1st Connective Cities African Dialogue Event

Service delivery fundamentals: challenges and innovations

Rethinking public service delivery: Innovative solutions for managing and financing public services in African cities

14 – 16 October 2014, Johannesburg

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What is public service delivery?

- Public service delivery is the provision by government (or other organisations) of goods or services needed or demanded.
- Public services translate political visions into implementable policies and programmes through the provision or delivery of services.
- Effective delivery is linked to economic growth, the alleviation of poverty and improved well-being.
- Not simply about the efficient and effective distribution of goods to citizens, also about the complex and challenging task of development.
The challenge

- local government seen as a key instrument of public service delivery (especially for basic services provision)
- embedded in complex socio-economic and political contexts
- can local governments ensure that the basic rights of citizenship are protected?
- do they have the institutional capability to be responsive, accountable, transparent and professional?
- assume that effective governance leads to better government
The challenge

- service delivery is fraught because the stakes are high
- delivery process is strongly associated with development and the ‘developmental state’ is associated with the capacity to provide social justice
- most state-driven delivery processes are about who gets what, when, in what ways and for what reasons
- access to and quality of services
- resource constraints, poor public participation and compliance challenges (Myo Naing, 2014)
Some facts

- 56 percent of Africans (in 34 countries) say government has done fairly or very badly in providing clean water and sanitation services.
- 55 percent say the same about delivering reliable power supply.
- Service inaccessibility and negative personal experiences underlie evaluations.
- Judgments about government performance change according to how citizens feel about their own living conditions.

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Service delivery in theory

- emphasis on access gives primacy to distribution which leads to an obsession with the mechanics (skills, systems and management) rather than the outcomes of delivery.

- in unequal societies, service delivery has to do more than redistribute existing resources or provide entry rights, it has to shift entrenched poverty and inequality (by providing access to services and employment).

- address not only issues of access, but the institutions (routines, practices and social norms) that condition people’s ability to control lives and livelihoods.
Governance and service delivery

- political purposes and institutional structures are driven by ideology and capacity to implement
- role of institutions as agreed norms, rules, procedures and routines in expressing and sustaining relations of power
- tension between efficiency and redistribution
- trade-off implicit to markets is that most disadvantaged unlikely to benefit
- links between democracy, development and improvement
- strong organisational emphasis for it to be more than tinkering

Francis Fukuyama (Origins of Political Order) argues that “…modern institutions cannot simply be transferred to other societies without reference to existing rules and the political forces supporting them. … It requires a great deal of hard work to persuade people that institutional change is needed.”
## Modes of governance

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<tr>
<th>Hierarchical</th>
<th>Exchange</th>
<th>Relation</th>
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<td>Power and authority structured hierarchical - ruler and ruled. Advent of a rights-based legal system meant social goods no longer distributed through the whim of a ruling sovereign, but through the neutral, legal bureaucratic system.</td>
<td>Power and authority based on exchange - a good that can be traded. Governance as a combination of democratic participation and free market development. Typified by the World Bank conception of ‘good governance’ as defining the framework for free and fair exchange of power and resources.</td>
<td>Power and authority socially constructed. Governance as changing rationalities or discourse. Rules of the game. Processes of normalisation and institutionalisation.</td>
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CITIZEN/SUBJECT

CUSTOMER/CLIENT

PARTNERS
Service delivery approaches

- approaches are not neutral – assume values and influence outcomes

**BUREAUCRACY**

- “One size fits all”
  - Bureaucratic provider
  - Universal and large scale
  - Citizens
  - Hierarchical

**NPM**

- “Get what you pay for”
  - Professional regulated
  - Performance orientation
  - Customer/client Exchange

**GOVERNANCE**

- “We will do it together”
  - Regulated provision in partnership
  - Decentralised for access and inclusion
  - Partners
  - Monitoring

**CONTEXT**

- “Let’s work it out”
  - Context specific
  - Results relevant to history and political economy
  - Co-producers
  - Accountability

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BEING RESPONSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE: tensions between citizens engaging in collective action and local state having to negotiate competing interests.

LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Outcomes: IMPROVED STANDARD OF LIVING AND LIVELIHOODS

Systems, processes, pathologies, institutions that drive process

Promise to the people:
• provision of basic services (water, sanitation, electricity)
• development and growth
• prosperity

Institutions

Citizen participation

Rule of law

Resources

Service delivery politics
Service delivery process

Legitimacy

Democracy and rule of law - what government earns through delivery

Public Value

Citizen engagement and participation - what locals experience as delivery but also potential impact on development and livelihoods

Operational Capability

State operations - the ability to mobilise resources (political, operational and financial) to deliver

Embedding innovation

Control

Participation

Access

Development

Leadership

Ownership

Commitment – ‘we want to …’

Over delivery and the distribution of resources

In decision-making, planning, management, administration and evaluation

To services, opportunities and projects

Capability – ‘we can …’

Enabling systems – ‘we are able to …’
A committed and supported champion is important

Leverage funding through existing programmes and practices

Allow context and resource relevant system to emerge to ensure integration into daily routines

Identify some achievable results for accountability and reporting

Build networks and partnerships inwards and outwards

- Leadership support and sensible management
- Incubate
- Robust effective learning and exchange system
- Dissemination
- Start narrow then grow
Drivers of innovation and change

- Strong peer relationships and cooperative engagements with stakeholders enable professional service and performance.

- Aligned planning and performance review systems link operational plans, human resources and budgets to implementation.

- Leadership actively builds and supports a performance monitoring and accountability culture.

- Organisational structures, processes, resources and norms support a focus on compliance. Incentives and consequences are clear.

- Leadership actively builds and supports a performance monitoring and accountability culture.

- Drivers enabling management performance

Anne Mc Lennan (2014) for South African Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) - Management Performance Assessment Tool – Good practice lessons
Conditions for innovation and change

Policy and planning

- Policy should be flexible enough to enable adaptation to departmental conditions.
- Planning must be aligned to operational processes, specifically HR and finance.

Leadership and consistency of purpose

- Consistent political and administrative leadership sets the tone and is integral to building a performance culture.

Organising and resourcing

- Consistent political and administrative leadership sets the tone and is integral to building a performance culture.

Professional service and performance culture

- Pressure from peers, and citizens contribute to the development of a service culture. This must be backed by effective monitoring, feedback and consequences.

Performance

- Organisational structure, governance, work flow and human resource deployment are critical to implementation. Resources are not the issue - how they are mobilised and deployed is.

Lessons for improving management practice

Anne Mc Lennan (2014) for South African Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) - Management Performance Assessment Tool – Good practice lessons
Are you ready?

Position

Defend

Attack

- Need appropriate political and regulatory structures, but also established cultures of practice
- Disrupt established practises and institutionalise new ones
  - Manage patronage and incentives
  - Checks and balances
- Create new norms and practices
  - Accountability not just a summons to compliance but a commitment to the public good