

## 9. KEY CHALLENGES

For the purpose of this section it is noted that a key challenge is informed by:

- Action to build upon strengths of municipality
- To address a weaknesses
- To tap into opportunities
- To counter the threats or plan around them

### 9.1 KEY CHALLENGES FACED BY LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN ZDM

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#### 9.1.1 ABAQULUSI LM

- **Apartheid spatial planning footprints:** The challenge of the IDP is two separate developments which were caused by historical planning or apartheid planning. This requires AbaQulusi to plan and provide time-balance for the provision of basic infrastructure services to rural areas and to maintain and upgrade existing services in urban areas with due regard to limited financial resources. This need to be part of a holistic approach to achieve social upliftment and a better quality of life for all the citizens of AbaQulusi. Specific projects need to integrate social, infrastructural and economic development.
- **Declining economic sectors:** The AbaQulusi area is facing the challenge of economic development after the close down of mining sector, which was a major boost for the regional economy. This challenge left many ghost town and hostels in the area, which also requires infrastructure development and maintenance today. As a result, the municipality is required to pull all various resources which, too date have not yet been fully developed. The IDP challenge is to draw on those resources and through creative and visionary means implement measures that will result in the economic regeneration and upliftment of the population. Hence, the AbaQulusi Local Municipality need to create an enabling environment that will stimulate investment interest.
- **Lack of skills and high rate of functional illiteracy:** In terms of the sectoral departments and municipal own competencies there is a need to address skills training, adult education and increased access to job opportunities. This in turn means implementing the necessary educational programmes as well as encouraging local economic activity. From a sectoral point of view the extension of the primary sector and the development of a secondary sector in conjunction with this need to be emphasised. Existing opportunities presented through the development of the Zululand Corridor should be embraced. Finally, the role of tourism and its growing contribution to the local economy should be explored and developed.
- **Settlement pattern:** Spatially the IDP must respond to the need for the development of hierarchy of settlements/ nodes, which will rationalise the regional distribution of investment in basic infrastructure and community services. The development of a Rural Service Centres may go a long way in achieving a more equitable development and investment pattern and spatial integration. There is a need to formalise the rural settlements surrounding the urban areas through the implementation of Framework Plans or precinct plans and for consistency in policies, land use management and by-laws.
- **Poor access to social facilities:** Urban areas within the AbaQulusi Local Municipality are reasonably well developed with social facilities and services. However, the standards do need to be maintained and such facilities need to be expanded to reach the urban population due to high rate of urbanization and migration. The real challenge lies in creating similar standards of provision of facilities in the rural areas in order to achieve social upliftment and a general improvement of socio-economic conditions. Addressing this need becomes even more critical, however the creation of regional sport centres may go a long way to achieve the desired outcome if one consider the dimensions that social facilities need to be accessible and should be provided at convenient locations.

- **Service backlog:** One of the main elements of socio-economic wellbeing is the access to basic services. The status of the physical and economic development level of a community such as that of AbaQulusi is often measured based on the provision and quality of infrastructure for technical services, i.e. access to roads, electricity, water and sanitation. These are found to be a huge challenge for AbaQulusi Municipality whereas the Vryheid town suffers from maintaining of existing services while rural areas have no basic services at all. In addition, the AbaQulusi Local Municipality is challenged with the maintenance and development of basic road and storm water infrastructure to serve the local community, particularly in eMondlo and rural areas. This will be severely constrained by limited financial resources. Public transport plays an important role in the economy of AbaQulusi and deserves some attention in the planning efforts of the municipality.
- **Land Claims:** About 80% of the land within AbaQulusi Municipality belongs to White group. The national government has got a target of 30% of the land must be transferred to Black communities by 2014. This makes AbaQulusi area to be considered under huge land claims by the Department of Land Affairs (DLA). This poses huge challenges to AbaQulusi Municipality due to lack of internal capacity, skills and adequate financial resources to deal with new infrastructure in the areas under land redistribution by Department of Land Affairs.
- **HIV and AIDS:** The number of individuals infected with HIV/AIDS continues to be major challenge for all spheres of government, and an attempt to stabilize the pandemic, is reflected in terms of budget allocations and programmes for implementation by the Department of health. The survey done at District level by the DOH in 2005 for pregnant women reflected 37.8% of infected persons in the Zululand District Municipality. The figures are very sensitive considering that AbaQulusi has a highest population in the whole district. The AbaQulusi municipality has participated in the development of a District HIV/AIDS Sector plan, and has developed HIV/AIDS Strategies through the establishment of an HIV/AIDS Council chaired by the District Mayor.

