

# **Institutional Voids: Impediment to the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in South African Municipalities**

SOKEIBELEMAYE NWAUCHE

AND

FREDERIK CLAEYE

# OUTLINE

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- **INSTITUTIONAL VOIDS AND THE IDP**
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# INTRODUCTION

## The role of social enterprises:

- A subset of organizations in the social and solidarity economy (SSE).
- Potentially viable mechanism for the implementation of the SDGs.
- **Context:** In South Africa social enterprises operate within a context of high levels of wicked sustainable development challenges.
- Government considers them as development partners and a viable mechanism for addressing these development challenges.
- At the institutional level, municipalities are expected to be the engine room for addressing these challenges through their integrated development plan (IDP).
- IDP ← Provincial development plans ← NDP ← SDGs.
- Institutional voids in the IDP impede achievements of social enterprises.

# INSTITUTIONAL VOIDS AND THE IDP

- Institutions provide a framework that guides and shapes the behaviour of actors within a context.
- When institutional frameworks are inadequate, weak or absent = Institutional voids.

**IDP: formal institutional framework to guide the development process in municipalities.**

- Developmental mandate: provide basic needs; promote social and economic development; narrow functions and duties.
- Participatory and consultative processes with the community, which includes social enterprises, towards the preparation of the IDP.
- Framework of the IDP should guide the development operations of government and external organizations (including the social enterprise sector)
- Coordinate the activities of actors within that space.

- Available evidence from IDP documents indicate that processes are not applied to social enterprise activities.
- Presence of institutional voids.

**How do the institutional voids impede social enterprises in the achievement of the SDGs?**

# METHOD

- Qualitative research approach: grounded theory strategy
- To investigate how institutional voids impede social enterprises in the achievement of the SDGs.
- Data was collected from Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.
- Total of 31 respondents were interviewed

# FINDINGS

- Institutional voids emanate from ***Constrained Development Mandate***: interpretation of municipalities' role keeps social enterprise services, which fall within the basic needs and socio-economic development category, from making it into the IDP; the planning framework (eg setting development priorities and objectives, key performance areas, performance indicators, M&E systems etc) are not applied to social enterprise services.
- Induces a ***Deficient Sector Engagement***: social enterprise sector is not engaged during the community consultative and participatory processes to set development agenda; services are not integrated into the IDP; municipalities are not able to articulate and account for their contributions.
- Enables ***Fragmented Processes***: existence of multiple autonomous entities, lack of coordination or organized and comprehensive data and information on the sector. Their contributions and achievements are subsumed under other entities and hardly reported.

# WAY FORWARD

- Institutional reengineering of the IDP and reinterpretation of the role of South Africa's municipalities to reflect the present realities in communities.
- Deepening and expanding the invited space for community participation to effectively engage the social enterprise sector as actual development partners, and incorporate discussions on the services they provide in the planning process.
- Put in place mechanisms for coordination and information gathering on the activities of the social enterprise sector in order to articulate, harness as well as effectively report on the contributions of social enterprises towards the implementation of the SDGs.