

# THE KHULULEKANI EXERCISE

## RESEARCHING THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Research and report by:

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# **INFORMATION NEEDS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

## **REPORT ON A PILOT STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA INTO THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

### **Background**

The Development Information Service of the Development Bank of Southern Africa was formally requested by Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Khululekani Institute for Democracy, to "conduct a study that identifies the normal information needs of MP's and make the necessary recommendations on how best to alleviate the information problems encountered by Members of Parliament"

Fr. Mkhathshwa's perceived problem was viewed as a challenge by the Development Information Service at DBSA. Mr GJ Richter, General Manager of the Centre for Policy and Information, shared the same view and gave the go-ahead for what has become known as 'The Khululekani Experience' to be handled as part of the Development Information Services normal 'Outreach' programme.

### **Extent of the report**

The research conducted into the information needs of MP's was formalised into a research pilot study in the Centre for Policy and Information at the Development Bank of Southern Africa. The contribution of the Development Information Service was set at:

- a report on the information collected during the meetings and categorised into information needs should be produced;
- there should be indications of how to answer these needs to assist Khululekani in planning strategies of interaction with the various role-players;
- the report should also provide some indication of how to arrange for information to reach the people in the local and broader community

The operationalisation of the resultant recommendations by the Khululekani Institute for Democracy into a series of projects and actions should go a long way to enabling the Parliamentary administration and all the Parliamentary Whips offices to become self-sufficient in their particular in-house information needs. The exercise would also assist all parties involved in Parliament with access to sources of external information.

### **Conducting the research**

The information collection and categorisation was conducted using face-to-face interviews with individuals and small groups from constituency level, regional level and Parliament. This course was followed so that there could be pertinent benefits arising from the educative approach to both the beneficiaries and to DBSA.



In the pilot study, *de novo* methodology was evolved in conjunction with Khululekani so that they can derive future benefit from it without the implications of intellectual property coming to the fore.

### **The study**

The broad detail of the study has been set out below. The product of this assignment will soon provide inputs towards the alleviation of the problem that Members of Parliament have with the lack of up-to-date and relevant information needed for their work, as well as the formulation of policies and specialist input to the various portfolio committees in Parliament.

The basic approach to the study was determined by some prior interviews and some anticipation of the information needs of Members of Parliament with specific reference to the nature, extent and complexity of the information required. It involved the classification, interpretation and analysis of the findings of the meetings held under the auspices of Khululekani Institute for Democracy.

### **Further advantages**

After the Board of Khululekani has reviewed 'The Khululekani Exercise' document and planned its strategic direction for their own projects, it is envisaged that plans will soon be drawn up so that the necessary links between Members of Parliament, DBSA's DIS Enquiries function and the major information-producing organisations (subject of another assignment currently being undertaken) could be detailed in order to:

- determine to what extent DBSA can provide timely, relevant, reliable and comparable information as a service to decision-makers;
- determine to what extent the Parliamentary administration should be assisted in the establishment of their domestic database;
- establish a link between Parliament and the DBSA Enquiries function which would rationalise, integrate and co-ordinate all incoming enquiries;
- further assist the DBSA Information Function to harmonise the databases of the information-gathering institutions operating within the framework of the evolving central government institutional framework; and

### **How all this fits together**

The initial information needs linking and networking methodology created by the DBSA Development Information Service Team was refined as the study progressed.

- The **first mini-workshop** held at the Parliamentary Constituency Office in Dobsonville resulted in a report and a slight correction to the broadly defined approach the DBSA team had in mind. There were more questions than answers, but the observations made there are typical of the building-block approach where one goes right down to the fundamentals and then starts putting all the disparate information together again into coherent categories. The categorisation after this workshop was clearly defined into various linkages and networks relevant to the direction of the investigation.



- The **second mini-workshop** held at Khululekani was easier in the sense that the DBSA team had already travelled along part of the road: the team knew what was becoming important and had an idea of what was of diminishing importance. [Part of what evolved was an interesting occurrence: Sr. Bernard (who had attended the Dobsonville workshop) initially sat in on the Khululekani meeting and would have been interviewed again in the course of the workshop. What actually happened is that, after a while, she began to take part as one of the 'discovery team' and not as one of the 'interviewees'...] The idea of the mini-workshops was for the DBSA team to initiate directed discussion and then see what transpires. Participation was most important and facilitation became easier when all worked together on the information gathering exercise.
- The **third mini-workshop** was held with randomly selected individuals and groups of MP's in their domain at Parliament. Interviews were random and members of most of the major political parties took part. More than 6% of the 400 MP's and over 15% of the 90 senators in Parliament participated, either individually or in groups, in the exercise. Experiences and input from the first two workshops was not only tested on this group, but they were challenged by the process to keep on observing and reporting back to the DBSA team, either directly or via Khululekani.

