANGXI PROVINCE

### 9.1 Background

Located in the middle part of Jiangxi Province, the city of Xinyu lies between two provincial capitals Nanchang and Changsha. At 27°33'-28°05'N,114°29'-115°24'E, Xinyu city has a subtropical humid climate, characterized by clearly-cut seasons, mild climate, plentiful sunshine, abundant rainfall, long frost-free term, and short frigid winter. It has a total area of 3,178 square kilometres and a population of 1,000,000. The urban area now covers 60 square kilometres, with 430,000 urban residents. The urbanization rate is 51.2%, ranked high in the province. It administrates Fenyi County, Yushui District, the Fairy Lake Scenic Area, Economic Development Zone, and Administrative Committee of Yangtiangang Hill.

**Figure 21: Map of China highlighting Jiangxi Province**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>)

Xinyu enjoys a long history dated back to 5,000 years ago, when the ancestors of Xinyu people began to cultivate and multiply generation after generation on this land. Surrounded by hills on three sides, and on the other side, two rivers, the Kongmu River and the Yuan River, pass through the city. Xinyu enjoys a beautiful and comfortable environment.

The city performs outstandingly in governance and has won many national titles, including National Advanced City in the Integrated Experiments on Energy-Saving, National Advanced City in Vocational Education, National Hygienic City, National Advanced City in Forestation and National Advanced City in Renovation of City Appearance. In 2007, Xinyu won the title of both Garden City of Jiangxi Province and of China. The city is marching towards the goal of becoming a resources-saving and environment-friendly ecological garden city (Xinyu Government 2012).

**Figure 22: Map of Jiangxi Province highlighting Xinyu City**



(Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>)

## 9.2 Municipal governance and administration

As in all other locales throughout China, the city political structure is centred round the Party Committee. Another two city political institutions are the People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. They meet for about 10 days annually. The former makes the by-laws and elects and supervises the government. The first Deputy Party Secretary is the Mayor, who leads about 47 bureaux or offices, one of which is the Municipal Bureau of Water Resources. One of the six vice mayors is in charge of the bureau on behalf of the city government.

The bureau was formerly named Xinyu Municipal Bureau of Water Resources and Electric Power. Its responsibilities cover the management of municipal water resources, river ways and reservoirs, flood control, drought prevention and water and soil conservation citywide. Its principal functions include:

(I) To organize and supervise the implementation of the PRC Law on Water, PRC Law on Water and Soil Conservation and PRC Law on Flood Control; to formulate municipal water-related policies, development strategies and medium and long-term development plans; to draft relevant municipal regulations and rules, and supervise their enforcement.

(II) To implement integrated management of water resources, including atmospheric water, surface water and groundwater. To formulate municipal development plans of water supply and demand and schemes for water allocation; to supervise the execution of the above plans and schemes; to assess water resources and flood risk and flood mitigation measures in relation to the overall planning of the municipal economy, urban planning and major construction projects; to implement the water-drawing permit system and the water resources fee system; to publicize municipal water resources bulletin.

(III) To draft municipal water conservation policies, compile water conservation plans, organize, direct and supervise the implementation of water conservation.

(IV) To formulate water resource protection plans in accordance with related national laws, regulations and standards concerning resource and environment protection; to demarcate functional water areas and control the discharge of wastewater to potable water areas and other water areas; to monitor the quantity and quality of water of rivers, lakes and reservoirs, review and approve the pollution loading capacities of water bodies with proposal for the limit of total wastewater discharge.

(V) To organize and direct the supervision and practice of water resources administration; to mediate and arbitrate inter-sector and inter-municipality water disputes.

(VI) To formulate economic regulatory measures for the water sector; to exercise macroeconomic regulation on the utilization of funds within the water industry; provide guidance to economic activities related to water supply, hydropower and diversified development within the water sector; to provide recommendations on economic regulation of water pricing, taxation, credit and financial affairs; to coordinate the collection and management of municipal flood control security funds and hydro project construction funds.

(VII) To draft and review proposals and feasibility study reports on construction projects in the water sector; to supervise the execution of technical standards for the water sector and specifications and codes for water works; to implement key hydro science research projects and the popularization and dissemination of water-related technologies.

(VIII) To organize and direct the management and protection of municipal hydraulic facilities, water areas, dykes and coast lines; to take charge of the examination and approval for municipal construction projects related to water and the management of municipal sand collection in river beds; to direct the reclamation and development of municipal rivers, lakes, beaches and shoals; to organize construction and management of key controlling and inter-municipality hydro projects; to organize and direct the monitoring and management of the safety of reservoirs and dams of hydropower stations.

(IX) To provide guidance to activities related to rural water resources; to organize and coordinate capital construction of farmland drainage and irrigation, and water supply for townships, villagers and domestic animals.

(X) To direct the water and electricity management of the water sector; to organize and coordinate the construction of rural electrification.

(XI) To organize the municipal water and soil conservation work; to formulate the engineering prevention measures for water and soil conservation; to organize the monitoring and integrated prevention and control of water and soil losses; to take charge of imposing fees for water resources protection; to take charge of the reclamation and development of four-dilapidated resources in rural areas.

(XII) To take charge of the construction, maintenance and management of urban hydro projects.

(XIII) To be responsible for the activities concerning science, technology and foreign affairs related to

water resources, including provision of guidance to the development of a competent work force for the water sector.

(XIV) To be responsible for the routine work of the Xinyu Municipal Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters, organize, coordinate, supervise and direct citywide flood control, and execute operations of flood control and drought prevention for major river basins and key water projects; to take charge of the municipal flood control and drought relief system and its informationization.

(XV) To undertake other tasks assigned by the municipal government (Xinyu Municipal Bureau of Water Resources 2008).

### **9.3 Focus groups**

The three focus groups were organized consecutively in the morning of October 27, 2011 thanks to the full support of the mayor and good coordination of his staff. The selected communities represent three types of residential zones: the residential compound of a plant; inner city community; and peripheral community.

#### **9.3.1 Participant characteristics**

The name of the Diangongchang Community means “community of the electrical plant” in Chinese. It was set up in October 2005 after the restructuring of the plant that got rid of many social functions of a factory as prevalent under the planned economic system. It has 2,218 households and 7,823 residents. They belong to 42 residents’ groups.

Most participants are retirees of the plant. Their profiles have been described in the previous section. It was held from 8:00 to 9:20 am on October 27, 2011.

The Shengde Community was set up in December 2009 for this new residential area of the low income families as a part of the city government’s effort at improving the people’s livelihood. It is located at the city’s west. It has a population of 13,390 in 3,997 households. Of them 1,477 households live in the “economy and habitable” apartments and 654 households live in the government-subsidized low-rent apartments. They have a combined population of 7,500, including 329 handicapped and 782 persons receiving the welfare for the below minimum living standard families. The community is the main area of the city hosting the middle and low income families.

The focus group lasted from 9:40 to 10:50 a.m. on October 27, 2011. The living conditions of residents in this community are compared less favourably with the previous one of workers of the electric power plant. They are less talkative and less comprehensive of the questions raised by the facilitator as well.

The Jiyang Community was set up in January, 2010. It has a population of 12,492 in 4,164 households. Of them, 8,270 persons are permanent residents and 4,222 persons live there but with residence registrations in other places. This is prevalent to many new communities of commercial apartments developed by real estate companies. Therefore the residents are comparatively well-off. The focus group was in session from 11:10 to 12:50 on October 27, 2011.

The Diangongchang focus group will hereafter be referred to as XY FG1, the Shengde focus group will be referred to as XY FG2 and Jiyang focus group XY FG3.

### 9.3.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

The participants in the three focus groups in aggregate present a fairly broad understanding of service delivery. The definition is given from the perspectives of the range of services, their significance to people's life and the respective roles of the government, provider and residents.

- "The service involves all aspects of life that can bring convenience to the residents' life and promote the socialization process. For example, except for special circumstances the supply of water and electricity should be guaranteed" (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "The government should be responsible for the people, including provision of infrastructure and public utilities. The people should abide by the rules adopted by the government. Pay when the bill arrives" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Attitude is very important. With good attitude services will be delivered satisfactorily" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

All families have access to running water. Two of the three communities are reported to have reliable running water provision while the other has the problem of low pressure that make water unavailable to the residents on the fifth floor. It is due to surrounding construction sites that frequently damaged the pipes. Frequent suspension of water supply was something in the past. Short time suspension for repair is announced beforehand. The change happened after the initiation of the reform and opening up in 1978. Before the city had two water plants and now has four. The water quality has also improved. As in other parts of China, tap water is not for drinking without boiling. With the improvement in general living standard, more and more residents install purifier or buy bottled water for drinking. They use the running water for cooking rice, washing vegetables, washing clothes and other daily use. The water looks clear and clean, but they don't know the percentage of micro-elements. The government says it is up to standard. The water is available 24 hours a day.

- "In the community, all families use running water" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "Their access to water is at home with running water. Some people take spring water in the nearby hill for drinking as they believe it is good for health. Very few families occasionally use well water for washing and cleaning. Nowadays the running water service is almost never suspended" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "In general the water supply is ok but to say completely reliable is not the case. In the recent 10 days or so, the pressurized tank cannot be started. On the fifth floor ... running water has never reached it after the transformation of ownership. They cannot use water heater and washing machine" (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "As the quality is not very good, some families install purifier or buy bottled water for drinking. Their access to water has not changed over the last five years except for the instalment of purifier as said previously. The quality should be criticized. Nevertheless the supply of water to our household is regular and reliable" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

The government doesn't provide free water. Subsidies are provided to low income families for a specified amount. The price of water is 2.15 Yuan per ton, which includes 0.30 Yuan sewage treatment charge. Most of the families pay 15-20 Yuan a month, less than 0.5 percent of income. Most families are water-saving conscious. The used water from washing vegetable or clothes is saved for cleaning the toilet or floor.

When they encounter minor problems with their water supply, the participants of two focus groups say they can receive help from the property management companies. Those of the other have to solve by

themselves as no services are provided. They pay for the repairs as the property management fees don't cover them.

- "For ordinary problems such as replacing faucet, we do by ourselves. The problems like burst pipe, we usually call the property management staff. For problems with pipes outside of the meter, we call the water company. Outdoor repairs may take 3 to 4 hours. Major problems may need 7 or 8 hours" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

The participants' response to the question "who is responsible for delivering and maintaining water services to the community?" is the running water company and the community property management company.

- "The running water company has placed some plates in the community with telephone number for emergencies and repairs. But the company is only responsible for pipes out-door. Most residents are workers and can fix small problems. If we cannot, we resort to the community repair man. For burst pipe, we have to call the running water company" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).

As to their role in the delivery and maintenance of water services, their reply is to maintain and protect the facilities and supervise the provider.

- "Our role in the delivery and maintenance of water services is to take care of our own water facilities" (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "The residents should play a role of supervisor. When problems are detected, they should report to the relevant authorities timely" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

Participants of two focus groups say the provision of water in the municipality is sufficient while those of the third split in their assessment. Some say the provision of water in their municipality is insufficient. Some say it is sufficient as suspension of water supply is rare.

- "For the new apartment buildings, water supply is not a problem. The problems often occur in the old buildings. Except for problems with the running water company sometimes, water supply is sufficient. The problem is mainly with pressure. When it occurs, those who live on the sixth or seventh floor will have no water. But in general, the water company provides service normally" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

- **Quality of life**

The participants believe "to live a good quality life" requires guarantee of basic necessities.

- "Quality life must have rice, water and electricity. With these people can go to make money. People should have housing, can afford sending their children to school and kindergarten. They should have a basic guarantee for life" (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "Water, air and environment are necessary for people to live a good life" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

The city government has set a goal for everybody to live to be 80 years old. The quality of water is improving so their health is getting better.

- "For some time in the past, we had to fetch water from nearby lake as the running water supply was insufficient. Now the problem has been solved and water is supplied 24 hours a day. If the supply will be suspended for repairing, notice is given. At the time when our plant was moved in, the water supply was insufficient. Later the problem was solved with the construction of the Third Water Plant. Now the water comes from the Fairy Maiden Reservoir, which is a famous scenic spot, so the quality is very good" (XY FG1: Oct.2011).

- "To date, our physical conditions are good as we often do exercises. We go to dance after dinner" (XY FG2: Oct.2011).
- "There have been similar changes to the health status of other members of our households. The young people are busily making money. When getting old, the retirees enjoy life, singing, dancing, playing mah-jong, walking, and taking care of grandchildren. So we are in good health." (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

But some participants hope the government will pay attention to the factors that increase pollution. No polluting factories should be built in their city. Another says the quality of water is good now and should not be polluted.

- "Here the air quality is not so good, polluted as a steel plant is nearby" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "The country is gaining speed of development but the water quality seems deteriorating. The air pollution in Xinyu is getting worse" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

- **Development**

The participants' understanding of the development is as follows:

- "All-round development is true development, which should result in good living conditions and local residents being healthy. The community should provide the services to the residents. The more, the better. The quality should be good and it's better to provide free of charge" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "In general the improvement in facilities has made life better" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Community should be able to provide more services to the people and think what the people are thinking. They hold a good community should be stable and united without criminal cases and family disputes" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).

A participant who has been to many surrounding places finds that the Xinyu is the best in terms of hygiene, economic environment, social harmony and habitability. The other says the community is well organized with many government service windows such as labour security and civil affairs. A participant says the community has done a lot in recent years for the aged, weak, sick and handicapped. It is good at organizing cultural and recreational activities. As a new community, the neighbourhood committee members have done better than other communities in terms of attitudes and efficiency. But the prices of goods in Xinyu are too high, comparable to those of Dalian or even higher than it. Further, wages in Xinyu are not as high (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).

- "Positive development in recent years is that services to residents by the Neighbourhood Committee have been improved to a new level. For any needs the committee will respond and help you. The cultural life has been enriched. Residents' difficulties are taken care of. The government should pay more attention to the community" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Housing price has risen. It's higher than the surrounding cities. It's too high. But housing is a basic need of life. Not only housing price-for most people one apartment is enough-, but also prices of goods in general are too high, articles of everyday use, food even higher than in large cities as Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Beijing" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "The development of restaurant industry nearby has worsened environment. It is too noisy to fall asleep" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).

- **Local government**

In general the local communities have maintained a good relationship with the government. In two of the three communities where the focus groups were held, there are government working stations in

parallel to the Neighbourhood Committees. The latter are autonomous organizations of the residents. The two institutions have cooperated well in serving the residents. However, some participants say that in reality the degree of Neighbourhood Committees' autonomy is not high (XY FG 2: Oct. 2011).

- "The government has a dispatched office in the community as a service window to the local residents" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "In Xinyu, the community work stations work very closely with the neighbourhood committees" (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "Ours is an advanced community. Many government officials visit us. The community neighbourhood committee is the residents' autonomous organization. Our community is large but the neighbourhood committee's power is limited. The community workers' station is the grassroots' unit of the government. Different from the relationship between the government and neighbourhood committee, the relationship between the government and the station is the leader and the subordinator" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).

In these communities, residents participate or engage with the municipality over the provision of water access mainly through their representatives. Such interactions are relatively frequent and involve both the government and service provider. But XY FG2 did not get answer to this question and some participants in XY FG2 were disappointed at the result of the interactions.

