CO-PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SERVICES – AN INNOVATIVE PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH AFICA

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ABSTRACT

Constitutional democracy in South Africa did not only present hope to grassroots beneficiaries, but on the part of government it presented a task of building democracy and ensuring the equitable production and delivery of public services to citizens, including ensuring their participation in the decisions affecting their lives. However, outcomes indicate low levels of grassroots participation and measures intended to enhance participatory processes are seemingly ineffective which defeats the ideals of good democratic local governance.

Participatory strategies like Integrated Development Planning (IDP) often fails to deliver effective local governance in that the grassroots' willingness to work within the State's invited spaces has decreased, rendering it a strategy perceived as a product of a top-down approach that treats the grassroots as passive recipients rather than active participants in public service delivery decision-making processes. The result is broad spread frustration resulting in grassroots protests that have become a ritual. The vision of a developmental, legitimate, transparent, responsive and accountably local government remains elusive due to lack of local government to engage its beneficiaries via public participatory planning partnership's (P4's) through which the public experience that their participation *actually* have an impact on local affairs.

Good local governance can be revived if the authorities become innovative by adopting a people-centred approach to development "interventions" through a P4 paradigm shift that encourages both public professionals and grassroots beneficiaries to co-produce public services. Co-production emphasises participation, collaborative partnerships, enables local beneficiaries to feel that they are equal partners, co-designers, co-producers, co-implementers and co-evaluators in good local governance. Such a "new" local governance dynamic is based

on the ability, through P4's for citizenry to not only influence and direct local development programmes/projects, but to co-control and own it. Well, this is the ideal!

The paper reviews international literature on participation, co-production, good local governance and democracy to argue that a partnership between professionals and grassroots beneficiaries promises not to only enable transparency and reciprocity among partners, but to change the livelihoods and wellbeing of grassroots beneficiaries. An abridged case study on a grassroots, municipal-level service delivery programme in the Kwazulu-Natal (KZN) Province of South Africa is presented to demonstrate the potential benefit of a co-production through P4's which results in good local governance that strengthens local democracy.
Following an analytical, theoretical and explanatory approach, the authors relied on secondary data, previous research and participatory observation as well as the outcomes of workshops with local/provincial/national government officials during programmes on participation and good governance.

Key words: participation, public participation planning partnerships (P4's), co-production, public service delivery and good local governance.

INTRODUCTION

The South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR, 2014:16) observes that contrary to what many think, living standards have improved since democracy, yet there is evidence that public resources are wasted through incompetence and unethical behaviour such as corrupt practises and the disregard of the rule of law at local government. Such behaviour erodes public trust in governance; as a result the grassroots invent their own participatory spaces (Hickey & Mohan, 2005:9; Mchunu & Theron 2013: 107) (see Cooke & Kothari, 2002; Cornwall & Coelho 2007; Van Donk, 2012) to demand that their voice is heard and that the government acts responsively, transparently and accountably.

This lost in faith presents a service delivery paradox (Benington, 2011: 24), governance deficits and a paradox of democratisation (Etzo, 2010: 564-584). The question that arises is whether the increasing grassroots discontent is as a result of either the lack of service delivery or public service. Unlike the later, the former presupposes the delivery of goods and services to a passive citizenry.

The Public Service Commission (PSC, 2013:4) points out that central to good local governance is active grassroots participation in municipal planning processes such as IDPs, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development "interventions" meant for them. The ushering of the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) which introduced the Batho Pele principles[1], the White Paper on Local Government (1998) and other related legislation and planning frameworks (National Development Plan, 2012) are geared towards introducing a democratic, service delivery oriented, developmental local government (DLG), a people-centred order and an active citizenry (PSC, 2013:4; World Bank, 2011; Parnell, *et al.* 2002; Van Donk, *et al.* 2008).

Other government's accountability strides have been the establishment of "watchdog" constitutional institutions such as the Auditor General, Public Protector, Human Rights Commission (Van Donk, 2012:12-27; Mchunu & Theron, 2014: 45). However they are perceived as recommendations and corrective measures. (SAIRR, 2014:17). The question that arises is how this governance deficit will be addressed. The problem seems to lie with the authority's lack of political will to promote authentic and empowering participation through P4's that would ensure grassroots participants equal space as co-production[2] partners in development "interventions" and decision-making processes.

