

Research Report: The Role of Civil Society Organisations in the Pilot District Development Model in Waterberg District Municipality, Limpopo Province

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TWENDE MBELE

Introduction and Background to the Research Report

- In 2022, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) in partnership with Twende Mbele (University of Witwatersrand) – commissioned a study on the DDM piloted in the Waterberg District.
- DDM adopted by the RSA Government in 2019 to improve cooperative governance (planning and budgeting) between national, provincial government, district and local municipalities
- DDM also seeks to enhance localisation of NDPs, introduce long-term planning in local govt, and strengthen the social compact between government, business and civil society in development planning, implementation, M&E
- Initially, DDM model piloted in three districts since 2019: eThekweni Metro, OR Tambo and Waterberg District Municipalities



Aim of this study

Identify current practices in the Waterberg District regarding participation of CSOs in the development of the Municipality's One Plan *and* explore possible areas of collaboration between the state and CSOs in subnational dev planning, implementation and appraisal

Methodology: qualitative research and case study, with triangulation between grey literature on DDM and primary data (KII with District and local municipal officials, National and Provincial COGTA, DBSA, CSOs)

Thematic focus of the study



CSO awareness about the District Development Model (DDM);



CSO awareness of the Waterberg One Plan;



Modes of communication about the DDM and One Plan employed by the municipalities;



Quality of civil society involvement (including the DDM Hub);



Challenges and opportunities regarding involvement of the civil society organisations in the One Plan; and



Possible strategies that can improve the participation of civil society organisations in the development of the One Plan.

4 objectives of the study

- 1) To **identify** current practices in Waterberg District in Limpopo regarding the participation of civil society in the formulation and implementation of the Waterberg District One Plan.
- 2) To **explore** possible areas of collaboration between the Waterberg District and CSOs necessary to improve the implementation and evaluation of the One Plan.
- 3) To **identify** mechanisms/tools/ideas concerning collaboration in the DDM, that can be scaled and tested nationally.
- 4) To **develop** recommendations for strengthening the collaboration between Metro/District Municipalities and civil society in developing the 'One Plan'.



Conceptual framework of the study



- A civil society organisation is any organised entity operating outside of the state or private sector, whose aim is to represent the interests, values and/or aspirations of a defined social group
- Types of CSOs: NGOs, FBOs, social movements, trade unions, and grassroots organisations (Cooper, 2018: 4)
- This DDM report (2022: 3) differentiates between NGOs engaged in governance development work (i.e. advocacy CSOs); NGOs in emergency relief (i.e. Gift of the Givers) and NGOs in charity and social welfare space (i.e. non-state homes for the elderly, the homeless, GBV centres)
- The Report also distinguishes between the DDM One Plan and the Integrated Development Plans:
- IDPs are established local government development plans that are developed and implemented on recurrent 5-year cycles. Detailed, focusing on human settlements, spatial planning, disaster management and economic development.
- DDM One Plans are a novel integrated long-term development planning framework over a 25-30 year period (i.e. a vision). Championed by the President and managed by COGTA