- "Here in Changhong part of the community, the neighbourhood committee members, the party branch secretaries and party members go to the city water affairs company and the city government office for receiving citizens' letters and complaints to raise the problem of the running water pressure. They represent the residents to seek the solution. When the company held public hearing on the price increases, the party secretaries and members attended" (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).
- "Sometimes the running water company organize activities such as the public hearing, the community dispatched the representatives to attend. It also organizes lectures on the scientific way of using water and using water safely. Last time the topic was the scientific way of using water. The company and the municipal association of science and technology jointly organized a survey on the water quality" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).

Their opinion of the role of service providers in assisting municipalities with the provision of water access to their community is that the providers should offer all-round services on behalf of the government.

- "The service providers should do concrete things for the residents. They should assist the city government in improving the water quality" (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).
- "The service provider...should guarantee the water supply and the water quality" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).
- "Except for special circumstances, the residents should be ensured 365 days of water supply a year. Now problem is with the management of the running water company rather than natural disaster. Therefore the company should be fined for water supply stoppage" (XY FG2: Oct.2011).

The participants in three focus groups agree their city is a good in terms of the provision of water services. Even those in Focus Group 2 who complained about low water pressure agree to this assessment and explained that "the insufficiency in water supply occurs in some old communities only."

- "Our city is a good performer in terms of the provision of water services. When we meet problems with water supply, we can call the hotline and repair is made timely. In the lectures organized by the water company, information on the water supply and repair is provided and explained" (XY FG1: Oct. 2011).

- “We are generally satisfied with the government’s performance in water supply. At least water supply has not affected our daily life. If there is suspension of water supply, time is short and opened at noon during the cooking time” (XY FG3: Oct. 2011).
- “The Xinyu City Government is doing well in providing water to residents in general. The local newspaper regularly publishes the result of water quality. It is good. But 20 years ago, the pipes were smaller. Therefore the old communities now face problems with water supply. The new communities basically don’t have such problem. The renovation of facilities in the old communities should be made” (XY FG2: Oct. 2011).

## 9.4 Interviews

### 9.4.1 Participant characteristics

We have managed to interview two high officials in charge of the city’s water provision. One is one of the six vice mayors of the Xinyu Municipal Government and assists the mayor in managing water affairs. Another is also a high level official in the Municipal Bureau of Water Resources, namely the Director. The first interview was conducted in the evening of October 27, 2011. The second interview was conducted in the evening of October 26, 2011. They will hereafter be referred to as XY INT1 and XY INT2 respectively.

### 9.4.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

As a high level official in the Xinyu Municipal Government, the first interviewee has a broad range of portfolios including water affairs in assistance to the mayor. More specifically, he is in charge of the following 15 aspects of work or offices: rural affairs office, forestry, association of the handicapped, agriculture, meteorological affairs, civil affairs, Yuanhe River Management Office, agricultural development, grain production and marketing, water affairs, environmental protection, rural supply and marketing, tourism, population and family planning, and Taiwan Affairs Office.

The second interviewee, from the Municipal Bureau of Water Resources, is responsible for the water supply and water saving of the whole city. His position is closely related to the water supply and maintenance.

Presently, the Xinyu’s water supply system is gradually improving. As the branch leader of the municipal government, the Vice Mayor is duty bound to handle well the relationship between the industrial and agricultural uses of water and the citizens’ use of water for daily life to ensure that the city’s socio-economic development is not affected and the citizen’s use of water is not affected.

According to the first interviewee, the city has reformed the management structure of the water affairs.

- “The Xinyu Municipal Water Resources Bureau is in charge of the industrial management, service coordination and supervision while the Xinyu Water Affairs Group Company is responsible for the production and marketing of the running water in the city and its own development as an enterprise” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The second interviewee repeated that point, adding:

- “In Xinyu, the Xinyu Water Affairs Group Company possesses the ownership of the water supply and water treatment plants. The Municipal Bureau of Water Resources supervises over its operation on behalf of the government” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

His answer to the question on the skills and capacities that are essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and/or deliver basic services is that

- “for maintaining good services, there must be a professional management team” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

Due to the first interviewee’s broader scope of responsibilities, his answer is understandably beyond management of water affairs. To him,

- “the following skills and capacities are needed for maintaining the good services: first, the inspection capacity over the road and traffic facilities to ensure the 95% up-to-standard rate of the municipal infrastructure; second, the maintenance capacity over the bridges to ensure their safety; and third, the maintenance capacity over the rain drainage network to ensure the proper functioning of draining facilities” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The Bureau Director’s advice to his counterparts in another municipality is that

- “In water affairs management, the government should do a solid fundamental job and allow the enterprises to operate autonomously” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

The advice given by the Vice Mayor is more general:

- “As civil servants, we should consider the interests of the people, especially the weak and needy social group, and the long-term sustainable development of the economy and environment” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

- **Development**

Due to the nature of the questions on this theme, the Vice Mayor’s answers are comprehensive while the Bureau Director’s supplementary, an accurate reflection of China’s political system centred on the Communist Party and the power hierarchic structure under which the subordinate obey the superior.

The Vice Mayor explains:

- “At the CPC Xinyu City Seventh Congress, the goal of building “a harmonious, prosperous and civilized New Xinyu” was put forth. The harmony covers the relationship among people, between people and society and between people and nature. The city will increase the average life expectancy to 80 years in 2020. For the prosperity, the city aims to double its government revenue, GDP, increases in the value of industry, income of the urban and rural residents and investment in capital construction at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan period in 2015. For the promotion of civilization and culture, the city aims to become a nationally and provincially advanced city” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The Bureau Director’s answer to the question of “who should be responsible for the local development” is very brief and general: the government. The Vice Mayor explains the job division between the CPC and the government:

- “While the leaderships of the Party City Committee and Government should be responsible for the local development, the Party Committee decides on the strategy and orientations while the government implements. They are the leadership core and their work determines the effectiveness of the local socio-economic development” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

According to the Vice Mayor,

- “the CPC Municipal Seventh Congress has decided on the development strategy in the next five years. It requires pursuing the scientific way of development and concentrating on economic development; to be among the first cities of becoming well-off and realizing integration of the rural and urban areas in the province by 2015; to improve the people’s livelihood and social management to increase the average life expectancy to 80 years; to realize doubles of the five indicators as described previous; and to renovate the old city district, build new and ecological district and upgrade the high-tech and new-tech zone” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The Bureau Director added:

- “The city’s overall development, development of industry and modern service sector cannot do without water. The water supplying sector must provide quality and efficient service” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

- **Policies and programmes**

The Bureau Director specified the policies guiding the municipality in the provision of water services.

- “The main regulations and policies that the city is implementing include: the State Council Regulations on the Water Supply in Urban Areas and the State Reform and Development Commission’s Methods on Water Pricing Management. The Provincial Government has not issued any regulations or policies. In 2005, the Xinyu Municipal Government issued the ‘Notice on Abolishing Water Sources by Enterprises, Institutions or Households in the Urban Area’ in order to promote the positive development of urban water supply” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

The Vice Mayor confirmed these points.

The question “whether these policies and programmes have achieved positive roles” has received affirmative answer by the Bureau Director.

- “Firstly they standardize the service of the water company. Secondly, they help improve the management of enterprise. Thirdly they help promote the development of enterprise” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

He added “these regulations and policies are implemented according to the set requirements.” without giving details. He noted “the municipal policies are in agreement to the state and provincial regulations and policies” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

On the question of the sources of funds for the service delivery in the municipality, the Vice Mayor’s answer is broader in scope than the financing of service delivery.

- “The sources of the government funds include: first, budgetary allocation of funds, which come from the taxes, fines and administrative fee charges. Second, funds come from sales of land for commercial uses, funds raised for infrastructure and public facilities and supplementary charges for public utilities. Third, subsidies from the higher level of government. Fourth, portion of local government bonds issued by the central government obtained by the city for the infrastructural projects. Fifth, money raised through trust products issued via the security companies. Sixth, funds raised through the government financing platform. The city investment company, public investment company and transportation investment company raise funds with the government guarantee or land guarantee” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The Bureau Director talked about the ways of the funds raised for the water service:

- “The funds are raised mainly through the following ways: the accumulation by the enterprise via business operation, loans from banking institutions and the special subsidies of the government. The funds for investment come from the running water users’ fees, bank loans and the government allocated funds” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

He continued to explain the procedure of the budget formulation. It begins with “verifying the number of employees, wages and salaries, office operation expenses, business travel expenses and categorical expenses” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

The Vice Mayor’s answer is similar to the Bureau Director’s and more detailed. However, as the water affairs company is an enterprise, the specific stipulations on the government funds’ allocation are not very relevant.

As to the question of whether the city provides subsidies to the water price, the Bureau Director said “the government doesn’t provide price subsidies to the water supply. The enterprise operates autonomously, responsible for its own losses and profits” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

Instead, according to the Vice Mayor, “the government provides water subsidies to residents receiving the government welfare for the low-incomers. (They pay 0.7 Yuan per ton of water for the monthly household use of below 10 tons. For the use beyond 10 tons, they pay 1.35 Yuan per ton. Each extremely poor household receives waive of payment for 5 tons)” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).<sup>5</sup>

The Vice Mayor’s answer to the question on the services price adjustment is as follows:

- “The important goods and services apply the government-set prices and the government-guided prices. Before decision, the government should exercise examination of cost. The factors such as economic development, policy requirement and situation of demand and supply should be taken into consideration. The people’s ability of bearing should also be taken into consideration. Comparison should be made between the local and other place’s prices. The government pricing department should deliberate collectively and draft price adjustment plan. The price adjustment of goods directly concerning the interest of people should go through the public hearings when necessary, listening to the opinions of the experts, scholars and consumers. The price adjustment concerning the important goods and services such as water and gas must be referred to the city government meeting for deliberation and decision” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

He added:

- “after price adjustment, relative stability should be maintained. Only when the cost has large fluctuations and without adjustment production and supply will be affected, the re-adjustment can be made” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

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<sup>5</sup> 1) The running water for daily use is 2.15 Yuan per ton (including 0.8 Yuan per ton as sewage treatment charge). 2) The running water for the use by the government offices and service institutions (schools, hospitals, research institutes and etc.) is 2.42 yuan per ton (including 0.8 yuan per ton as sewage treatment charge). 3) The running water for industrial use is 2.42 yuan per ton (including 0.8 yuan per ton as sewage treatment charge). 4) The running water for business and construction use is 2.83 yuan per ton (including 1.1 yuan per ton as sewage treatment charge). 5) The running water for some special industry such as public bathhouses is 7.3 Yuan per ton (including 1.2 yuan per ton as sewage treatment charge). The current prices were adjusted and became effective on January 1, 2008. The sewage treatment charges were adjusted by the province on February 1, 2010.

The Bureau Director shed further light on the water price adjustment:

- “the price adjustments are made according to the ‘Methods of Water Pricing Management’. The price standard is controlled at 8% profit rate of the enterprise’s net asset. A medium institution is contracted to prepare a report on examining and monitoring the water production cost. The report on adjusting water price is submitted to the municipal government for approval after the endorsement of the public hearing. The participants in the public hearings are selected for their representativeness. The price adjustment is made usually once every 3 years” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

- **Impacts and challenges**

Both officials identified the two challenges their city faces, i.e., the water quality and the volume of water. The Bureau Director explains:

- “The city is one of 200 cities in China with water shortages. Facing the need of city expansion and industrial development, the source water is insufficient in quantity that will result in lack of supply to meet the demand. New sources of water must be found (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

They also said the main challenge is the water quality. Again the Bureau Director elaborated:

- “The city has two rivers of Yuanhe and Kongmmujiang as the sources of the city’s water plants. The quality of the Yuanhe River is unstable as affected by its upstream. Although the whole Kongmujiang River is within the city territory and the water quality is fairly good, the water quantity is not so large during the dry season, not enough to meet the city’s water need. A large reservoir-Baimei Reservoir-is urgently needed to be built to cope with the city’s water demand” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

The Vice Mayor’s answer to the question “to what extent do migration and urbanization dynamics influence effective service delivery in your municipality” is as follows:

- “The population migration and the on-going urbanization has had great impact on the urban infrastructure including public lawn, squares and cultural and sports facilities with many uncertainties. The city government will strengthen the construction of the public service system and give priority to public utilities to achieve the balanced development of both quality and quantity” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The Bureau Director agreed to these points, adding:

- “The water plants have to increase the water supply capacity to meet the ever-increasing demands for water” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

Both interviewees noted the marketization of the water service but did not say in details its impact. The Bureau Director noted:

- “The city’s water supplier-the Xinyu Water Affairs Group Company has implemented the modern enterprise management system and is a subsidiary of the exchange-listed firm-China Water Affairs Group Corporation” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

- **Community participation**

Both officials gave positive answers to the question “Is there a process of community consultation and/or engagement provided for in your policies and programmes”. The Vice Mayor offered detailed descriptions:

- “In order to improve grassroots democracy, the city has resorted to all kinds of measures to enlarge the channel for the residents, civic organizations and working units locating in the community to participate in the management of and consultation over the community public affairs.
- “The various systems have been set up in the community including the Party member deliberation of public affairs system, democratic consultation system and the residents’ representative assembly system. They are convened for the major issues, matters concerning the public interests and the residents.
- “The public institutions and enterprises locating in the community are encouraged to take part in the activities of the community. They have made their cultural, educational and sports facilities available to the local residents.
- “These measures have helped to alleviate the difficulties of residents and improve the effectiveness of community services” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

The Bureau Director supplemented the means available to residents:

- “The Xinyu Water Affairs Group Company runs a 24-hour service hotline to serve the citizens. The municipal government operates the Mayor Hotline to provide all-round services. The users can also go to the relevant departments to express their views and demands directly. The participation in the community affairs and consultation help make the service more convenient and effective (XY INT2: Oct. 2011).

Their answers to the last question of the interviews on the role of the average individual in the community in the delivery of basic services were not specific. The Bureau Director emphasized that “the water supplying department should play an important role in provision of water service” (XY INT2: Oct. 2011). The Vice Mayor highlighted importance of the interaction between the service provider and residents:

- “The water supply department is responsible for the maintenance and development of the infrastructure and facilities. Every resident should play an active role in the community affairs. The company and residents should interact positively for the mutual benefit” (XY INT1: Oct. 2011).

## 9.5 Summary

The participants in the three focus groups have basically presented a positive picture of the water supply and consumption in this Central China city. The running water is provided to almost all households. The two communities report satisfaction with the government’s performance in water supply while the other acknowledges that “the services are wide ranged” although low pressure fails to bring water to some fifth floor users. The majority of participants agree that the city is a good performer in terms of the provision of water services. And a participant who has been to many surrounding places finds that the Xinyu is the best in terms of hygiene, economic environment, social harmony and habitability.

The residents receive preferential treatment in water price as compared to other categories of users, especially businesses. The average running water bill makes only between 0.5 and 1 per cent of family income per month. The increases in water price have gone over strict procedures with public participation.