The aggregated inputs from all three workshops has started to produce results that can be of use in and to the process. The hints, comments and observations generated along the way and mentioned in the various reports can, if Khululekani so wish, be acted upon without waiting for the process to reach finality. Due to the co-operative nature of the interaction between the assignment team, MP's, Khululekani, Parliamentary Constituency Offices and participants in other structures, at no stage will there be any prescriptive instructions or recommendations made or suggested.

All input received from participants in the 'The Khululekani Exercise' and the information collection process is valued as it represents a different perspective on what is important to Parliamentarians and what is not, as well as providing an objective assessment of whether the evolving methodology is still directed towards the original goal.

### **In summary**

The file which contains this introductory document also forms the report on the information collected during the meetings and categorised into the information needs of Parliamentarians as per the first requirement of the study.

In each of the three reports on the mini-workshops are indications of what the information needs of Parliamentarians are and how they can be catered for. This will assist Khululekani in planning strategies of interaction with the various role-players and follow-up projects.

This report also provides an indication of how Khululekani and the Parliamentarians can arrange for information to reach 'the people' in the local and broader community and also reverse the flow of information to mutual advantage.



Discussion of the various human networks and information linkages between the networks that were found was deemed to be a good way of indicating to Khululekani the range of opportunities that exist for them to take part in the democratic process from a different (sometimes called 'unconventional') dimension. Contact with the community is essential and the Kagiso Information Day held before the start of 'The Khululekani Exercise' showed that what initially seems to be an unconventional way of doing things often turns out to be the most effective way of reaching the people.

### **Closure**


In closing, it is pertinent to mention that there are still more questions than answers. This report is structured in a format that shows Khululekani the way to **finding** answers to information-related questions rather than trying to provide a 'quick-fix' by **giving** all the answers. There is no 'quick-fix' when working with Parliamentarians and their information needs, but the building up of mutual respect and trust between them and the communities they serve will allow the information to flow...

### **Acknowledgements**

The Development Bank of Southern Africa and Mr GJ Richter, General Manager of the Centre for Policy and Information, for authorising a grant-in-expertise rather than a grant-in-aid for this pilot study to be undertaken.

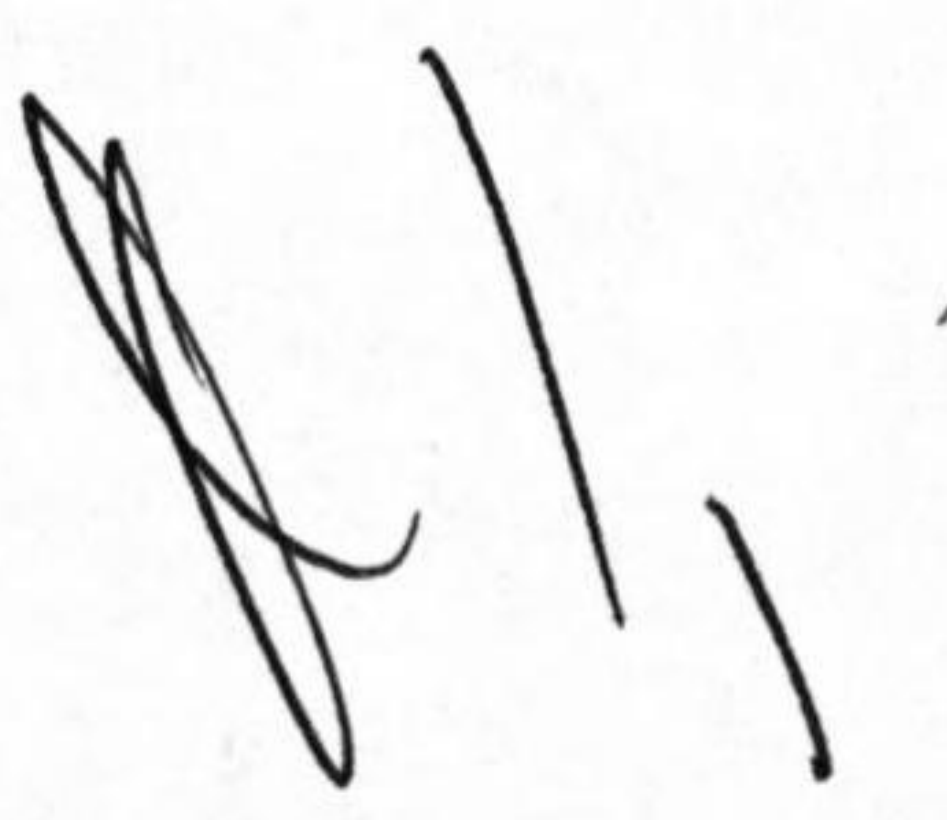
The Board and staff of the Khululekani Institute for Democracy for facilitating the information collection and research process. Sr. Bernard Ncube deserves special mention in this regard, especially for her facilitation and willingness to work long and hard hours with the researchers.