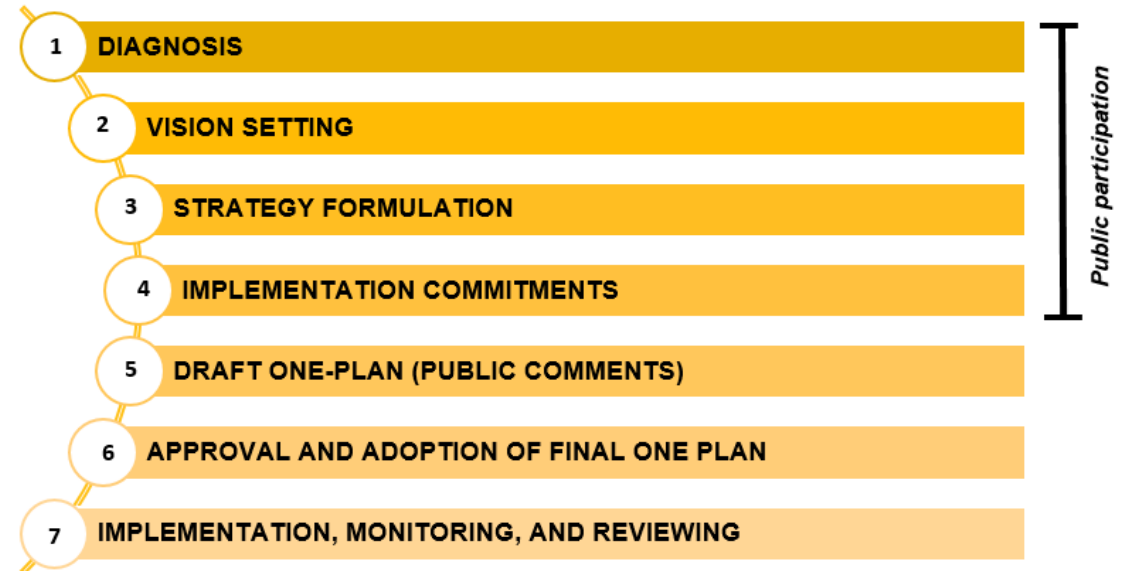
Literature mandating inclusion of CSOs in DDM One Plan development

- ***Constitution of 1996 (section 152 [e])***, which promotes involvement of communities and community organisations in local government
- ***Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000*** (amended 2011) encourages the involvement of the local community and makes community engagement in IDP development mandatory at the local level.
- ***Local Government White Paper*** (1998: 6) highlights that local government should work “with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives
- DDM is consistent with the objectives of such legislative frameworks

DDM One Plan process and role of CSOs



STAGES OF THE ONE PLAN





One Plan Process Guidelines mandate that stakeholder and community participation should be facilitated in stages 1 to 4 (outlined above)



Process Guidelines do not, however, provide adequate information regarding the participation of CSOs



This study, therefore, investigates the nature of the participation of CSOs in the Waterberg District One Plan in relation to these stages outlined in the One Plan Process Guidelines.



Waterberg District is constituted by 5 local municipalities: Bela-Bela LM, Thabazimbi LM, Modimolle-Mookgopong LM, Mokgalakwena LM, and Lephalale LM

Findings of the study

This study demonstrates that most CSOs surveyed did not participate in the earlier stages of the Waterberg District One Plan development

