



**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**An evaluation of the back-to-basics programme to enhance municipal performance: the case of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality**

By

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to evaluate the Back-to-Basics Programme (B2BP) to enhance municipal performance in the case study of eThekweni Municipality. Since the advent of democracy, the local government system has been subject to several extensive reforms to ensure the municipalities are developmental-oriented. Hence, municipalities remain the cornerstone and the champions of service delivery for their citizenry. Against the backdrop, the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2014 introduced the B2BP to challenge the status quo at the municipality level. To ensure that municipalities serve communities better by focusing on the five (5) critical pillars, mainly public participation, infrastructure services, good governance, financial management, and building institutional capacity. This study adopted a qualitative method to generate information that answered the research questions. The interpretivism philosophy and the inductive approach with thematic analytical data interpretation informed this study. The study showed a significant improvement in how the municipality delivers services to its citizenry. The Back-to-Basics programme managed to improve the performance and functionality of the eThekweni Municipality through the implementation of the B2BP. However, some areas still had challenges, such as community participation, since many councillors failed to convene community meetings to report back to their communities. Furthermore, the program was confronted by numerous challenges, namely: - treating the B2BP as malicious compliance; the politicization of the B2BP; lack of political support; administrative instability due to high vacancy rates; poor political governance and political stability due to poor management of coalition. However, the B2BP has a great potential to change the status quo at the municipality level and, at the same time, enhance municipal performance and speed up service delivery. Therefore, in unleashing the potential of the B2BP, this study recommended that it is imperative to sustain the program through the reaffirmation of the commitment from both political and administrative authorities, ensuring de-politicization of the B2BP, strengthening monitoring and evaluation of the Back-to-Basics program to ensure accountability.

## DECLARATION

I, Sbusiso Nzimande declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is our original contribution.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs, or other information unless expressly acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing unless expressly acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
  - a) their words have been re-written, but the general information attributed to them has been referenced:
  - b) where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- (v) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics, or tables copied and pasted from the Internet unless expressly acknowledged, and the source is detailed in the dissertation and the References sections.

Signatures: .....

Date: .....

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Honor and Glory be to God, who enables me to be.

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**Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my boys, Andile Nzimande, Thandolwethu Nzimande, Lorenzo Nzimande, and Sibusiso Nzimande, my daughter.

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## **Acronyms**

B2BP- Back to Basics Programme

COGTA- Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

DDM- District Development Model

DPLG- Department of Provincial and Local Government

IDP- Integrated Development Plan

ISRDP- Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme

KZN COGTA- KwaZulu-Natal Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

LGSTAS- Local Government Turnaround Strategy

MBO- Management by Objectives

MDGs- Millennium Development Goals

MTEF- Mid-term Expenditure Framework

NDP- National Development Plan

PDGS- Provincial Growth Development Plan

PMS- Performance Management System

SALGA – South Africa Local Government Association

SDGs- Sustainable Development Strategy

UN- United Nation

URP- Urban Renewal Programme

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, mandates the Provincial Government in South Africa to monitor, support, and intervene to enhance the capacity of municipalities – local government across the board, to fulfill their legislative mandate. Since the advent of democracy, the country's provincial government has been progressing in attaining its mandate to support municipalities. This progress can be determined by the quality of service delivered to communities by municipalities. However, some municipalities are still confronted with challenges and constraints due to a lack of adequate municipal governance, which resulted in poor delivery of service, poor artistry, poor financial management, and inadequate capacity by the local administration.

Despite these challenges, the Provincial Government continues with the execution of its legislative mandate to turn things around at the municipal level and to ensure that municipalities deliver on their Constitutional mandates. For this reason, this study must evaluate the implementation of the recently introduced Back-to-Basics Programme (B2BP) by the government to enhance municipal performance in September 2014 (national CoGTA, 2014:6). This program was established to enhance municipal performance. The programme is based on the following five fundamental principles: -

- to place people and their concerns first:
- to deliver municipal services that are of quality and high standards,
- to enhance good governance,
- to enhance sound financial management and accounting and build institutional and local administrative capacity.

These five (5) fundamental principles serve as the pillars of municipal performance as they seek to transform and build capacity at the municipal level. While municipalities serve as the face of government and as the primary point of delivery using direct interaction with the people, this study, per its research aim and objectives, determines

the influence of the Back-to-Basics Programme in changing the *status quo* at the municipal level.

## **1.2 Background to The Study**

The local government in South Africa has been subjected to extensive reform since the establishment of the South African state in 1910. Since 1994, however, in the democratic dispensation, numerous changes have been conducted to transform local government and ensure that the existence of municipalities is developmentally oriented. This is crucial, as municipalities remain the cornerstone of local government and champion the agenda of the general welfare of their communities (Madumo, 2015). However, some challenges still confront municipalities across the country that also relate to performance and still need attention. According to the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs [CoGTA] (2014), these challenges emanate from institutional incapacity and slow pace or inadequate responses to service delivery that lead to a breakdown of trust and social distance from the public-by-public representatives.

Against this backdrop, the national government had to implement systems to address challenges facing municipalities after 30 years of democracy. As a result, the then President of the Republic of South Africa officially launched the “Back-to-Basics: Serving our Communities Better” programme (national CoGTA, 2014:6). Subsequently, the national CoGTA expanded the programme to various provinces. KwaZulu-Natal’s (KZN) Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) launched its own in February 2015.

The Back-to-Basics Programme advocates for a paradigm shift regarding the day-to-day functioning of municipalities (KZN CoGTA, 2016). The programme emphasized the commitment to doing things differently and serving communities better. To achieve this paradigm shift, municipalities are, at least, expected to do the following, as per the requirements of the programme:

- Place communities and their interests first and guarantee consistent contact with networks through viable public investment stages.

- Create conditions for fair living by reliably conveying local (city or town) administrations and services of quality and standard. This incorporates getting ready for and conveyancing foundation and conveniences, as well as supporting and upkeeping, including planning.
- Be an all-around local administration and show excellent administration and organization, cut wastage, spend public assets judiciously, recruit capable staff, and guarantee straightforwardness and responsibility.
- Ensure sound financial management bookkeeping and judiciously manage assets to bear the benefits reasonably and carry improvement to networks; and
- Build and maintain strong institutional and regulatory abilities, controlled and overseen by dedicated and talented staff at all levels of the local administration (CoGTA, 2014).

Considering the above, this study evaluates the Back-to-Basics Programmes effectiveness and importance in enhancing municipal performance. It will use the case of eThekweni Metropolitan in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the focus of this study.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Local government is a sphere closest to the people and the vehicle for service delivery and socio-economic development. According to the South African Local Government Association [SALGA] (2015), considerable progress has been made in addressing the service delivery backlog across the country, and there has been a slight improvement in financial management and audit outcomes (Auditor General of South Africa AGSA, 2021). However, this sphere of government continues to experience leadership challenges due to poor service delivery in meeting the needs of their communities. The inferior performance of municipalities has often led to service delivery protests (Mbandlwa, Dorasamy , & Fagbadebo, 2020). These challenges are associated with the lack of skills, corruption, political interference, lack of inter-governmental relations, and poor basic administration (Shongwe & Meyer , 2023). On the other hand,

(Presidency, 2014) also confirms that these challenges are associated with poor governance, accountability, financial constraints, service delivery constraints, and changing demographics in the municipal sphere.

Therefore, the study will focus on, *inter alia*, assessing the selected municipality against each pillar of the Back-to-Basics Programme since each pillar talks about critical elements that municipalities are expected to achieve in terms of service delivery and socio-economic development. As a result, this study will evaluate the importance of B2BP in enhancing municipal performance to deliver essential services and improve the socioeconomic development of its citizens.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The following objectives will guide this research: -

- To examine the extent to which the Back-to-Basics Programme contributes towards improved municipal performance.
- To analyse the effectiveness of the Back-to-Basics Programme in supporting the various municipalities across the province in doing things differently and serving their communities better.
- To evaluate the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing challenges faced by the different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To examine challenges and constraints that hinder the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This research will address the following questions:

- What is the significance of the Back-to-Basics Programme in enhancing municipal performance?
- How effective is the Back-to-Basics Programme in municipalities to do things differently and serve their communities better?

- What is the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing local government challenges?
- What are the challenges and constraints that are crippling the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme?

### **1.6 Significance of The Study**

This will immensely contribute significantly to the existing literature, thus expanding academic literature and providing practical knowledge on municipal performance. Moreover, this study will provide a critical and strategic understanding, which relevant and various municipalities can refer to, to ascertain insight into the current state of local government and the importance of the Back-to-Basics Programme in improving municipal performance. In this regard, the study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and assist local government practitioners in unlocking the bottlenecks such as institutional incapacity, serious breakdown of services, low-rate collection, inadequate responses service delivery, and lack of public participation, which are the order of the day within the local sphere of governance in South Africa.

### **1.7 Justification and Rationale for The Study**

The study evaluates the implementation of the Back-to-Basics programme to enhance municipal performance with a specific focus on the eThekweni Municipality. The eThekweni Municipality is the only Metropolitan within the KZN province. Local government is where citizens interface with public representatives and a primary point of delivery. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure that they are capacitated through support to change the paradigm and better serve their communities. Furthermore, the study seeks to ascertain the critical role of the Back-to-Basics programme in tackling challenges and constraints confronting municipalities after 29 years of democracy. Hence, evaluating back-to-basics to enhance municipal performance is the point of departure for changing the *status quo* at the municipal level to ensure excellence.

### **1.8 Preliminary Literature Review**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 establishes the local sphere of government, which comprises municipalities, their powers and functions, the objects of the local government, its developmental duties, and their role in the cooperative governance process.

Furthermore, the constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 also provides categories of the municipalities into three, namely: -

- Category A: Metropolitan Municipality.
- Category B: Local Municipality and.
- Category C: District Municipality.

According to (Naidoo & Ramphal, 2019) Administration and service delivery ought to be founded on, *inter alia*, the Batho Pele principles. These principles are essential for improving transparency, accountability, and service efficiency in the public sector. These principles are dependent on the idea of putting people first. The Batho Pele principles guide the government's existence and how it should run its business in implementing efficient and effective public service delivery to enhance the development of local government. Adherence to the implementation of these principles will ensure the provision of excellent free essential services that meet, amongst others, people's needs and expectations and enhance customer service (Mboweni , 2022)

The approach of a vote-based system presented the White Paper on Local Government (1998) as another vision for a reformed Public Service, fully intent on destroying racial isolation due to politically sanctioned racial segregation arrangements and advancing formative nearby government (Lopez-Littleton, Blessett , & Burr, 2018). The White Paper on Local Government (1998) constrained locally to work with the people to discover maintainable ways to deal with and address their issues. The appropriation of the White Paper on Local Government, 1998, prompted the primary popularity based on local government elections in 2000. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, imagined local government that is formative by enhancing social turn of events and monetary development, incorporating and organizing improvements, arranging advancing vote-based turn of events, and building social capital at the nearby circle to give nearby answers for formative difficulties (Guo et al., 2023).

Therefore, the Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS, 2009) became effective, fully intent on recharging the vision of formative local government by improving the hierarchical and political execution of districts. Likewise, the Local Government Turnaround Strategy pointed toward managing the developing dissatisfaction of different people with the poor delivery of services (Meyer & Venter, 2014). The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional (CoGTA) affirms that the presentation of the Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) explicitly is aimed at achieving and accompanying five key destinations:

1. ensuring that municipalities deliver to the needs of their communities.
2. develop a clear plan for a clean, efficient, effective, responsive, and accountable local government system.
3. improve municipal performance and professionalism in local government.
4. enhancing national and provincial policies, oversight, and support; and
5. strengthening partnerships between communities, civil society, and local government (LGTAS, 2009).

Against this scenery, in September 2014, the then State President of South Africa, then President Jacob Zuma, launched the Back to Basic Programme: 'Serving Our People Better' with the plan to change the situation at the municipal level (National CoGTA, 2014). The programme endeavors to adjust the attitude of regulatory and political authority of districts and to do things differently and for the better. The program comprises, as recently referenced, the five fundamental columns to be specific: -

- to put communities to help of the correct quality norm.
- good administration.
- sound monetary administration.
- construct and keep up solid institutional and.
- managerial capacities (National CoGTA, 2014).

The Back-to-Basics Programme culminates from challenges that are facing municipalities across the country. In dealing with these challenges, the Constitution of South Africa, 1996, allows national and provincial governments to support, monitor, and intervene in municipalities (Grest, 2022). Amongst this legislation is the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, which also gives effect to establishing three types of municipalities and their functions. Namely, Category A – Metro: This municipality has exclusive executive and legislative authority. Category B – Local Municipality: This municipality shares its municipal executive and legislative authority with the district, which is Category C, within the area in which it falls. Lastly, Category C is a district municipality. This municipality also has municipal executive and legislative authority in the area, which comprises more than one local municipality (South African Municipal Structures Act 117, 1998).

Considering the abovementioned categories, the study will focus on eThekweni Metropolitan, under the stewardship of political leaders and local administrative leaders, such as mayors and municipal managers. Therefore, they are regarded as champions of the Back-to-Basics Programme at the municipal level (National CoGTA, 2014). Also, municipalities should engage and keep their communities abreast about plans they have for specific wards and areas falling within the authority of the municipalities. Therefore, Ward Committees were established to keep constant contact between the municipalities and the citizens (Naidoo & Ramphal, 2018)

Accordingly, the government had to implement systems to ensure that municipalities execute their executive and legislative mandates, as they have a right to govern and run their affairs. Consequently, the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 came into effect to provide a system for municipalities to function and stipulate the processes that need to be engaged in to ensure their communities' social and economic development (Mbandlwa & Dorasamy, 2020). Therefore, B2BP is one of the systems that seeks to change the current state of municipalities and to serve communities better (National CoGTA, 2014). Guided by the five (5) fundamental pillars, namely:

- Public participation.
- Infrastructure services.
- Good governance.

- Financial management; and
- Building institutional capacity.

The KwaZulu-Natal Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Back-to-Basics Programme evaluation report categorizes municipalities in terms of, *inter alia*, performance. The programme provides three municipal categories: functional, challenged, and requiring intervention. The functional category comprises municipalities with fundamental rights and performing their functions adequately. The challenged municipalities are those that are functional and whose overall performance is average. Lastly, the municipalities that require intervention are dysfunctional, where intensive support will be needed to get them to function adequately (KZN CoGTA, 2007). Therefore, should municipalities succeed in getting the basics right, the situation and the state of municipalities could be turned around.

### **1.9 Research Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative method and applies it to guide the sampling procedure, the data collection, and the analysis that provides answers to the research questions. This study's location is eThekweni Municipality, the only Metro in KwaZulu-Natal out of 54 municipalities in KZN. Therefore, this study will apply "thematic analysis" since this process involves delving through a data set, identifying patterns, systematically coding, deriving themes, and creating a narrative. In the context of this study, the population will be based on the decision-makers population, which is not a substantial number due to the system of governance within the public service and at the municipal level. Therefore, the accessible target population will include the local administrative and political leadership of the eThekweni Metropolitan and the KZN Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs officials, who were also invited to partake in the study. This resulted in (10) ten participants sampled playing a critical role in implementing the Back-to-Basics Programme and are best positioned to provide meaningful insights on the subject matter. On the other hand, these are the decision-makers within the provincial and local government system.

### **1.10 Dissertation outline**

**Chapter One:** This chapter outlines the research problem, the background of the study, the research methodology applied, and the research objectives and questions that need to be answered.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter deals with the literature review. It reflects on the policy and legislative framework imperatives that govern and regulate local administrative government. This includes the reform of local government and the broadening of performance management issues.

**Chapter Three:** In this chapter, the researcher outlines the research methodology, procedures relating to sampling, the participants, data collection, its tool – the instrument, and the data analysis technique applied.

**Chapter Four:** This chapter presents the study's collected data, analyses it, and discusses its objectives.

**Chapter Five** presents the study's findings based on its purpose, conclusions, and recommendations.

### **1.11. Summary**

Chapter one is the introduction and overview of the study; hence, it has provided the study's outline and background. The introduction provided a background of the Back-to-Basics Programmes and their relevance in changing the *status quo* at the local administration-governance level, explicitly concerning the challenges facing municipalities across South Africa, which also give effect to the implementation of the Back-to-Basics programme (B2BP) across the country. B2BP intends to provide support and enable local government, thereby improving its performance and the satisfaction of municipalities' constituencies with local administration and service delivery. The next chapter is the literature review guided by the study's purpose and objectives.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with the policy imperatives that govern the local government system and the legislative framework regulating the local government as the sphere of government that deals directly with communities. This includes reform in local government, including the support provided by the national Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs as the department responsible for providing support, monitoring, and intervention; on the other hand, the performance management issues broadly.

The literature review provides a firm foundation on the subject matter as it provides expert knowledge in the intended research. Moreover, it provides a different scholarly perspective on the research, focusing on the local government sphere of governance.