The Members of Parliament and Senators who supported 'The Khululekani Exercise' and gave of their time and knowledge.



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19 June 1996



**WORKING PAPER REPORT ON THE PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY  
OFFICE MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 1995 AT DOBSONVILLE.**

**Present:**

**Constituency Office:**

Mr S. Ndou, MP (chair)  
Dr E Kuzwayo, MP  
Sr. C Obotseng  
Mr B Mathabathe (scribe)

**Khululekani Institute for Democracy**

Sr. B Ncube, MP  
Ms D. Scott (Executive Director)

**also consulted:**

Adv. DP Jana, MP

**DBSA Development Information Service:**

Dr SS Mncube  
Dr JD Berlyn

**Expectations of meeting**

The aggregated expectations of those present at the meeting were:

- a report on the information collected during the meeting should be produced in the near future. This report should be categorised into needs
- there should be a possible indication of how to answer these needs to assist those present in planning strategies of interaction with the various role-players
- the report should also provide some indication of how to arrange for information reach the people in the local and broader community

**Guiding thought**

**Précis:**

While it is acknowledged that information is power in that it can be sold, traded, given or withheld, it is always important to remember that inherent in the tenet of democracy is the principle of transparency.

(DP Jana)



## **Approach used in this report**

This report is based on the identification of needs articulated during the Constituency Office meeting. These perceived needs have been categorised into groups of **linkages**. The reason for using this approach is one of simplicity: the meeting raised far more questions than answers. Instead of repeating the questions hereunder, it would, therefore, be a wise move to start off at an aggregated level and give further attention to points of interest as they arise. This in turn could lead to some form of action by the recipients of this report.

## **Linkages**

The linkage groupings for this report are the following:

- linkages to constituencies
- linkages to networks
- linkages to the public at large
  
- building linkages
- maintaining linkages
  
- community interaction
- media interaction

## **Linkages to constituencies**

The kind of information needed by the constituency office will depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents.

The kind of information needed by the constituents themselves from a parliamentary constituency office will also depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents.

The kind of information needed by the representatives of the constituents will also depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents.

The most effective information flow between the constituents, Members of Parliament in the constituency and Parliament itself can be facilitated by the Parliamentary constituency office.

The question of how should one go about information collection and dissemination in a parliamentary Constituency office has a simple answer: ask questions to find out what the person wants (information collection) and then give a simple, unambiguous answer (information dissemination). Information gathering is not a one way exercise and should be a participative process.



The expectations of the constituents as to the kind of information flowing from the Parliamentary Constituency Office should be tempered by some form of screening and guidance: after all, a person does not go to a doctor to find out what is wrong with his/her car !

While there should be ideally be a continuous incoming flow of articulated information needs from constituents, this is likely to remain more fancy than fact. It is thus important that the Parliamentary Constituency Office, in conjunction with the constituency MP's, remains as a pro-active conduit to the community and vice versa.

### **Linkages to networks**

The MP's have a **personal network** to which relatively few constituents would ordinarily have access.

The MP's have access to a **privileged network** that has relevance to the type of work that they do, the committees they belong to and the groupings in which they assimilate.

MP's and constituents both have access to **public networks**, possibly in differing degrees of scope and extent, for their information.