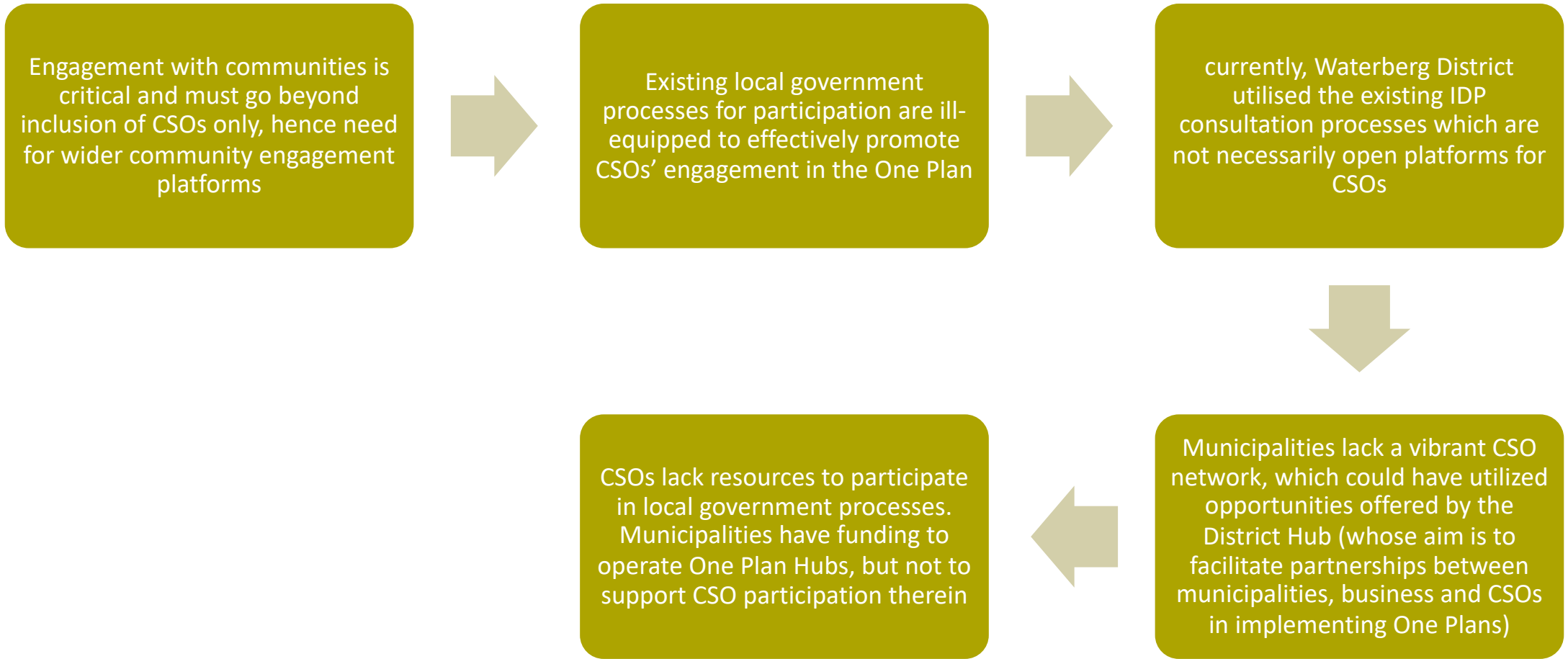
the gap is likely to be witnessed in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages if left unaddressed

Under-consultation of local municipalities concerning the One Plan resulted in their passive response and engagements with CSOs

Greater involvement in the diagnostic, vision setting and strategy formulation stages would have helped ensure that the CSOs have a sense of ownership of the One Plan process

There is scope for much greater efforts by municipalities to consult CSOs through community engagement processes that facilitate participation





Recommendations of the study



CoGTA and municipalities should create an enabling environment by developing comprehensive guidelines for involving CSOs in the One Plan development process



Provincial CoGTA and district municipalities should develop a comprehensive intergovernmental forum that implements a DDM awareness-raising programme aimed at reaching many more CSOs



The DDM awareness raising programme should involve local municipalities



District and local municipalities should provide technical and financial support to CSOs to enable them to engage meaningfully in the One Plan stages



Municipalities should establish a database of CSOs in their jurisdiction



District and local municipalities should ensure that the One Plan process involves disadvantaged groups (women, disabled, youth) to meet their interests and needs

National Treasury and COGTA should provide funding to municipalities to enable them to do broader community and CSO consultations regarding the One Plan process

COGTA and DBSA must incorporate inputs from public consultations into the One Plan to prevent tokenism

Municipalities must strive to promote public participation in the formative stages of the One Plan

Value of the report for DDM stakeholders

- Some of the findings point to the lack of knowledge about DDM and One Plans in Waterberg (may be a common issue in the pilot eThekweni and OR Tambo municipalities)
- Opportunity for civic education rolled out by COGTA or The Presidency (or joint effort).
- Is there scope for SALGA to advocate for greater civic education programmes to be rolled out by The Presidency and COGTA? Given that no dedicated budget is there to involve CSOs in DDM One Plan processes
- Democracy analyst has raised the question of the feasibility of realising the participatory nature of local governments in the absence of permanent civic education efforts by Government





End

Q&A