### **2.2 Local government, service delivery, and the community**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa advocates for a local government that is developmental and self-sustainable, facilitating socio-economic development in a safe and healthy environment through the provision of participatory democracy (Ramodula & Governer , 2020) . Since public representatives come and go, these underpinning local government systems or normative guidelines must not be muddled with party politics or restricted to finite terms. Furthermore, the Constitution also considers local government as an equal and autonomous partner with a non-hierarchical structure of government ‘sphere.’ However, this has been diluted by the political arrangements and party structures, which are hierarchal. (SA Cities, 2024).

Moreover, section 151 of the Constitution vests the authority of municipalities to govern local government affairs in their communities. As such, it outlines the following objectives for local government: -

- a) To provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities.
- b) To ensure the provision of services to communities sustainably.

- c) To promote social and economic development.
- d) To promote a safe and healthy environment, and
- e) To encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in local government matters.

The Constitution further compels municipalities to adopt a developmental approach by structuring and managing its administration, budgeting, and planning processes that prioritize the community's essential services by promoting its social and economic development. In addition, the White Paper on Local Government (1998) constrained local government to work with the people to discover maintainable ways to deal with and address their service delivery issues. The appropriation of the White Paper on Local Government, 1998, prompted the primary popularity based on local government elections in 2000. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) imagined local government that is formative by enhancing social turn of events and monetary development, incorporating and organizing improvements, arranging advancing vote-based turn of events, and building social capital at the nearby circle to giving nearby answers for formative difficulties (Grest , 2022).

Likewise, the Local Government Turnaround Strategy pointed toward managing the developing dissatisfaction of different people with the poor delivery of services (Mathane, 2013). The national Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional (CoGTA) affirms that the Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) explicitly tried to achieve five key objectives: -

- ensuring that municipalities deliver to the needs of their communities.
- develop a clear plan for a clean, efficient, effective, responsive, and accountable local government system.
- improve municipal performance and professionalism in local government.
- enhancing national and provincial policies, oversight, and support; and
- strengthening partnerships between communities, civil society, and local government (LGTAS, 2009).

Against this scenery, in September 2014, the then-president of South Africa, President Jacob Zuma, launched the Back-to-Basics Programme: 'Serving People Better' with the plan to change the situation at the municipal level (National CoGTA, 2014:6). The program endeavors to adjust the attitude of regulatory and political authority of districts and to do things another way. The program comprises, as recently referenced, the five fundamental columns to be specific: to put individuals and their interests first; to offer types of assistance of the correct quality norm; excellent administration; sound monetary administration; to construct and keep up solid institutional and managerial capacities (National CoGTA, 2014).

These columns radiate from the various shaky difficulties confronting municipalities nationwide (National CoGTA, 2014). Thus, the examination will zero in on the columns as they cut across this circle of government and are distinguished as fundamental difficulties that frequently adversely influence city execution. Municipalities' overall helplessness will continue if the challenges they face are not adequately addressed or given the necessary attention (Tshishonga, 2021).

### **2.3 Macro perspective of policy imperatives**

Since the advent of democracy, South Africa made significant developmental progress; South Africa remains amongst the most unequal societies in the world, with extreme poverty and inequality and high levels of unemployment. The South African Public Sector is a highly regulated institution ( Makgetla, 2020). Subsequently, several policies and regulations govern the South African government system. Amongst these policy imperatives are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2015), National Development Plan (NDP, 2013), KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Development Plan Strategy (PGDS 2020), Integrated Development Plan (IDP), and Social Capital.

#### **a) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2015)**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a global initiative of the United Nations that aims to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all. These goals are interdependent and interrelated, underscoring the necessity for an integrated development method. In September 2015, member states of the United

Nations (UN) adopted SDGs as the new sustainable development agenda entitled *“Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”* (UN, 2015). Central to the agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which build on the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), intending to achieve what could have not been achieved during the MDG process. The 17 SDGs are divided into 169 targets effective from 1 January 2016, with the signatories intending to achieve the targets by 2030 (UN, 2015), using the ideas of local government and urban development to help understand how to put sustainable development into practice. Even though numerous tools have been created to address sustainable development, focusing on policy integration, which is enmeshed in the philosophy of implementing sustainability, in the policy concept of the SDGs process and Goal 11 (Nkhabu, 2021).

Local government plays a significant role in achieving Goal 11, which is to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (UN, 2015:8)," This goal primarily focuses on the following:

- i. Ensure everyone can access appropriate, safe, affordable housing and essential services and upgrade slums.
- ii. Providing access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transportation systems for all, particularly by increasing public transportation.
- iii. enhancing participative, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management capabilities and inclusive and sustainable urbanization;
- iv. intensifying initiatives to defend and preserve the world's natural and cultural treasures.
- v. significantly lowering the number of fatalities, people impacted, and financial losses brought on by disasters.
- vi. significantly lowering towns' negative per capita environmental impacts, especially by paying particular attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.
- vii. Ensure that everyone has access to green spaces that are inclusive, safe, and accessible.

- viii. Promote strong economic, social, and environmental ties between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.
- ix. Boost the number of municipalities that adopt and implement plans for disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation; and
- x. Support the least developed nations through financial assistance (UN, 2015).

In South Africa, the SDGs are implemented within the context of the existing regional and national strategic plans, such as the African Union's Agenda and the South African National Plans, to forge effective partnerships. As a result, at the National level, South Africa has aligned the implementation of the SDGs with that of its National Development Plans (PWC, 2016).

Parnell (2016) believes that this resulted from South Africa's entry into a global arena immediately after apartheid, fuelled by the influence of global paradigms such as sustainable development and decentralization and the utilization of these concepts in its legislation and policies.

South Africa has made a positive stride towards improving the livelihoods of its citizens through increased public spending on essential services and social security, increased access to fixed Internet broadband services, and a notable reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Notwithstanding the acute shortage of reliable electricity, the country has recently experienced a lack of electricity supply. However, South Africa and its neighbors have positioned themselves as leaders in renewable energy mainly due to the abundance of solar and wind resources. (The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, 2023)

This has also been confirmed by the South African Local Government Association's (2016) sustainable development goals agenda at the local level, which should be about making municipal space more socially inclusive, economically productive, environmentally sustainable, and resilient to climate change.

## **b) National Development Plan [NDP] (2030)**

The National Development Plan is the overarching vision for South Africa's development to 2030, which is integrated into government administration and planning. The National Development Plan seeks to end poverty and lessen inequality by utilizing the resources of its people, developing an inclusive economy, strengthening the state's ability, building capabilities, and encouraging leadership and collaborations across society (The Presidency 2014).

The National Planning Commission (2019) prescribed the five main objectives that need to be reached by 2030, and they are outlined as follows: -

- **Eliminate poverty and reduce inequality**

The elimination and reduction of poverty should cover all races and classes in South Africa. As a result, it calls for developing and providing a joint program that deliberately caters to the country's extensive diversity. Despite that, the largest population living below the poverty line is black people.

- **Active and individual development**

Citizens should be encouraged to participate in their own development. Participation should be encouraged through strengthening democracy and ensuring government accountability to its citizens.

- **Economic Growth, promoting exports and a more labour-absorbing economy**

The promotion of exports is critical in the sense that the government will be expected to critically select winners and losers that have the potential to create labour-intensive employment to raise economic growth.

- **Key capabilities of both people and the country**

Among the capabilities are skills, infrastructure, social security, strong institutions, and partnerships both in the country and with strategic international partners.

- **Capable and Developmental State**

This requires building strong leadership that needs to work together to solve society's problems.

In addition to the above-mentioned objectives, the National Development Plan also the 14 Outcomes, and they are outlined in the following table: -

**Table 2. 1:** National Development Plan Outcomes

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Quality basic education
<b>Outcome 2</b>	A long and healthy life for South Africans
<b>Outcome 3</b>	All people in South Africa are and feel safe.
<b>Outcome 4</b>	Decent employment through inclusive economics growth
<b>Outcome 5</b>	A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path
<b>Outcome 6</b>	An efficient, competitive, and responsive economic infrastructure network
<b>Outcome 7</b>	Comprehensive rural development and land reform
<b>Outcome 8</b>	Human Settlement
<b>Outcome 9</b>	Responsive, accountable, effective, and efficient development of local government
<b>Outcome 10</b>	Protect and enhance our environmental assets and natural resources.
<b>Outcome 11</b>	Create a better South Africa, contribute to a better and safer Africa in a better world.
<b>Outcome 12</b>	An efficient, effective, and development-oriented public service
<b>Outcome 13</b>	AN inclusive and responsive social protection system
<b>Outcome 14</b>	Nation-building and social cohesion

**Source:** National Planning Commission (2019)

Therefore, for implementing the National Development Plan in the local government sphere, the focus is on outcome 9, which envisages a “Responsive, accountable, effective and efficient development local government” (National Planning Commission, 2019:34). Implementing back-to-basics programmes forms part of the plan that seeks to achieve outcome 9. Against this backdrop, the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs ensures that all municipalities across the country simulate the principles of outcome 9. Through monitoring, support, and intervention whenever required. On the other hand, the provincial department is equipped with the same responsibility at the provincial level. Hence, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

is also expected to be responsive, accountable, effective, and efficient in how they discharge their duties in responding to the needs of their citizens.

### **c) KwaZulu Natal Provincial Growth Development Strategy (KZN PGDS 2020)**

The KwaZulu Natal Provincial Growth Development Strategy (2020) is an ambitious plan to promote economic growth, job creation, and social development in the province between 2020 and 2024. The strategy, developed in consultation with various stakeholders, aims to improve people's lives in the province by addressing unemployment, inequality, and poverty. It is based on a solid understanding of the province's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is designed to harness its potential for sustainable growth.

One of the strengths of the KwaZulu Natal Provincial Growth Development Strategy is its focus on key sectors that have the potential to drive growth and create jobs. These sectors include manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, shipping, and renewable energy. The strategy recognises that these sectors have the potential to contribute significantly to the economy and create employment opportunities for people in the province. By focusing on these sectors, the strategy aims to unlock the province's economic potential and reduce unemployment and poverty.

Another positive aspect of the Growth Development Strategy for KwaZulu Natal Province is its emphasis on private sector participation. The strategy recognises that the private sector is a critical driver of the province's economic growth and job creation. To this end, the strategy outlines numerous measures to encourage investment and private sector participation in the economy. These measures include establishing an economic development agency, creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, and developing infrastructure that supports private sector growth.

### **d) Integrated Development Plan (IDP)**

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a planning tool designed to guide the development of cities, towns, or regions. The macro perspective of the IDP involves focusing on the region's long-term development vision. It involves identifying the key

issues, problems, opportunities, and challenges and setting realistic development goals and strategies to address them (Dlamini, 2018).

One of the key macro perspectives of the IDP is to ensure sustainable and equitable development. This means that the plan should seek a balance between economic, environmental, and social development goals. The IDP should promote social cohesion and reduce inequality in the region. It should also promote sustainable development practices such as using renewable energy sources, reducing waste, promoting public transportation, and protecting biodiversity. IDP is to ensure a responsive and accountable government system (Reddy, 2018)

According to the Local Government Municipal Systems Act, there are seven Key Performance Areas of the IDP, namely good governance, service delivery, performance monitoring and evaluation, local economic development, spatial planning, intergovernmental relations, financial management, and compliance with the Municipal Finance Management Act 6 of 2003

#### **e) Social capital**

Social capital can significantly impact a community's overall well-being and economic development. Research has shown that communities with high levels of social capital tend to have lower crime rates, higher levels of trust, and better outcomes in areas such as education, health, and economic growth (Romanowski, 2022).

According to Xie (2021), Social capital can also be a valuable resource for individuals and organizations operating locally. By building solid relationships and networks within the community, individuals and organizations can access resources and expertise that may not be available through other channels.

Overall, social capital is an essential element of a thriving community that is educated and developed through focused efforts to build connections and relationships among community members.

## **2.4 Legislative and Policy Framework Regulating Performance Management in Local Government**

### **a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**

The Constitution of the Republic gives effect to the establishment of the three spheres of government, namely: - national, provincial, and local government. The three spheres of government are distinctive, interdependent, and interrelated. In terms of Section 41 of the Constitution of the Republic, the spheres of government are also designed to be: -

- Be loyal to the Constitution of the Republic (including its people);
- Ensure the well-being of the people of the Republic.
- Provide effective, transparent, accountable, and coherent government; and
- Do not assume any power or function except that conferred on them in the Constitution of the Republic (RSA, 1996:21).

Furthermore, section 155 of the Constitution of the Republic explicitly provides the basis for the establishment of municipalities with the number of legislations that give effect to the establishment of municipal structures, municipal systems, and policies that seek to regulate how municipalities operate. These legislations are discussed as follows: -

### **b) The White Paper on the Transformation in the Public Services (1995)**

1994 was a turning point for the South African Public Services and Administration as the newly democratic government inherited the Public Administration governed by apartheid principles and systems. The system consisted of the so-called independent states, homelands, and Bantustans. Therefore, the national unity government introduced the democratic system, creating developmental states that were effective and accountable through the White Paper on Transformation in the Public Services 1995. The key priority areas of the white paper on Transformation in Public Services consist of the critical elements that seek to change the culture of Public Service in the new dispensation: -

- Rationalisation and Restructuring of the Public Services

- Institutional Building and management
- Representativeness and affirmative action
- Transforming service delivery
- Democratising the state
- Human resources development and training
- Employment conditions and labour relations
- The promotion of the ethos of the professional services

**c) The White Paper on Local Government (1998)**

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) was one of the critical frameworks aimed at restructuring and democratising the system of local government post-apartheid. The primary objectives of the White Paper on Local Government were to establish a developmental local government framework that could lead to sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development within municipalities (Robson, 2021).

**d) Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)**

The Municipal Systems Act provides the process of assigning powers and functions to the local government system regarding their roles and responsibilities and the areas of authority. The Systems Act also emphasizes the importance of performance management; specifically, section 38 compels employers to implement a performance management system that is in line with the priorities, objectives, indicators, and targets that are part of the Integrated Development Plan as a developmental planning tool that informs the planning, budgeting, management, and decision making at the municipal level (Dube, 2012).

**e) Performance Management Guidelines for Municipalities (2001)**

Then, in 2001, the Performance Management Guidelines for Municipalities were introduced as specific guidelines for municipalities to develop and implement an organisational performance management system. On the other hand, it outlines key linkages related to employee or personnel performance management systems (Clamp et al., 2022).

**f) The Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001)**

According to Beerli et al. (2019), the Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001) allotted in terms of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000, provides more details on what municipalities are expected to do in implementing the Performance Management Systems. It also presents the process of performance, planning, monitoring, measurement, evaluation, reporting, and improvements in terms of the municipalities' cycles.

**g) Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly accountable to the Municipal Managers (2006)**

Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly accountable to the Municipal Managers, also allotted in terms of the Municipal Systems Act 2000, encapsulate the performance regulations for the municipal managers and managers that are directly accountable to the Municipal Managers (Ngidi, 2018). The regulations provide the conditions of employment for these managers and show how performance management must be planned, reviewed, and improved.

**h) Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).**

This legislation gives effect to the establishment of municipalities. It provides the specific types of municipalities in accordance with the requirements relating to categories and types of municipalities to be established in a particular area (Hovey, 2020). This also includes the allocation of functions and powers per category. At the same time, it prescribes the municipalities' internal systems, structures, and political office-bearers.

**i) Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003)**

The Municipal Finance Management Act regulates the management of public monies at the municipal level, including the role and responsibility of functionaries when it comes to managing funds. Moreover, the Municipal Finance Management Act of 2002 compels the mayor to ensure that the performance agreements of all the sections 57

managers are in line with the requirements of the Municipal System Act (Maloka & Sefoka, 2023)

**j) Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (Act 27 of 1998)**

According to Jeeva, Gumbo, and Cilliers (2022), this legislation affects the establishment and operation of the Municipal Demarcation Board. At the same time, the board's mandate is conferred to determine the municipal boundaries and ward delimitation.

**k) The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005)**

Local government is one of the spheres of government in South Africa. Therefore, this legislation seeks to promote cooperative governance and a seamless government within the sphere of government concerning their operation (Simiyu, 2015).

**l) Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act, 2000 (Act 27 of 2000)**

The Municipal Electoral Act regulates the process of municipal elections, including the matters connected therewith, such as the allocations of seats per political party that contested elections (Popoola & Ayandele, 2017).

**m) Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Amendment Act, 2014 (Act 29 of 2014)**

Provide guidance on determining rates on property within the municipality's jurisdictions as part of revenue collection based on the municipality's category status (Daudi, 2017).