Of the three communities, the Diangongchang and Jiyang Communities represent an average or above average water service standard of the city while the Shengde Community as a new residential area for

the low incomers has a problem with low water pressure. Additional information as gathered through interviews and visits to the location confirmed some focus group participants' explanation that the surrounding regions are still under construction and the low pressure is due to large amount of water use by construction sites and the occasional low water quality and low water pressure can be attributed to frequent damages of pipes by the construction companies.

Almost all families use running water for cooking rice, washing vegetables, washing clothes and other daily use. The fact that some families install purifier reflects a higher demand for direct drinking that the current national water standard is not up to it yet.

Most participants noted great improvement in services and quality of life since the reform and opening up in 1978. The improvement in facilities has made life better. Xinyu is an industrial city so has the problem of pollution. But in general the life expectancy is increased and the government has set the goal of further increasing it to 80 years.

The community has done a lot in recent years for the aged, weak, sick and handicapped. It is good at organizing cultural and recreational activities. As the autonomous organization of the residents, the Neighbourhood Committee represents the local residents in taking part in the public hearing on the service quality and price adjustment. It also engages with the water company including administration of surveys on the water quality and arrangement of lectures on the scientific way of using water and using water safely.

The leaders' interviews show that the Chinese government has transformed its functions since the initiation of the reforms and opening up in 1978. Such transformations concern its relationship with the economic enterprises and grassroots organizations. For the former, the direct management of enterprises has been shifted onto setting legal and policy framework for enterprises and supervision over their operation. The latter involves the restoration of the status of the Neighbourhood Committee as an autonomous organization of residents. The government monopoly of community affairs has been replaced by the initiatives of the residents. In this respect, an effective network of community institutions is instrumental that is composed of the Party member deliberation of public affairs system, democratic consultation system and the residents' representative assembly system.

The municipal policies are in agreement with the state and provincial regulations and policies. This reflects the current state of the central-local government relations in China. All levels of government operate within the same general legal and policy environment while the local government enjoys autonomy in running local affairs.

The city government has delegated the water production and marketing to the water company. But the supervision system remains effective through the Bureau of Water Resources. The low-income families receive waive or partial waive of water bill depending on the amount of incomes. This is a good case of public-private partnership in that the government sets the legal and policy framework and supervises the operation of the service sector while the company produces and supplies the water. For the social responsibilities such as the care of the low incomers, it remains the government that is in the position of providing the social safety net. Further to the public-private partnership, a polycentric service provision model has been visible in early stage of development. As in the city, the community and voluntary organization have become important actors.

Problems the government face are two-fold: in general the city has a shortage in water resources although it has two rivers; and the water quality has yet to be improved. The latter is partly due to increases in pollution and partly due to the heightened consciousness for quality drinking water. But the quality of bottled water may not be better than boiled running water. The bottled water producers may exaggerate the quality problem of tap water.

## SHAOXING CITY, ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

### 10.1 Background

Modern-day Shaoxing sits on the site of the capital of the Spring and Autumn Period State of Yue. Around the sixth century BC, Yue had a sinicised ruling elite which fought a number of wars against its northern archrival, the State of Wu. Shaoxing became a sub-prefecture during the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368 AC-1911 AC). Under the Republic of China (1911-1949), it became a county. Under the People's Republic of China it is a city administrative unit.

The city of Shaoxing covers 8,332 square kilometres. It has six administrative divisions (one district, three county-level cities and two counties) with a population of 4.9 million, including 620,000 citizens. It has a tropical and subtropical humid monsoon climate. It has a rainfall of 1,300 millimetre annually. It is north of Qiantang river with meandering Chao'e river across it, and is a famous watery region in south China. Shaoxing is situated in the south corner of Yangtze River delta, only 30 kilometres to Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, 120 kilometres to famous Beilun Port, 230 kilometres to Shanghai.

**Figure 23: Map of China highlighting Zhejiang Province**



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>)

Figure 24: Map of Zhejiang highlighting Shaoxing City



(Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>)

Shaoxing is one of the National Famous Historic and Cultural Cities of the first group, one of the Excellent Tourist Cities in China, one of the National Sanitary Cities, one of the National Model Cities of Environmental Protection, one of the National Garden Cities, one of the 40 best cities with hard environment for investment, and one of the key developed and open cities of south wing of Yangtze River.

In 2010, the city registered a total GDP of 278.3 billion Yuan and per capita GDP of 63,486 Yuan, much higher than China's average of 29,748 Yuan.

## 10.2 Municipal governance and administration

China is a unitary state with a high degree of centralization. Shaoxing has the political structure identical to that of Xinyu City. It administers the Yuecheng District, Shaoxing County, Shangyu City, Shengzhou City, Xinchang County, and Zhuji City.

The Municipal Government has about 30 bureaux or offices, including the Civil Affairs Bureau, whose officials received the CASS and HSRC research teams and helped organize the focus groups. But the Municipal Electric Power Bureau is a company rather than a government department as explained in the Literature Review.

## 10.3 Focus groups

### 10.3.1 Participant characteristics

The field work in Shaoxing was arranged in the territory of the Yuecheng District, which hosts the Municipal Government. The two communities are relatively well-run in the district. The residents of the Xixiaolu Community are better off than those of the Shuigouying, a community of the middle and low incomers. Due to the presence of the HSRC researchers, the local officials mainly invited the neighbourhood committee members with few ordinary residents, although all members live in the communities. This also explains that the number of participants in each focus group is smaller than those in Xinyu as prevalently the case.

The Shuigouying focus group will hereafter be referred to as SX FG1 and the Xixiaolu focus group will be referred to as SX FG2.

### 10.3.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

The participants' understanding of service delivery is fairly broad in scope, from the provision of public utilities to caring for the aged and management of the migrants.

- "The government has invested heavily in the infrastructure. As a result, the city appearance has become more pleasing, the streets and roads are well paved with good lighting" (SX FG2: Dec. 2011).
- "Our community has a total population of 10,000 and 1,800 migrants. The Neighbourhood Committee is actively organizing to serve those from outside of the city" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

In both communities the residents have in house access to electricity. Each household has a meter, which is fixed on a wall where all meters from the same apartment building are assembled together. There are two ways of paying the electricity bill: pre-use purchase stored in the electronic card or post-use payment via bank or wire transfer. Their access to electricity changed over the last 10 years rather than five years from neighbourhood sharing of meters to household meters. The basic purposes for using electricity are lighting, air conditioning (mainly in summer), TV sets, refrigerators and cooking. Both focus groups present a picture of efficiently organized and well provided service delivered to the end users. From the differentiated prices for the valley and peak time usage to convenient methods of paying the bill, the residents are generally very satisfied. The municipality does not provide residents with free electricity in general but gives subsidies valued half of the bills to the families below the minimum living standard. The three months in summer are the peak in electricity usage. Those families have a large amount of use pay between 180-210 Yuan a month, about 5% of monthly income.

- "One or two decades ago, this community often had black out. Thanks to the large-scale investment in the infrastructure by the government, the residents have enjoyed the ideal life of using lamp and telephone as wished for when young" (SX FG2: Dec. 2011).
- "Ten years ago, several households shared a meter. Now every family has a separate meter, which uses electronic card. The residents can find out the status of usage at any time. The electric power company encourages the saving of electricity use. For a monthly use less than 50 degrees, the rate is 0.53 Yuan per degree; for between 100 and 700 degrees, per degree is 0.03 Yuan more expensive; and for use above 700 degree, per degree is added another 0.03 Yuan" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).
- "I pay the bill through the bank. We have benefited from the introduction of rates for peak and valley times' use of electricity. The valley time price is only 0.28 Yuan per degree while the peak time 0.53 Yuan" (SX FG2: Dec. 2011).
- "My family entrusted the bank to pay the bill. Every month it transfers money to the electricity company for us. The company sends a notice with breakdown of the items. The service is very people friendly" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).
- "There is almost no case of electricity power cut. If the stored money in the card is to be used up, the bank or the Neighbourhood Committee will remind me timely" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).
- "To guarantee the use of electricity for the families below the minimum living standard, the government reduces the bill by half and covers the difference" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

The participants think the provision of electricity in their municipality is sufficient. The service is so good that room for further improvement is limited under the current technology.

- **Quality of life**

The residents' life has been improved greatly since the initiation of the reform and opening up in 1978. The frequent electric power cuts was something of the past. The sufficient power supply has made it possible for people to use more electric appliances. In particular, the popular use of air conditioners and water heaters for shower has made life much more comfortable in summer in that part of China.

- "The kind of life that we dreamed when young has become the reality: living in high buildings with electricity, running water and telephone. We didn't expect such things as colour TV sets and air conditioners" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

The topic of health status of the participants and their family members over the last five years was not discussed in detail. However, some participants said positively the effort of the local government at improving the care for the aged, adding "the community built the activity rooms for the residents and a community medical centre is opened" which are widely welcomed (SX FG2: Dec. 2011).

- **Development**

The question of the participants' understanding of community development is not discussed in length. Shaoxing Municipality is well developed in this one of the most developed provinces in China. The city is proud of its long history of culture and attracts a large number of tourists every year. The residents have enjoyed higher living standard and improved environment than before. "The hills are green and water clear. The cultural heritages are well preserved or restored. Ours is one of the cities with the similar scale with most tourists in the country" (SX FG2: Dec. 2011).

For the local development, the city has encouraged institutions and enterprises to actively take part in the running of communities where they locate. This activity, termed "joint construction and promotion of community well being", has improved the community facilities and make cultural and recreation activities more accessible to all residents with the material and manpower support of these institutions and enterprises.

- **Local government**

According to the participants, both communities have maintained good relationship with officials of the local municipality. With the support of the government, the Xixiaolu Community provides two kinds of services to the aged: visits of social workers to the aged in their homes or assisting them to go out for activities. As mentioned previously, the community has established a medical centre (SX FG2: Dec.2011).

As to the question of the extent the residents are given the opportunity to participate or engage with the municipality over the provision of electricity, the answer is that "the rationality of prices is guaranteed by the public hearings, which is organized regularly to listen to the opinions of residents" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

On the question of the role of service providers in assisting municipalities with the provision of electricity to the community, the participants expressed satisfaction with the electric power company.

- "Every family has a meter in the corridor. It is very convenient to read the meter. There are two options to pay for the use: the company reads the meter with a remote control devise and send the bill or the user goes to a bank to purchase an amount and saves it in the electronic card. When getting back home, the saved amount in the card can be put into the meter. For the temporary suspension of service for repairing, the users will be noted beforehand. Before the saved amount in the meter is to be used up, the user will be reminded. For the delayed payment of the bill, the user will be reminded as well" (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

- “Some of us use another service arranged by the electric power company and banks. The bank will automatically deduct the money from the bank cards of users who signed for the service. The company will send a letter to each household monthly giving the breakdown of the bill” (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

The other point is that the community has placed emphasis of its work on serving the migrants due to the large number of people from outside of the city now living and working there.

- “We have tried to serve well the migrants by improving both the hardware and software. In terms of hardware, with the support of the government, we put up sign of caring for all residents and make public the relevant regulations and policies. In terms of software, we make the decision in light of the local conditions to raise funds. The community funds are raised through the following channels: first, the funds allocated by the street office based on population; second, funds donated by the enterprises based in the community; and third, the self-generated funds from the rents of houses” (SX FG1: Dec. 2011).

## **10.4 Interviews**

### **10.4.1 Participant characteristics**

As explained in 3.2, the CASS research team could not access to the municipal government leaders and the electric power bureau officials. Instead the officials of the Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau received the group interview of the HSRC and CASS research teams.

### **10.4.2 Results**

- **Service delivery**

The interviewees are the officials of the municipal and district civil affairs bureaus. Theirs is the government department that directly concerns the welfare of citizens. The bureau’s responsibilities cover the management of NGOs, settlement of the demobilized servicemen, disaster relief, social aid, community construction, village self-government, administrative divisions and names, social welfare, philanthropy, social affairs, marriage registration, social worker and welfare lotteries. The officials come from the divisions that promote the autonomy of the community Neighbourhood Committees, which work for the betterment of the residents’ daily life.

Their answers to the questions on the ownership of the power plants in their municipality and the supervisor of the plants are that the municipal electric power company is an enterprise, which operates under the government supervision but is responsible for its own profits and losses.

They noted that they are not competent to answer more specific questions in the interview schedule, but added that the city is a pace-setter in good service of electricity in the province and China.

- **Development**

Answering the question on their understanding of the development goals of their local municipality, they say:

- “The city’s infrastructure and public utilities are expected to be further improved in the next five years. During the 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan period (2011-2015), the city will promote the construction of the city with special local industries, the city of culture and leisure and the most habitable city. For these ends, the city will accelerate the upgrading of industries, further improve the people’s livelihood, increase the residents’ disposable income, strengthen the integration of the

urban and rural areas, flourish culture, augment eco-civilization and promote social harmony” (SX INT: Dec. 2011).

- **Policies and programmes**

According to them, the priority of the government policy for improving public service and infrastructure is placed on the following four points: First, constantly increase the employment rate. Second, heighten the standard of social security. Third, increase the quality education and training. Fourth, guarantee the popular health service. Fifth, increase provision of public cultural service. Sixth, improve the integration between the rural and urban areas to extend the government services to the countryside.

The measures for improving the people’s livelihood include: 1) to promote harmony in the communities. The community activity facilities are to be installed and improved. Cultural activities will serve as a medium to augment the identity of residents to the community. 2) to increase the autonomy of the neighbourhood committees to allow the self-government by the residents. 3) to promote and expand the various services to residents in all age groups including those provided by the volunteers. 4) steadily increase the financial input into the public services. 5) employ more community workers and raise their remuneration.

- **Impacts and challenges**

Most questions on this theme are too technical to them. But they are very familiar with the management of and service to the migrants. The Civil Affairs Bureau has devoted much effort at guiding the Neighbourhood Committees in carrying out this task. Providing housing to the migrants is a priority, which includes basic service of water, sanitation and electricity. Due to the bureau’s jurisdictions, the officials are involved in the registration of migrants and issuing permits of temporary residence. To a less extent, their work involves providing aid to the migrants who face difficulty for survival. Their workload has been increased in recent few years after the international financial crisis as migrants find it difficult in finding jobs.

- **Community participation**

The principles for the grassroots democracy are implemented in the city. They focus on promoting the open and competitive elections, democratic decision making, management of community affairs and residents’ supervision over the functioning of the Neighbourhood Committees. The decisions on the service provision, including electricity, require the participation and supervision of residents. Through their representatives, the residents can also involve in the relevant decision of the service providers. For example, the price adjustment of electricity must go through the procedure of public hearing before the government price administration can approve the application.

## **10.5 Summary**

Situated in one of China’s most developed regions, Shaoxing City is a pace-setter in delivering electricity to residents. The participants in both focus groups confirm that the city is a good performer in provision of electric power. The local residents have nothing to complain of the service, which is reliable. Days of frequent black-outs have gone. The introduction of differentiated fee rates for the peak and valley electricity use helps the residents to reduce the bill and allow the local grid make a stable use of the available electricity.

Household-based meter is very convenient to users, saving disputes between neighbours from meter sharing. The door-to-door visits by the company workers to read meters and prepare bills have been replaced by automatic reading and deduction of money from the consumers' bank cards to pay bills or pre-use purchase to be saved in the electricity card.

