

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The research concludes that there are community-based job creation opportunities for some of the operation and maintenance tasks required for the provision of basic sanitation services to the Khayelitsha Ablution Blocks. Local community-based caretakers were best suited to fulfill the day-to-day operational and routine maintenance tasks, whilst the Water Services Informal Settlements Department should take responsibility for undertaking crisis maintenance. Monitoring and evaluation should be undertaken by both the caretakers and the Water Services Informal Settlements Department.

The community perspective demonstrated the value of the “local knowledge” at a community level and the data collected was used by the Research Group in the planning sessions for the focus group discussions. The community perspective also allayed fears and concerns that the municipal officials from the Water Services Informal Settlements Department had about engaging with the community. The end-users from the represented communities had a good understanding on the causes of the poor sanitation conditions, and made suggestions that were aligned with those of the municipal officials for the improvement of sanitation service delivery for existing infrastructure.

The research identified shortcomings for the tasks required for sustainable sanitation service delivery within the current service provision arrangements. Analysis of the current operation and maintenance tasks currently being undertaken for the provision of basic sanitation services to informal settlements, showed that the City of Cape Town did not have the resources to deal with all the day-to-day operational tasks. In particular, insufficient and inconsistent reporting, poor response times to deal with minor leaks and repairs, and restricted access to sanitation facilities for users were some of the problem areas identified. These were the same tasks identified by stakeholders as tasks that were best carried out by locally based caretakers.

The research created an opportunity to identify communication channels and initiate dialogue between municipal officials and community representatives, which with time and effort, could develop into potential partnerships that are based on meaningful participation. There was overwhelming agreement among community representatives, political representatives and municipal officials involved with basic sanitation service delivery, on the tasks best suited to locally-based caretakers.

In addition to the tasks identified for community-based operation and maintenance, the following operational aspects need to be considered when developing an operational plan for the operation and maintenance of the Khayelitsha Ablution Blocks:

- Provision needs to be made for the safe disposal of the night soil buckets.
- Access to the sanitation facilities after dark. Security at the facilities at night was raised as a concern, and it was agreed that it would be safer for the users if the facilities were locked at night. It was also felt that this would also reduce the incidents of vandalism.
- The need for appropriate skills development and training for the caretakers.
- The issuing and supply of materials and equipment, and in particular, the costs of supplying toilet paper.
- The need for appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems to be in place.
- The need to implement an appropriate awareness and education programme on household sanitation as an integral component of the basic sanitation service as required by the WDSP.
- The need for municipalities to put mechanisms in place that will allow for improved communication channels between end-users and the municipality so as to encourage more public participation which is essential for community support and buy-in. The implementation of awareness promotion initiatives will increase community support and buy-in through the conscientization of the importance of sanitation.
- The need for inter-departmental collaboration and support between the Health, Solid Waste and Water Services Departments for the provision of basic sanitation services to informal settlements.
- The need to contact the Khayelitsha Development Forum to facilitate the selection and recruitment of labour.
- The need to put measures in place to ensure that fair labour practices are followed for the employment of the caretakers.

For the purposes of this paper, the objectives of the research have been met. However, the research has created an opportunity for officials from the Water Services Informal Settlements Department to use the research data to enter a new cycle of PAR and develop an operational plan for the operation and maintenance of the Khayelitsha Ablution Blocks. By doing so, they would have the opportunity to implement a practical application at a community level of the developmental local government approach to planning that is recommended in the IDP.