Tackling the governance deficit requires a radical shift in development thinking towards more localised participation (micro-level) approaches that have the potential to holistically address poverty, increase livelihoods opportunities, improving service delivery and strengthening good democratic local governance (World Bank, 2013:1; Mohan & Stokke, 2010:247; Chambers, 1995: 182; Theron & Wetmore, 2008:205). The people-centred development approach is best placed to achieve these ideals. Korten (1990:67) defines people-centred development as:

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[1] Batho Pele is a Sesotho word which means "people first" – is a government initiative that is aimed at improving service delivery through increased citizen participation, transparency and accountability (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997).

[2] The concept was originally developed by the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University. During the 1970s they struggled with the dominant theories of urban governance underlying policy recommendations of massive centralisation. Scholars and public officials argued that citizens will receive efficient and effective services if delivered by public officials of a large bureaucratic agency. But the group of researchers found no empirical evidence to support such claims (Ostrom, 1996)

"A process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilise and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly-distributed improvements in their quality of life, consistent with their own aspirations".

A methodology that would assist in this "radical" shift, according to Theron & Wetmore (2008:205) and Chambers (1997:179; 2005) is participatory action research (PAR). The PAR methodology enables "poor communities to analyse and express what they know, experience, need and want". This would bring public officials, who are supposed to act as "change agents" (Theron, 2008: 1-22) closer to the grassroots realities and as equal co-production partners to enable them to, in a P4 (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:112; OECD, 2011:15) devise appropriate local context specific strategies and "interventions" (Gwala & Theron, 2013). Summing up this "radical" shift, Chambers (1997:182) foresee:

"Development going beyond economic development, to include social development and good government, and beyond reducing poverty, to improve the quality of life and reduce suffering and deprivation, embodies a much broader set of values".

Though the notable omission from Chambers summation is community development (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011), the micro-level paradigm calls for holistic and multi-disciplinary approaches to development through which public value is re-appraised (Theron & Mubangizi, 2014: 101-110). The underlying belief in utilising the micro-level paradigm is to allow grassroots participation in co-designing, co-implementing and co-evaluation through a P4 that would create a closer connection between a development "intervention" and its intended beneficiaries (World Bank, 2013:1). Unsurprisingly, the micro-level development paradigm is also echoed in the White Paper on Local Government (1998:38-42) as a critical imperative that characterises DLG.

This paper analyses local government democratisation using a co-production P4 - approach. Now that we know that dependency and modernisation paradigms have not produced the "desired results" (Rist, 1999; Schuurman, 1993; Matinussen, 1997), can the micro-level, people-centred development paradigm bring about good democratic local government? If in this regard a co-production P4 seems to be compatible with the micro-level paradigm, what are the prospects in the New Public Governance approach as opposed to traditional public administration (TPA) and new public management (NPM)?

DEMOCRATISING LOCAL GOVERNMENT THROUGH CO-PRODUCTION

The key promise of a democratic local government is that by building popular participation and accountability into local governance, government will become more responsive to grassroots' needs and more effective in service delivery (Blair, 2000:21; Friedman, 2011:58). Therefore, democratising local government requires that grassroots beneficiaries are part of decision-making and development processes so that they are empowered to be in a position to influence, direct, control and own development meant to change their lives (Theron & Mchunu, 2014: 111-128).

Friedman (2011:58) reminds us that "popular sovereignty, decision-making by the people, it is not idealistic fantasy which democratic systems can manage without – it is the very essence of democracy". Public officials forget this; hence grassroots beneficiaries resort to collective and direct action, create their own invented spaces in the form of protests and as a participation strategy to demand public service (Mchunu & Theron, 2013:258) (see Cornwall & Coelho, 2007).

Authentic and empowering grassroots participation enables public officials and the grassroots beneficiaries to better understand community realities to be able to directly respond to their needs and wants (Mchunu & Theron, 2015; Friedman, 2011:58). It does this by tapping into the grassroots' "local knowledge" (Sillitoe, Dixon & Barr 2005:12-18) and "social capital" (Emmett, 2000:501-51) which guides the development "intervention" co-production P4-process. Such an "intervention" stands a better chance of being successful because it is based on the grassroots' desires and aspirations.

The hope of democratic local governance can be strengthened by the system of decentralisation. As Mohan & Stokke (2010:250) point out, decentralisation holds a promise of changing the participation arena it that it provides the grassroots space to hold government accountable. Blair (2000:21) sees decentralisation as "meaningful authority devolved to local units of governance that are accessible and accountable to the local citizenry, who enjoy full political rights and liberty".