### 9.1.2 eDumbe LM

- A large rural population that depends on the nearby urban area of Paulpietersburg for commercial and public services (e.g. health, social welfare, police services etc) places pressure on the primary node because of the lack of social and economic services within the rural areas.
- Most of the rural settlements are small thus making service delivery costly, this effect is compounded by the aspect that only 35% of the municipality's population lives in an urban area while 65% lives in the rural hinterland of the municipality. The spatial development pattern of the municipality will have to be addressed.
- 53% of the population of the municipality are women. Women are assumed to be acting as household heads in the absence of partners seeking employment in other urban centres. It is also accepted that these women are more disadvantaged in terms of resources. Strategies need to be developed in order to create security for women and their dependent children.
- Close to half of the population are children, placing pressure on the need for educational and social facilities. Many of these children will be orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS. At least 17% of the population is already infected with HIV. The severe impact on the need for health, social and welfare services over the next 20 years will have to be accommodated in the Municipalities strategy for service delivery.
- Income levels in eDumbe tend to be quite low with 69% of the population earning less than R800 a month. The traditional and rural areas are the most poverty stricken.
- The majority of the population relies on public transport facilities. This is primarily taxi based. The quality and efficiency of the public transport sector still needs attention.
- Although a large portion of the population has access to household electricity the low income levels in the municipality puts a severe restriction on the number of people actually using electricity as a primary means of energy. Electricity provision at schools and health facilities are especially critical. In the wake of the looming energy crises faced by this country it is vital that the Municipality adopts policy embracing the use of alternative energy sources for new residential and commercial development.

**9.1.3 Uphongola LM**

- A large rural population that depends on the nearby urban areas such as the Pongola town for Commercial and public services (e.g. health, home affairs, etc) places pressure on the primary node because of the lack of services and facilities within the rural areas. Service delivery in the rural areas will need to be attended to.
- The uPhongolo population is characterised by significantly more women than men. 47% households are headed by women in the absence of partners seeking employment in other urban centres. It is accepted that these women are more disadvantaged in terms of resources. Strategies need to be developed in order to create security for women and their dependent children.
- Close to half of the population are children, placing pressure on the need for educational and social facilities. Many of these children will be orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS. At least 11.7% of the population is already infected with HIV. The severe impact on the need for health, social and welfare services over the next 20 years will have to be accommodated in the Municipalities strategy for service delivery.
- Income levels are low with 66% of households receiving no income or less than R2 400 per month. The traditional and rural areas are the most poverty stricken.
- Unemployment levels are relatively high and with only 13.43% of the population being formally employed. Dependency levels are also high with every employed person having to support 6.5 persons of which 3 are over 15 years of age. The farming sector employs a significant number of people, indicating the importance of the agricultural sector in the economy of the area. The local economic development strategy needs to build on this strength.
- The majority of the population relies on public transport facilities. This is primarily taxi based. The quality and efficiency of the public transport sector needs attention.
- Most of the urban communities have access to clean water with severe shortcomings in this respect as far as rural communities are concerned and have access to less than 5 liters of water per day. People rely on natural resources for water and are considered to live at survival levels.
- The larger urban areas have sanitation systems, but the rural areas rely on septic tanks, pit latrines or no system at all. This places tremendous strain on the environment.
- The population in the urban areas has access to household electricity, but few or the rural settlements have this service. Electricity provision at schools and health facilities are especially critical. In the wake of the looming energy crises faced by this country it is vital that the Municipality adopts policy embracing the use of alternative energy sources for new residential and commercial development.

**9.1.4 Key Challenges faced by ZDM**

- Maintain functionality of Council structures
- Ensure MTAS is complied with
- Maintenance of EDMS system thereby ensuring accurate record keeping.
- Ongoing support to the LED sub-forums to continue functioning.
- Maintenance and continual improvement of GIS system.
- Ensure continued compliance with legal financial requirements.
- Improve vertical and horizontal alignment thereby ensuring coordinated service delivery by all spheres of government.
- Prioritization of needs of marginalized groups.
- Formulation and compliance with Risk Management Framework and Strategy.
- Maintain functionality of IDP organizational arrangements internally and externally.
- To further diversify the district's economy.
- Ongoing support of tourism initiatives.
- Harness agri-processing opportunities in the district, notably venison production, leather processing and traditional medicines.
- Foster timber product ion opportunities.

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- Improve rural road network to ensure improve linkages between settlements, rural nodes and municipal centres.
- Harness opportunities relating to small scale mining.
- Ensure indigent policy remains updated and relevant.
- Ensuring ongoing monitoring of water balance in rural areas.
- Commit and implement approved MIG business plans for roll-out of water and sanitation services in the district.
- Ensure disaster management forums remain functional.
- Redress disparities between levels of services and development in the urban and rural areas.
- Improve access to formal waste disposal system.
- Provision of adequate land to cater for anticipated required burial space.
- Ongoing efforts to clarify the responsibilities between Local and District Municipality as well as the Department of Transport in respect of road maintenance and construction.
- Improve the limited capacity of the electricity network in the southern portions of the District.
- Improve functionality of Council oversight committee in particular.
- LLF (Local Labour Forum) to meet more regularly.
- Risk reduction strategies and actions to be defined and implemented.
- Seek clarification in respect of the land reform programme roll-out/implementation.

### SECTION D: VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES & GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 1. VISION

The ZDM Council adopted the following long-term development vision.

***'We are the Zululand region and proud of our heritage. We are mindful of the needs of the poor and we seek to reflect the aspirations of our communities. We are committed to responsible and accountable actions, tolerance and concern for racial harmony, the protection of our environment, and the strengthening of the role of women and youth. We will strive to improve the quality of life in Zululand by providing sustainable infrastructure, promoting economic development and building capacity within our communities.'***

***'WE SERVE THE PEOPLE'***

#### 2. MISSION

To create an affluent district by:

- Provision of optimal delivery of essential services;
- Supporting sustainable local economic development; and
- Community participation in service delivery

#### 3. CORE VALUES

- Transparency
- Commitment