**n) Municipal Fiscal Powers and Functions Act, 2007 (Act 12 of 2007)**

The Municipal Fiscal Powers and Functions Act, 2007 (Act 12 of 2007) outlines the fiscal powers and functions of municipalities in South Africa, providing a framework for their financial management and responsibilities (Kanjalar, 2022). This legislative provision allows municipalities with powers to impose surcharges on fees for services that the municipality delivers to its citizens.

## **2.5 Evolution of Local Government Reform**

Modumo and Koma (2019) define the state of municipalities as the endemic challenges that date back to the dawn of democracy. These challenges emanate from the constant dysfunctional state of municipalities, poor financial management, and poor political oversight. As a result, the dire situation requires the national government to revisit the local government system as enshrined in the constitution of the republic. Numerous new models have been introduced to local government systems to improve how municipalities run their affairs. Namely:

- The Project Liquidity (1995-1997)
- Masakhane Campaign (1995-1997)
- Project Viability (1997-1999)
- Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP) and the Urban Renewal Programme (URP)(2001-2011)
- Project Consolidate (2004-2006)
- Siyenza Manje (2006-2011)
- Year Local Government Strategic Agenda (2006-2009)
- Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) (2009-2013)
- Back-to-Basics (B2B) (2014-2018 and ongoing)
- District Development Model (DDM)

This reflects a severe programme turnover in trying to address the situation facing the local government system in South Africa. Despite implementing these programmes, the situation is not stabilising; it continues to get worse. However, municipalities continue failing to discharge their roles and responsibilities.

### **a) The Project Liquidity (1995-1997)**

Project Liquidity came into effect after the national survey conducted by the then Department of Constitutional Development in 1995 to establish the liquidity of municipalities in South Africa and determine the liquidity position of municipalities (Santos, 2019). On the other hand, measures should be implemented to address the cash flow challenges at the municipal level. The main thrust of the programme was to identify and support specifically those municipalities that are yielding toward the states of insolvency (Naumenkova & Tishchenko, 2020).

### **b) Masakhane Campaign (1995-1997)**

This campaign was the brainchild of Former President Mandela on 24 February 1995, and it was intended to normalise local governance by implementing the Reconstruction and Development Programmes (RDP). This programme emanates from the previous governance systems that led to a divided nation and segregation of people through race, gender, etc. The programme seeks to enhance the delivery of services while promoting a culture of payment amongst the beneficiaries of the services delivered by municipalities. However, the campaign intended to achieve the whole nation-building perspective (Tröhler, 2023).

### **c) Project Viability (1997-1999)**

The Project viability was initiated in 1995 under the banner of Project Liquidity to monitor the short-term liquidity of municipalities, such as payment levels, arrears, and the efficiency of credit control and collection (Shershneva et al., 2020). Project viability was responding to numerous challenges facing the process of transformation of the local government system to determine the financial and socioeconomic realities of local government as well as the interventions and support measures for municipalities facing financial challenges.

### **d) Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP) and the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) (2001-2011)**

Former President Thabo Mbeki introduced the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme and the Urban Renewal Programme as a new system of developmental local government to address the underdevelopment in the most severely impoverished areas. According to Mpofu (2022), The then former President Mbeki announced thirteen (13) rural and eight (8) urban development nodes as the special focus of the government's Integrated Sustainable Rural Development and Urban Renewal Programme as the pilot programmes for ten years. These two programmes were established to highlight the strength of integration across the spheres of government and the integration of resources across various sectors toward the sustainable fight against poverty and under-development, focusing on the geographical areas (the nodes) as the testing sites. The plan was to alleviate poverty through: -

- Local Economic Development.
- Improved coordination and integration of service delivery.
- Decentralization of decision-making.
- Demand-driven approaches.
- Fostering partnerships; and
- A participatory approach to development

#### **e) Project Consolidate (2004-2006)**

In 2004, the then Department of Provincial and Local Government commissioned a rapid assessment of municipal capacity to identify municipalities that require direct support from the central government. As a result, the assessment revealed that 136 municipalities faced challenges in fulfilling their mandate. Then, Project Consolidate was introduced to respond to the assessment findings (De Santis et al., 2022). This was a short intervention from the central government to support municipalities seriously lacking the expertise to execute their mandate to deliver basic services and, on the other hand, addressing the fact that national and provincial departments were also failing to execute their constitutional obligation to support municipalities.

#### **f) Siyenza Manje (2006-2011)**

The Programme Siyeza Manje was a joint initiative between the National Treasury, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), and the Department of Provincial and Local Government managed by the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) on behalf of the government (Abaza et al., 2021). This program allowed the central government to leverage the expertise and project management skills of the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) to build local government capacity. This was more of the capacity-building model with the key focus on developing: -

- A programme to contribute toward developing the sustainable capacity to manage the delivery of infrastructure services in targeted municipalities.
- A programme to mobilize and manage the development of existing skills and the building of new, required skills.
- A knowledge-sharing platform.

The programme Siyeza Manje deployed 78 project managers, engineers, and finance specialists to fast-track the implementation of infrastructure projects, especially water, and sanitation, in 84 municipalities nationwide (Collao et al., 2021).

#### **g) 5-Year Local Government Strategic Agenda (2006-2009)**

This new Strategic Agenda for Local Government aimed to provide the framework for the intergovernmental program of actions to boost municipal performance, ensure accountability, provide capacity over the long-term period, and support the existing approach of Project Consolidate. The agenda was informed by the three strategic priorities, namely: -

- Mainstreaming the existing support to local government to improve municipal governance, performance, and accountability.
- Fixing institutional arrangements in terms of the structure and governance of the state to better strengthen, support, and monitor Local Government.
- Enhancing the policy, regulatory, and fiscal environment for local government and paying attention to enforcement measures (Mkhwane, 2019).

Moreover, the Agenda had five key performance areas that municipalities measured in terms of their performance, namely: - Municipal Transformation and Organizational Development; Basic Service Delivery; Local Economic Development; Municipal Financial Viability and Good Governance and Public Participation

#### **h) Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) (2009-2013)**

The Local Government Turnaround Strategy came at the transitional time when the Department of Provincial and Local Government disbanded and was replaced by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. At this point, all the flagship policies, as well as programmes, were discontinued due to a change of leadership (Morris et al., 2021).

Consequently, a country-wide assessment of the local government system was conducted, considering the challenges that the municipalities faced. This assessment culminated in The State of Local Government Report (2009), which affected the

development of the Local Government Strategy, which was adopted in 2009. The issues that were raised by the assessment report were as follows: -

- The model of the local government is linked to systematic factors.
- Policy and administrative factors.
- Political factors.
- Weakness in the accountability system.
- Capacity and skills constrain.
- Weak intergovernmental support and oversight because of fragmented national and provincial support; and
- Issues associated with the inter-governmental fiscal system.

Taking into consideration the challenges mentioned earlier, the Local Government Turnaround Strategy put forward the following overarching objectives to address these issues: -

- Restore people's confidence in municipalities as the primary delivery oiled machine of the developmental state, which is closer to the people.
- Rebuild and improve the basic service requirements for the functional, responsive, effective, and efficient developmental local government.
- Makes municipalities the nation's pride and
- Ensure accountability of the public representatives to their respective communities

In addition to these objectives, the Turn Around Strategy was framed into the Ten Point Plan for Local Government: -

- Improve the quantity and quality of municipal basic services to the people in the areas of access to water, sanitation, electricity, waste management, roads, and disaster management
- Enhance the municipal contribution to job creation and sustainable livelihoods through Local Economic Development (LED).
- Ensure the development & adoption of reliable and credible Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).
- Deepen democracy through a refined Ward Committee model

- Build and strengthen the administrative, institutional, and financial capabilities of municipalities
- Create a single window of coordination for the support, monitoring, and intervention in municipalities
- Uproot fraud, corruption, nepotism, and all forms of maladministration affecting local government
- Develop a coherent and cohesive system of governance and a more equitable intergovernmental fiscal system
- Develop and strengthen a politically and administratively stable system of municipalities
- Restore the institutional integrity of municipalities

**i) Back-to-Basics (B2B) (2014-2018 and ongoing)**

The Back-to-Basics Programme was introduced in September 2014 as a model that seeks to ensure that municipalities get the basic rights in delivering municipal services in the short and long term. The President of the Republic of South Africa launched the Back to Basic Programme: 'Serving our people better' with the plan to change the situation at the municipal level (CoGTA, 2014). The programme endeavors to adjust the attitude of regulatory and political authority of districts and to do things differently.

The then-late Minister for the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr. Pravin Gordon, defined B2BP as the new plan to focus municipalities on getting small things right, such as fixing the potholes, streetlights, leaking taps, and collecting refuse. Simultaneously, this programme is a new breath of life for municipalities. This programme seeks to position municipalities at the forefront of improving lives and creating conditions for inclusive economic growth and job creation. The programme was coined around creating decent living conditions, good governance, public participation, sound financial management, and institutional capacity. As a result, the Back-to-Basics Programme came up with the following priorities to transform the system of local government: -

**Priority 1:** Ensure that all municipalities are out of a dysfunctional state and, at the very least, able to perform the basic functions of local government. This shall be done by enforcing current policies and legislations, systematically managing performance and accountability, and enforcing the system for managing consequences. Minimum performance requirements include ensuring the proper functioning of the council structures and processes and providing basic services.

**Priority 2:** Support municipalities at a minimum basic level of performance to progress to the higher-level path. Therefore, the focus will be on building solid municipal administrative systems and processes. This includes ensuring that administrative positions are filled with competent and committed people whose performance is closely monitored. The oversight system for the local government must be improved by creating real-time monitoring systems. A targeted, vigorous, and brisk response must be taken to ensure that municipalities engage with communities. Support measures will create an enabling environment for local economic development to stimulate competitive, inclusive, and sustainable economies.

**Priority 3:** Support and incentivise municipalities that are performing well to remain there. Given that the basics are largely in place in these municipalities, we will focus on transforming the local space economy and integrating and densifying our communities to improve sustainability. In this regard, the Integrated Development Framework provides an important building block. The National Spatial Development Framework must be developed to ensure the effective alignment of the national economic, environmental, and social programs with those of the municipalities. Therefore, innovative ways to incentivise municipalities that are doing well must be developed (National COGTA, 2014).

Therefore, these priorities seek to change the *status quo* so that the local government system realises the envisaged aims and objectives of the Back-to-Basics and does things differently. The focus should be on the people, the citizens of the municipalities. They should be aware of what is happening in their municipality and keep abreast.

Furthermore, the Back-to-Basics approach introduced the five pillars that should guide the programme's implementation: Good Governance, Public Participation, Financial Management, Basic Services, and Building Capacity. These five pillars are the municipalities' Key Performance Areas, and as a result, their performance will be monitored and evaluated (National COGTA, 2014).



**Figure 2.1:** Back-to-Basics Pillars Source: Adapted from various sources by the Researcher.

### **(i) Good Governance.**

Good Governance is the cornerstone of an effective and efficient municipality. Therefore, municipalities are expected to deliver on the key responsibilities such as holding municipal council meetings as legislated; having functional oversight structures such as audit committees, section 79 committees, and District IGR Structures; assessing the existing and efficient Anti-Corruption measures; compliance with legislation as well as the enforcement of by-laws and lastly the rates of the service delivery protests and measures to address them (National COGTA, 2014).

### **(ii) Public Participation.**

This objective aimed to ensure that municipalities had regular engagements with their communities, as per the requirement of the Municipal Systems Act (National COGTA, 2014). Furthermore, this objective compels municipalities to provide an effective and efficient communication platform to engage and communicate with the communities. Therefore, the following measures should be considered: - assessing the existence of ward committees and their functionality, including the percentage of ward committee grants spent, effective public participation programs conducted, and the number of regular community surveys conducted.

### **(iii) Financial Management.**

According to the National Treasury sound, financial management is integral to the local government system. Consequently, the standard and reporting requirements are legislated, and the National Treasury is always there to support the remedial process. The performance of this pillar is based on indicators that will be assessed: the number of disclaimers in the last six months, whether the budget is cash-backed, the revenue collection percentage, the extent to which debt is serviced, and the efficiency and functionality of supply chain management.

### **(iv) Basic Services**

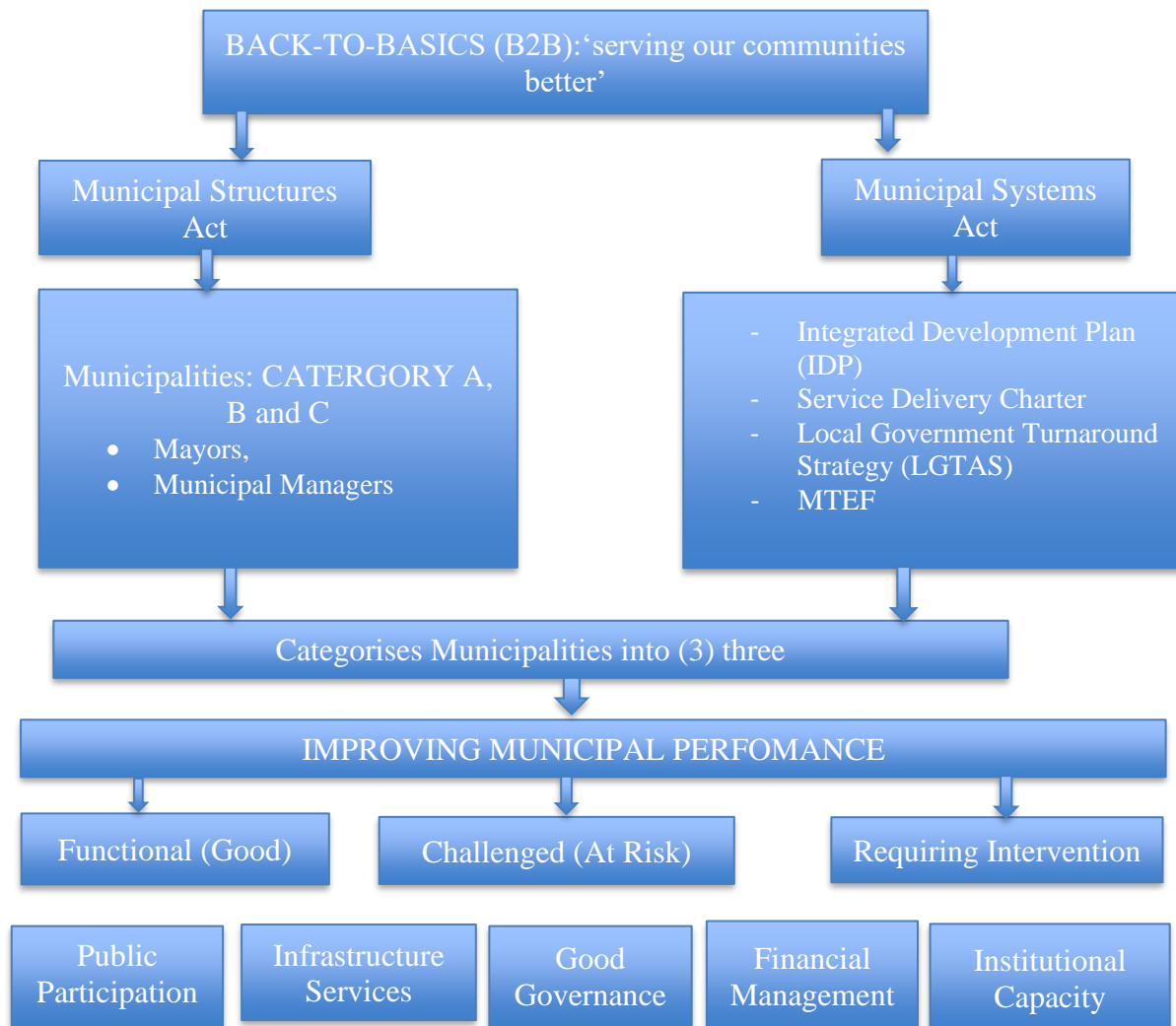
This pillar is about delivering Basic Services and creating decent living conditions (National COGTA, 2014). So, municipalities are expected to develop service standards for each service and establish mechanisms for monitoring adherence to those standards. This pillar will be measured on the municipality's ability to: - develop fundable consolidated infrastructure plans, ensure infrastructure development maintenance, and reduce losses to: - Water and sanitation, Human settlements, Electricity, Waste Management, Roads, and Public Transportation

### **(vi) Building Institutional Capacity**

The pillar aims to build solid municipal administrative systems and processes (National COGTA, 2014). This includes filling administrative positions with competent and committed people whose performance should be closely monitored. Simultaneously, ensure training and capacity building are provided to political and administrative leadership to equip them with the knowledge and skills to address municipalities' challenges.

The measurement of this pillar will be ensuring that the top six positions of the municipalities are filled with competent people with proper qualifications (Municipal Manager, Finance, Infrastructure, Corporate Services, Community development and Development, and Planning); municipal organograms are realistic, underpinned by a service delivery model and affordability; implementable human resources

development and management programmes; and sustained platforms to engage organised labour to minimize disputes and disruptions.