Judging from the poor performance and accountability challenges at a municipal level in South Africa, it can be argued that a further devolution to Ward Committees, for example is needed to further bring government closer to the grassroots. The World Bank (2011:5) supports this view and suggests that government should not only review functions of government spheres but need to go beyond that to service providers, grassroots themselves, third sector in a "co-production approach to service delivery". Co-production allows the grassroots to be the co-designers, co-implementers and co-evaluators of the development intervention, but, as the World Bank (2011:5) points out, this potential has not been fulfilled. The issue of who holds decision-making power as raised by Cooke & Kothari (2001) needs to be attended to as devolution without power is meaningless.

Participation spaces, Cornwall & Coelho (2007) state, should ideally be a platform for deliberation in a co-production P4 - process. Grassroots participation in IDP processes should ideally deepen local democracy, strengthen legitimacy, enhance long term planning and strengthen development initiatives (Everatt, Marais & Dube, 2010: 227) but IDPs tend to reinforce a top-down approach; they tend to be prescriptive and are driven by municipalities which then exclude the input of the beneficiaries from the ensuing development (Harrison, 2008:327; Pieterse & Van Donk, 2008:7). Chambers (1997:184) reminds us that if the lives of grassroots beneficiaries are to be transformed for the better, efforts need to be made to understand their reality better. In this regard, participatory learning and action (PLA) research methods can be used to understand grassroots realities because it is all encompassing and emphasises co-learning among community participants and public officials (Theron & Wetmore, 2008:203).

The IDPs adoption of a top-down approach defeat the DLG ideals in that IDPs should promote democratic local government by encouraging grassroots authentic participation, good governance, democratising development and fostering economic growth (Van Donk *et al*., 2008:121; Smith & Vawda, 2003:29). It is therefore not surprising that the National Development Plan (NDP) (2012) of South Africa emphasises that municipalities need to strengthen and fulfil their DLG role by strategically refocusing the IDPs to spatial planning, infrastructure and basic services. The NDP (2012) argues that this can happen if the IDP processes are not outsourced to consultants.

PROSPECTS FOR A NEW PUBLIC GOVERNANCE PARADIGM

The failure of the development approaches (modernisation and dependency) (Theron, 2008:6; Mohan & Stokke, 2010: 250; Pestoff, 2013) to bring about democracy at local government level necessitates that governance paradigms such as the traditional public administration (TPA) and new public management (NPM) be examined to gauge the extent to which they hinder or promote local government democracy.

The TPA governance model emphasises technocratic control which implies that techniques can address grassroots underdevelopment (Mohan & Stokke, 2010:247). Similarly, the Growth Employment and Redistribution Programme (GEAR) which is a product of NPM sees citizens as "users and consumers", whose ability to gain access to basic services is dependent on their ability to pay (Edigheji, 2003:4; Tseola, 2012: 161-179). It recognises markets as having potential to solve underdevelopment. However, markets are synonymous with privatisation which encourages cost recovery in service provision. As Kihato & Schmitz (2002:7) point out, privatisation leads to a loss of democratic accountability because the markets exist for profit, which in turn alienate the poor and marginalised. This goes against the South African Constitutional provisions (1996) and planning frameworks such as the NDP (2012).

Therefore, to establish DLG that has the potential to draw the grassroots to the centre of development and usher in democracy, a transformative and distributive service delivery and governance approach (Everatt *et al*., 2010:223) is necessary to "shift the balance of power" (Boyle, 2014:15), responsibilities and resources from public officials and government to the grassroots beneficiaries so that the ideal DLG can be realised. This conceptual change from "government" to "governance" signifies a move away from hierarchical development and service delivery to a people-centred approach driven by the grassroots themselves and local networks (Mchunu & Theron, 2014:43; Osborne & Strokosch, 2013:4; Pestoff, 2011:17; Mchunu & Theron, 2015:5).

The TPA and NPM governance approaches are incompatible with the micro-level approach to development that has the potential to transform the grassroots plight by allowing them space to be co-production equal partners in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of development "interventions". Pestoff (2011:21); Morgan & Shinn (2014:5) and

Mchunu & Theron (2015:6) support this view because they have proven not to be the efficient and effective mechanisms to improve development and service delivery outcomes in that they shut out the grassroots beneficiaries from the P4 and co-production process which in turn erodes democracy, hence a need for a shift to New Public Governance (NPG)[3].