In the above exposition are a number of gaps and therefore the creation of a directory of contacts for the Parliamentary Constituency Office would appear to be a necessity. The various Parliamentary Constituency Offices in South Africa could all contribute to the creation of a national directory, a provinces directory and maybe even local level directories. The logistics and planning of such an exercise would need careful attention.

### **Linkages to the public at large**

It would appear as if the creation of 'community information centres' needs an urgent assessment. Such centres could be attached to or in the vicinity of the Parliamentary Constituency Offices. Some modern information dispensing techniques could be used, but there should be provision made for personal contact as a matter of course ---- after all, information **MUST** have a human face !

The problem of information 'bottlenecking' between the various levels of government, MP's, Parliamentary Constituency Offices and constituents is a real one and would need urgent attention. Arrogance on the part of the information disseminators or even not enough respect for the constituents can lead to information flow problems

Too much openness can also backfire as very few constituents would need the minute level of detail that this would require, the information should, however, be available if required.

The maxim of "unknown = unloved" should guide the actions of the MP's. If they want the support and respect of the constituents they are supposed to serve, then



they will have to earn it by their deeds and words. The same generalisation is valid for the Parliamentary Constituency Offices.

The MP's will have to define their own personal and generic roles in the constituencies they are supposed to serve. In the same vein, they will have to define their roles as Parliamentarians in a democratic society. The constituents might expect regular Parliamentary briefings from their MP's and regular feedback from the MP's in session time via the Parliamentary Constituency Office.

### **Building linkages**

It is essential for ALL Parliamentary Constituency Offices in South Africa to be linked with each other, not only for co-ordination and standardisation of actions, but also to provide the best possible flow of information and the maintenance of a high standard of service to their constituents.

Co-ordination and standardisation also presuppose the creation of a structured communication format so that information is collected, transmitted and/or disseminated within a logical framework.

An idea that might be worth pursuing is the necessity of each Parliamentary Constituency Office being required to render a (say) weekly report to a central point for collation, refining and distribution to Parliament, the media and the Parliamentary Constituency Office.

While the idea of a regular report to a higher structure might just have a smack of bureaucracy about it, immediate detractors would do well to take note of the fact that public money is being utilised and public accountability must therefore be exercised.

The real point that should not be obfuscated is that this is the most effective way of gathering and collating information to show just what the 'grassroots' are really thinking and talking about. Such a presentation of facts would cut out a lot of uninformed guesswork.

To build linkages is not easy and the creation of an easily used and understood glossary for the definition of words, terms and jargon that abound in Parliament and the information universe would go a long way to smoothing contact between linkage points.

### **Maintaining linkages**

It is self-evident that creating and maintaining quality linkages in any type of formalised information system would require certain bureaucratic structures. The nature of the various linkages used would have to determine the 'rules of play' or procedural measures.

Maintaining linkages is a broad-based exercise that extends from the low intensity level oral linkage with constituents through to the more demanding exigencies of the media, MP's and Parliament.



Maintaining linkages is a costly but cost-effective exercise if undertaken in a co-ordinated manner. Private sector involvement as part of a corporate social responsibility programme would go a long way to solving the problem of maintaining linkages. Material and intellectual help and expertise emanating from those corporate social responsibility programmes that do not just throw money at what they perceive the problem to be could well provide an answer to this particular problem.

Maintaining the linkages referred to in this report would tend to point matters in the direction of an information officer or a particular structure that could co-ordinate efforts in this regard.

Maintaining linkages referred to in this report would also entail maintaining of linkages with the administration of Parliament for reasons of continuity, especially if this was the home of the bureaucratic structure mentioned earlier.

Maintaining linkages means that the links between the formal information infrastructure (infostructure) and the more informal networks should be maintained to the benefit of all parties concerned. When one party perceives that it is giving more than it is receiving, then problems could occur.

### **Media interaction**

Linkages and Interaction with the media (be it radio, TV or print) are essential for spreading news and bridging the gap between the (rightly or wrongly) perceived elites on the national, provincial and local political levels and their constituents. While it is true that good news rarely sells newspapers, a good idea to pursue is the fact that good community news (not propaganda!) is needed by commercial and community radio, by some TV programmes and welcomed by the local 'knock and drop' newspapers.