**Figure 2.2:** Conceptualisation of the Back-to-Basics Source: Adapted from the various sources by the Researcher.

The above-mentioned conceptual framework entails the rolling out the Back-to-Basics Programme across the Province of KwaZulu-Natal by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Conversely, this process culminates from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as the supreme law of the country and the amount of legislation that governs the institution of local government, which led to the establishment of the local government as the sphere in the form of municipalities (Huang et al., 2023).

Amongst this legislation is the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, which gives effect to establishing three categories and functions of municipalities: Category A – Metro: This municipality has exclusive executive and legislative authority in its area of authority. Category B – Local Municipality: This municipality shares its municipal executive and legislative authority with Category C, within whose area it falls. Lastly, Category C – District Municipalities: These municipalities also have a municipal executive and a legislative authority in the area, which includes more than one municipality.

Considering the above categories, the study will focus on eThekweni Metropolitan, under the stewardship of political leaders and administrative leaders, such as mayors and municipal managers. Therefore, they are regarded as champions of the Back-to-Basics Programme at the municipal level (National CoGTA, 2014). Also, municipalities should engage and keep their communities abreast about plans they have for specific wards and areas falling within the authority of the municipalities. Therefore, Ward Committees were established to maintain contact between the municipalities and the citizens (Diedericks & Seitholo, 2018).

Accordingly, the government had to implement systems to ensure that municipalities execute their executive and legislative mandates, as they have a right to govern and run their affairs. Consequently, the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 came into effect to provide a system for municipalities to function and stipulate the processes that need to be engaged in to ensure their communities' social and economic development (Delport, 2015). Moreover, the systems in place also provide the framework and policies to govern the entire operation of municipalities. The Back-to-Basics Programme is one of the systems that seeks to change the current state of municipalities and to serve communities better (National CoGTA, 2014). Guided by the five (5) basic pillars, namely:

- Public participation.
- Infrastructure services.
- Good governance.
- Financial management; and

- Building institutional capacity.

The Back-to-Basics Programme categorises municipalities in terms of, *inter alia*, performance. The programme provides three municipal categories: functional, challenged and requiring intervention (KwaZulu-Natal Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). The functional category comprises municipalities with fundamental rights and performing their functions. The challenged municipalities are those that are functional and whose overall performance is average. Lastly, the municipalities that require intervention are dysfunctional, where intensive support will be needed to get them to function adequately (KZN CoGTA, 2007). Therefore, should municipalities succeed in getting the basics right, the situation and the state of municipalities could be turned around.

## **2.5 The state of KZN municipalities**

The study examines the states of municipalities per district and groups of municipalities within that district, as they were categorised based on their performance by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The categorisation is divided into three (3) levels based on performance: functional, challenged, and required intervention (South Africa. KZN CoGta.2014 and 2017 Back-to-Basics Programme Assessment Reports).

uGu District Municipality, as the district required intervention in 2014, was functional in 2017. Umdoni, Umzumbe, Umuziwabantu, and Ray Nkonyeni were all functional in 2014 and 2017. Two were functional: Umzumbe and Ray Nkonyeni. However, uMdoni regressed to challenged status, and Umuziwabantu regressed and required intervention.

uMgungundlovu District Municipality was functional in 2014 and regressed to challenge in 2017. On the other hand, Impendle, Msunduzi, and Mkhambathini Richmond remained functional in 2014 and 2017. Umgeni and Umshwathi remained challenged in 2014, but Mpofana required intervention, although they improved to functional in 2017.

uThukela District was challenged in 2014 and improved to become functional in 2017. However, the group municipalities such as Alfred Duma and uKhahlamba remain

functional for 2014 and 2018, except for iNkosi Langalibalele, which remains challenging.

uMzinyathi District Municipality, for both assessments in 2014 and 2017, kept the status of requiring intervention, including their locals, eNdumeni and Umvoti, in 2014. However, eNdumeni improved to functional status in 2017. Nquthu and Umsinga remained functional in 2014. However, Nquthu regressed in 2014 and required intervention.

Amajuba District Municipality required intervention in 2014 and moved to challenge in 2017. eMadlangeni and Danhausser were functional in 2014, except for Newcastle, which remains challenging. eMadlangeni regressed and required interventions in 2017

In 2014, Zululand District Municipality remained challenged by its locals, eDumbe, Abaqulusi, Uphongola, and Ulundi, except for Nongoma, which required intervention. In 2017, Zululand, Uphongola Ulundi, and Nongoma improved to functional. But eDumbe and ABaqulusi remained challenged.

Then, uMkhanyakude District and Jozini remained challenged in 2014, except for uMhlabuyalinga, which remains functional. Big 5 Hlabisa and uMtubatuba required intervention. In 2017, uMkhanyakude District regressed to requiring intervention, with Umhlabuyalingana maintaining its functional status. Then, the Jozini, Big 5 Hlabisa, and UMtubatuba moved to challenge.

In 2014, King Cetshwayo District, including the Nkandla, uMthonjaneni, uMhlathuze, and Umlalazi, remained functional, except for uMfolozi, which was regarded as challenged. However, in 2017, there was a severe improvement since all locals and the district maintained the functional status.

iLembe District, including KwaDukuza and Mandeni, were functional for 2014 and 2017, except for Ndwedwe and Maphumulo, assessed as challenged in 2014, and Maphumulo required intervention in 2017.

Harry Gwala District, including the Ubuhlebezwe and uMzimkhulu, remained functional in 2014 and 2017. Greater Kokstad and Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma remained challenged but improved to functional status in 2017.

Lastly, eThekweni Metropolitan achieved functional status for the consecutive year of the assessment. Therefore, the above-mentioned assessment of municipalities gives a clear indication of the states of municipalities. This assessment is based on the principles of back-to-basics assessment. Municipalities are categorised into three categories: functional, challenged, and requiring intervention. There is a significant improvement in some municipalities from being challenged to functional. On the other hand, some have regressed from being challenged and requiring interventions. Some remain challenged, and there is no improvement.

## **2.6 Performance Management Imperatives**

Performance management is a continuous, future-oriented, and participatory system: a cycle of criteria setting, monitoring, informal feedback from supervisors and peers, formal multi-source assessment, diagnosis and review, action planning, and resource sourcing for development. This cycle can be annual, semi-annual, quarterly, or even monthly. All employees in the organization must take responsibility for their contribution and evaluation, subject to senior management support. Managing employee performance is critical because, without performance orientation and recognition, employees may not understand where and how to direct their efforts (Tsuma, 2017).

Performance management is a process that contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams to achieve high- levels of organizational performance. It is a strategy that relates to all managerial activities and is placed in the context of its human resources, policy culture, style, and communication systems. From these definitions, it can be deduced that performance management is about helping people understand how they can contribute to the organization's strategic goals and ensuring that the right skills and efforts are directed towards aspects that are relevant to the organization are essential. Some consensuses among academics are that performance appraisal, goal

setting, regular feedback, regular reviews, and assessments of development needs are the cornerstones of performance management (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021).

Organizations compete in dynamic and competitive environments characterized by seismic changes. This requires an emphasis on excellence to be successful (Bradbury et al., 2021). It is about directing resources to efforts based on a sound analysis of how the organization's activities can lead to the desired changes and a leadership that includes continuous improvement.

## **2.7 Principles of Performance Management**

It is imperative to understand that the Performance Management System in the Local Government is informed by the Municipal Systems Act 2000 and Handbook for the Municipal Councillors (DPLG, 2011). These two prescripts prescribed that the senior managers of the municipality should familiarise themselves with the following principles: -

- The municipality must promote the performance management culture amongst the politicians within the administration. Park, Kim, Lee, Choi, Lee, and Jakovljevic (2023) believe that a strong organisational culture of performance is produced through good performance. Therefore, a positive performance culture can contribute to individual performance and achieve good results. However, a weak and negative culture can discourage an outstanding employee from underperforming.
- The municipality should administer its affairs economically, effectively, efficiently, and accountable. Hence, municipalities must deliver on their promises and remain accountable, especially using public funds (Civit et al., 2021).
- According to Kumar et al. (2022), Performance Management Systems should be able to detect early warning signs of poor performance and take corrective measures if performance is poor. These systems can assist municipalities facing performance challenges in taking necessary action before the challenge worsens.

Kallio et al. (2021) underline that measuring municipal performance involves assessing how the municipality delivers services to its citizens. Performance measurement typically involves the volume, quality, efficiency, and outcomes of the provided goods and services.

## **2.8 Key Components of Performance Management in Local Government**

The four components that need to be taken into consideration when it comes to performance management at the municipality level are leadership, attitudes, skilling training, and rewards (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021).

- **Leadership**

Leadership is the most critical component of organisational performance. It is the key driver in terms of the direction, vision, and alignment of the vision, as well as the strategies, motivation, and inspiring confidence of the team. Jin et al. (2022) consider that leaders must clearly expect what is required so the staff can deliver to the expectation as the drivers of change. Whenever there is an absent leader, normal development cannot occur since leaders drive people to achieve the goals in their best interest (Bermad et al., 2023). Zhang et al. (2023), advance a position that is critical for leaders, especially at the municipal level, to be drivers of the change within their space, and it is essential to ensure that a culture of learning is infused, influencing, and managing changes that are being introduced by the municipal transformation processes.

- **Attitudes**

Attitude is the most severe and effective factor that plays a critical role in influencing employees' performance in an organisation (Saqlain et al., 2020). Employees must develop a positive attitude toward their work to reach maximum performance. Llmiyono (2019) believes that municipality performance should also focus on developing employees' attitudes and be measured to ascertain the level of performance.

- **Skilling through training**

Sibanda (2018) states that municipalities must prioritise skills development to enhance the capacity of their employees. Skills development will also be a factor in performance management. However, proper, and frequent training of municipal employees may enable them to become more efficient and effective in executing their day-to-day work. Therefore, training should be part of the plans for the municipalities simply because the world they operate in is rapidly changing, and there are new challenges every day.

- **Rewards**

According to Amegayibor (2021), there is a significant relationship between rewards and employees' performance. Likewise, municipalities should clearly understand the sense of commitment toward rewarding good performance of their employees whenever they have performed exceptionally. Rewards motivate employees to perform at a certain level and above expectation; hence, one believes there is something to gain. On the contrary, should the link between performance and rewards be understood, employees are bound to perform below the standard (Zhang & Chen, 2018).

## **2.9 Performance measurement in local government**

There are different approaches to performance measurement, and in the case of local government, there are specific requirements that each municipality must develop that will fit with the institutional arrangement as prescribed by the Municipal Systems Act. Performance measurements assist in the process of improving municipal performance in the delivery of service locally. Hence, it also helps set targets and ensures effective monitoring (Izraelevitz et al., 2019). Subsequently, Managers and supervisors should be aware of the areas for improvement. Under normal circumstances, performance improvement can only occur by determining clear, measurable performance targets.

Performance measurement is a critical tool for performance management at the municipal level. Since it brings all the key stakeholders together and pays attention to the same goals (Han et al., 2023). Hence, the main objective of the performance measures is to deal with the two critical elements of accountability and organisational performance. Setiawan, Winarna, and Nugroho (2022) also emphasise that

accountability is imperative for the local government as a public institution, including the effectiveness and impact of the programs that they are doing in changing people's lives.

- **Accountability**

Bracci (2019) concluded that Managers in the Public Sector, including municipalities, should be accountable and achieve the expected performance. Similarly, Han et al. (2023) demonstrated that public accountability is essential at the municipal level, as the government should account for its citizens, justify its decisions, and effectively use public funds.

- **Improving performance**

According to Biondi and Russo (2022), performance management is entirely about exploring and learning from experience in terms of performance measurements. Therefore, the measurement systems that seek to support performance improvement always set the measurement activities within the entire framework for results management. As a result, performance improvement is directly linked to the strength of the organization's human resources management systems, especially its capacity and capability for innovation, reflection, and learning.

## **2.9.1 Types of Performance Measurements**

According to Gobel, Muhtar, and Putri (2023), there is no single best approach to performance measurement. Each municipality must develop a specific approach appropriate for the institutional arrangement and its political and administrative norms. There are three types of performance measures within the sphere of the local government system: output measures, efficiency measures, and outcomes measures. These are the most critical measures suitable for improving performance at the municipality level (Biondi & Russo, 2022). Performance measurement enhances municipal performance, especially in service delivery.

### **a) Output (workload) measures**

An output (workload) refers to the measurable results achieved by individuals according to the level of performance they demonstrate in fulfilling their tasks

(Yousef, 2017). Evans (2020) defines output measures as the number of services rendered or that meet a specified quality requirement. (For example, the lane miles of the repaired road). Comparing performance from year to year provides insight into the increasing or decreasing demand for a particular service. More importantly, output figures are often critical in calculating higher-order policies with more excellent value in managerial and policy decisions (Biondi & Russo, 2022). Outputs are complicated to measure, and in most cases, indirect measures can be used, such as the number of meetings held and documents produced (Evans, 2020).

### **b) Efficiency measures**

Efficiency refers to reducing waste and improving resource use so that the same number of inputs produces more output (Stoker, 2017). Efficiency measures report the relationship between the resources used and the services rendered. Sometimes, this relationship is expressed in unit costs, e.g., B. Cost per complaint processed, cost per license issued (Biondi & Russo., 2022). Measuring efficiency requires qualitative information on the costs and outputs of public services. Therefore, efficiency measures in the public sector are more complex, as a large part of the services provided are typically intangible. These measurement difficulties are even more pronounced in cross-country comparisons, although they can be overcome in some sectors (Rhodes, 2018).

### **c) Effectiveness outcome measures**

Effectiveness refers to how an activity or program achieves its intended goals (Hengevoss, 2023). Effectiveness (outcome) measures show how well a program or service fulfills its mission, including quality, cycle, and customer satisfaction. Effectiveness measures are widely used because they assess service quality and service outcomes from the perspective of citizens and service users. Often referred to as effectiveness measurements, these measures also provide essential information about what is working, what is not, and under what conditions (Vedung, 2017). Biondi & Russo (2022) require an integrated performance management system to use output and outcome measures. Van Wart (2016) argues that outcome measures are more important than outcome measures

because they provide insight into local government's ability to serve their customers better, which is the critical success factor for for-profit businesses.

## **2.10 Approaches to Performance Management**

The accomplishment of any organisation depends on numerous factors, including a performance measurement approach that an organization uses to measure and manage the performance of its people (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017). Performance measurement approaches are tools for improving organizational performance and competitiveness in business. They are a reference or measurement standard for comparing employee performance against set goals or targets. Hence, these approaches are crucial because they can change employee behavior through measurement, feedback, and learning (Jakobsen & Mortensen, 2016).

### **a) The Balanced Scorecard approaches**

According to Hasan and Chi (2017), the balanced scorecard approach was introduced in the early 1990s to enable private sector companies to describe the essential aspects of their operations. Menz et al. (2021) define the balanced scorecard as a set of measures directly linked to corporate strategy. The scorecard allows managers to evaluate the organization from four perspectives: financial performance, customer knowledge, internal business processes, and learning and growth. According to Sayed et al. (2022), the balanced scorecard approach covers the quality and efficiency of community service delivery. Still, it broadens the scope of action by attempting to balance short-term operational control in the organization with the long-term vision and strategy for connected success. Many municipal systems examine administrative performance, while others measure governance processes and citizen service satisfaction. However, the Performance Management Guide for Municipalities (DPLG, 2001) states that when measuring performance, municipalities must consider inputs (resources, financial perspective), outputs (results, service delivery perspective), and outcomes (impact, customer satisfaction, growth, quality of life).

### **b) Performance benchmarking**

McKay et al. (2023) argue that performance benchmarking is another approach to defining community performance. Benchmarking is understood as comparing the best in the same class or across sectors with the best in the economy (Hendricks & Dietterich, 2019). Municipalities often compare their current performance to historical performance or their set targets. Many will compare themselves to other similar communities or national or international standards of performance in specific service areas.

### **c) Management by objectives MBO**

Management By Objectives is regarded as a systematic approach that allows managers to know what is expected from them. In other words, it focuses on the manager's performance (Sun et al., 2023). At the end of the performance period, the manager's performance is assessed to determine whether their assigned objectives are achieved. Based on this assessment, decisions are made regarding reviewing objectives and setting new targets and developmental needs of an employee for the next performance period (Chang et al., 2023).

### **d) Performance Prism**

The performance prism is a tool to assist management teams in influencing their thinking about the key questions that need to be asked for designing their performance measures and management systems (Yudhistira et al., 2022). The Performance Prism system was invented by experienced researchers and consultants within the performance management space (Afifah & Syakhroni, 2022). It encompasses five interrelated facets: Stakeholder satisfaction, Strategies, Processes, Capabilities, and Stakeholder contributions. Then, the Performance prism builds on the strengths of the existing measurement system on shareholder value and brings innovation based on free premises. Siva & Gajendran, (2023). Points out that, in the first place, organisations should think about the wants and needs of all their key stakeholders and how to deliver value to each of them. Secondly, the organisation must harmonize and integrate strategies, processes, and capabilities to provide real value to its stakeholders.