As participants in both focus groups reported reliable electric power supply almost without cut-off, we checked with the national and municipal figures and found it is the case for the city. While nationally the average yearly cut off time for urban households is about 4 hours, Shaoxing City's figure is only 2.2 hours (China Website 2011).

As a rich city, the electricity bill only makes a small percentage of a family's income. Even during the summer peak season, the monthly spending on it is still no larger than one twentieth or thirtieth of family income.

The Neighbourhood Committee has played an important role in making residents' daily life easier. The government has provided adequate funding to the committees, which in turn helps the government in social management, including the orderly management of the migrants to the city and provision of services to the aged.

## QINGDAO CITY, SHANDONG PROVINCE

### 11.1 Background

Qingdao, on the coast of the Yellow Sea, lies in the south of Shandong Peninsula. It faces the Republic of Korea and Japan across the sea in the east. The city has a total area of 10,654 square kilometres, 1,159 square kilometres of which is the urban area. The permanent population totals 8.4561 million. Of them urban permanent population is 3.4745 million.

Figure 25: Map of China highlighting Shandong Province



(Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>)

Figure 26: Map of Shandong highlighting Qingdao Municipality



(Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>)

With a long history, Qingdao has a splendid culture; it is also the cradle of Chinese Taoism. Qingdao is one of the main places where the Dongyi People lived and procreated in the Neolithic Age over 5,000-6,000 years ago, leaving rich and colourful Dawenkou Culture, Longshan Culture and Yueshi Culture.

In the Zhou and Shang Dynasties (about 1600 BC-771 BC), Qingdao became the birthplace of Chinese sea salt, ranking among China's "Four Ancient Salt Zones" and "Five Ancient Harbours". During Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods, Jimo, the second biggest city in Shandong Province, was established there.

On June 14, 1891, the Qing government established garrison in Jiao'ao, which represented the beginning of Qingdao as an administrative division in China. On November 14, 1897, German troops occupied Qingdao under the pretext of the "Juye Religious Incident" and turned Qingdao into a colony, which caused the "Reform Movement of 1898" by reformers in the Qing Dynasty. After World War I broke out in 1914, Japan replaced Germany to occupy Qingdao. The famous "May Fourth Movement" was triggered by the calls for the recovery of Qingdao, which was the watershed of China's contemporary history and China's modern history. On December 10, 1922, Chinese Beiyang government took back Qingdao and transformed it into a commercial port. The Kuomintang government designated Qingdao as a special city in July 1929 and renamed it as Qingdao city in 1930. In January 1938, Japan reoccupied Qingdao. In September 1945, Kuomintang government took over Qingdao and designated it as a special city again.

On June 2, 1949, Qingdao was liberated as the last city in North China and placed under the jurisdiction of Shandong Province. Qingdao was designated among China's 15 economic centre cities in 1981 and among China's 14 coastal open cities in 1984. In 1986, Qingdao was listed in the 5 cities specifically designated in the state plan and granted with provincial level authority over economic administration. In 1994, Qingdao became one of China's 15 sub-provincial cities and a famous historical and cultural city in China.

## **11.2 Municipal governance and administration**

Qingdao currently has seven districts including Shinan, Shibei, Sifang, Licang, Laoshan, Huangdao and Chengyang, and five county-level cities of Jiaonan, Jiaozhou, Jimo, Pingdu and Laixi.

The political structure of the city is same as in other cities. However, as a sub-provincial level city, its Party Secretary and Mayor carry a rank of vice governor of a province or vice minister at the central government.

The municipal government has 42 bureaux or offices. One of them is the Qingdao Municipal Engineering and Public Utility Bureau (QMEPUB), responsible for city infrastructure, public utility and environmental hygiene (Qingdao Municipal Engineering and Public Utility Bureau 2012). Some of its subordinate institutions or companies handle public hygienic affairs, i.e., the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Company, Municipal Garbage Treatment Company and Municipal Manure Treatment Company.

## **11.3 Focus groups**

### **11.3.1 Participant characteristics**

The focus groups were held at three communities representing the rural-urban joint, remote suburban and well-off new residential areas of the city. The Xitian Community was a village five years ago but maintains institutions of the village collective such as provision of common welfare and services. Of the 10 participants, two are local residents and community staff and the rest are residents. Of the eight, three are male and five are female. The oldest is 75 and youngest 43.

The Taiguang Community was established in March 2008. It has a population of 1,100 residents in 400 households and an area of 0.14 square kilometres. They live in 21 apartment buildings, of which 14 are five storeys and the rest is two storeys. The Neighbourhood Committee is composed of five members. The Qingdao Haixing Construction Co. Ltd. provides the offices, running funds and salaries of the staff to the community. The input into the hardware of the community is ensured by the town government and the company. The community has a complete infrastructure of sewage, drainage, water supply, electricity supply, roads, telecommunication lines, TV cables and broadband internet connection. It is among the first communities in the city to have such infrastructure in place.

The majority of participants in the focus group held at the Hong Kong Garden community are females. The two males are a retired school master and a newspaper manager respectively and therefore are playing a central role in community affairs although they are not the chair of the neighbourhood committee. Except for the chair whose age is unavailable, the oldest is 72, the retired newspaper manager while the youngest is 40. Most of participants are community activists including four heads of resident groups and three Party branch secretaries.

Hereafter, the focus group at the Xitian Community will be named QD FG1, the focus group at the Taiguang Community QD FG2 and the focus group at the Hong Kong Garden Community QD FG3.

### 11.3.2 Results

- **Service delivery**

The participants in the three focus groups provided a broad ranged understanding of the service delivery. They identified the government, community and volunteers as the service provider.

- “The public service is a large topic, including the services provided by the government and by volunteers. The community services and the services provided by volunteers can alleviate the burden on the government to some extent. The public services can upgrade the quality of life of the residents” (QD FG3: Dec.2011).
- “The community provides services to the residents. These services are human-based and very good. They are part of effort at building a civilized and harmonious community. The services provided by the government at every level are also human-based” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The services are provided by the Neighbourhood Committee. It creates health file for all residents and is responsible for public hygiene and forestation. When we encounter problems with the running water or electricity, we will first think of contacting the Neighbourhood Committee. The committee members are very kind to residents. If because of work some residents forget to pay the bill, the committee members will remind them. The services provided either by the Committee or the property management company should meet certain standard. For example, repair should be made timely” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

The Chair of the Women Affairs Sub-committee says: “Many migrants live in the community. We have been working hard to provide variously services to them, including the family planning” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

They presented well-organized sanitation services with indoor toilets, good sewage, and regular garbage collection and removal. Notable is that garbage is treated. And repairs of the relevant facilities are handled efficiently and timely. All three communities have seen great improvement in sanitation and environment in the recent few years. In two communities, the sanitation services are free of charge while the other (high quality commercial residential area) charges fees and the property management company and the residents are negotiating over the rate of fee increase.

- “They all use indoor toilets. In their high-quality apartments, there are two toilets for each household. There is no public toilet in the community” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).  
 “The refuse collection is one of the services provided by the community. The workers come to collect in front of the gate of apartment. There are garbage bins” (QD FG 2: Dec. 2011).
- “The refuse removal is done well and regular, twice a day, 8:00 in the morning and 4:00 in the afternoon. The service is provided free of charge” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “There are two garbage bins for every column of the apartment building. The signs are placed conspicuously, visible when you get down from the stairs or turn over the corner. There are three stages for refuse treatment: 1) the refuse wrapped in plastic bags is disposed into the bin; 2) the collecting station of the Shinan District dispatches workers to collect; 3) the station treats” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “The refuse is collected timely. Normally it is collected twice a day, around 10:00 in the morning and around supper time in the evening. The refuse collection fee is included in the property management fee, 0.7 Yuan per square meters per month. It is fair price. The cleaning is also well done to the satisfaction of the residents” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “The used water will flow from each household to the sewage pipe, which will flow to the waste water treatment plant. The residents only need to take care of the sewer indoor. They even don’t need to pay the property management fee, which is paid by the government” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “The sewage and drainage are maintained well. The waste water is treated in plant. We pay for sewage treatment and then don’t need to care about the rest. The treatment plant operates regularly and reliably. Each household pays 5 Yuan per month, a reasonable rate. In fact the government has to spend much more on top of it. We don’t know whether the fee will be raised later” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “The sewer is well maintained and functions normally. If there is a problem such as clog, the repairer comes quickly after calling. The service is provided free of charge” (QD FG2: Dec.2011).
- “The government doesn’t charge the residents. Ours is a rural community, which has become a model of garbage removal in that the garbage is collected from household to transfer station via village. The government pays the service” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “Fundamental changes have happened beyond description. Five years ago, it was very untidy, garbage was found everywhere. The removal was village based (not convenient to residents). Now there are garbage bins in front of the apartment building. The environment becomes tidy and clean. Five years ago, we lived in the one-storey houses. The garbage was dumped in an open space and removed in carriage. Now there is a bin for every unit of the building and garbage is removed twice a day. In the past the residents dumped water into the gutter waterway in front of houses that flew to the village large pipe. It was visible. Now the living conditions have changed, much better than before. It is the government that has made such changes under the old city renovation projects” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The environmental hygiene has always been so good in the Shinan District. There have been improvements, especially in Xinjiazhuang area. Since the establishment of the Hong Kong Garden Community Neighbourhood Committee, the area has seen much improvement. Two factors can be accounted for the improvement in the community in recent 10 years: firstly, the attention paid by the government; and secondly, the work of the capable community leadership. More specifically, the improvements are reflected in the following points: recreation and physical exercise facilities have been installed; the roads have been paved; the running water meters replaced with the new ones; central heating has been provided; handles have been installed on stairs. The general environmental hygiene has been improved and the

residents live in harmony. They are enjoying with recreational activities. The government has provided money to taking care of the aged and the handicapped” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

- “The government has deployed material and manpower to improve the service. The garbage treatment vehicles are purchased. The open sewer is changed into sewage pipe. Five years ago, the area was the countryside. Residents used public toilets. Manure had to be carried away in carts. There are now two public flush toilets in the community but few use them as all households have our own toilets indoor” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “For any problems with the public sanitation facilities, they can call the chair of the Neighbourhood Committee, who will send a worker to repair. For problems of facilities at home, the residents look for and pay the worker. Usually it takes only 10 minutes that the worker will come and repair done in about 30 minutes. They pay 50 Yuan” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “When they encounter problems with their sanitation facilities, they report to the property management company. The company workers respond to phone calls quickly and normally it takes between 10 and 20 minutes to solve the problems” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The Neighbourhood Committee and the property management company have set up a 24-hour hotline. Any requests for repair will be responded quickly. They are very friendly to the residents” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “Currently the property management company of the community wants to raise fees but the residents don’t agree. We are negotiating. Two sides sometimes dispute over it. If the current rate can be maintained, it’s acceptable. If higher, it will not match the income of residents. The pre-condition for fee increases is the comparable improvement in service quality. The residents of some apartment buildings in the community don’t need to pay the property management fee. The employees of the organizations for public benefit do the job. To some residents, there is a gap between the open spaces that are taken care of by the property management company and those by the public welfare organizations. The employees of the public welfare organizations only clean the out-door spaces while the residents have to clean the corridors. With the augment in the residents’ quality, they will clean the open spaces after the corridors” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

According to the participants, the Neighbourhood Committee, the property management company and residents are responsible for delivering and maintaining sanitation services to the community.

- “The Neighbourhood Committee should be responsible for delivering and maintaining sanitation services to the community” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “All residents should be responsible for maintaining sanitation in the community. It is a trend to employ the property management company to do the job. For those apartment buildings that currently don’t employ the company, the residents take care of it by themselves” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “Everybody is responsible for maintaining sanitation facilities. The property management company is responsible for delivering sanitation service and everybody is duty bound to maintain it” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

The participants’ responses to the question on their role in the delivery and maintenance of sanitation services are three-folded: first not to make the environment untidy, second respect the work of sanitation workers and third conduct voluntary services.

- “The public hygiene in their community or village is taken care of by the residents. They don’t litter and instead drop garbage in the bins. The property management company employs workers to do the cleaning and every household consciously keeps the environment clean” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

- “We should heighten civil consciousness to protect the public property and educate their children to do the same. The street office should make the publicity on it. The employees of the public welfare organizations do the voluntary services and the residents don’t need to pay them. The residents should maintain the environmental hygiene out of their own accord to be good citizens and display the quality of the civilization of the nation” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

All participants are generally satisfied with the provision of sanitation services in their municipality but some believe there are rooms for improvements such as better regulation of dog raising and posting of advertisements.

- “We are very satisfied with the provision of sanitation services of the city. In recent years, the city is aspiring to become a nationally advanced city of civilization. All citizens take part in it. The advertisement boards are placed neatly after introduction of the unified management. The litter bins are installed in the city. The environment has been improved” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The government employs workers to clean the streets. The cleaning is daily. So the streets are cleaner in their town than nearby towns, although cannot compare to large cities. The government, Neighbourhood Committee and the cleaning company should all improve the service. The hardware falls into the responsibility of government, but the residents should improve their own quality and consciousness” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “We are satisfied except for those who raise dogs without consciousness of the public hygiene. The community should educate them. There should be a public bulletin. The government should issue regulations on it. The other is advertisements placed everywhere. The government should improve the enforcement, for example, to suspend the cell phone numbers provided in the advertisement. Some civil servants don’t perform their duties. With their salary paid by the people, they fail to serve the people properly” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

- **Quality of life**

The participants give a fairly long list of things they feel are necessary for them to live a good life: material resources, income, environmental hygiene, good living environment, housing, health care, harmonious family, and rich cultural and recreational activities. Most of them are satisfied with their life. The main problem that some participants pointed out is the pressure from society in general and high medical expenses.

- “Good quality life requires good health, harmonious family, good environment, developed economy and rich cultural and recreational activities” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “The quality life has to be based on the material resources and income. You must also have good health. Now the basic livelihood is guaranteed. Bread is not a problem. The question is to eat better. The environmental hygiene should be good. The cultural life should be rich. In our community, we have achieved these so that the community’s happiness index is high. Both hardware and software of the community are important. The word environment is rich in content” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “Good living environment, housing and health care are necessary for you to live a good quality life. All these are very good now. So we feel happy. There used to be one-storey houses. After the development of the area, every family now has two units in the apartment building. Each unit is 150 square meters. The community is forested. The community distributes grain quarterly and vegetable regularly to residents. All residents are covered by the pension and health care insurance. The community is safe. Electronic monitoring devices are installed for every building. There is a clinic, which sells drugs without addition of retail sale profit. The doctors and nurses are paid by the community so seeing a doctor here is cheaper than clinics or hospitals outside of the community” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

- “Nowadays the young people face high pressure, such as unemployment, resulting in sub-healthy. Nor can they have happy family life. There are many men and women in their thirties cannot get married. Many of them are white-collar employees. Some married women cannot conceive, which may be related to the social environment: pressure is high. The safety in the urban areas has direct impact on the quality of life” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “The public health includes health service. There is a medical centre in the community and the Jiannan Hospital is nearby. But it’s expensive to see a doctor. The residents have taken part in medical insurance for the major illness, but have to pay for minor sickness, which still tend to incur large medical bills. The state has reduced prices of drugs but the drug plants found ways of keeping increases by changing packages. This affects the quality of life” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

Most participants say the provision of sanitation services makes them “in good mood”. The good environment allows them to enjoy off-work time. The main problem some participants complained is the oil-smoke and noise brought about by restaurants in their community.