### **Community interaction**

In most communities with an oral tradition, community interaction is not as much of a problem as in communities where houses are separated by walls and people by real or imagined differences.

The capacity to create an infrastructure for communication in each constituency should be housed in the Parliamentary Constituency Office. Success in this field would be an indicator of the efficiency of the performance of that particular office, while failure would indicate a serious problem in making information, MP's and Parliament free and accessible to all.

The Parliamentary Constituency Office could also interact with the community by being a referral agency to a particular source of information, thus enhancing credibility while not actually spending too much time on one constituent to the detriment of the others.

The idea of a Parliamentary Constituency Office acting as an information source for matters other than its clearly defined role might be an appealing one, but one that



should be avoided. Trying to be too many things to too many people is a sure-fire recipe for total failure.

The idea of an information 'hotline' line would warrant pursuing as it enhances accessibility and credibility.

The Parliamentary Constituency Office would do well to co-opt members of the various community forums in the constituency onto an advisory panel. Although such a panel would be (and should remain) a purely advisory panel, constituency participation could easily be enhanced at very little cost or effort.

## **Closure**

The above report is by no means exhaustive, but it does outline the gist of the discussions and the possible solutions to the myriad of problems that arise in the pursuit of such an exercise. The first meeting should be seen as the first step on a long road that has not yet been properly charted.

There are no textbooks and no previously defined models to show what must be done, how it should be done and what the costs are in terms of manpower, technology needed, time or money. In such a *de novo* exercise, intangibles such as knowledge, expertise, commitment, drive, participation, support and a large amount of goodwill are necessary prerequisites for success.

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\* document compiled by jd berlyn of the centre for policy & information, dbsa



# **WORKING PAPER REPORT ON THE MEETING HELD AT THE KHULULEKANI INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY OFFICE, EDENVALE.**

**MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 1995**

## **Present:**

Ms Susan Shabangu, MP  
Mr Benny Makena (Pretoria MTC)

Khululekani Institute for Democracy  
Sr. B Ncube, MP  
Ms D. Scott

Fr. S Mkhathshwa, MP (Chairman of Khululekani)

DBSA Development Information Service:  
Dr SS Mncube  
Dr JD Berlyn

## **Expectations of meeting**

The aggregated expectations of those present at the meeting were:

- a report on the information collected during the meeting should be produced in the near future. This report should be categorised into the needs of Parliamentarians and should be matched with suggestions on how to meet the expressed needs.
- there should be an indication of the planning strategies necessary for interaction with the various role-players in the local and in the broader community

## **Guiding thought**

If you do not know where it is that you want to go, how then do you know which road to take to get there...

(Anonymous)

## **Approach used in this report**

This report is based on the identification of various needs related to information flow and MP - community-level communication that were articulated during a meeting at the Khululekani offices in Edenvale Mall with those persons listed above. The perceived needs have been categorised, as in the case of the Constituency Office investigation conducted in Dobsonville, into groups of **linkages**. The reason for using the same approach is one of simplicity and continuity: the needs remain the same and it is only those who articulated them who were different. As previously, the meeting raised far more questions than answers. It is for this reason and for



continuity that, instead of repeating the questions hereunder, it was felt that it would be best to start at an aggregated level and give further attention to points of interest as they arise. This approach could thus lead to some form of action by the recipients of this report.

## **Linkages**

The linkage groupings for this report are the following:

- linkages to constituents
- linkages to networks
- linkages to the public at large
  
- building linkages
- maintaining linkages
  
- community interaction
- media interaction

### **Linkages to constituents**

"The constituents" in this case are defined in exactly the same way as "the public" or "the people". The kind of information needed by the constituents will largely depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents at any given point in time. The comforting factor is that the groupings will remain more or less the same, even though the emphasis and priorities might change.

The kind of information needed by the constituents themselves from Parliamentarians will also depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents in response to the information imparted to them in the first instance during report-back sessions.

The kind of information needed by the representatives of the constituents (i.e. Parliamentarians, provincial councillors and local councillors) will also depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents.