### **e) Performance pyramid**

Zhao et al. (2016) define the performance pyramid as a framework for ensuring that employee needs assessment addresses each component's underlying performance. According to Zhang et al. (2018), the performance pyramid was introduced by Cross and Lynch in 1992. It focuses on the linkage of an organisation's strategy with its operations within four levels, which seem to fit into each other in the achievement of objectives. According to Li et al. (2021), developing a municipality performance pyramid starts with defining an overall corporate vision at the first level, translating into specific business unit objectives. The second level concerns the setting of short-term targets and long-term goals. The business operating system links top-level to day-to-day operational measures. Finally, four key performance measures (quality, cycle time, delivery, waste) are used at departments and work centres daily. Although the Performance Pyramid includes financial and non-financial measures, it also considers integrating corporate objectives with operational performance indicators.

### **f) Logic Model**

The logic model, according to Biswas & Akroyd, (2022) is a system for integrating strategic management and performance measurement designed for the government. It is a program-based measurement tool that forces planners to define inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. For municipal performance, the logic is often simply that municipalities use resources to deliver goods and services that will benefit people in local communities. Therefore, this model provides short-term and long-term goals for performance and builds causal links among budgets, planned activities, and expected results (Dissaux, 2023).

### **g) The performance models**

Bourne, Neely, Mills & and Platts (2003) state that the concept of the performance model was developed by Kaplan and Norton with the idea that the performance model is based on the concept that senior managers have in their minds a set of beliefs about how the business operates and how performances in different parts of the business interact with each other. The method for generating such a

business model includes facilitating the senior management team through a review of their business strategy by asking two questions: which objective is to be achieved and how the objective be achieved (Zhao et al., 2023).

### **2.11 Performance rating techniques**

Municipalities rely on a combination of assessment methods to measure performance. Most municipalities recognize the value of self-assessment, particularly as a consensus-building exercise within strategic processes. Impartiality in data collection remains paramount important issue (Zhang et al., 2023). However, there is a great deal of confusion about the purpose for which assessments are made.

Evaluations are conducted to (a) provide a basis for administrative actions such as promotion, raises, and termination, and (b) support supervisors in their task of striving for optimal employee performance. The existing method of applying a common form and assessment standards for both purposes at the same time tends to produce poor results for both purposes (Jayakumar et al., 2022). These assessment techniques include but are not limited to, 360 degrees, self-assessment, critical incidents, and behavior-based methods.

#### **a) 360 Degree**

According to Ningtyas, Taufiqurrochman, and Rahman (2023), the 360 degree is a popular performance appraisal technique that involves the evaluation of inputs from multiple levels within the organization as well as external sources. That is, 360-degree feedback relies on the input of an employee's superiors, colleagues, subordinates, sometimes customers, suppliers, and/or spouses. It provides people with information about the effect of their actions on others in the workplace. It provides a notion that behavioral change might be elicited through a process of enhanced self-awareness. A 360-degree process is most often used as an assessment tool for personal development rather than evaluation, and experts warn that linking 360-degree feedback to administrative actions such as selection or pay could skew the feedback and become detrimental to the process (Jiménez et al., 2023).

### **b) Self-Evaluation**

According to Ren, Zhao, Vu, Liu, and Lakshminarayanan (2023), self-assessments offer employees the opportunity to systematically assess their performance. Employees can self-assess by completing their own assessment and submitting the draft for discussion with the manager or by reviewing a draft of the manager's assessment. The self-assessment process is greatly enhanced when clear performance standards are used, staff are experienced, and confidence is high (Oosterveld-Vlug et al., 2022).

### **c) Critical incidents**

The critical incidents technique, as described by Persolja (2020), involves identifying the job requirements for successful performance and keeping a log of effective and ineffective workplace behavior incidents for each subordinate. This technique is a valuable tool for managers to assess and manage employee performance. The manager keeps a log of effective and ineffective incidents of workplace behavior for each subordinate. The incidents are then analysed and refined into a composite picture of the fundamentals required in a particular job. From this, a checklist is developed that represents the framework against which the subordinate is judged. During the evaluation conference, the manager can refer to the critical incidents to correct work deficiencies, identify training needs, or commend successful performance. This method is normally applied to assess what constitutes good or bad performance by analysing events observed to have a successful or unsuccessful outcome, instead of simply listing tasks and guessing performance requirements (Emmett, 2021).

### **d) Behavioural anchored method**

The behaviour-based method focuses on worker behaviour (Mishra et al., 2023). This rating of leadership qualities prompted the evaluator to evaluate behaviours (e.g., working well with colleagues, coming to meetings, and working on time). In one type of behavioural instrument, behavioural observation scales, supervisors record the frequency with which different behaviours appear on the scale (Brown et al., 2013).

## **2.12 Constraints & Challenges of Effective Performance within the Context of B2B**

The performance management systems in the South African municipal landscape emanate from the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 as well as the Municipal Performance for municipal managers and managers that are directly accountable to the Municipal Managers. The above-mentioned documents outline the fundamental processes such as the establishment, planning, and implementation of the systems in every municipality in South Africa. Within the South African context, performance management is described as the basis of excellence and the basis of honest, transparent, and effective service delivery embedded in good and honest governance, unity, and commitments, which are the cornerstones of the back-to-basics programme (Ndevu, 2022).

Performance Management challenges at the municipal level arise from a lack of management commitments, performance feedback, clear goals and objectives, resource allocation, and performance evaluation (Quaadgras et al., 2014).

### **a) Lack of management commitments**

There is a serious lack of commitment on the side of managers at the municipal level to management performance. As a result, it remains the compliance exercise for managers (Motl et al., 2023). This emphasizes how important strong leadership is to PMS's success. According to Hristov, Camilli, and Mechelli (2022), management engagement and execution make PMS challenging. They suggest that line managers should be responsible for PMS rather than the human resources department and that management should provide a good example for workers to follow.

### **b) Lack Of Performance Feedback.**

Since the performance management process remains a tick-box exercise for the municipal managers, there is no feedback on the performance of the managers. It is essential to give criticism when workers have not sufficiently performed or even in instances of extraordinary execution (Sur'is et al., 2023). Bressan & Jiang, (2020) agree with the significance of giving fortuitous and consistent criticism to workers on

how they perform all through the year as opposed to yearly execution surveys, as this will assist with distinguishing representatives whose exhibition is beneath the normal guidelines early. The statement "presentation of the board achievement increments when there is progressing correspondence among representative and manager on the exhibition result" is supported by Dlamini, Suknunan, and Bhana (2022:67), who found that the employee-manager relationship influences employee performance and productivity. In addition to the fact that there should be correspondence, however, that correspondence ought to be powerful, which implies that it should support criticism, discourse, and cooperation. The director and representative consequently have the obligation to have a two-way correspondence process for the input interaction to work.

### **c) Lack Of Clear Goals and Objectives**

The inability to adjust sets of responsibilities to departmental vital targets and those of the association can lead to underperformance (Paszke et al., 2019). This is because sets of expectations make sense of what is anticipated of workers and the acknowledged presentation thereof (Khalil et al., 2019). They further add that muddled hierarchical objectives and targets show an absence of responsibility by the board to flow hierarchical objectives downwards.

In a study by Thneibat and Sweis (2022), the authors analysed the relationship between the performance appraisal of employees and the departmental strategic objectives. They found that the essential targets of the division were not aligned with individual performance plans. During the exploration, it was demonstrated that respondents did not have the foggiest idea of what the essential goals of the division were, giving a sign that it is improbable that singular execution and departmental targets were adjusted practically speaking. This view was upheld by shop-floor proof that presentation arrangements accept just position depictions, and not key departmental goals into account.

### **d) Lack Of Resources to Perform**

This method included the process of assessing execution. It is one of the most completed parts of implementation by management since directors feel less open to pondering and giving input on ways of behaving, and furthermore, since ways of

behaving are more emotional and not assessable as targets (Champoux, 2020). The previously mentioned creators further add that since execution assessments are a yearly or half-yearly occasion, they are viewed as standard and insignificant. Furthermore, Schlaegel et al. (2022) believe that the most popular methodology used by the supervisor is trying to manage lacklustre, showing the designation of the normal execution evaluation while leading assessments that are not genuinely records of the singular exhibition.

#### **e) Evaluating Performance**

Bogdanova-Beglarian et al. (2020) consider that an absence of assets is a serious contributing factor to PMS difficulties and mention that the arrangement of the right devices for the gig is basic if the association has any desire to carry out PMS effectively. Without the important apparatuses and assets to the gig, it is improbable that workers will meet their objectives. The instruments are not restricted to yet incorporating the accompanying innovative hardware like PCs, preparing of representatives, and board support.

Organisations face several limitations and challenges in implementing effective performance management using the back-to-basics approach. Lack of management commitments, performance feedback, clear goals and objectives, resources to perform, and performance evaluation can all hinder the successful implementation of performance management practices. Hence, organisations must address these issues and develop effective strategies that support the back-to-basics approach to ensure that effective performance management practices are implemented.

### **2.13 The Balanced Scorecard within the Public Institutional Environment**

The Balance Scorecard (BSC) is the most strategic management instrument that has been applied in different settings (Stavropoulou et al., 2023). It illustrates a comprehensive guideline for organisations to align their strategic objectives with key performance indicators across various perspectives, such as financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth.

The Balance Scorecard is normally used as a strategic management tool within the public sector which translates an organisational strategic objective into a set of performance indicators as it goes beyond the traditional measurements of results offered by the financial or accounting reports, integrating financials and non-financial indicators, representing internal processes, customer-relations as well as the ability to learn and growth Freitas (2021). As a result, they turn to perfect their strategic plans by adopting the Balance Scorecard to the reality of the public sector so that they improve in providing better services to the citizens. Remember that the public sector is always searching for continuous improvement in lieu of organisational performance. Amongst the benefits of using the balanced scorecard within the public sector are the integration of budgetary and non-budgetary actions, alignment of organizational strategic and budget planning, modernization of public management, and budgetary control.

Furthermore, Rahmawaty, Darwanis, and Abdullah (2023) consider the public sector as an institution that is always looking forward to innovation and improving their performance to fast-track service delivery to their citizenry. Although the balanced scorecard in the public institution may significantly differ due to the role the organization plays in relation to the clients that are serving. (Armel et al., 2022)

Against this backdrop, the Balanced scorecard consists of perspectives that are analysed through the strategic, intending to generate value: financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth.

According to Kaplan 2010, the balanced scorecard framework is a strategic management tool that helps organizations align their goals with their strategies and measure their performance. Furthermore, it expresses that the framework is based on (4) four perspectives: financial, customer, Internal business process, and learning and growth. Each perspective is essential to the Balanced Scorecard and plays a critical role in the success of an organization: -

### **a) The financial perspective**

This perspective examines an organisation's financial health and includes metrics such as revenue growth, profitability, and return on investment. It is critical to ensure that an organization can sustain operations, meet its financial obligations, and generate profits for its owners or shareholders.

### **b) The customer**

The customer perspective focuses on meeting customer needs and includes measures such as customer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty. This perspective is important to ensure that an organization meets the needs of its customers and builds strong customer relationships. Focusing on customer satisfaction is also necessary for customer acquisition, as satisfied customers are more likely to recommend a company to others.

### **a) The internal business**

This process perspective focuses on the processes and systems a company needs to provide value to its customers. This perspective includes metrics such as cycle time, efficiency, and productivity. Focusing on internal business processes is critical to a company's ability to deliver high-quality products and services to its customers in a timely and efficient manner.

### **b) The learning and growth**

This perspective includes measures such as employee training and development, employee satisfaction, and innovation. This perspective is important to ensure that a company has a skilled and motivated workforce that can adapt to changing business needs and technologies. A focus on learning and growth is also necessary to drive innovation and continuous improvement.

However, the financial perspective is linked to the other perspectives through cause-and-effect relationships. For example, investments in employee training and development can lead to improved internal business processes, which in turn can improve customer satisfaction and financial results.

### **2.13.1 The benefit of the balanced scorecard**

The Balanced Scorecard underscores the importance of considering the interactions between these perspectives when developing strategic plans and measuring performance. It provides a comprehensive approach to an organization's performance and allows managers to identify areas for improvement. By comparing measures from different perspectives, executives can gain insights into how improvements in one area can lead to improvements in another (Amer et al., 2022).

On the other hand, Sharma & Kumar (2023) also share the same sentiments that the balanced scorecard framework also supports organisations in aligning their goals with their strategies. By setting goals and measures for each perspective, organisations can ensure they are making progress toward the desired outcomes. This alignment is critical to success because it ensures that everyone in the company is working toward the same goals.

Therefore, if the balanced scorecard is implemented properly, it has a serious impact on improving internal business processes and can lead to higher customer satisfaction. Its four perspectives - financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth - provide a comprehensive view of an organization's performance and help managers identify areas for improvement. Aligning these four perspectives of the balanced scorecard to pillars of the back-to-basics, which are promoting good governance, transparency, and accountability; ensuring sound financial management and accounting; and building institutional resilience and administrative capability can improve the performance of the different municipalities across the province.

### **2.14 Good Corporate Governance in the Public Sector**

In the South African context, Good Corporate Governance emanates from Section 195 of the constitution of the republic recognises the importance of good corporate governance in the Public Sector by stating that: -

*'Public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles as contained in the constitution (a) a high standard of professional ethics must*

*be promoted and maintained, (b) efficient, economic, and effective use of resources must be promoted.*

As a result, the Department of Public Enterprise came up with the Protocol on Corporative Governance in the Public Sector, which incorporated the principles of the King Report on Corporate Governance. Then, in 2003, the Cabinet approved the provisions of the protocol on corporate governance, and all public entities were directed to comply with the provisions contained in the protocol. However, this does not end with the public entities. It also provides guidance to the public sector in terms of the best corporate governance practices.

Despite the approval and the existence of the Protocol on Good Governance in the Public Sector. There are serious corporate failures in the South African Public Sector at all levels and Provincial, and the situation is worse than at the Local Government Level. The scandals of Maladministration, corruption, and poor service delivery are witnessed in the public sectors in all spheres of government (Mboweni, 2019). Hence, the implementation of the Back-to-Basics program is in place to ensure that there is promoting good governance, transparency, and accountability, ensuring financial viability accounting, institutional resilience, and administrative capabilities.

#### **2.14.1 King IV Report on Corporate Governance**

The King Report came into being in 1994, as King I, King II, and King III, with King IV as the latest addition (The King IV effective date was 1 April 2017). Since 1994, The King Reports has undergone many changes. It was inevitable that the King Report and King Code would need to be updated from time to time. Each version of King builds on the previous version. King IV builds on the underlying principles of previous King reports but now emphasizes greater stakeholder engagement, IT governance, and disclosure. King III had 75 principles, but King IV had only 17 principles in total. Previously, code and reports were published separately, but in King IV code is integrated into reports. King IV includes all the principles of previous King reports, but they are updated and more effective.

The King IV final report was released on November 1, 2016. The King Commission has also published five King IV Supplements to be used in conjunction with the King IV Report and Code. Supplements provide guidance for specific sectors on how to apply King's Principles within an organization.

According to Michalsons (2022). The King Report and the King Code were developed with the intention of defining corporate governance and the tool to exercise ethical behaviour and effective leadership by the governing body. There are five critical purposes of the King Report namely: -

- a) Create an ethical culture in the organisation.
- b) Improve their performance and increase the value they create.
- c) Ensure there are adequate and effective controls in place
- d) Build trust between all stakeholders.
- e) Ensure the organisation has a good reputation; and Ensures legitimacy

Corporate Governance is the system of rules, policies, and practices that dictate how a company's board of directors manages and oversees the operation of a company (Tibiletti et al., 2021).

Amonboev (2020) attests that 'corporate governance represents the systems through which companies and firms can be controlled and directed. Based on the definition of corporate governance it can be stated that objective of the good corporate governance is to maximize the contribution of the company to the whole economy, particularly to all stakeholders'

Therefore, this confirms that the issues of good governance are not solemnly for public entities; they also include the public sector in different spheres of government, as per the requirements of the constitution of the republic, to promote ethical culture, ensure good performance, put effective controls in place, and ensure legitimacy.

## **2.15 Performance Management within the Public Institution**

According to Patel et al. (2021), performance management system was conceptualised in the public sector in the 1700s and early 1880s to enhance government calls to ensure accountability and demonstrate value for money. Performance Management was introduced as a tool to reform administrative systems to address the challenges of the 21st century. This came into effect because of transition in the public sector, as well as the introduction of the New Public Management model (Barzelay, 2019).