The New Public Governance paradigm emphasises authentic citizen participation, active citizenship, local control, co-production, P4's, civil leadership and democratic processes (Pestoff, 2011:22; Morgan & Shinn, 2014:5). The above insulates grassroots beneficiaries and the development process from "elite capture" (Everatt *et al.,* 2010: 224) in that it safeguards the interest of the poor and the voiceless in development processes. The co-production of development "interventions" through P4's promises, not only to make positive adjustments to municipal budgets that are strained due to fiscal constraints and increasing grassroots discontent, but (also) increases the availability of resources through savings as a result of P4's, "collective action and direct citizen participation" (Pestoff, 2011:21; OECD, 2011:17).

The above "shift" becomes possible because the NPG embraces a "service-dominant and value centred approach" where co-production becomes an essential aspect of development and service delivery that places the experiences and knowledge of the grassroots beneficiaries at the centre of effective public service design and delivery (Pestoff, 2013:19; Morgan & Shinn, 2014:5). In this governance approach, the co-production of public services is emphasised in a form of a P4. In essence, the grassroots are co-designers in development and service delivery from inception to implementation and evaluation. By so doing, it puts grassroots beneficiaries in a better position to safeguard their interest and to keep track of accountability, transparency, and unethical behaviour.

The democratising element of co-production is it emphasis on the "shared character" of the development production process in that grassroots participation does not only transform the service, the grassroots are also transformed by the development outcomes (Brandsen &

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[3] The term New Public Governance first appeared in print in 1998 and re-appeared separately in 2008 (Toone, 1998; Larsen, 2008b in Morgan & Shinn, 2014:12). It has been used consistently to describe new governing structures and processes that include inter-governmental arrangements, partnerships across the public , private, non-profit sectors, and new policy instruments to promote the "common good" (Salmon 2002; Osborne 2010; Koliba, Meek & Zia 2011 in Morgan & Shinn, 2014:12).

Pestoff, 2006:7). This view is supported by Larsen (2014:129) who argues that co-production can serve four purposes: (i) a substitute for diminished resources, (ii) a way of getting things done that people care about (iii) rebuilding faltering trust in government, and (iv) teaching and educating people.

As Theron & Mchunu (2014: 111-128) argue with regards to authentic participation, the P4 approach is based on the core principles of co-production that serve as conditions under which effective co-production of public services can be achieved. These principles are provided by Boyle, Slay & Stephens (2010:1-26):

- *Valuing people as assets*: people are acknowledged as equal partners in the design and delivery of services, not as passive or problematic recipients of public services.
- *Building on people's existing capabilities*: the traditional deficit model begins with people's needs; co-produced services start with their abilities and identify opportunities to help these flourish.
- *Mutuality and reciprocity*: co-production is based on an equal and reciprocal partnership between professionals, service-users and their communities.
- *Peer support networks*: co-production utilises local and personal networks to maximise the effective transfer of knowledge and support change.
- *Facilitating rather than delivering*: professionals are encouraged to become facilitators of change rather than providers of services.

These principles are in line with the ideals of the DLG and the micro-level governance paradigm in that they provide scope to grassroots beneficiaries to be co-designers, co-implementers and co-evaluators in a co-production P4.

CASE STUDY – OPERATION SUKUMA SAKHE IN KWAZULU-NATAL (KZN), SOUTH AFRICA

The Sukuma Sakhe service delivery programme (OSS), translated to isiZulu to mean "stand up and build" is a provincial government initiative that emanates from the "War on Poverty" Campaign that was announced by former President Mbeki in the State of the Nation Address in February 2008 (Office of the Premier, 2012). In KZN, the "War on Poverty" Campaign

was launched in three presidential nodal areas. The Provincial Government later adopted it as part of the KZN Flagship Programme and re-launched the programme as OSS in April 2011 (Office of the Premier, 2012).

OSS aims to rebuild the fabric of society by promoting human values, fighting poverty, crime, diseases, deprivation and social ills, ensuring moral regeneration and by working together through effective local municipal-driven partnerships. Partners in the OSS programme includes civil society (religious and traditional leaders, vulnerable groups, business), development partners, communities, and government departments, all of whom work together to provide a comprehensive integrated service package to communities.

The programme is founded on the DLG premise of "taking government to the grassroots" in a coordinated manner and prioritises the poorest of the poor. The desired outcome of the service delivery model is the implementation of a comprehensive, efficient, effective, quality service delivery system that contributes to self-reliant communities (Burkey, 1997: 40-70) in a sustainable manner. The programme has been launched in all 11 districts municipalities and 51 local municipalities under them.