The most effective information flow between the constituents, MP's in the constituency and Parliament itself can be facilitated by the Parliamentary Constituency Offices. Khululekani Institute for Democracy has now emerged as a potential major player in this field and it would be interesting to see what happens: the worst case scenario is that Khululekani and the Parliamentary Constituency Offices compete against each other. While competition is healthy in some cases, it can cause fragmentation of effort, confusion and even resentment or resistance in some cases. The best case scenario is that Khululekani be contracted to by Parliament to do the necessary training and performance monitoring of the Parliamentary Constituency Offices

The question of how should one go about information collection and dissemination in the Khululekani operation has a simple generic answer: ask questions to find out what the person wants (information collection) and then give a simple, unambiguous answer (information dissemination). It is important to remember that information



gathering is not a one way exercise and should be a participative process; the same truism applies to information dissemination.

The expectations of the constituents as to the nature, depth and kind of information flowing from Parliament via MP's should be tempered by some form of screening, categorisation and guidance: it would be useless to ask an MP about an individual's wages at the local municipality!

There should be ideally be a continuous incoming flow of articulated information needs from constituents to the MP's to enable them to be aware and responsive. This presupposes that the MP's really want to be aware and responsive to the people. Past experience has shown that the euphoria lasts until after the election (the so-called 'honeymoon' period) and flares up again when thoughts turn to re-election. It is thus important that an organisation like Khululekani should remain as a pro-active conduit to the community and thus keep the Parliamentary Constituency Offices and the constituency MP's on their toes.

### **Linkages to networks**

The MP's have a **personal network** to which relatively few constituents would ordinarily have access.

The MP's have access to a **privileged network** that has relevance to the type of work that they do, the committees they belong to and the groupings in which they assimilate.

MP's and constituents both have access to **public networks**, possibly in differing degrees of scope and extent, for their information.

In the above exposition are a number of gaps that urgently need bridging. The first step in this regard would entail the creation of a directory of contacts for the use of Khululekani (per se) and ultimately its clients. By using Khululekani interests as a starting point and linking the directory up with all the various Parliamentary Constituency Offices in South Africa, it is not difficult to see that the creation of a national directory, a directory for each of the provinces directory and possibly even local level directories. The viability, logistics and planning of such an exercise would need careful attention.

### **Linkages to the public at large**

It would appear as if the creation of 'multi-purpose community information centres' needs an urgent assessment. Khululekani offices, Khululekani Information kiosks or even Khululekani-run Parliamentary Constituency Offices could be attached to or in the vicinity of these 'multi-purpose community information centres'. Even though some modern information dispensing techniques could be used, provision should still be made for personal contact as a matter of course ---- after all, information **MUST** have a human face !

The problem of information 'bottlenecking' between the various levels of government, MP and constituents is a real one and demands urgent attention. Any discernible arrogance on the part of the MP's or Khululekani information disseminators or even



not enough respect for the constituents can lead to information flow and street-credibility problems

Transparency often looks good in theory, but sometimes too much openness can also backfire: very few constituents would ever need the minute level of detail, but the information should be available if required.

It would be important for Khululekani to remember at all times the maxim of "unknown = unloved". This simple truism should always guide the actions of Khululekani representatives, but the same generalisation is valid for those connected with it: if they want the support and respect of the constituents they are supposed to serve, then they will have to earn it by their deeds and words.

At this stage, it is pertinent to mention that Khululekani might have to assist MP's to define their own personal and generic roles in the constituencies they are supposed to serve. In the same vein, they will have to define their roles as Parliamentarians in a democratic society. The constituents might expect regular Parliamentary briefings from their MP's and regular feedback from the MP's in session time via Khululekani and the various Parliamentary Constituency Offices.

### **Building linkages**

The best case scenario outlined earlier in this document, as well as the ideas articulated under the discussion on networks would seem to indicate that Khululekani would have to build its own or 'piggyback' onto established linkages if it was to become a major player in information dissemination and Parliament - public contact. The strategic decisions surrounding this issue should also be researched.

It was observed after the visit to the Dobsonville Parliamentary Constituency Office that it would be essential for ALL Parliamentary Constituency Offices in South Africa to be linked with each other, not only for co-ordination and standardisation of actions, but also to provide the best possible flow of information and the maintenance of a high standard of service to the public.

Co-ordination and standardisation also presuppose the creation of a structured communication format so that information is collected, transmitted and/or disseminated within a logical framework.