Biondi & Russo (2022) emphasise the point that performance management is an instrument that seeks to improve service delivery within the public service. Hence within the Public Service, the performance management steered by the Public Service Regulations 1999 compels government departments to manage performance in a consultative, supportive, and non-discriminatory manner to enhance organisational efficacy and effectiveness, accountability for the use of government resources at the same time achieving results.

The rationale behind introducing the performance management system within the public service was to ensure monitoring, reviewing, assessment, performance, training, and development of the underperformers, promoting and introducing the personnel's sense of responsibility. Fundamental to this, performance management is induced by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which expresses that the local government is the sphere of government that is closest to the people (Steden, 2016). Therefore, the local government employees, specifically the municipality officials, should keep up with the demands for services, improve the assessment, and address the service delivery issues.

According to He & Ismail (2023), in the South African context of local government, Integrated Development encompasses the systems of performance management and performance budgeting. The rationale behind incorporating these two systems in the Integrated Development Plan is to ensure that municipalities properly prioritise their budget and monitor and ensure that they report on their performance accordingly.

Then, in 2001, the Performance Management Guidelines for Municipalities were introduced as specific guidelines for municipalities to start developing and implementing an organizational performance management system.

## **2.16 Theoretical Perspective of Performance Management**

There are numerous motivational theories that provide explanations for employee behavior and attitudes. These content theories are based in the assumption that people have individuals need that motivate their behaviour. Theories such as Maslow (1995) Herzberg (1996), and McGregor (1960) are known in this area. In contrast to content theory, this work deals with process theory that identifies relationships between variables, namely Bloom's expectation theory (1964). In addition, there is also a resources-based theory which is the most influential and cited theory of management (Wahyuni & Pujiharto, 2016). Freeman (2021), attest to the fact that this theory emanates from the field of strategic management.

### **a) Motivation**

Motivation is the critical component that is embroiled in leadership. It is the responsibility of leaders to drive the personnel toward the achievement of the organisational objectives (Prokopenko et al., 2023). Personnel needs the motivation to reach an acceptable level of performance. There are certain theories that give effect to motivation in the workplace namely: - Self-determination theory, Expectancy-Value Theories, Maslow's theory, the hierarchy of needs, and goal-setting theory.

#### **o Self-determination theory**

Legault (2017) defines the self-determination theory as a broad theory of human personality and motivation that influences how an individual interacts with and depends on the social environment. Actual this theory is confined within the basis of psychological needs of independence, competence, and relatedness as well as their role in self-determination. Therefore, the theory emphasizes the importance of motivation in improving the performance of the

individual or the team in any organisation. Hence, the success of B2BP needs a certain level of commitment and self-determined individuals to work with the citizenry to achieve the objective of this programme.

- **Expectancy-Value Theories**

According to the expectancy-value theory (Chan & Zhou, 2023), individuals' motivation to engage in certain behaviours is influenced by their own expectations of success and the value they place on the task. This theory is also applied to understand and predict individuals' motivation and behavior in numerous fields, such as psychology and education. Since this study focuses on the enhancement of performance it is imperative to consider and manage the expectations of the personnel that is expected to implement B2BP

- **Maslow's theory, the hierarchy of needs**

This theory originated in 1943 with the belief that people need to be motivated to achieve certain needs and that these needs are preceded by others. According to Maslow, the critical need for an individual is physical survival, and once that is achieved, then the next step in the process is what motivates the individual. In the main Maslow's theory has five stages namely: -

- I. (Physiological needs: - basically this is human survival such as food, water, shelter, air, sleep, etc
- II. Safety needs: - each individual needs protection such as security, stability, freedom, law, and order
- III. Love and belongingness needs: - once the safety need is there then the sense of belonging should be fulfilled such as trust, love, and affection.
- IV. Esteem needs: - this is classified into two categories (i) esteem for oneself such as dignity, independence, and achievement) (ii) desire for respect from others and reputation (in the main the status)
- V. Self-actualization needs: - this is about fulfillment and personal growth (McLeod, 2018).

Therefore, Maslow's Hierarchy on Needs is in line with the B2BP as it provides the framework to understand and improving the services provided by the municipalities using this theory. Furthermore, municipalities can now start to deliver services based on priorities such as basic services and meet the diverse needs of the citizenry.

- **Goal-setting theory**

According to (Locke & Lathan 1984, 1990), the goal theory is based on introspective observations such as conscious human behavior purposeful as it is regulated by the goals of the individual. Moreover, they also believe that goals seriously influence individual behaviour and performance (Han et al., 2023). Hence, the goal-setting theory deals with the critical relationship between goals and performance. As a result, goal setting can impact performance and motivation in the implementation of the B2BP across the province in various municipalities

**b) Resource-Based View Theory**

The Resource-Based View Theory is based on a broad understanding and the utilisation of existing resources within the organization to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Adam, 2022). This theory can assist municipalities to leverage on their critical asset such as the human capital, knowledge, infrastructure, and the rapport with communities to improve the way they delivery services and create sustainable value for money for residents

On the other hand, Amit & Shoemaker (2016) confirms that the Resource-Based View Framework compels the management of the organisation to focus on the internal resources of the organization, either through responsiveness to opportunities, neutralising external threats, and avoiding internal issues which are critical acts in developing the potential to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage. According to the Resource Based View Framework, this can be achieved through the following attributes: - Physical Capital Resources, Human Capital Resources, and Organisational Capital Resources.

- **Physical Capital Resources**

This refers to the physical or tangible technology that is in existence from the past or in the current period which can be owned or borrowed, to generate a business flow of Technology or Information Communication Technology (ICT) and financial resources are the prerequisite and an important resource in any business or organisation at the same time has a critical impact in the performance of the organisation (Crittenden et al., 2019). This is crucial in the sense that can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service delivery in various municipalities.

- **Human Capital Resources**

Human Capital Resources is another important component of the organisation's success, consisting of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees (Hamilton & Soden, 2020). On the other hand, the treasured resource should be strategically managed by means of big data analytics to identify opportunities and address the challenges in human of the organisation's success, consisting of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees (Hamilton & Soden, 2020).

- **Organisational Capital Resources**

According to Verplancke et al., (2023), organisational capital resources are crucial in the financial performance of small and medium-sized accounting practices (SMP). These types of resources consist of the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of the employees, at the same time the organisational structures and processes that contribute to the overall effectiveness of the organisation. Consequently, the impact of B2BP can be realized requires the organisation's capital resources with relevant skills and expertise.

**c) Institutional Theory**

Since the institutional theories emerged in the 1970s, individuals and organisations have been perceived as the local actors in the institutions as they are affected by societal institutions and national states by a world society.

Institutional theory is a framework that attempts to explain how organizations and social institutions are shaped by their environment. Proponents of this theory assume that organizations are influenced not only by economic and technical factors but also

by social and cultural factors. The institutional theory provides how structures are created, diffused, adopted, and adapted, and how they fall into decline and discuss over time (Khassawneh & Elrehail, 2022). According to Young (2020), the notion of social structure intensifies those institutions as multi-layered, durable social structures that consist of symbolic elements, social activities, and material resources. Consequently, these institutions consist of both formal and informal institutions (Gerxhani & Cichonocki, 2023). In the South African context, the formal institution, for example, the constitution, laws, regulations, as well as government policy statements. Hence, the institutional theory is applied in the different forms: -

**Policy Implementation:** Municipalities are established based on legislation, mainly the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, and related legislation, such as the Municipal Systems Act and Structure Acts, which determine how the system of local government should operate.

**Resource Allocations:** The institutional theory also determined how municipalities should prioritize their funding and resources based on their institutional pressures (Risi et al., 2022).

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Municipalities are expected to engage with their stakeholder on a regular basis as part of their institutional expectations, which also have serious ramifications on service delivery (Kujala et al., 2022).

**Organizational Structure:** The institutional arrangement of municipalities also reflects their norms, impacting their efficiency in operating and responding to the needs of the citizens (Shaffer & Ginsberg, 2017).

**Change and Adaption:** The theory also provides some clarity on how some municipalities are slow to adapt to change. In some instances, resist change due to existing norms and practices (Krantz & Gustafsson, 2021).

**Legitimacy and accountability:** Since municipalities are highly regulated through a legislative framework, they are bound to adhere to institutional norms (Ringsgwandl et al., 2022). Hence, it is imperative for organizations to adapt to social expectations to gain legitimacy and survive. Therefore, organisations are compelled to adopt certain practices or structures not necessarily because they are most efficient or rational but because they are consistent with prevailing norms or values in their social context with social expectations of ethical behaviour.

It is against this backdrop that the implementation of the Back-to-Basics program in enhancing municipal performance is critical in this regard to change the *status quo* at the municipal level. The challenges that are being faced by municipalities need to be addressed so they will deliver on their mandates as enshrined in the constitution of the republic. They need to adapt and align with the five basic pillars of the programs of promoting good governance, transparency, and accountability, ensuring sound financial management and accounting, and building institutional resilience and administrative capability.

### **2.17 Summary**

Despite the numerous attempts to address challenges that are facing municipalities across the country. They are continuously failing to deliver on their mandates to meet the needs of their citizens. Since the advent of democracy, local government has gazetted several legislation and policy frameworks that seek to guide in terms of the establishment of structure, municipal systems, financial management, and issues of performance. Moreover, there is a serious turnover in policy frameworks and reforms in trying to transform the system of local government to work better. It is also transpired that out of ten (10) of the municipal reforms starting with Project Liquidity to District Development Model, only Siyeza Manje, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP), and the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) that lasted for more than five (5) years. Most of the reforms discontinued less than the period of 5 years. In terms of KZNCoGTa's performance report on Back-to-Basics (2014) and (2017) the states of municipalities in the KwaZulu-Natal are clearly showing that municipalities are still facing challenges, despite the efforts of the national and provincial government to rescue the situation. Although some municipalities have improved from being challenged to functional there are also those that require interventions. Lastly, the introduction of performance management could not assist that much as it remains the compliance exercise for some managers.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introductions**

This chapter introduces the research methodology applied in responding to the questions set out for this research in Chapter 1. Research Methodology refers to the systematic and scientific applied in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data with the intention to respond to the research questions or testing hypothesis (Mehta, 2023). The research methodology is a critical tool that gives researchers an opportunity to select a strategy to be used to conduct the research based on the intended objectives. Therefore, the research design is outlined, followed by the description of the study area, research population, sample size and procedure, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research philosophy**

A research philosophy outlines the tool applied in the data collection as well as the analysis tool and the way data are used to weave threads of the research problem. According to (Hanson-DeFusco, 2023) Research philosophy, particularly epistemologies, heavily influence the selection of relevant data sources and methodologies in the social sciences. This guidance provides for the creation of new knowledge on the specific topic, regardless of how intense the present idea may appear. (Creswell, & Creswell, 2022) Research philosophy is the principles and interpretations regarding how information on a particular phenomenon should be gathered, evaluated, and utilized. It influences researchers' methods and understanding of results.

To comprehend the research philosophy, the research philosophy shapes the research process by influencing the selection of research methods and the understanding of results (Robson & Foster, 2023). Moreover, the research philosophy outlines the beliefs and assumption cycle methodically to figure out new knowledge. It is imperative for the purpose of each study to respond to the research problem through data collection and analysis. Then the findings eventually provide answers to the specific question. Creswell (2022) emphasizes that the search philosophy assists in the

understanding of the assumptions as well as realities faced during the journey of the research.

There are three factors that largely determine the philosophical positions; the first one is ontology, which focuses on understanding the essence of existence and which entities are present in the universe. It delves into inquiries regarding being, existence, and the characteristics of objects and their connections (Crotty , 2022). The second one is epistemology which investigates the characteristics and range of knowledge, such as the ways in which knowledge is obtained and what qualifies as legitimate knowledge (Cresswell , 2022), Lastly, is axiology which examines how values and ethics impact research, including how researchers' values affect their investigation and results (Hesse-Biber, , 2020).

Therefore, depending on the study's philosophical inferences of implication, the research philosophy can apply any of the following critical aspects in the research study. They are outlined as follows: -

- **Positivism:** This aspect is suitable for extremely structured large samples and is highly recommended for qualitative and quantitative data. This philosophy supposes that the social world can be understood objectively. Therefore, a scientist is regarded as the most objective analyst since he or she distances himself from personal values and works independently (Zukauskas, 2017).
- **Interpretivism** (Interpretivist) believes that the social world can be understood in a subjective way. As a result, the utmost attention is directed to the understanding of the way in which people experience the social world (Zukauskas, 2017). Therefore, this is suitable for the small samples with depth investigation and merely qualitative.
- **Realism:** This philosophy is founded on the assumption that it is necessary for the perception of the subjective nature of the human (Zukauskas, 2017). The study applies the methods according to the flow of the subject in question and can be qualitative or quantitative.

- **Pragmatism:** This philosophy deals with the fact that it does not view the world as absolute unity (Zukauskas, 2017). It is popular for the mixed method design for qualitative and quantitative data collection, normally catering to different-size samples (Creswell & Plano Clark,, 2022)

### 3.2.1 Research philosophy for this study

Zukauskas (2017) believes that every researcher should be guided by their own approach to conduct the research. Research philosophy can be defined as the development of the research assumption, knowledge, and nature. The assumption is perceived as reasoning, but it is based on the philosophizing person's knowledge and insights that are born as the product of the intellectual activity. On the other hand, Hitchcock and Hughes (2018) believe that research comes from assumptions.

Since the study focuses on evaluating Back-to-Basics programmes to enhance municipal performance, attention will be given to the participants' experiences regarding how they view the impact and significance of the Back-to-Basics programme in eThekweni. As a result, interpretivism was the most relevant and suitable philosophy for this study.

### 3.3 Research approach

It is important for any study to determine a research approach that is associated with the intention of the study. This should also consist of the research methods that will be applied for data collection and the methods applied to test the hypotheses or to provide answers to the research questions. The outcome of the research should be able to explore new knowledge in the specific discipline. Normally, there are three approaches that are often applied in the research namely: - deductive, inductive, and abductive approaches (Bryman, 2021).

- **Deductive approach:** This approach begins with the hypothesis and pays attention to testing a specific theory (Creswell J. W., 2022). This approach is predominately used from the top down.
- **Inductive approach:** This is the opposite of the deductive, and it is related to qualitative research. However, it starts from the bottom and works upwards,

manipulating the data for the generation of the theory however, certain researchers apply it in quantitative research in some instances (Bryman, 2021). Bryman (2021) emphasised that researchers apply an inductive approach for the purpose of exploring phenomena. In addition, the utmost common inductive approach is grounded theory.

- **Abductive approach:** this approach came because of the weakness in deductive and inductive approaches. The uncreativity in the selection process of theory for testing in the formulation of the hypotheses is in the context of the aesthetics of the theory selection and the logics of arts (O'Loughlin & McCallum, 2019). Henceforth, this led to the generation of a new approach called abduction. The abductive approach encompasses the numerous decisions on the probable deduction to make out of a set of observations (Hurley et al., 2021).

### **3.3.1 Research approach for this study**

This study is going to apply an inductive approach in the evaluation of the Back-to-Basics Programme in eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. Taking into cognition the significance of the Back-to-Basics Programme in enhancing municipal performance. Municipality is the closest sphere of government to the people and where service delivery and government policies are implemented. The government's successes and failures are evaluated to see whether they are making an impact in changing the lives of the people. It is against this backdrop that the inductive approach will be applied as it starts from the bottom and works upwards in the manipulation of data for the generation of the theory (Bryman, 2021).

### **3.4 Research methodology and design**

Research Methodology refers to the systematic and scientific applied in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data with the intention to respond to the research questions or testing hypothesis (Mehta, 2023). There are several types of research methodology that research can be applied depending on the nature of a research question, available resources, and goals of the study. Amongst these types of research methodology include quantitative, qualitative mixed methods,

experimental, and case study. Moreover, each of these methods has its own strengths and limitations (Mahta, 2023).

According to Creswell (2022), there are three types of methods when it comes to research, namely: - qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches. The qualitative research method allows the researcher to use text findings, the quality of the subject, and give the picture from the researcher's point of view. Secondly, the quantitative research method deals with numbers and amounts for describing an event that supports the hypotheses and prediction model. Thirdly, the mixed research method consists of both qualitative and quantitative data. The research may be conducted within the framework of either the qualitative or quantitative methodological traditions' (Tashakkori & Teddlie , 2020: 5).

This study employed the qualitative method with the intention to engender information that provided responses to the research questions. According to (Flick, 2022:67) qualitative research design as an inquiry tool and is "a systematic subjective approach used to describe and give meanings to social phenomena." Such an approach, hold forth (Flick, & Rohn,, 2023:34), relied on the description and thorough understanding of the field of study as well as obtaining the insiders' perspective through participant observation (Flirk, 2022:68).