- “We are in good mood because the environment in the community is so good and a high level of hygiene is maintained. In the evening the residents go to the community square to walk, dance or sing. In the past it was not tidy. Before the large garbage cans were used; now underground garbage transfer station is functioning. Now the community is same as in the city centre, the residents feel like of being in a park after going out of home” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “A good environment makes people in good mood. That means a quality life. This year the garbage is removed timely resulting in fewer mosquitoes and flies” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “The public hygiene is good enough to ensure the quality life. The forestation in the city is well done” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “In this community the air is good during day time. But beginning from late afternoon everyday when restaurants start business, the air becomes bad. They are driven by pursuit of money but don’t care of the environment. The burning of charcoal for barbecue pollutes air, harmful to health. These restaurants don’t meet the standard for business in terms of oil-smoke drawing and drainage. The government shouldn’t permit their business” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

As the question on the impact of the provision of sanitation services on the quality of life for people in their community is closed related to the previous one, the participants reiterated the improvement in their life resulting from better environment but did not have too much to say.

- “We are very pleased that the community is well managed. After the renovation of the old area, the environment has got much better. It is green. The Chengyang District Government has improved the public services, especially for the middle and low income families. The health care insurance has covered all residents” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “As far as our community is concerned, the quality of running water is far better than others because the source water is from the Leixi Lake” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

Most participants say they are physically and mentally healthier than before because of the better living conditions. It is notable that people are paying attention to preservation of good health and prevention against illness. They attributed the improved health status to the government’s efforts at improving environment and public services.

- “My health has got better in the past five years. In the past she was over-weighted. Now she goes to have physical exercise in the evening that helps to reduce the weight. The Leixi is well forested. The city government desires that it becomes the backyard garden of the city. The improving environment, public hygiene has made people healthier. Local people are enjoying good life with hospital, pharmacy, kindergarten. With so many public services available, people

can focus on their jobs. Good jobs mean higher incomings, which in turn improve the quality of life” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

- “I feel getting better in recent five years except for high blood pressure and over-weight. The spiritual life is happy, which is occasionally disturbed by the uncivilized behaviours in the community such as hosts of dogs allowing dropping everywhere, posting of advertisement untidily. When disturbed, I will read newspaper or book and get relieved. Many places in the world are unstable, but China under the Communist Party is stable and people are enjoying prosperity. But some officials are corrupt and not performing their duty. Their irresponsible behaviours make people unhappy. China cannot afford to slip into chaos” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

His view is confirmed by a Member of the Neighbourhood Committee.

- “I’ve been in good health in the recent five years because I’m serving in the Neighbourhood Committee and residents support my work. I feel under pressure to serve the community better. The income gap between the community workers and civil servants is a thing to be concerned. The coverage of the medical insurance is not wide enough. Residents still have to pay much for seeing a doctor” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “Nowadays people are more conscious of taking care of themselves. In the past the living conditions were not good. People worked hard to make a living and didn’t care about food or rest. The village has got developed and now provides good welfare to residents. In the past, the village organized medical check for the residents aged above 60 and took them to the hospital in the city centre. Now the village clinic can do it. The village often organizes lecture on health care. For example, in the winter, the lecture is on how to prevent cardio-cerebral vascular disease; in the spring, the lecture is about what is the best seasonal food. In the past, the villagers had to work in the field. The job was hard. Now they have a lot of leisure time. Every family has two units of the apartment building. One unit is for rent. With leisure time, the old people do physical exercise. They dance after supper” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

Participants in the two focus groups reported the improvement in the health status of their family members while some in the third focus group did not reply the question directly but explained the causes of “well-off diseases” (illness along with good food and little physical exercise). It is no accident that the third focus group is held at the high quality commercial residential community--the Hong Kong Garden Community.

- “The health status of our family members is good. People have more leisure time for playing mahjong or watching TV” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The health status of other members of our families has also improved. You need every family member to be in good mood, not just yourself, to have a harmonious family” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- “Along with getting old, it is natural that the physical conditions are not as good as before. One factor is that people feel under greater pressure from work and life than before. The other is that nowadays the food is more refined but people do less physical exercises. These affect people’s health” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

- **Development**

The participants in all three focus groups agree that their communities in particular and their town or city in general have got developed substantively. Two communities used to be rural and have become urban.

- “The community has seen substantive development. For example, the community recreation centre, the place we are having meeting, has all kind of facilities and equipment. The aged

residents regularly come here. In the past when food and goods were in short supply, people wished for meat and fish. But now all these are available, but people don't dare to take them as too much is not good for health. The changes in the past five years are profound. The old people didn't think they would have enjoyed such a good life" (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

- "Our community has seen fast development. Now it is comparable to a city in all aspects. The quality of residents has also improved in the past five years. Compared to surrounding communities, there is less litter in our community. The fitness equipment and recreational facilities are available now" (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- "Our community has got developed. In 2001, the office of the Neighbourhood Committee was only 16 or 17 square meters. Three years later, it was merged with the other two committees, but continued to use the same office. It was in 2006, the condition was improved with renting an office space of 160 square meters. In 2009, a space of 300 square meters was rented. In 2011 we moved into a new office compound. It is important to interact between the district government and the community. The community serves as a bridge between the residents and the government. The community is well organized. There are 4,049 households in the community. Every 300 households form a group. A total of 41 groups are set up, each is a Party Branch and has a head. The residents' opinions and demands are expressed through these groups. The community has set up a library, a school for the aged and a dance hall. Last year the community obtained 9 million Yuan from the street office to tidy up the physical environment, including removal of unauthorized buildings, planting trees and painting the outer walls of the apartment buildings. The residents as tax-payers received tangible benefit" (QD FG1: Dec.2011).

Some participants who have been to surrounding towns or cities in other parts of China say their communities or district developed faster or better. In terms of public hygiene, according to one participant, some city does better. But in fact Qingdao is a national clean city.

- "I've been to other cities. Within the city, the Chengyang District is better than other districts in terms of environment and public hygiene" (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- "Compared to other communities, the housing price in our community is higher because it is a good one. People want to live here. The services are good and relationship between neighbours is good" (QD FG3: Dec.2011).
- "The impacts are positive. Two years ago I visited Hangzhou, whose community work and public hygiene are better than Qingdao. Qingdao was good during the time of aspiring to be a national advanced clean city but has not maintained the momentum. Management should be improved. But the Shinan District can compare with Hangzhou and Beijing. The speaker has been to Beijing but found Beijing's development is uneven, whereas the Shinan District has developed all-roundedly, not only in terms of hardware but also cohesion power. Every resident is considering how to contribute to the community for building a culturally strong community" (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

The two communities out of three used to be rural and now the residents enjoy the urban life. The Neighbourhood Committees have residents' life easier and residents are friendly to each other and help each other.

- "The village was backward. In the past few years it has made fast and great progress thanks to the work of the community leadership. The Neighbourhood Committee members have considered details to make the residents' life easier. They set up day care centre and provide services to the aged and the handicapped" (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- "Many of us feel the area that used to be countryside is turning into urban. Now more guests visit us because the living conditions are good. There are two kindergartens and a clinic. Five

years ago, people didn't expect to have these. Then there was no cable TV. Now we have digital TV and internet, broadband, wired or wireless. The number of telephones has increased greatly. Almost everybody now has a cell phone, some even have two" (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

- "The community has become a large family. We have made friends with each other and meet each other with smiling faces. In the past the road condition in the community was bad, difficult to walk when raining. Now it has been broadened and paved. Trees and flowers have been grown and physical exercise facilities have been installed. Residents really love our community" (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- "Many volunteers provide free services. For example, they take care of children during day time when parents go to work. The community set up an activity room for the aged and a library and installed fitness equipment" (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

- **Local government**

All three communities have maintained a good working relationship with the local government. The latter provides support to the communities while the communities help implement government policies and services.

- "The relationship between the community leaders and the government officials is very close and good. We have maintained a good working relationship. The government officials often visit the community to inspect work and offer guidance. The town government is nearby. So the residents often encounter officials who are taking a walk or are using the fitness equipment in the community" (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).
- "Our community's relationship with officials of the local municipality is very good. The government departments have provided funds to the establishment of the school for the aged, library and dancing hall. The government respects the Neighbourhood Committee as it represents the interests of residents. Sometimes the residents' complaints (such as those over the polluting restaurants) are not timely handled. Then the committee members will intervene and call the officials directly and the problems are more likely get handled. We also often contact the public utilities authorities, for instance over the overflow of the sewage pipe, on behalf of residents. We gave the silk banners as an award to the government department concerned as an expression of gratitude several times a year. Because the committee has maintained a good relationship with the relevant government departments, they are helpful. For example, conversion from shared meters to one household one meter was completed very smoothly" (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- The Neighbourhood Committee implements the tasks as required by the District Government and the Street Office. The services are partly provided by the community and partly by the government (for example, pension). The government has set up a service centre in the community and the residents can apply for social security payments, pay fees and apply for family planning services. The government plans to connect the three networks of the district, street and community to bring the public services to the community. Next year it will be implemented in some communities. Then the residents don't need to visit the District Government offices. Currently, the labour insurance business has realized connection of the three level networks" (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).

According to the participants, the residents have extensive channels to participate or engage with the municipality over the provision of sanitation services. In Qingdao, all government departments deliver annual reports to citizens. Other means of soliciting public opinion include issuing transparency information sheet and occasional public hearings. The residents' representative serves as the bridge

between the local community and government. Please note some participants of the Taiguang Community still call their place the village and themselves villagers although the area has turned into urban.

- “We have some opportunities to engage with the municipality over the provision of public services. All government departments will report their work to the citizens once a year. This year 10,000 citizens were invited to the meeting, including residents’ representatives and deputies to the municipal people’s congress. Our community sent two representatives. Every participant was given a sheet of paper for writing suggestions. They raised issue of the food hygiene. There are opportunities to participate but not broad enough.” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “I took part in a meeting at the community organized by a government department and raised issue of public sanitation. Those departments that received not high enough evaluation will reflect on their performance and make improvements. Some of us also received telephone calls in the evening for the opinions and comments on the government services” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “The higher authorities often distribute ‘transparency information sheet’ to us residents. In this way, the relevant government policies are made known to us. The information bulletin and electronic screen are also made use of for this purpose. For the community decision making, every month the residents receive a blue-cover pamphlet. The community (neighbourhood committee) may know the government policy-making process but every resident may not. The community listens to the opinions of the residents when making decisions. The meetings of residents may be convened for this purpose. The government has set up a ‘Hall for Residents’ Deliberation of Public Affairs’. For example, the pending decisions of the Street Office are referred to the hall, where the community leaders and representatives of the enterprises based in the community discuss and examine. Only after that procedure the decision can be made and announced” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The villagers’ representatives must be informed of the major affairs of the community. Assemblies must be convened to discuss and make decision. That is required by the villagers’ self-government. Leixi is a national model of implementing villagers’ autonomy. Residents have taken part in the decisions on the sanitation. Last year for whether to include the family planning work in the village rules and regulations, the residents’ opinions were sought after. This year, for implementing the pension scheme, a letter is issued to every household for opinions. The village publishes its newspaper. Every town has a newspaper with a column on the transparency of the government affairs. The newspaper is distributed free of charge. In addition, the community regularly distributes sheets of transparency to make village affairs public” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

In one community, the Neighbourhood Committee performs so well that residents do not need to care about the service provision. For the other two communities, the participants seem not very satisfied with the performance of the service providers. The fact that some participants talked about replacing the contracted company means that the new institution of residents’ self-government is functioning.

- The business regarding the service provision is handled by the community. The residents don’t need to care about it. The community is responsible for the residents” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The service providers seem to play a role of the contracted, but the residents feel they should play a role of service provider. Their service is not very satisfactory such as the refuse collection. When raining the refuse bin is not so easy to move, they were found to kick it with foot. The workers come from countryside and should receive professional training. The classification of refuse should be enforced more strenuously. The classification is necessary as some kind of

refuse such as batteries is very harmful. A problem with it is that the residents have classified but the refuse collector later mix up again” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).

- “As service providers, you must do things as your own to the satisfaction of the residents. The service standard nowadays is high. Those who cannot perform to the satisfaction of residents should be replaced” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

All participants agree that Qingdao is a good performer in terms of the provision of sanitation services. The relevant government policies are made known to the residents in the form of bulletins.

- “We agree that our municipality is a good performer in terms of the provision of sanitation services and things are improving gradually. The city is aspiring to be a national city of civilization. The refuse collection is improving. As a developing country, things cannot reach perfection by one step. The municipality publishes the relevant policies and programmes and there is an exhibition pavilion nearby. If people are interested, they can go to read” (QD FG3: Dec. 2011).
- “Qingdao is aspiring to become a nationally advanced city of civilization. The city administers over 7 districts and 5 county-level cities. So it has little direct interaction with the community. The Municipal Government sets a policy frame as a guide. For most business the community is in charge and the residents don’t need to worry about. As far as the sanitation is concerned, the underground refuse transfer station is built, which improves the community environment” (QD FG2: Dec. 2011).
- “The government and the Neighbourhood Committee have done a good job. Now mosquitoes and flies are fewer than before. There is a bulletin on the wall in the front gate that publishes the 20 things the government promises to do for the residents in 2012” (QD FG1: Dec. 2011).

## **11.4 Interviews**

### **11.4.1 Participant characteristics**

The official interviews were conducted on April 12 and 13, 2012. Two officials from the department in charge of a wide range of services including sanitation and reporting to the mayor received interviews. They are the Deputy Director of Qingdao Municipal Public Utilities Bureau and the Director of the Division of City Appearance and Environmental Hygiene of the Bureau. They will be referred to as QD INT1 and QD INT2 respectively.

### **11.4.2 Results**

- **Service delivery**

As a Deputy Director of Qingdao Municipal Public Utilities Bureau, the first interviewee is “responsible to industrial management of the environmental hygiene of the whole city” (QD INT1: April 2012). Of the five divisions under his jurisdiction, the one on City Appearance and Environmental Hygiene is headed the second interviewee, whose responsibilities include “the planning, routine supervision and management of the municipal environmental hygiene and its development” (QD INT2: April 2012).

Probably due to the phrasing of our question in Chinese on his position’s linkage to the provision and/or maintenance of sanitation services, the Deputy Director found it too broad to answer. His subordinate, the Division Director said: “the contents of the management over the environmental hygiene include garbage collection and treatment; maintenance of clean roads and residential buildings as well as toilets. The emphasis is placed on supervision with formulation and enforcement of standards and evaluation of results” (QD INT2: April 2012).

In combination both interviewees explained municipal and district levels of institutions' involvement in the provision of sanitation services and the way they are involved. The sanitation service is mainly a government responsibility with the involvement of professional service institutions and enterprises while the NGOs' role is limited. The municipal level is responsible for policy making and supervision with the organization and delivery of services done by the district level.