Principles that guides the implementation of the OSS Programme

Implementation of OSS is guided by the following principles:

Community Partnerships

Provincial government provides a participatory space to the participating community to enable it to provide appropriate services at the appropriate level. The citizens are encouraged to "know your human rights as a citizen." Through community participation, OSS creates a platform where communities can raise their concerns regarding government services and discuss topics such as the attitude of municipal staff, professionalism of civil servants, efficiency and access to services, etc. (Office of the Premier, 2012). Localised "War Rooms[4]" centres, as in the War on Poverty Campaign previously stated, are used as a vehicle to inform the community about the Batho Pele Principles, which covers the ideals to address

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[4] "War Rooms" are used as local integration centres where government departments, civil society organisations and the private sector are mobilised to contribute to service delivery in an integrated manner (Office of the Premier, 2012).

participation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money (RSA, 1997).

The OSS is founded on the principle of effective and efficient local partnerships that includes the grassroots beneficiaries to provide coordinated, comprehensive, integrated and transversal services to beneficiaries (Office of the Premier, 2012).

Behaviour Change

The utilisation of a door to door campaign provides Community Care Givers (CCGs) an opportunity to promote health and social behaviour change through their interaction with household members. Other community structures such as the Youth Ambassadors and Sport Volunteers deploy its members across all districts in the Province to assist with encouraging behaviour change amongst their peers. Messages include taking responsibility for one's own sexual behaviour, practice safe sexual conduct, respect the law, prevent crime, prevent violence and live a healthy lifestyle.

Integration of Government Services

"War Rooms" are used as local integration centres where government departments, civil society organisations and the private sector are mobilised to contribute to service delivery in an integrated manner. Government departments play an important role at the Municipal Ward, district and provincial level to ensure that grassroots needs as identified by them are timely attended to. Each "War Room" has an inventory of government services available in each and every Ward. The "War Rooms" provide a deliberative platform for the stakeholders to reach agreements on the manner in which services will be delivered in line with the Batho Pele principles and the Citizen's Charter[5].

To fast track service delivery and response time to community needs and to extend programme reach to each household, community fieldworkers, Community Development Workers, CCGs, Youth Ambassadors, Extension Officers, Sport Volunteers and Social Crime Prevention Volunteers are assigned to Wards to administer community profiling using a Household Profiling Tool. The aim is to approach individual, household and community

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[5] A Citizen Charter is a government initiative that is aimed at improving service delivery. It spells out what services will be provided, how they will be provided, by whom and when (Office of the Premier, 2012).

problems in a comprehensive manner and to collect and collate data in a single database and present them in a coordinated way to the "War Room". This information can be used to inform municipal IDPs.

Economic Activities

The "War Rooms" are used to create business support service such as access and linkages to markets for local producers of goods and services. Various community projects (infrastructure) and job creation initiatives are co-ordinated for economic growth. The "War Room" meetings encourage further discussions by the various Government Departments and private sector on how they would assist the community to create jobs (e.g. housing, roads and clinics) and business opportunities.

Service delivery model

The OSS Programme utilises a Municipal Ward based approach to gather data on the households that need assistance to ensure effective and efficient response at municipality Ward level. Once a need is identified through the Sukuma Sakhe "War Rooms", relevant officials in the department are notified and relevant action co-ordinated.

Service delivery process

The OSS Programme service delivery process entails nine steps that start from profiling the household to reporting to the Office of the Premier on action plans:

    a. Profile household
    b. Household needs presented at "War Room" and service provider action plans developed
    c. All Ward needs presented at local task team (LTT)
    d. LTT prioritises local needs
    e. Develop service provider action plans at LTT
    f. Report needs and action plans to district task team (DTT)
    g. Develop and prioritise aggregated DTT action plan
    h. Report needs and action plan to provincial task team (PTT)
    i. PTT action plan and report to the Office of the Premier

Capacity-building

Capacity-building for both the field workers, elected representatives and the "War Room" staff is specifically aimed at increasing the capacities of and mechanisms for civil society and elected representatives to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in a democratic manner and effectively. A civic education toolkit is used for training and those trained are expected to provide training at grassroots. Elected representatives in the districts are also trained.

The field workers training incorporates an introduction to the aims, objectives and principles of the OSS Programme, effective communication skills, the use of the Household Profile Tool and on the compilation of the database and reports. Training also include guidance on meeting attendance as the CCGs will have to attend "War Room" meetings on a weekly basis and present their findings.The Inter-District Forum is also established for exchanging best practices in promoting democratic accountability at local level and enhancing cooperation between civil society actors and elected leaders.