The suitability of the qualitative approach for this study is dependent on its capability to gather information that is descriptive of the characteristics and the setting of the phenomenon that is being investigated (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research needs a proper interaction between the researcher and the participants to ascertain the critical information that reflects an all-inclusive view on the implementation of Back-to-Basics in eThekwini, and its impact on improving performance. This can be realized through a qualitative approach because it provides the researcher with a certain flexibility in which the design can be relooked to draw more in-depth quality from the information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, this approach is suitable for this study because, according to (Guba, & Lincoln,, 2019), it also has a "great possibility to trace

development and progress over a specific period of time as perceived by the research participants.”

### 3.5 Research setting

This study will be undertaken in KwaZulu-Natal, specifically in eThekweni Municipality. eThekweni Municipality falls within Category A since it is a Metropolitan. eThekweni is the largest city in this province and the third largest city in the country. The city is also a major tourism centre due to the warm, subtropical climate and widespread beaches. The eThekweni Metropolitan is the only Metro in the province of KwaZulu-Natal out of 54 municipalities (eThekweni Municipality, 2023).



### **Figure 3.1** Map of eThekweni Municipality

**Source:** eThekweni Municipality (2023)

## **3.6 Population**

The population is normally defined as “the entire group of people or elements that share specific characteristics and are of interest to the study.” (Cresswell, 2023:36). Therefore, researchers frequently establish a population to identify the subjects or objects they will investigate, which informs their sampling techniques and methods for collecting data. (Babbie, 2021). On the other hand, Cresswell (2022) defines the population as the total group of people or entities where the information is probably needed. Therefore, the KwaZulu Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, as the custodian of B2BP, and eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, as the implementers, remain the population of the study to ascertain the impact of B2BP to enhance municipal performance.

In the context of this study, the population will include the administrative and political leadership of the eThekweni Metropolitan. The Senior Management for the Local Government Branch, KZN CoGTa, will also be invited to partake in the study since they are entrusted with the responsibility to ensure monitoring, support, and intervention whenever it is necessary. Therefore, the KZN CoGTa remains instrumental in this study on the evaluation of Back-to-basics programmes in the province.

### **3.6.1 Sampling**

According to Trochim and Donnelly (2021), sampling is the process of choosing a subset of individuals, items, or observations from the larger population to make inferences about that population. According to Hung (2023), there are two types of sampling techniques:- probability and non-probability sampling. Furthermore, these techniques are described as;- probability sampling techniques:- simple random, systematic random, stratified random, cluster, and multi-stage.

However, the non-probability is rouged of purposive, volunteer, haphazard, and quota sampling. Hence, probability sampling is divided into four different stages namely:- identifying the suitable tool based on the types of research questions; determining the

appropriate size of the sample; selecting the suitable technique of sampling and then sampling, evaluating if the sample mirrors the population

On the other hand, Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) simplify sampling as the record of the population from which a sample can be drawn. For this reason, the sampling frame will be drawn from the political and administrative leadership of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality as well as the KZN CoGTA political and administrative leadership. Thus, the purpose of this study is for the researcher to purposefully sample (10) ten participants as a sample, all of whom have a critical role to play in the application of the Back-to-Basics Programme and who are in the best position to provide meaningful insight into the subject due to their role in the implementation of B2BP.

### **3.6.2 Sampling technique**

The shared factor between the researcher and the members arranged above is that they communicate at an expert level. All things considered; this qualifies these members to have the option to react usefully to questions identified with the significance of the straightforward program in improving the performance of the municipalities. Considering this, the legitimate testing procedure for this investigation thusly is purposive or judgment examining, which, as per (Obilor & Isaac, 2023), is the point at which the researcher intentionally selects the viewpoint that the person likes to remember for the example, considering particulars.

Moreover, "purposive or judgment testing is a progression of key inquiries about with whom, where, and how one does one's examination" (Cresswell, 2018:59). Normal utilized on this investigation to empower the specialist to focus and solely choose just those subjects that have the qualities that are appropriate for this examination, which might compactly be portrayed as explained proficient association.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher will purposefully sample (10) ten participants as a sample, all of whom have a critical role to play in the application of the Back-to-Basics Programme. According to Emmel (2013), purposeful sampling is judgemental or non-probability sampling, which is when a researcher intentionally

chooses the participants based on the specific characteristics or criteria that are relevant to the research objective and questions. This sample is enough because these are responsible key people to ensure that the back-to-basics is implemented within the municipality. On the other hand, KZN CoGTA is also critical to ensure that there is accountability, monitoring, and evaluation of the programmes as part of the support to the municipality. The next table below is the breakdown of the composition of the research participants.

**Table 3.1:** Sample of the study

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>RELEVANCE</b>	<b>POPULATION</b>
eThekweni Metropolitan Political Leadership	2	As the political head of the Municipality and a champion of the programme.	Public Office-Bearer's
eThekweni Metropolitan Administrative Leadership	1	As the Implementers of the programme at the municipal level.	Senior Management (Heads of Departments)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and Evaluation Department</li> <li>• Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE)</li> </ul>	1		
KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs: -	6	As an implementing department in the province.	Senior Management specifically from the Local Government Branch
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>		

### 3.7 Data collection

Data collection is one of the critical stages that enables the researcher to find answers to research questions. Moreover, data collection is the process of collecting data with the intention of gaining insights regarding the research topic (Taherdoost, 2022).

According to Dawson, (2020), there are six types of data collection tools that are normally used during the collection of data in empirical research studies namely, surveys/ questionnaires, interviews, observations, focus groups, document analysis, and case studies: -

- **Surveys/Questionnaires**

Structured instruments consist of a series of questions aimed at gathering quantitative or qualitative data from respondents. Creswell, & Plano Clark, (2017).

- **Interviews**

In-depth, often semi-structured conversations between the researcher and participants to explore their perspectives, experiences, and insights (Flick, 2022).

- **Observations**

Systematic recording of behaviours, events, or conditions as they occur in their natural settings is often used in qualitative research (Dawson, 2020).

- **Focus Groups**

Guided discussions with a group of participants aimed at exploring their perceptions and attitudes toward a specific topic or product. Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston (2014).

- **Document Analysis**

Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as the examination of existing documents (e.g., reports, articles, or records) to extract relevant data and insights for research purposes.

- **Case Studies**

An in-depth exploration of a particular instance or case within its real-life context, often employing multiple data collection methods (Yin, 2018).

Therefore, this study will opt for interviews as it offers the researcher a great opportunity to interact with the participants of the study. On the other hand, it gives the participants an opportunity to express themselves in their own words and in detail. At the same provides a researcher with an opportunity to probe further into the

participant's responses and make follow-ups. Moreover, this method assists a researcher in getting valuable information.

### 3.8 Data analysis

The technique employed for the analysis of the data take the form of thematic content analysis. Thematic content analysis is analysing data under the lenses of certain themes that emanate from the collected data (Kaur, Mahajan, Singh, & Gupta, 2023). Thematic analysis defines by (Braun & Clarke, , 2021:95) the: “thematic analysis is a qualitative research method normally applied to identify, analyse, and report patterns (themes) within data. It also provides a flexible approach to understand participants’ perspectives by organising and interpreting data through systematic coding process.” Therefore, through coding: “the researcher develops themes within the raw data, by recognising important moments in the data and encoding them, prior to interpretation” (McGill, 2023:56). The thematic analysis applied in this study, using seven phases of thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2019). Table below shows these seven phases.

**Table 3.2:** Seven phases of the thematic analysis

Stage	Thematic Analysis Activities	Explanation
1	Transcription	Audio data to be translated into transcription
2	Readings and familiarisation	Understanding the content through the examination of the data
3	Coding (selective and complete	Familiar with the content through reading of data
4	Identification for themes	Examined the patterned throughout the responses from a of data
5	Examine themes	Identify themes suitability within the data that is coded
6	explain and naming themes	Identify the exclusivity of each theme
7	Writing report	compile the actual report using persuasive extracts that is exclusive to the research question as well as literature

**Source:** Braun and Clarke (2019:589-597).

### **3.9 Ethical considerations**

The researcher knows that in directing examination, there are moral guidelines that should be maintained. Thus, the researcher will make guarantee that he follows the moral code of exploration as endorsed by the UKZN Research Office under the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSRC). This applies to research involving human subjects and is non-biomedical. The researcher solicited the gatekeeper's letters from both institutions where the study conducted namely: - KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The Accounting Officer issued a permission letter to the Researcher to conduct the research within the Department. The study area eThekweni Metropolitan Area also provided a permission in the form of the letter to the researcher. Subsequently, the researcher received the ethical clearance letter from UKZN Research Office under the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSRC) giving the go ahead to conduct the research.

The participation to this study was voluntary and all participants had to sign the consent form acknowledging this before their participation and before the interviews were conducted. Lastly, the participants can withdraw at any given time without providing a reason. Thus, all the necessary ethical processes were applied before the execution of this study.

### **3.10 Summary**

The success of this study will attain through the research methodology that is outlined above. The study areas are also critical since eThekweni Municipality is the only metropolitan in KwaZulu-Natal. Most of the municipality whether is district or local is looking upon on eThekweni Municipality in term of the good learning lessons and experience. Therefore, their performance is expected to be of the highest standard as they are well resourced financial and expertise that they attract in terms of the human capital.

## **CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF THE STUDY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides data presentation and analysis from in-depth interviews that the researcher conducted through the interaction with participants, in the main were Senior Officials and Political leadership of eThekweni Municipality. Since the study was focusing on the eThekweni Municipality. The study also considered participants from the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs again focusing on Senior Management. Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs was critical as they are entrusted with the responsibility to support, monitor, and intervene as per the Constitutional obligation.

### **4.2 Data presentation**

This study applied the qualitative method. The in-depth interviews were conducted with the participants from eThekweni Municipality and from the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The first set of interviews were conducted with the Senior Management Officials and Political leadership of eThekweni Municipality with specific questions as the implementers of the Back-to-Basics Programme.

Then, the next sets of interviews were conducted with Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs which comprised of the Political and Administrative leadership (Senior Management Officials). Their questions were different as they are providing support to municipalities and the overall coordination of municipalities.

However, these types of questions were aligned and yield toward responding to the objectives and questions of the study which are outlined as follows: -

The objectives of the study were to: -

- To examine the extent to which the Back-to-Basics Programme contributes towards improved municipal performance.
- To analyse the effectiveness of the Back-to-Basics Programme in supporting the various municipalities across the province in doing things differently and serving their communities better.
- To evaluate the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing challenges faced by the different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To examine challenges and constraints that hinder the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme.

The study was focusing on the four critical questions relating to the evaluation of back-to-basics in enhancing municipal performance: -

- What is the significance of the Back-to-Basics Programme in enhancing municipal performance?
- How effective is the Back-to-Basics Programme in municipalities to do things differently and serve their communities better?
- What is the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing local government challenges?
- What are the challenges and constraints that are crippling the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme?

### **4.3 Data analysis**

This study applied the thematic analysis technique to interpret the data collected during participant interaction. The thematic analysis intends to interpret data by identifying themes from the collected data. Thematic analysis is defined by (Braun & Clarke, , 2021:95) The: “thematic analysis is a qualitative research method normally applied to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within data. It also provides a flexible approach to understanding participants’ perspectives by organizing and interpreting data through a systematic coding process.”. Therefore, through coding, “the researcher develops themes within the raw data by recognizing important moments in the data and encoding it prior to interpretation.”

This study aligned each objective with the following themes in the evaluation of back-to-basics to enhance municipal performance.

- Dominant Theme: The fundamental significance of back-to-basics to accelerate good governance
- Emerging Themes: The streamlining of the Back-to-Basics phenomenon from the user perspective on the effectiveness of Back-to-basics in enhancing municipal performance
- Emerging Theme: the feedback loop on the overall Impacts of Back-to-Basics within the intervention within the facilitator's mindset
- Patterns: constraints and challenges confronted implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programmes.

**Objective 1:** To examine the extent to which the Back-to-Basics Programme contributes towards improved municipal performance

Dominant Theme	Emergent Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fundamental significance of back-to-basics to accelerate good governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rate of accelerated of the implementation of B2BP</li> <li>• The comprehensive and holistic execution of the B2BP in an institution-wide context</li> <li>• The optimal checks and balances to be pursued by the authorities</li> </ul>

(*Respondents 1 and 2*) cited that the B2BP assisted the municipality in fast-tracking the service delivery process to their citizens. Simultaneously, it enhanced municipal performance and ensured they delivered on basic things such as water and sanitation. The programme also assisted the municipality in ensuring decent living conditions are improved, ensuring the creation of a safe, healthy, and economical. Indeed, the Back-to-Basics programme managed to achieve its intended objectives and changed the *status quo* at the municipal level to excellence (Ngumbela, 2021)

*RP: 3 and 4* believed that the back-to-basics programme is a simple requirement because councillors are expected to work with the community and even engage them regarding the affairs of municipalities through community meetings and report-back sessions working with the Ward Committees. Indeed, the Back-to-Basics Programme promoted accountability and transparency at the administrative and political levels, which are the program's requirements for the five fundamental pillars (Zengehwa, 2019). This is in line with the five main objectives that were prescribed by the National Planning Commission (2019), which need to be achieved by 2030, namely: - the elimination of poverty and reduction of inequality; active citizenry and individual development; economic growth, promoting export and more labor absorbing economy; critical capabilities of both people and the country; lastly capable and developmental state. Therefore, the success of back-to-basics leading to the realization of the 2030 vision of the National Development Plan should make the local sphere of government efficient and effective.

On the other hand, *RP: 5, 6, and 7* confirmed that the programme enhances functionality and ensures political stability; the programme responds to service delivery issues and promotes good financial health. In addition, the programs encourage community interaction and satisfaction and, at the same time, deliver service as per mandate. Therefore, the rolling out of the Back-to-basics programmes is positioning municipalities to be more responsive, accountable, effective, and efficient in changing the life of the people (National Development Plan, 2019).

*RP 7* defined the Back-to-Basics programme as the modular to-service delivery. *RP* also expressed by *RP 6* that the programme is about planning and delivering infrastructure, assisting in identifying service delivery gaps, and ensuring that they are restored urgently. Adding to the point of speeding up the service delivery, *RP 8* stressed that the programme focuses on ensuring quick service delivery at the same time, improving the turnaround time on the delivery of services and making an informed decision based on the information that is collected through the back-to-basic programmes reporting system. *RP 9* also emphasized that a back-to-basics programme is a tool that seeks to ensure accountability and transparency in running the affairs of the municipalities. Implementing the Back-to-Basics programme seeks

to achieve and respond to outcome 9 of the National Development Plan to position municipalities as a ‘responsive, accountable, effective, and efficient developmental local government National Planning Commission (2019).

*RP 10* acknowledged the back-to-basic programmes as they seek to fast-track service delivery and improve turnaround time. Since this programme forces the municipality to take 360 degrees on the critical performance areas, they focus on performance indicators to assess performance against the benchmarks. Eventually, this confirmed that the Back-to-Basics Programme emphasizes the commitment to doing things differently and serving the communities better with a sense of urgency. (KZN CoGTA, 2016). On the other hand, CoGTA, 2014, also confirmed that the commitment to serving communities better can only be attained through the paradigm shift, placing people and their interests first and guaranteeing consistent contact. Therefore, there is a consensus at the municipal level that the Back-to-Basic Programme is a game changer in how the municipality runs its business.

**Objective 2:** To analyse the effectiveness of the Back-to-Basics Programme in supporting the various municipalities across the province in doing things differently and serving their communities better

Dominant Theme	Emergent Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• streamlining of the Back-to-Basics phenomenon from the user perspective on the effectiveness of Back-to-basics in enhancing municipal performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• service delivery improvement impacted essential services</li> <li>• improved good governance and accountability</li> <li>• functionally, the municipal council</li> </ul>

The Back-to-Basics programmes introduced the five basics as the indicators to measure performance at the municipal level, which are as follows: -

- basic services,
- good governance,
- sound financial management and accounting,

- building institutional resilience and
- building capacity (Local Government Back-to-basics approach, 2014).

As a result, the city of eThekweni was measured based on these five fundamental pillars, and challenges existed in certain key areas.