- "As far as the environmental hygiene sector is concerned, at the municipal level, the following bureaus are involved parallel to our bureau: the Patriotic Public Health Office, Property Management Office, Food and Drugs Supervision Administration, Urban Management and Law Enforcement Bureau and Urban and Rural Construction Commission; within or related to our bureau, there are the Waste Management Office, Scientific Research Institute of Public Utilities, Solid Waste Disposal Co. Ltd and the Dongjiang Environmental Protection Co. Ltd. They take part in the provision of sanitation services in light of their job divisions" (QD INT1: April 2012).

These institutions he mentioned fall into three categories: government departments, service institutions (such as Scientific Research Institute of Public Utilities) and enterprises (Solid Waste Disposal Co. Ltd and the Dongjiang Environmental Protection Co. Ltd.).

- "The system arrangement is that environmental hygiene is implemented mainly at district and street levels. The district is responsible for garbage collection, cleaning of roads and residential buildings and toilets. The streets employ clean workers. The municipal level supervises over the enforcement of standards and evaluates results. Only refuse treatment is handled at the municipal level.
- "The Qingdao Municipal Public Utilities Bureau is the government department responsible for the environmental hygiene. Each district runs an environmental hygiene company. Other enterprises can also enter the sector under the franchises granted by the government.
- "The refuse treatment applies the following two investment forms: First, the government invests in the establishment of infrastructure. Second, the government resorts to the market mechanism to attract the social investments to establish infrastructure. The refuse is treated in the following way: burying (with the government investment); bio-chemical method (with the government investment and foreign loans); burning (BOT through tendering).
- "The degree of the NGO participation is very low. There are some cases of voluntary participation. But the environmental hygiene is a daily necessity.
- "Of the cleaning and toilet sectors, the government or government-owned enterprises make up 80% while the franchised enterprises make up 20%. The refuse treatment sector is estimated to be equally shared by the government or government-owned enterprises and the franchised enterprises" (QD INT1: April 2012).

According to the two officials, there are varied forms of the ownership of the water treatment plants in Qingdao and the government environmental hygienic administration supervises over their operation.

- "In the environmental hygienic sector, the forms of the ownership over facilities are varied including the state-owned and private-owned. It is the municipal environmental hygienic department that is responsible for supervising their operation" (QD INT1: April 2012).
- "The district governments are responsible for environmental hygiene and toilets and refer them to companies for actual implementation. The municipal government formulates standards and supervises implementation. The refuse treatment is handled by the Municipal Public Utilities Bureau" (QD INT2: April 2012).

Both interviewees' answers to the question on the skills and capacities essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and/or deliver basic services are as follows:

- “There must be a scientific plan on the infrastructure that suits the present need or exceeds current need to some extent, a certain number of professional and technical personnel, effective management system and a relatively independent supervisory mechanism. The whole society should be mobilized to take part in the management of environmental hygiene and improvement in the public understanding” (QD INT1: April 2012).
- “The government should first have a clear understanding of the sector to set a foresighted target, taking into consideration of various demands. The infrastructure construction and personnel management are necessary. Good service requires a workforce, which needs a good management system” (QD INT2: April 2012).

The Deputy Director’s advice given to his counterparts in another municipality is three-folded:

- “Actively seeking the support of the local government to offer preferential policies to the environmental hygiene in terms of personnel, funds and materials; broadening coordination to get the support of other departments and improve the management efficiency; and strengthening horizontal exchanges with other industries to smooth the flow of information, learn from each other for common progress” (QD INT1: April 2012).

The Division Director actually presented his experience to his counterparts:

- “Cities should learn from each other as various cities have different conditions and degree of development. Qingdao has its own special ways: First it has a comprehensive refuse treatment park that brings together various treatment methods. This allows sharing of facilities to make best use of resources to meet the needs of the city’s development and recycling economy. Second, it has a refuse transmission centre that sorts out and pre-treats refuse sent from each district. It saves costs compared to the district’s direct transport. The centre can also be used as an emergency treatment plant” (QD INT2: April 2012).

- **Development**

The Deputy Director’s understanding of the development goals of his local municipality is more general while the Division Director’s more specific.

- “The Qingdao Municipal Government Report delivered on March 25, 2012 sets out the development goal for the next five years. It’s practical, specific and detailed. In particular, it fixes the orientation for Qingdao’s next stage urban development and industrial pattern, conducive to the pooling of regional resources and connection of industries. It makes arrangements for the scientific development, ‘blue seaside economic development zone’ and habitable, happy and modern international metropolis. The county economic development has been given unprecedented priority. The goal is in line to the requirements of the 12th Five-Year Plan and the 11th Municipal CPC Congress” (QD INT1: April 2012).
- “The city’s development plan for the next five years is to plan the future with the international sight, improve work with international standard and give play to the local features to build an international habitable city with high happiness index. As to the environmental hygiene, the mechanical cleaning rate should reach 70%; there should have three toilets per square kilometers (the newly-built toilets should be first rate with those in the scenic spots rated three star); and the refuse treatment rate reaches more than 90%” (QD INT2: April 2012).

Both interviewees share the view that the government should be responsible for the local development.

- “The government is responsible as it formulates the development plan and is responsible for implementation.”
- “The local government is responsible for the local development. The government dominates and the society participates.”

Both officials explained the Qingdao Government's development strategy while the Division Director supplemented information on its involvement with service delivery.

- "The municipal development strategy is 'overall coordination, three cities joint action, ecological internal separation and block development'. The three parts of the municipality coordinate and interact to make the east coast urban area high quality and beautiful, the west coast urban area larger and stronger and the north coast urban area concentration of high and new technologies. The Dagu River is to be turned into an ecological axis with flood-prevention dams, modern agriculture, new type of towns and rural communities. The three development zones along the coast, centred on Yantai, Weihai and Qingdao and on Jinan, Weifang and Qingdao are for the extensive development of the region. The emphasis for the block development is placed on building a number of new cities and harbour and transportation centre. The track backbone transportation network is to be constructed to support the block development" (QD INT1: April 2012).
- "The building of international habitable city requires plan. For example, how many refuse treatment plants should be built, how large each plant should be and which disposal method should be used. A task is the realization of the urban and rural integration for the refuse treatment. Currently the urban areas have basically realized complete collection and harmless disposal but the rural areas have not. The cleaning is performed individually but refuse collection must be coordinated to realize economy of scale" (QD INT2: April 2012).

- **Policies and programmes**

In principle, the Deputy Director should be in a better position to answer the question on policies that guide his municipality in the provision of sanitation services and explain them. But our interview was interrupted so that his answer is not complete. It is the Division Director who provided detailed answers.

- "The basic guideline is laid down in the 'Qingdao Municipal Management Methods of City Appearance and Environmental Hygiene'. The state policy is anyone who produces refuse pays. Based on it, the municipality issued a document on the fee charges for refuse collection.
- "These policies and standards have played very important role. Without them it is impossible to exercise management. For example, the judgment of cleanness must be based on standard.
- "Some policies and regulations are compulsory and some are instructive. The former is mainly based on the "Qingdao Municipal Management Methods of City Appearance and Environmental Hygiene", which puts forth norms and standards for evaluation. The latter carries with it subsidies as an incentive.
- "The national and provincial laws, regulations and policies are implemented faithfully. For some details, the municipal features are taken care of. Some municipal standards are more advanced" (QD INT2: April 2012).

According to the Deputy Director, the service delivery in his municipality is mainly financed with government revenue. "Some refuse disposal projects adopted BOT format" (QD INT1: April 2012). Again the Division Director's reply is more specific:

- "The expenditures on daily maintenance of environmental hygiene come from the tax on the urban maintenance. More specifically, the district revenues contribute to the road cleaning, refuse collection and toilet maintenance and the municipal revenue contributes to the refuse treatment and subsidies to districts for infrastructure construction. In addition, social resources are used under the principle of who invests who benefits" (QD INT2: April 2012).

The Deputy Director said the budgeting for and distributing funds to various service sectors go through the following procedure: “the environmental hygienic administration and the operation department estimate annual operation funds in light of the labour quota and actual workload and submit the budget to the government financial department for examination and approval. The latter then directly allocates funds to the operation units” (QD INT1: April 2012).

The Division Director shed further light on the process:

- “The municipality has maintained a base figure calculated in light of the areas for clean, workers employed and number of machines. It is supplemented by needs of occasional activities. Thereafter, the base figure is adjusted annually by taking into account of economic development, growth in consumer price index and increases in wages. The municipality distributes the revenue from the urban maintenance tax to districts, which in turn distribute to streets and communities. The budget is made at the beginning of each year. After approval, the distribution is made” (QD INT2: April 2012).

As to the question on whether price subsidies are in place for sanitation services, the interviewees’ answers are affirmative but the subsidies seem to be provided to the service provider instead of residents.

- “The fees are charged for refuse collection and disposal and maintenance of clean environment according to the income level of residents. The insufficiencies are subsidized by the municipal government” (QD INT1: April 2012).
- “Yes. The municipal government sets a fee rate for three services of refuse collection, cleaning and toilet maintenance. Currently the rate is 6 yuan per household per month. Of it, 1 yuan is for cleaning and 5 yuan for refuse collection and treatment. If there are shortages, the communities submit a report. The government provides subsidies from its total revenue” (QD INT2: April 2012).

The two officials’ answers to the set of questions on price adjustment are also complementary to each other in terms of general policy and departmental implementation.

- “Judging from the local socio-economic development level and appropriateness of the fee rate of a certain service, the service provider and management department decide whether to adjust price. If they find it necessary, they raise a motion and prepare a plan to be sent to the government financial and price departments. The latter conduct investigations and examinations to report to the Municipal Government for a decision. In the process of price adjustment, the public views and suggestions are widely solicited and public hearings are organized. The participants are invited based on quotas. The frequency of price adjustment is not high out of the consideration of maintaining the continuity and relative stability of policy” (QD INT1: April 2012).
- “The existing fee rate was decided in 2006. Prior to it, it was the government that covered the costs. Under the principle of who produces refuse who pays, the fee was introduced. For it, the public hearings were held, at which the government explained why the fee was to be charged and how the amount was fixed. The property management fee collected by the property management companies used to include the fee for public hygiene. Communities had different fee rates from lowest 0.3 yuan to 7 or 8 yuan per household per month. With calculation and estimation, the municipal fee rate was fixed at 6 yuan. It was expected to be adjusted. But to date it has not. If the adjustment is made, the Municipal Price Bureau will hold public hearings. The property management companies collect the fee and then turn over 5 yuan per household per month to the city and keep 1 yuan as cleaning cost” (QD INT2: April 2012).

- **Impacts and challenges**

Both officials identified the contradiction between the higher demands for both quantity and quality of their work and insufficiencies in funds and competent personnel that they face specifically with regards to the provision of sanitation services.

- “The environmental hygienic sector faces the following problems: 1.) the public sense of maintaining a clean environment is not high; 2.) the relevant policies and institutions are not complete; 3.) the hardware and equipment is insufficient; 4.) the funds for sanitation operation are low; and 5.) the quality of work force for road cleaning, refuse collecting and toilet management is low.
- “These are related to the following challenges: 1.) the higher demand of citizens for clean environment; 2.) the increasing volume of refuse; 3.) difficulty in implementing refuse classification and reduction in quantity; 4.) difficulty in finding the sites for constructing public sanitation facilities (toilets, collection stations, transit stations, disposal plants); and 5.) lack in professional managers and technicians” (QD INT1: April 2012).
- “As far as my division is concerned, we face the following four problems: First, the problem regards the planning and construction of public hygienic facilities. The existing city plan does not leave spaces for new public toilets. Nowadays citizens’ outdoor activities are increasing, more public toilets are needed. Another is the difficulty in finding places for building refuse treatment plants as the local residents are not welcome such projects. Second, the budget restrains impede the improvement in the more refined operations and services. Third, the quality of workers should be improved. As it is the case throughout the country, the workers in the public hygienic sector are basically the old, weak, sick and handicapped, not required by other industries. But actually the refuse treatment contains high technology. The mechanical cleaning requires the workers with good technology and physical conditions. However, the existing workers are older people. Fourth, the management system should be improved. In the developed countries, the public hygienic workers are civil servants with high social status. In China, the public hygienic workers used to be employees of service institutions. In the recent two decades they have been converted to enterprises. Now they consider profits in addition of fulfilling the workload as fixed by the government. The profits come from two ways: more incomes and fewer expenses. The latter results from management and employment contract. Most migrant workers are not offered contracts and therefore do not receive social security payments. In this way, the companies reduce the costs” (QD INT2: April 2012).

As regards the main challenge, the Deputy Director General directed his sight to the public sense of maintaining a clean environment while the Division Director focused on the lack of funds.

- “Only when organizations at every level realize the importance of environmental hygiene and put it on their working agenda, it can receive due attention and support in terms of personnel, funds and materials. Only when every citizen realizes its importance and consciously obeys the public ethic codes and laws and regulations, its management can achieve good result with less input” (QD INT1: April 2012).
- “The main challenge is funds. Nowadays a prevalent problem in the urban management is placing emphasis on construction while neglecting management. Large investments are made in construction while investments in management are insufficient. He believes that planning, construction and management are equally important. Improper management of good infrastructure will result in large follow-up expenditures” (QD INT2: April 2012).

The Deputy Director General repeated the importance of publicity to heighten the society's sense of maintaining environmental hygiene but did not talk much about the extent migration and urbanization dynamics influence effective service delivery in his municipality. The Division Director briefly answered this question:

- "Qingdao has two kinds of migrant population: tourists and temporary residents. The plan for infrastructure and facilities has taken care of them. During the tourist season, additional workload is assigned. For example, sweepers work longer" (QD INT2: April 2012).

According to the Deputy Director General, "commercialization, marketization and privatization have not been actually implemented citywide. Surveys and investigations are under way. They will be implemented when conditions are mature" (QD INT1: April 2012). But the Division Director's answer is affirmative and the reforms adopting these measures have achieved positive results.

- "Most cleaning companies belong to the district government. After conversion of management structures, they operate as enterprises. The government monitors their equipment and facilities maintenance standard and internal management. Whether it is called commercialization or marketization, he can say the situation has improved and the companies are more responsible. The adoption of BOT has made refuse disposal facilities and equipment available. Before the government did not have money for it" (QD INT2: April 2012).

- **Community participation**

The two officials said in the city, there are many channels for exchanges of ideas between the service provider and receiver.

- "My bureau runs a service hotline, which receives calls from citizens not only for problems regarding environmental hygiene but also other business and services of the bureau including provision of water, gas, heating and sewage. At higher level, the municipal government also has a hotline. The citizens can also express their opinions via the Neighbourhood Committees, other government departments and newspapers. They also participate in the policy making process. Before approval, policy drafts are published to solicit the public opinions" (QD INT2: April 2012).
- "For the environmental hygienic sector, there are 12319 service hotline, service attitude on-line, internet access to administration. Through these citizens can express their individual opinions and views and supervise over the management of sectors including sanitation" (QD INT1: April 2012).

Both interviewees stressed the importance of the role played by citizens in the delivery of sanitation services as they are beneficiaries of and participants in the service.

