

**CHANGE READINESS & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ASSESSMENT WITH  
POSSIBLE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TRAINING AND PUBLICATION FOR  
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.**

**MEMORENDUM**

**TO:** The Chairperson: NCOP: Hon. MJ Mahlangu, MP  
**Cc:** The Minister: Hon. Sicele Shiceka  
**FROM:** NCOP Permanent Delegate: Hon. DB Feldman, MP  
**SUBJECT:** IMPROVING PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE TRAINING  
MANUAL  
**Date:** 02 November 2009

**1. Purpose:**

- (a) To move and inform Parliament and the NCOP of the need to urgently realign strategic and legislative priorities to improve local government, improving participatory governance.
- (b) To request permission to investigate, audit and compile recommendations how to improve public participation in local government.
- (c) The possibility of initiating an educational, skills development and research programme intent to empower local community leadership and governance; which include municipalities, councillors and ward committees nationwide.
- (d) To request Parliament to facilitate this change programme in the Local government Work Group as an urgent priority.
- (e) To request Permission for a marketing and awareness campaign to promote and develop ward committees as part of the process to set service delivery standards nationwide.
- (f) To establish a permanent public participatory forum that can advise parliament how to improve participatory governance and monitor good governance in municipalities.

**2. Introduction:**

Participatory governance is a legislative approved process, marking the progressive intent and strategic developmental action plan of government to alleviate poverty, improve service delivery, inspiring progressivism in protecting and enhancing the democracy. The legislator intended a consultative process with communities, engaging government on how to improve quality of live.

This is a radical legislative and policy directive in movement away from past prescriptive service orientated Local Government to developmental Local Governance through consultation; where communities may offer recommendations, to improve governance, determining their own destiny, at Local Government level. However, we need to look at the possibility how to include this consultative process over the three spheres of government and move to a single public service (SPS) model where the voice of the collective has power to improve governance.

This based on the President Zuma's call to improve Local Government and legislative guidelines and policy principles that may suggest an alternative strategic approach to local government. With the option to revisit the fundamentals of current legislative thinking, legislative guidelines and strategic approach to the participatory governance processes both at national and local government to make service delivery a nationwide proactive process of national realignment priority and patriotic relation building to enhance service delivery adhering and celebrating the ANC Klipfontein-Freedom Charter intent.

**3. Background:**

Liberation instituted a culture of change. This paradigm shift of redressing past and present injustices became now a critical national discourse to redress. It is threatening the very democracy which the system is supposed to protect. Current omissions and oversight errors since the declaration of intent to address poor service delivery in our country is contentious and is the one factor that progressively have serious consequences on policy and the way we practice governance. It is undoubtedly the current destabilising factor that will influence the coming local government elections of 2011 and impact on the 2014 National Elections which results may affect the way we practice governance if the current negative community dissatisfaction continues.

Notably, it is the responsibility of the collective in government, inclusive of all opposition parties to ensure that the democracy is protected against all forms of possible destabilising factors that influence the democracy. However, sentimental political nativity exploiting the current wave of Local Government failure is neither in the interest of society nor government.

It is imperative that all role-players become part of true change in South Africa as political and philanthropic responsibility; therefore, we urgently need a task team to investigate, research and recommend possible strategic change how to improve governance incorporating community perspective and recommendations in municipalities. While starting a compulsory educative process to share knowledge and empower community leaders about governance. This knowledge dissemination will inspire new understanding and progressively motivate change to legislation that will empower the nation. While the Work Group periodically may offer Parliamentary report to improve Local Government change.

**4. Intervention:**

It is in the national interest that the collective leadership synchronise their expertise in an aggressive mode as urgent interventive process; stabilising our countries municipalities,

re-amping, improving and educating all stakeholders while government improve legislation, developing a new strategic action plan to restore credibility at local government and service delivery processes as an ongoing project.

Radical realignment action is now an urgent priority. Presidential intervention with commitment of all Premiers realigning legislative policy with current practices, revisiting the prescriptive Acts finding improved ways to aggressively incorporate the power of "the peoples voice" as the Freedom Charter delineate "the people shall govern" meaning accountability and responsibility of all respective leaders in answering the needs of society. This may introduce a remarkable era in new approach to service delivery and community development that failed dismally in our local government.

#### **5. Motivation:**

In terms of the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, the Municipal systems Act 32 of 2000 and supremely the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Section 152(1), it is important to facilitate public participation, adhering to the community perspective and recommendations. The Constitution states explicitly that one of the objectives of Local government is to: encourage community involvement through consultation in the matters of Local government.

The ward committees are central to the public participation process and their respective inputs from a public participation perspective are critical to make participatory governance possible, but then the efficiency of bylaws must empower communities to directly submit their recommendations to council. Notwithstanding the legislative network in place the participative process at community and municipality level urgently need a national educational drive so as to enable true public participation at a professional and consultative meaningful way as contribution to avert the potential anarchy that is looming.

However, the quality, efficiency and consultative process and practical implementation of these community input, benchmark against service delivery standards, timeframes, educational and legislative intent is an academic/political discourse to be urgently investigated, improved and regularised in the public domain and institutional local government networks and all relevant process frameworks.

#### **6. Way forward:**

Government need to have a permanent oversight Workgroup to assess, audit and report to Parliament on the ever changing scenarios, dynamics and perspectives of communities in their dealings with municipalities that motivate radical professional intervention to the way municipalities practice governance. It is suggested that accountability and efficiency need to be regularised, while oversight from a Parliamentary position need be centralised to ensure good governance.

Municipal officials, Ward committees, stakeholders and councillors involved with the public participation process need be trained on all aspects of legislation, organisational development, people's management and intent of public participation as an ongoing project of local government. With a responsibility, to address service delivery dynamics in our country, while the three spheres of government find restorative,

legislative and innovative strategies based on recommendations from society to improve public participation so as to improve service delivery.

It is important that the bylaw of establishing ward committees nationwide operate on a basic template that reflect standardised terms of references of establishment, service delivery standards and accommodate an electronic or Speakers Office network that is directly linked to councils procedures so that the community via its ward committee leadership can offer inputs to council procedures and community recommendations can be recognised via an alternative forum other than the councillor, for councillors does not necessarily endorse the community perspective but rather give first priority to party political agendas and personalised priorities that does not necessarily reflect the will of the people.


#### **7. Project:**

The intent is to research, assess, and consult communities, specifically their local Ward Committee leadership, to evaluate the impact of current participatory governance efficiency. Further, to consult various academic resources and academic institutions with credible expertise on the subject matter, auditing and compiling a report on the state of public participation with reference to local government, how to improve it and give residents an opportunity to recommend their respective views while parliament ensure that the legislative Acts and municipal bylaws are synchronised to encourage direct excess to municipal deliberations. Too urgently request permission to develop educational material on Public Participation and good governance, with the intent of printing various booklets to empower citizenry followed with a process of educating structures, community leaders (WOC), councillors and relevant stakeholders on participatory governance.

#### **8. Financial Implication:**

It would be an honour to present the draft paper and the layout of the action plan within 3 (three) weeks should it be recommendate by the NCOP and Minister Steclo Sicofo. This draft document will have no cost for the State. On acceptance of the draft document a financial break down will be table for the implementation of this project.

Yours sincerely,



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Permanent Delegate: NCOP