Implementation Plan (Operational Plan) for the "War Rooms"

Each "War Room" develops a work plan which acts as the programme "road map" which provides details on how the development intervention will be implemented. The strategy or strategic plan can be seen as the ultimate destination and the implementation plan as the means of delivering services. The implementation plan sets out the activities that need to be carried out within a given timeframe and resources are allocated. All key role players and the members who will carry out these tasks participate in the conceptualisation of the plan. The implementation plan can be used as a Monitoring and Evaluation tool.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is done to enable the Task Teams to identify gaps early on in the process and adjust existing activities to reach the revised targets and outcomes. Indicators are measurable targets that are quantifiable and are measured to gauge how well the different targets have been achieved.

Evaluation is a time-bound, periodic assessment of the OSS Programme in order to gauge the progress made against the targets set. Evaluation is also the yardstick with which to measure

what has been completed and what still needs to be done, as well whether additional resources are required.

Based on the discussion above it is clear that the OSS Programme fits in with the micro-level approach to development and New Public Governance paradigm. For a co-production P4 to be realised, a people-centred approach must be adopted. This approach does not only create a closer connection between the development intervention and its intended beneficiaries, but enables local beneficiaries to feel that they are equal partners, co-designers, co-implementers and co-evaluators in local governance as the case study demonstrates. It puts legislative prescripts into practice by providing a platform for deliberation between government and grassroots beneficiaries. It provides information through community profiling that enables effective decision-making for improved service delivery to grassroots in line with the Batho Pele principles. The essence of democracy is that the "shared character" of the co-production process should not only transform the service, the grassroots beneficiaries must be transformed by the development outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Following the theoretical perspectives, it is clear that South African legislation, policy and planning frameworks have laid a firm foundation for good, democratic and developmental local government. However, unethical conduct that is demonstrated by the politician and public officials in the implementation of grassroots programmes, threaten the achievement of a democratic local government. This shows that there is lack of political will to contain the wastage of public resources that is caused by incompetence, corrupt practises and disregard of the rule of law. It is such behaviour that erodes public trust in governance. The grassroots' beneficiaries cannot be blamed if they take a protest route to demand an end to this malice.

The OSS Programme is geared towards achieving the ideal democratic local government; however it is in danger if local government malice is not addressed. The OSS Programme has good intentions in that it provides participation space for the grassroots to enter and engage in the process of social learning in a co-production P4 where grassroots can experience growth and changes in their livelihoods and wellbeing, the essence of democracy.

The OSS Programme service delivery model has potential to reach out to the grassroots and ultimately reduce poverty in the case study. The decentralisation of the OSS Programme to

municipalities could indicate the potential impact in changing the livelihoods and wellbeing of grassroots beneficiaries. It is clear that cooperative governance is pivotal if development "interventions" are to have an impact at grassroots.

The case studies model of cooperative and inter-governmental co-operation promises to expedite service delivery, more so as "War Rooms" are designed to be the distribution and coordinating centres for service delivery. It might also solve accountability, transparency and responsiveness problems, or those popularly identified as the Batho Pele principles.

Based on the service delivery model of the OSS Programme, its coordination mechanism could prove to be a solution to grassroots protest as the "War Room" inter alia also becomes a "grievance centre". As municipalities are the first point of contact for the grassroots grievances, they have to take the blame of poor service delivery even that is supposed to be delivered by other spheres of government. The "War Room" promises to solve this problem as different government departments form part of the "War Room".

The potential problems in this programme relate to the households' identification criteria for the door to door profiling. The use of census data, municipal indigent databases may be useful in avoiding the problem of free riders, rent seekers, corruption, elite capture and nepotism.

The levels of buy-in from the community once selected for financing may also be a challenge. Co-financing which is a norm in most programmes of this nature can be used to increase buy-in and to ensure that they are engaged throughout the programme lifespan. The downside for this is that the needy yet deserving can be excluded as they cannot afford to pay the required fee. Free labour or cheap labour might be an option in this regard.

Overall, the OSS model has the potential to make a positive impact in the lives of its grassroots beneficiaries. As argued above, the co-production partnership through a P4 would enable grassroots beneficiaries to be the co-designers, co-implementers and co-evaluators of the development "intervention". In the OSS case, if all stakeholders comprehend the theoretical planning and governance principles presented above, grassroots beneficiaries can be empowered to actually not only influence and direct their "own" development, but though authentic participation control and own the programmes and projects they have co-produced.

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