- "The environmental hygienic sector requires everybody's participation. Everybody is a participant and a beneficiary. The sector is under supervision of citizens through various channels. The relevant management department and operation department will timely respond to the criticism, suggestions and opinions of citizens to rectify and constantly increase management standard" (QD INT1: April 2012).
- "The environmental hygiene requires maintenance. When the environment is not clean, you need residents to clean it. After cleaning, you need them to maintain it. These require the public participation. The professional workers are responsible for cleaning while the residents are duty bound to maintain" (QD INT2: April 2012).

## 11.5 Summary

The three communities locating in different parts of the Qingdao Municipality have presented the same picture of a well-maintained environment with good sanitation services. The former village like the Taiguang Community or the inner city community as represented by Hong Kong Garden Community have the same regular refuse removal service and every household has toilet indoor. The property management companies are entitled to charge fees for refuse removal services. The city government collects the sewage treatment fee. The residents feel that the fee rates are reasonable. Remarkably, the Taiguang Community that used to be a village pays all fees so that the residents do not need to pay. The collective economy left over from the village should be resourceful so that in addition the community provides very good welfare to the residents such as distributing grain, meat, fish and vegetables free of charge.

Another case is voluntary services in the Xitian Community that replace the property management company in providing sanitation services free of charge. A community-based company covers the costs. This is a special arrangement under the model of community-based working units involving in the construction of the community.

Here again we find emergence of a polycentric service delivery model with the government as the main entity and assisted by the local community and voluntary institutions.

Most participants report that their health status has improved thanks to the better environment and good medical service by the clinics in the communities. In order to help residents cope with the generally expensive drugs, the clinics sell drugs at the whole sale price. This is possible because of the government or voluntary organization's support.

The Qingdao Municipal Government brings together most services concerning citizens' daily life and entrusts them to the management of one department, i.e., the Municipal Public Utilities Bureau. This kind of institutional design is more efficient than putting specific services under different departments. At the municipal level, the Bureau cooperates with and coordinates other government departments. Vertically, the municipal level is mainly responsible for policy making and supervision while the services are actually delivered by the district government and its dispatched offices to streets. More specifically, the service providers are public companies rather than government institutions.

The municipality has maintained its status as a national advanced clean city. The refuse collection, transportation and disposal apply up-to-date standards and technology. Its 70% mechanical cleaning rate and 90% refuse treatment rate are impressive. So are the three-star toilets in scenic spots.

The municipal development goal is also national pace-setting. The rural and urban integrated refuse collection and disposal system with harmless treatment is an ambitious plan.

The government policies are formulated with citizen participation, which are in line with the provincial and national ones, suit the local conditions and are effective. Price adjustment, for example, undergoes a set procedure involving other government departments, service providers and representatives of residents.

The challenges the city faces are two-folded: funds and manpower. The two are inter-related in that application of more modern equipment and facilities require both funds and a competent workforce.

Good environmental hygiene cannot do without the active participation of citizens. This is the reason the Deputy Director General emphasizes the importance of citizens' sense of maintenance. Their role also involves supervision over the government management and performance of service providers.

## **DISCUSSION ON COUNTRY FINDINGS**

The three case study cities share one common feature: each is a good performer in the selected service areas of water, electricity and sanitation. More specifically, Shaoxing City and Qingdao Municipality are national pace-setters in the provision of electricity and sanitation respectively, while Xinyu City is a provincial good water service provider. In a broader sense of public service, the three cities have also done a good job in improving people's livelihood. In this respect, again Shaoxing and Qingdao are national front runners while Xinyu is a provincial one. Such results accurately reflect the overall ranking of these three cities in China. Shaoxing City locates in one of the most developed provinces and is a nationally famous cultural city. Qingdao Municipality is one of the five sub-provincial level cities that are not provincial capitals. Its overall development surpasses its provincial capital Jinan. But Xinyu City locates in a less developed Central China province and is not a provincial capital. As each city is matched with a service area, comparison is better reserved for cross-country analysis. Here some general observations are appropriate.

### **12.1 Service delivery and development**

Residents from the three selected cities supported, to different degrees, the assessment of their cities as good performers in terms of water, electricity and sanitation. While Shaoxing and Qingdao residents were unanimous in endorsing the statement, their Xinyu counterparts have some reservation due to low water pressure in some residential areas.

Our study finds that the selected service areas are generally not of things to be worried about by residents in their daily life. Two model cities of Shaoxing and Qingdao have offered the best service possible under the current Chinese hardware and software. For example, the one household one meter, remote electronic reading of meters and payment of bill via bank cards or pre-use purchase cards of electricity as operating in Shaoxing are the most advanced in the country. As a national clean city, Qingdao's refuse and manure collection and treatment are unequalled by most other cities. For Xinyu, if not because of the large scale construction around the city, water provision is otherwise normal. This also means such a temporary problem will soon be replaced by better service in a broader scale.

The services under investigation have reached almost all residents. The government does not subsidize production prices to companies but waive or partially waive fees for the low income families. The Shaoxing Electric Power Company has introduced different prices for the use during peak and valley times, which is good to residents and also for the local grid.

All levels of government, i.e. national, provincial and municipal government, are involved in the regulation and provision of water, sanitation and electricity services. The national government sets a legal and policy framework and technical standards in terms of the provision of the respective services. The provincial government plays a similar role while the municipal government enforces them and administers the services.

Public-private partnerships in the delivery of services are important. In all three cities, companies instead of the government or its departments are delivering the various services. They are responsible for their own profits and losses. The days when the government was responsible for their existence and operation have gone. But it should be noted that these companies are public holding companies rather than private firms.

In this respect, it is worth noting the Chinese programme of involving enterprises and institutions located in the community in the service provision and cultural and recreational activities of the community concerned. An example is found in the Xitian Community in Qingdao where voluntary services replace the property management company in providing sanitation services free of charge. And a community-based company covers the costs.

### **12.2 Policies and programmes**

The government requires that any price adjustments in service charges must go through public hearings. In the three cities, residents knew about such procedures and the communities sent their representatives. Other channels are also available for the residents to air their opinions on the service, including price adjustments. These include, for example, the mayor's hotline and the government office for receiving people's opinions and complaints.

In China, the government does not provide price subsidies to either the water or electricity supply company. Instead, subsidies are provided to the low-income families who are qualified for the government welfare.

### **12.3 Challenges**

The government faces demands for more and better services along with the socio-economic development. The accelerating pace of urbanization and modernization has increased social consumption of water and electricity and work load for sanitation. A balance has to be maintained for the industrial and domestic uses of water and electricity. Another conflict is between the increasing pollution resulting from economic development and higher consciousness of residents for clean water and environment. The residents are requiring a higher standard of services, for example, water for direct drinking and different prices for peak and off-peak uses of electricity. The new life style has brought about new issues for keeping environment clean such as pet raising.

The migrants mean needy labour for the cities but also additional burden on the municipal services. As the government expenditure on infrastructure and public services are based on the taxes collected from the permanent residents, more migrants also mean more extra-budgetary income to cope with the additional services.

### **12.4 Community consultation and participation**

Community representatives serve as a bridge between the residents and the government. As the autonomous organization of the residents, the Neighbourhood Committee represents the local residents in interacting with the government and service companies. It sends representatives to the public hearing on the service quality and price adjustment. It also engages with the service companies including administration of quality surveys and arrangement of lectures on such topics like the scientific way of using water and using water safely.

The majority of the communities have maintained good working relationships with local government. This helps the communities to obtain substantive support from the government. For example, the Hong Kong Garden Community in Qingdao has received funds from the government departments to establish the school for the aged, library and dancing hall.

The government respects the Neighbourhood Committee as it represents the interests of residents. Sometimes the residents' complaints are not timely handled. Then the committee members will intervene and call the officials directly and the problems are more likely get handled.

The good relationship between the Neighbourhood Committee and service companies also results in concrete benefits to both sides. The company business becomes smoother. For example, conversion from shared meters to one household one meter was completed very smoothly. In turn, the Neighbourhood Committee and the property management company run a 24-hour hotline. Any requests for repair will be responded to quickly, and residents are thus better served.

The cohesive power of the Neighbourhood Committee among the residents derives from its good services that help make residents' daily life easier. For example, some communities have done a lot in recent years for the aged, weak, sick and handicapped as well as in organizing cultural and recreational activities for all residents.

However, there is also the case whereby the relationship between the Neighbourhood Committee and government is abnormal in the eyes of residents. By law the committee is autonomous, but in reality its degree of autonomy is not high. A participant in the focus group at the Diangongchang Community, Xinyu City said, "The community development needs the support of the government. But now most communities tend to serve the government." This can partly explain why the low water pressure problem has not been dealt with better there.

## CONCLUSION: LESSONS FOR BEST PRACTICE

This Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS) study investigated the significance of intangible forms of infrastructure for service delivery. This study was done through the identification of comparative 'best practice' municipalities and their respective programmes across the service sectors of water, sanitation and electricity. The chosen areas of study, namely local governments in South Africa and in China, are not exempt from the challenges confronting most local governments in developing countries. It is within this context of infrastructure and service delivery backlogs that experiences of success are essential.

### Lessons of best practice:

Comparison of the findings from each country shows that many cross-country lessons can be drawn. With regard to the theme of service delivery and development, the following lessons are notable:

- Socio-economic development of the local municipal area is important for best practice service delivery;
- The employment of technically skilled workers to implement and manage projects;
- Employee skills development programmes and training contribute to employees' satisfaction and skills retention in the municipalities;
- Public-private partnerships are workable and effective for the provision and maintenance of service delivery as in the selected three Chinese cities water, electricity and sanitation services are actually provided by companies rather than the government-run institutions as it was the case prior to 1980s;
- Public-private partnerships are also important with services that are not the core competency of municipalities, such as recycling initiatives as is done in the City of Cape Town;
- Public-private partnerships are important to facilitate development initiatives of municipalities, for example, to partner with developers and banking institutions to improve access to housing;
- A polycentric service provision model is desirable and practical, under which the government sets the legal and policy framework for and supervises over the business companies and voluntary organizations in running various services; and
- The government should employ community workers to provide a parallel service structure in addition to the property management company as hired by the residents;

In terms of policies and programmes to improve infrastructure and service delivery, several significant lessons can be drawn.

- In China, the national and provincial service standards should be more widely and stringently enforced to equalize various services;
- In South Africa, national service standards and legislation should continually monitor and incorporate changes in service delivery requirements in municipalities.
- In South Africa, adherence to the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) to maintain infrastructure and basic service delivery;
- Long-term planning should address the balance between on-going and future demand for services and land, for example between industrial and domestic use;
- Proper understanding of and planning for in-migration and its impact on the demand for service delivery; and
- National selections of best performers such as "the clean city" should be maintained to raise overall service standard through the emulation of best practice.

The final important theme was community participation and consultation.

- In both South Africa and China, well-established community consultation and participation processes in the municipalities are crucial, as identified by residents and community and government leaders.
- In China, the Neighbourhood Committee serves as a bridge between the government, enterprises and voluntary organization on the one side and residents on the other;
- In South Africa, residents can engage with the local Ward committee at regular meetings, and also with appointed community development workers.
- Standardised processes should be followed for ward committees' engagement with communities to improve communication and participation with residents;
- Adherence to established reporting structures between councillors and municipal management is necessary;
- Capacity in the local municipalities is optimized through engagement with civil society and local NGOs in the consultation and implementation of projects; and
- In China, the government should empower the Neighbourhood Committee by allowing it to operate with due autonomy as authorized by the law and supplementing its limited sources with the involvement of the community-based enterprises and institutions.

This study found that, notwithstanding their historical and contemporary contexts, cities in South Africa and China face similar challenges with regard to maintaining infrastructure and providing basic services. In both developmental contexts, however, intangible infrastructures such as public-private cooperation and community participation were identified as key aspects in improving and sustaining service delivery. This study identified strategies and programmes of best practice that can be adopted by other local municipalities to assist them to improve their performances across the service sectors of water, sanitation, and electricity. Furthermore, it may be utilised as a pilot study for a larger, comparative project on intangible infrastructure and local governance.

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## **FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS**

Cape Town Focus Group 1 (CT FG1) (Oct. 2011), Bellville/Brackenfell, Transcript.

Cape Town Focus Group 2 (CT FG2) (Oct. 2011), City Business District (CBD), Transcript.

Cape Town Focus Group 3 (CT FG3) (Oct. 2011), Khayelitsha, Transcript.

Cape Town Focus Group 4 (CT FG4) (Oct. 2011), Mitchell's Plain, Transcript.

Cape Town Interview 1 (CT INT1) (Oct. 2011), Transcript and researchers' notes.

Cape Town Interview 2 (CT INT2) (Oct. 2011), Researchers' notes.

Moses Kotane Focus Group 1 (MK FG1) (Oct. 2011), Mogwase, Transcript.

Moses Kotane Focus Group 2 (MK FG2) (Oct. 2011), Mabele-a-Podi, Transcript.

Moses Kotane Interview 1 (MK INT1) (Oct. 2011), Transcript.

Moses Kotane Interview 2 (MK INT2) (Oct. 2011), Transcript.

Tswelopele Local Municipality Focus Group 1 (TS FG1) (Oct. 2011), Bultfontein, Transcript.

Tswelopele Local Municipality Focus Group 2 (TS FG2) (Oct. 2011), Bultfontein/ Phahameng, Transcript.

Tswelopele Local Municipality Interview 1 (TS INT1) (Oct. 2011), Transcript.

Tswelopele Local Municipality Interview 2 (TS INT2) (Oct. 2011), Transcript.

## ANNEXURES

### Annexure A: Focus group information and consent form



#### THE ROLE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN ACCELERATING SERVICE DELIVERY: LESSONS LEARNT FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA

##### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

###### Who we are

Hello, I am (*fieldworker's name*). I am working for the Human Sciences Research Council. The HSRC is a national research organisation whose headquarters are in Pretoria. The HSRC conducts policy-relevant social sciences research, with a unit dedicated to democracy, governance and service delivery.

###### What we are doing

We are currently conducting research on government policies and practices related to service delivery in three municipalities in South Africa, including yours, as well as three municipalities in China. For this study, we are holding focus group discussions with members of the local community to find out more about people's views of service delivery programs and the impact of the programs on their lives. We will use the information gathered from the discussion together with other research material to better understand the benefits, limitations and impact of the local service delivery programs and practices.

###### Your participation

We invite you to participate in this important study on a free and voluntary basis whereby you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time before or during the study without penalty or negative consequence. If you do agree to participate in the study, we will match you with about 8-10 participants and conduct a focus group discussion with you. This session will take approximately 1.5 hours of your time.

Please understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not, is yours alone. If you choose not to take part, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop participating in the research at any time and tell me that you don't want to continue. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will not be prejudiced in any way.

###### Confidentiality

With your permission, the interview will be recorded. If you agree that your answers may be recorded, it will be linked to a fictitious code number. No one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Your name and the name of your organisation will also not be attached to the transcript. The information will

be stored electronically in a secure environment and used for research purposes now or at a later date. The audio tapes will also be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of the HSRC researcher for a period of one year after the completion of the project. Only researchers will have access to your answers, the tape recordings and notes.

At no time will your personal details be disclosed by researchers, although confidentiality during the focus group discussion cannot be guaranteed.