The *RP 1* Back-to-Basics programme changed the performance reporting but failed to change the municipality's performance in delivering services to its citizens. On the contrary, *RP 2* praised the program as a game changer since there has been a significant improvement in the provision of services, and it has managed to address the backlogs in the rural areas regarding service delivery in eThekweni. *RP 3 and 4* cited minimal effectiveness because most councillors fail to convene community meetings to report back. Out (of 111) hundred and eleven Ward Councillors, less than (20) twenty councillors managed to convene community meetings to report back to communities as per the requirement of the back-to-basics programme. The municipality is not doing well in public participation, considering the number of councilors who managed to call the public meetings since it is a requirement in the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

*RP 5* attested to the fact that Back-to-Basic Programmes are relatively successful as they refocused the attention on the critical organizational standards focus on the mandate of delivering services to their citizenry without any hindrances. At the same time, enhance performance at the municipality level and do things right as expected. On the other hand, *RP 6* also shared the sentiments with response one that there is a severe lack of implementation of the Back-to-Basics programme on the side of municipalities. As a result, the impact of the back-to-basics is minimal. In addition, *RP 6* also cited a severe lack of monitoring on the side of the responsible Department and at the municipal level. *RP 7* described the program's effectiveness as a robust hands-on support to track performance as there is a weekly Back-to-Basics meeting for accountability and reporting. Performance management is a continuous, future-oriented, and participatory system (Tsuma, 2017). Therefore, in the case of eThekweni,

there is a severe lack of monitoring on the departmental side as they are entrusted with overseeing municipalities.

*RP 8 and 9* also supported *RP 6 and 1* regarding the lack of effectiveness; hence, there is no visible difference on the ground. Municipalities are still facing the same challenges as before. *RP 9* also stressed that municipalities treat the Back-to-basics programme as a compliance tool. Then, the support tool was used to enhance municipal service delivery, and some viewed the programme as political rather than supporting. *RP 10* believed that the programme should assist in addressing the critical issues of service delivery at the municipal level. Lastly, it mentioned that the programme depends more on the municipality's political and technical commitment to making a difference. This can only be done by treating the back-to-basics programme as the support programme, not as the ticking box exercise. Consequently, in the case of eThekweni, the contribution of Back-to-Basics programmes toward its performance was minimal. It is understood that the whole back-to-basics process should contribute to the municipality's performance. Hence, performance management is a process that should contribute to effectively managing individuals and teams to achieve high organisational performance (Shields et al., 2013).

**Objective 3:** To evaluate the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing challenges faced by the different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal

Dominant Theme	Emergent Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the feedback loop on the overall Impacts of Back-to-Basics within the intervention within the facilitator's mindset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improved political and administrative municipalities,</li> <li>• reducing conflict and enhancing governance structure</li> <li>• Improved monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>

According to the KZNCoGTa performance report on Back-to-Basics (2014) and (2017), the eThekweni Municipality maintained the functionality status. Despite the challenges identified during this study, it never regressed in terms of performance. Although challenges still need to be addressed, there are also successes and good stories to tell amongst the respondents.

*RP 1* cited that the Back-to-basics programme assisted in the standardisation of the reporting tool when it comes to municipal performance based on the program's pillars. *RP 2* also attested that the municipality can now compile the service delivery reports in their implemented program. The life of most of the citizenry within the city of eThekweni has changed for the better. Introducing performance measures as fundamental pillars of back-to-basics has assisted a lot in standardizing the unilateral form of reporting for all municipalities (Local Government Back-to-basics approach, 2014).

According to *RP 3 and 4*, they believed that back-to-basics programmes made a severe impact, especially in the wards that managed to convene community engagements and get the needs of their communities. As a result, the service delivery protests/ demonstrations were minimal in those communities because they were aware of what was planned and received feedback from their councillors. This also reaffirms that if people are involved in the affairs of the municipality, they get satisfaction because they are informed. Despite the few councillors who managed to call the community meeting, some councillors ensured accountability per the Municipal Systems Act requirements.

*RP 5 and 6* significantly impact the ground as the program successfully guides municipalities to address fundamental service challenges and its quickness in responding to issues at hand. *RP 6* also complements the program by encouraging community participation and providing an integrated approach to addressing service delivery issues. Despite the intra-political fighting, there is a lack of trust between communities and municipalities. Although, there was a significant impact at the beginning of the implementation of the back-to-basics programmes. The impact has diminished lately, and there is a severe lack of interest at the national and provincial

levels in continuing the program. *RP 7* also augmented the point that *RP 5* and *6* made that the programme dealt with elementary service delivery timeously. It has simultaneously rejuvenated the notion of shared services in addressing governance issues, budget reforms, and provisions. This was also supported by the *RP 9*, which indeed creates good governance structures. The back-to-basics programme achieved its intended objectives and assisted the city of eThekweni; now, they are doing things differently. Therefore, Back-to-Basics programmes are indeed a programme for change that seeks to introduce new solutions (National CoGTa, 2014).

*RP 8* commends the impact of the back-to-basics programme. However, implementing the program correctly and monitoring it accordingly is believed to positively impact service delivery.

*RP 10* holds a different on the impact of the back-to-basics program, citing the increasing challenges facing municipalities, such as lack of skills, lack of spending, poor service delivery, irregularities, and fruitless and unauthorized expenditure continue to be the order of the day—political instabilities in some municipalities due to the advent of the coalition government and implication thereof. As a result, it creates additional challenges for municipalities. However, there are noticeable service delivery achievements in eThekweni Municipality. The systems of governance in eThekweni need necessary attention due to corruption, political infighting, and failure by the municipal leadership to enforce corrective measures and consequences management (Auditor-General, 2023).

**Objective 4:** To examine challenges and constraints that hinder the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme

Dominant Theme	Emergent Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patterns: constraints and challenges in the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Politicisation of the B2BP</li> <li>• Poor political governance and stability</li> </ul>

*RP 1 and 2* cited several challenges and constraints that are crippling the implementation of back-to-basics; municipalities are regarding the programme as the reporting and compliance tool instead of the mechanism that seeks to bring about change in the manner that they should deliver services to the citizenry. Sebola (2012) confirmed that there is a severe lack of commitment on the part of the management when it comes to the process that seeks to assess performance, and it is generally treated as a tick-box exercise. As a result, it remains a compliance process instead of addressing the challenges and constraints the municipalities face. *RP 2* further cited the other critical challenges, such as the institutional capacity and limited and insufficient budget. Presidency (2014) acknowledged that the challenges confronted by municipalities are attributed to institutional capacity, financial constraints, and political interference.

*RP 3 and 4* raised the issue of **politicisation of the back-to-basics** programme sharply as the contributing factor that cripples implementation of the back-to-basics since this programme is used as the political platform to advance party political agendas. Moreover, the failure of councillors to call community meetings was due to a lack of understanding of the importance of community involvement in the municipality's business. Political factors always crips in when it comes to local government, such as political interference and politicization of programmes (The State of Local Government Report, 2009).

*RP 5, 6, and 7* pointed at the municipalities as the primary source of the challenges in implementing the Back-to-basics programme. **Namely, the poor commitment at the municipal level, municipal failure** to meet the requirement of the back-to-basic programme, snail pace in the appointment of qualified people, lack of proper coordination of the programme during the implementation process, consistent failure on the municipal side to address the ongoing community issues; inadequate human resources and financial resources reap the desired impact. The State of Local Government Report (2009) also sharply raised the weakness in the accountability systems and the weakness of intergovernmental support and oversight due to fragmented national and provincial support.

*RP 7* and *8* both believed that some leaders' politicisation of the back-to-basics programmes also met some resistance at the municipal level. On the other hand, there was also a challenge regarding monitoring and evaluation at the municipal and provincial levels. *RP 9* cited the lack of support from the political office-bearers at the municipal level. In addition, the non-implementation of consequence management for non-compliance poses a severe challenge in realising the programme.

*RP 10* mentioned an endless list of challenges, such as **poor political governance and political stability** due to poor management of coalitions in some municipalities. Furthermore, the administrative instability due to high vacancy rates, problematic financial management due to cash flow caused by the collection of revenues, high creditors, maladministration, breach of supply chain management processes led to unauthorised, fruitful, and wasteful expenditure. Eventually, the service delivery will suffer due to the challenges mentioned above. It constrains the implementation of the back-to-basics programme, proving the corporate failures within the South African Public Sector system, national, provincial, and worse at the level of municipalities (Mboweni, 2019).

The research showed a consensus on the overall performance of the eThekweni Metropolitan when it comes to implementing Back-to-Basics compared to other municipalities across the province. Based on the assessment by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, eThekweni Metropolitan performed comparatively well as it maintained its status as one of the municipalities that were consistently functional for the assessment period of 2015-2019 and up until now (KZNCoGTa, 2019).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the study's recommendations and conclusion regarding the evaluation of the back-to-basics programmes in enhancing municipal performance, with a specific focus on eThekweni Metropolitan. These recommendations culminate from the collected data, which the researcher analysed to attain the study's objectives.

The literature review strategically focused attention on relevant literature from policy documents, academic journals, legislations, and textbooks covering the spectrum of local government reforms such as the (Project Liquidity; Masakhane Campaign, Project Validity; ISRDP; URP, Project Consolidate, Siyeza Manje, Year Local Government Strategic Agenda, Local Government Turnaround Strategy, including the recent and currently back-to-basics programme which is currently under review by this study (CoGTA, 2014). Examined in line with the performance management perspectives within the public sector context (Fryer, 2009). The literature review provided a broad understanding of the challenges in local government and performance management at the level of municipalities, which is the sphere closer to the people.

The objectives of the study were outlined and consistently incorporated. As a result, the primary objectives were outlined as follows: -

- To examine the extent to which the Back-to-Basics Programme contributes towards improved municipal performance.
- To analyse the effectiveness of the Back-to-Basics Programme in supporting the various municipalities across the province in doing things differently and serving their communities better.
- To evaluate the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing challenges faced by the different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal.

- To examine challenges and constraints that hinder the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme.

The impact of the back-to-basics programme in enhancing municipal performance (as discussed in Chapter 2) was based on the performance management perspective within the context of the public sector and the challenges and constraints thereof. Therefore, the recommendations provided are based on the critical research findings.

## **5.2 Overview of the fundings**

This study evaluated the back-to-basics programme to enhance municipal performance in the eThekweni Municipality. The key findings concerning the study objectives will be discussed.

**Objective 1:** To examine the extent to which the Back-to-Basics Programme contributes towards improved municipal performance

The participants confirmed the significant contribution of the back-to-basics programmes in enhancing municipal performance, specifically in eThekweni. Since the municipality managed to speed up the delivery of services such as water and sanitation, the programs assisted the municipality in ensuring decent living conditions, including safety, health, and economic. eThekweni Municipality also comparatively performed and maintained the municipal functional status on their performance as per the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs assessment on the Back-to-Basic Programme compared to other municipalities in the province KZNCoGTA (2014), (2017) and(2019) Should the provincial government emphasise the importance of back-to-basics programmes; provide the necessary support to municipalities, the dying states of municipalities can improve for the better. It is confirmed that the back-to-basics programmes enhanced municipal performance, with the support of the political and administrative leadership as the key role players of the programmes.

**Objective 2:** To analyse the effectiveness of the Back-to-Basics Programme in supporting the various municipalities across the province in doing things differently and serving their communities better

The participants confirmed that eThekweni Municipality is now effective, and service provision has significantly improved as they have managed to deal with service delivery backlogs in rural areas. The programme also assisted the municipality in focusing on its co-mandate and delivering quality service to its citizenry (KZNCoGTA 2014; 2017; 2019).

Most municipalities welcome the programme as hands-on support to the municipality instead of the compliance process. The programme has been embraced across the province and regarded as a game changer. However, there are challenges in some areas of the program in some municipalities, such as a lack of implementation monitoring and evaluation. This has been confirmed by the assessment of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, which reflected the three categories of dysfunctional, functional, and intervention required. Some municipalities were improving and emerging from being dysfunctional to functional. On the other hand, some were compelling the Department for the intervention. At the same time, others were regressing to dysfunctional status. (KZNCoGTA 2014; 2017; 2019).

**Objective 3:** To evaluate the overall impact of the Back-to-Basics Programme in addressing challenges faced by the different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal.

Different municipalities embraced the programme and appreciated the standardisation of the reporting tools; since the program's implementation, municipalities have managed to compile their service delivery reports on the programmes they implemented. The programme also guided municipalities in addressing service delivery without any delays. The programme encourages community participation amongst the stakeholders and in various municipalities according to the Back-to-Basics Strategy (2014). Lastly the programmes also rejuvenated the shared services in dealing with governance issues, budget reforms and provisions. As much as the program has a considerable impact, other participants

believe that if back-to-basics were implemented correctly and monitored as expected, the program could improve the state of local government in the province. KZNCoGTA (2014), (2017) and (2019).

**Objective 4:** To examine challenges and constraints that hinder the implementation of the Back-to-Basics Programme

All the participants accepted that challenges hinder the implementation of the back-to-basics programme. There is a consensus that municipalities should treat the programmes as malicious compliance or as a ticking box exercise, followed by the support program that should assist municipalities. The politicisation of the programme and the lack of support from the political office-bearers; the recent poor political governance and political stability due to poor coalition management in some instances. The Auditor General even confirmed these challenges, citing leadership's political infightings and failure to enforce consequence management and implement corrective rulings (Auditor-General Report, 2023). This was not a peculiar situation in eThekweni alone; the Auditor General raised the red flag even for the City of Cape Town about the unstable coalition and its negative impact on local government audits (Auditor-General Report, 2023).

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The recommendation of this study is based on the interviews and literature review conducted by the researcher during the interview process. These recommendations should expand on the firm foundation by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs during the implementation of the B2BP across the province. For the back-to-basic programs to achieve their intended objectives need commitment both politically and administratively; lining on that is the depoliticization of the program and strengthening of monitoring and evaluation.

#### **5.3.1 Commitment of the political office-bearers and administrative authorities**

A back-to-basics programme can enhance municipal performance if it gets political and administrative buy-in. Both these actors are critical to the program's success. Communities judge municipalities based on service delivery, good governance,

transparency and accountability, sound financial management and accounting, and the municipality's administrative capabilities. Seemingly, all these measures or tools commonly applied by communities to assess the performance of municipalities across the country are the pillars of the back-to-basics programme.

### **5.3.2 Depoliticization of the Programme**

The political office-bearers and councillors should focus on playing political oversight over the programmes, then being the stumbling block and the cause of the failure of the Back-to-Basics programme. Essentially, the councillors should work hand in hand with the administration by creating a conducive environment for the functionaries to perform their duties without any hindrances. They must embrace the programme and support the administration in delivering essential services per the municipality's mandate. That is the rationale of back-to-basics programmes from their inception. The sooner councillors refrain from meddling, the better; service delivery will improve, communities will be happy, and there will be fewer service delivery protests due to poor service delivery in various communities. (Patterson, 2022) It was also acknowledged that councillors' involvement negatively impacts service delivery. Reducing unnecessary interference from councillors can enhance service efficiency, increase community satisfaction, and result in fewer protests related to service delivery issues.

### **5.3.3 Strengthening of monitoring and evaluation**

It is always imperative to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of back-to-basics programmes, mainly on the side of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The Department has a responsibility over the local government as they are expected to provide support, intervene whenever necessary, and monitor the work they are doing. Moreover, the current challenges identified by the study show a severe lack of monitoring of the programmes and evaluation of their impact. Local government needs to be considered regarding accountability as the sphere of government is closer to the people. Back-to-basics programmes need to be strengthened in terms of monitoring and evaluating to get the necessary attention that the programme received from its inception.

## **6. Managerial implications of the study**

Commitment and support are critical to implementing a back-to-basics programme. The commitment from the powers that can culminate in the necessary support for the program's implementers to ensure that it yields the expected results.

## **7. Areas for future research**

Future studies should examine the impact and effectiveness of the back-to-basics approach, drilling down to each pillar, namely service delivery, good governance, sound financial management, building capable institutions, and putting people first through community engagements. Lastly, future studies should examine the entire province, including all the municipalities.

## **8. Limitations of the study**

The geographical area of this study, the eThekweni Municipal area, was the limitation since this is the only metropolitan municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. The study focused on the programme's impact and effectiveness within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality as the geographical area, not the entire province. On the other hand, it did not drill down to each program's pillar.

## **9. Summary**

The back-to-basics programmes have great potential to enhance municipal performance in delivering services and support the municipality's focus on primary service delivery. Indeed, the programmes are regarded as hands-on support, which is robust in tracking performance and ensuring accountability and transparency in which the municipality runs its affairs in changing the citizenry's life. The programme also projected a significant improvement in refocusing the attention on the critical elements of the mandates of municipalities as the sphere of government closest to the people to deliver services of quality standards and timeously. Despite this, some challenges and constraints still need to be addressed as they hinder the implementation of the back-to-basics programme.

The success and failure of back-to-basics programs depend on three critical aspects, which are recommended as follows: the commitment of the political office-bearers and

administrative authorities and the depoliticization of the B2BP. (Taherdoost, 2022); strengthening of monitoring and evaluation. The attention given to B2BP when it was initiated should be revived for the realization of better communities because of good governance, transparency, accountability, sound financial management, accounting, and administrative capabilities at the municipality level.

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## **APPENDIXES**

- **Appendix A:** - Informed Consent
- **Appendix B:** Ethical Clearance
- **Appendix C:** Research Instrument
- **Appendix D:** Turnitin Similarity Report (TBC)