Although the focus group facilitators will make every effort to encourage participants not to reveal personal information about other participants outside of the focus groups, the researchers cannot guarantee that the participants will do so. Your name will not be revealed in any written data or report resulting from the study.

### **Risks/discomforts**

At the present time, we do not see any risks in your participation.

### **Benefits**

There are no immediate benefits to you from participating in this study. If you agree to participate, you will be compensated for any transport fees you may incur on the day of the group discussion, and you will be provided with some refreshments.

### **Contacts**

If you have further questions about this project, about the results of this study, or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the project leader, Ms Elmé Vivier, at 012 302 2711.

Alternatively, you may contact the HSRC's toll-free ethics hotline 0800 212 123 (toll free when phoned from a landline from within South Africa), or the REC Administrator, Khutso Sithole, at the Human Sciences Research Council on 012 302 2012, e-mail [ksithole@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:ksithole@hsrc.ac.za) / [research.ethics@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:research.ethics@hsrc.ac.za).

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this informed consent form. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact us on the telephone numbers provided.

**CONSENT**

I hereby agree to participate in research on the local service delivery programs. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand, and that I can stop participating at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally in the immediate or short term.

I understand that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed during the focus group, but that my participation will remain confidential in the recorded materials.

I understand that the information collected during this research project will be recorded, stored electronically in a secure environment and used for research purposes now or at a later date.

I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

.....  
**Signature of participant**

**Date:**.....

I hereby agree to the tape-recording of my participation in the study.

.....  
**Signature of participant**

**Date:**.....

**Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study!**

## Annexure B: Interview information and consent form



### THE ROLE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN ACCELERATING SERVICE DELIVERY: LESSONS LEARNT FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA

#### INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

##### Who we are

Hello, I am (*fieldworker's name*). I am working for the Human Sciences Research Council. The HSRC is a national research organisation whose headquarters are in Pretoria. The HSRC conducts policy-relevant social sciences research, with a unit dedicated to democracy, governance and service delivery.

##### What we are doing

We are currently conducting research on government policies and practices related to service delivery in three municipalities in South Africa, as well as three municipalities in China. For this study, we are holding interviews with local government officials and service providers to find out more about the relevant programs, policies and practices in place for the delivery of basic services. We will use the information gathered from the discussion together with other research material to better understand the benefits, limitations and impact of the local service delivery programs and practices.

##### Your participation

Your position has been identified as important in relation to our study and we invite you to share your views with us on a free and voluntary basis. If you do agree to participate in the study, we will meet with you individually for approximately 45 minutes of your time.

Please understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not, is yours alone. If you choose not to take part, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time before or during the study without penalty or negative consequence.

##### Confidentiality

With your permission, the interview will be recorded. If you agree that your answers may be recorded, it will be linked to a fictitious code number. No one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Your name and the name of your organisation will also not be attached to the transcript. The information will be stored electronically in a secure environment and used for research purposes now or at a later date. The audio tapes will also be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of the HSRC researcher for a period of one year after the completion of the project. Only researchers will have access to your answers, the tape recordings and notes.

**Risks/discomforts**

At the present time, we do not see any risks in your participation.

**Benefits**

There are no immediate benefits to you from participating in this study, and there will be no payment involved for your participation in the interview.

**Contacts**

If you have further questions about this project, about the results of this study, or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the project leader, Ms Elmé Vivier, at 012 302 2711.

Alternatively, you may contact the HSRC's toll-free ethics hotline 0800 212 123 (toll free when phoned from a landline from within South Africa), or the REC Administrator, Khutso Sithole, at the Human Sciences Research Council on 012 302 2012, e-mail [ksithole@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:ksithole@hsrc.ac.za) / [research.ethics@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:research.ethics@hsrc.ac.za).

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this informed consent form. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact us on the telephone numbers provided.

**CONSENT**

I hereby agree to participate in research on the local service delivery programs. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop participating at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively. I further understand that access to records of this interview will be carefully controlled and that files will be stored electronically in secured environments.

I will sign my name to indicate that I have agreed to participate in this research project as explained above. If I wish, I may use only my initials or first name in order to remain completely anonymous. If I do not wish to sign anything, I may tell the researcher that I am willing to participate and he/she will sign to confirm that I have agreed to the terms of participation.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally in the immediate or short term.

I understand that my participation will remain confidential.

I understand that the information collected during this research project will be recorded, stored electronically in a secure environment and used for research purposes now or at a later date.

I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

.....  
**Signature of participant**

**Date:**.....

I hereby agree to the tape-recording of my participation in the study.

.....  
**Signature of participant**

**Date:**.....

**Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study!**

**Annexure C: Participant characteristics sheet**

**Participant characteristics [to be completed before or after the discussion]:**

**PLACE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TIME:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Sex of participant:

Male	1
Female	2

2. Race of participant:

<b>Black</b>	<b>Coloured</b>	<b>Indian/Asian</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

3. Age of participant in completed years:

			Years
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4. What is your current employment status? (Which of the following best describes your present work situation?)

Employed full time	1
Employed part time	2
Unemployed, not looking for work	3
Unemployed, looking for work	4
Pensioner (aged/retired)	5
Permanently sick or disabled	6
Housewife, not working at all, not looking for work	7
Housewife, looking for work	8
Student/learner	9
Other (specify) .....	10

5. Are you the current head of your household?

Yes	1
No	2

6. How many people are currently living with you in the same house?

			People
--	--	--	--------

7. How long have you been living in this area?

			Months
--	--	--	--------

			Years
--	--	--	-------

## Annexure D: Focus group schedule

### The role of infrastructure and service delivery: Lessons learnt from good practice municipalities in South Africa and China

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#### FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE: WATER/ELECTRICITY/SANITATION

##### Facilitator: Welcome and introductions

Good (afternoon/evening), I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), a national research organisation whose headquarters are in Pretoria. The HSRC conducts policy-relevant social science research with a unit dedicated to democracy, governance and service delivery. We are conducting a series of focus groups in three municipalities in South Africa (City of Cape Town, Moses Kotane Local Municipality and Tswelopele Local Municipality) that have been chosen as best practice cases with regard to sanitation, water or electricity services. \_\_\_\_\_ has specifically been selected as a best practice municipality for water/electricity/sanitation services.

The main aim of the focus group is therefore to discuss issues related to service delivery, specifically the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services. In particular, the study investigates the policies, programmes and practices of the local municipality that contributes to the delivery and maintenance of water/electricity/sanitation services.

We would like to thank you for accepting our invitation to participate in this discussion. In addition, we would like to assure you that the information you will give to us is required for research purposes only, and will be kept confidential by the HSRC. Furthermore, the information provided will not be used against you in any way whatsoever. Finally, your participation in the study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you have the right to withdraw at any stage without any penalty.

The discussion will last approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

**Facilitator:** Requests participants to introduce themselves to the group (first name and occupation).

##### Facilitator explains general discussion rules and issues:

1. The role of the moderator (facilitator).
2. Explain why we use the digital voice recorder and ask for their consent to record the discussion.
3. Explain the importance of only one person talking at a time in a clear voice.
4. Explain how the discussion will proceed: We will discuss issues around four broad themes: service delivery, quality of life, development, and local government.
5. Give each participant the information and consent form to read and sign.
6. Give each participant the Characteristics Sheet to fill out.
7. Collect all consent forms, characteristics sheets and the signed Incentive Receipt form before beginning the discussion.

## **THEME 1: SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **WATER**

1. What is your understanding of service delivery?
2. How would you describe your access to water specifically?
  - a. What kind of access to water do you have?
  - b. Besides the sources of water identified, what other access to water sources do you have?
  - c. Has your access to water changed over the last five years? Why did this change come about and in what ways?
  - d. What do you use the water for? Can you comment on the quality of the water?
  - e. How regular and reliable is the supply of water to your household?
  - f. Does your municipality provide you with free water? How many litres every month? Is there a limit to the supply?
  - g. How much water do you have to pay for? How much do you pay per month and do you think it is a reasonable amount?
  - h. When you encounter problems with your water supply (e.g. broken faucet, no water, burst pipe, leaking tap), what is the procedure for reporting the problem? How long does it take to fix the problem?
3. In your opinion, who is responsible for delivering and maintaining water services to the community?
4. What do you think your role should be in the delivery and maintenance of water services?
5. Do you think the provision of water in your municipality is sufficient? Why or why not? How can it be improved?

### **ELECTRICITY**

- 1 What is your understanding of service delivery?
- 2 How would you describe your access to electricity specifically?
  - a. What kind of access to electricity do you have?
  - b. If you have electricity in your house, is your meter household-based or shared with neighbors?
  - c. Do you use pre-paid meter or a conventional meter?
  - d. Has your access to electricity changed over the last five years? Why did this change come about and in what ways?
  - e. What do you use electricity for? Can you comment on the quality of the supply?
  - f. How regular and reliable is the power supply to your household?
  - g. Does your municipality provide you with free electricity? How much every month? Is there a limit to the supply?
  - h. How much do you have to pay for? How much do you pay per month, and do you think it is a reasonable amount?
  - i. When you encounter problems with your power supply (e.g. no power, stolen cables), what is the procedure for reporting the problem? How long does it take to fix the problem?
- 3 In your opinion, who is responsible for delivering and maintaining electricity services to the community?
- 4 What do you think your role should be in the delivery and maintenance of electricity services?

5. Do you think the provision of electricity in your municipality is sufficient? Why or why not? How can it be improved?

### **SANITATION**

1. What is your understanding of service delivery?
2. How would you describe your access to sanitation services specifically?
  - a. What kind of access to toilets do you have? What kind of toilet is it?
    - If a communal toilet, how far is it? Are the toilets sufficient for the community?
    - Can you comment on the quality of the toilets that you have access to?
  - b. Does your municipality provide sewage removal and sewage treatment services? Can you comment on the quality of this service?
    - Is it regular and reliable?
    - If you have to pay for it, how much do you pay per month, and do you think it is a reasonable amount?
  - c. Does your municipality provide you with a free refuse removal service? Can you comment on the quality of this service?
    - Is it regular and reliable?
    - If you have to pay for it, how much do you pay per month, and do you think it is a reasonable amount?
  - d. Has your access to sanitation facilities (like toilets, refuse removal, wastewater treatment) changed over the last five years? Why did this change come about and in what ways?
  - e. When you encounter problems with your sanitation facilities (e.g. broken toilet, no refuse removal, overflowing sewage), what is the procedure for reporting the problem? How long does it take to fix the problem?
3. In your opinion, who is responsible for delivering and maintaining sanitation services to the community?
4. What do you think your role should be in the delivery and maintenance of sanitation services?
5. Do you think the provision of sanitation services in your municipality is sufficient? Why or why not? How can it be improved?

### **THEME 2: QUALITY OF LIFE**

6. What things do you feel are necessary for you to live a good quality life?
7. How does the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services impact on your quality of life? Please explain.
8. What impact does the provision of water/electricity/sanitation have on the quality of life for people in your community? Please explain.
9. What impacts, if any, do you think the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services has had on your health? Please explain.
10. What impacts, if any, do you think the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services has on the health of other members of your household? Please explain.

### **THEME 3: DEVELOPMENT**

11. What is your understanding of community development?
12. What impacts have there been on development in your community over the last five years compared to surrounding towns? Please explain.

13. To what extent has the development of the community impacted on your personal welfare over the past five years? Please explain.

**THEME 4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

14. What is the community's relationship with officials of the local municipality?
15. To what extent are you given the opportunity to participate or engage with the municipality over the provision of water/electricity/sanitation access?
16. What is your opinion of the role of service providers in assisting municipalities with the provision of water/electricity/sanitation access to your community?
17. Your municipality appears to be a good performer in terms of the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services. Would you agree with this assessment? Please explain your answer.

## Annexure E: Key participant interview schedule

### The role of infrastructure and service delivery: Lessons learnt from good practice municipalities in South Africa and China

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#### KEY PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: WATER/ELECTICITY/SANITATION

##### Facilitator: Welcome and introductions

Good (afternoon/evening), I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), a national research organisation whose headquarters are in Pretoria. The HSRC conducts policy-relevant social science research with a unit dedicated to democracy, governance and service delivery. We are conducting a series of interviews in three municipalities in South Africa, namely the Cape Town Metro, Moses Kotane Local Municipality (NW) and Tswelopele Local Municipality (FS). The main aim of the study is to discuss issues related to service delivery, specifically the provision of water, electricity and sanitation services. Each municipality has been chosen as a best practice case for a particular service, and thus the study investigates the policies, programmes and practices of each municipality that contribute to the delivery and maintenance of such services. \_\_\_\_\_ has especially been selected for its performance in the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services.

We would like to thank you for accepting our invitation to participate in this discussion. In addition, we would like to assure you that the information you will give to us is required for research purposes only, and will be kept confidential by the HSRC. Furthermore, the information provided will not be used against you in any way whatsoever. Finally, your participation in the study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you have the right to withdraw at any stage without any penalty.

The discussion will last approximately 45 minutes.

Explain why we use the digital voice recorder and ask for their consent to record the discussion.

Give interviewee the Information and Consent Form to read and sign.

##### **THEME 1: SERVICE DELIVERY**

1. Please tell us a bit about your position and your responsibilities.
2. How does your position link to the provision and/or maintenance of water/electricity/sanitation services?
3. What parties (government offices/officials, businesses, NGOs) are involved in the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services and how are they involved?
4. Who has ownership of the water/water treatment plant(s)/ power plant(s) in your municipality? Who supervises the plant(s)?
5. What skills and capacities would you say are essential for a municipality to maintain infrastructure and/or deliver basic services?
6. What advice would you give to someone in your position in another municipality?

## **THEME 2: DEVELOPMENT**

7. How do you understand the development goals of your local municipality?
8. Who all do you think should be responsible for local development and why?
9. What is your local government's development strategy? To what extent does it involve service delivery? Please explain your answer.

## **THEME 3: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**

10. What policies guide your municipality in the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services? Please explain.
  - a. Do these policies facilitate effective service delivery?
  - b. How are these policies implemented?
  - c. To what extent do your municipal policies and programmes cohere with relevant national and/or provincial policies?
11. How is the service delivery in your municipality financed? What are the sources of investment?
12. What is the process of budgeting for and distributing funds to various service sectors?
13. Are there price subsidies in place for water/electricity/sanitation services? Please explain.
14. How are price adjustments decided and implemented? To what extent is the public involved in the process? How often do price adjustments occur?

## **THEME 4: IMPACTS AND CHALLENGES**

15. What challenges do you face specifically with regards to the provision of water/electricity/sanitation services?
16. What would you say is the main challenge? Why?
17. To what extent do migration and urbanization dynamics influence effective service delivery in your municipality?
  - a. What assumptions are made about migration and urbanization dynamics in your relevant guiding policies?
  - b. What plans or measures are in place to manage the impacts of migration and urbanization on service delivery?
18. What has been the impact, if any, of commercialization, marketization and privatization on the provision and maintenance of water/electricity/sanitation services?

## **THEME 5: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

19. Is there a process of community consultation and/or engagement provided for in your policies and programmes? Please expand.
  - a. Does community consultation and/or engagement facilitate better or more effective service delivery?
20. Do you think the average individual in the community has a role to play in the delivery of basic services? (Or in the specific service sector of water/electricity/sanitation?)