It was proposed in the report to the Dobsonville Parliamentary Constituency Office that an idea that might be worth pursuing is the necessity of each Parliamentary Constituency Office being required to render a (say) weekly report to a central point for collation, refining and distribution to Parliament, the media and the Parliamentary Constituency Office. Khululekani could quite easily become this central point if the assignment was within or was arranged to fall within the Khululekani mandate: is merely a question of positioning and the creation of a collection and delivery system.

While the idea of a regular report to a higher structure might just have a smack of bureaucracy about it, immediate detractors would do well to take note of the fact that public money is being utilised and public accountability must therefore be exercised. Here again, an organisation like Khululekani could step in, reduce the charge of bureaucracy to a minimum and perform a very necessary service to Parliament (as the ultimate controller of state funds) and the public at large.



The real point that should not be missed is that this is arguably the most effective way of gathering and collating information to show just what the 'grassroots' (synonymous with aggregations such as 'the public', 'the community', 'the people') are really thinking and talking about. Such a presentation of facts would cut out a lot of uninformed guesswork.

To build linkages is not easy. Khululekani must be intensely aware of this and possibly even take the lead in the creation of an easily used and understood glossary for the definition of words, terms and jargon that abound in Parliament and the information universe. An easily understood yet comprehensive glossary would go a long way to smoothening contact between linkage points and would even assist the vocabulary of the illiterates in their struggle to explain themselves and their circumstances.

### **Maintaining linkages**

It is self-evident that creating and maintaining quality linkages in any type of formalised information system would require certain bureaucratic structures. The nature of the various linkages used would have to determine the 'rules of play' or procedural measures.

Maintaining linkages is a broad-based exercise that extends from the low intensity level oral linkage with constituents through to the more demanding exigencies of the media, MP's and Parliament.

Maintaining laboriously created linkages is a costly but cost-effective exercise if undertaken in a co-ordinated manner. Private sector involvement as part of a corporate social responsibility programme would go a long way to solving the problem of maintaining linkages and again Khululekani could become a prominent player in this regard, especially since it already has the leadership, the personnel and the necessary accounting and accountability structures. Material and intellectual help and expertise emanating from those corporate social responsibility programmes to responsible institutions that do not just throw money at what they perceive the problem to be could well provide an answer to this particular problem.

Maintaining the linkages referred to in this report would tend to point matters in the direction of an information officer or a particular structure that could co-ordinate efforts in this regard.

Maintaining linkages referred to in this report would also entail Khululekani maintaining of linkages with the administration of Parliament for reasons of continuity, especially if this was the source of funds or even the home of the bureaucratic structure mentioned earlier.

Maintaining linkages means that the links between the formal information infrastructure (infostructure) and the more informal networks should be maintained to the benefit of all parties concerned. This would be an important area for Khululekani to operate in, not only in terms of credibility / legitimacy, but also in terms of becoming and remaining a major player in information dissemination and the Parliament // people initiative.



### **Media interaction**

Linkages and interaction with the media (be it radio, TV or print) are essential for spreading news and bridging the gap between the (rightly or wrongly) perceived elites on the national, provincial and local political levels and their constituents. Here too, the presence, expertise and experience of Khululekani can be used to the advantage of the democratic process.

While it is true that good news rarely sells newspapers, a good idea for Khululekani to pursue is the fact that good community news (not propaganda!) is needed by commercial and community radio, by some TV programmes and welcomed by the local 'knock and drop' newspapers.

### **Community interaction**

In most communities with an oral tradition, community interaction is not as much of a problem as in communities where houses are separated by walls and people by real or imagined differences.

The capacity to create an infrastructure for communication in each constituency should be housed in the 'multi-purpose community centres'. This is an area where both the local Parliamentary Constituency Office and Khululekani can co-operate if no other agreements (of the type mentioned earlier in this text) are in place.

Success in this field would be an indicator of the efficiency of the performance of the co-operation between that particular office and Khululekani. Failure would indicate a serious problem in making information from MP's and Parliament free and accessible to all, while the community conduits would also not produce the vitally necessary feedback to keep the process alive.

The Khululekani offices could also interact with the community by being a referral agency to a particular source of information, thus enhancing credibility while not actually spending too much time on one constituent to the detriment of the others. This is where Khululekani's possible connection to a 'multi-purpose community centre' would be a definite plus; especially since such a positive step would be even further enhanced by participation in a type of information kiosk operation

The idea of Khululekani acting as an information source for matters other than its clearly defined role might be very tempting, but that should be avoided. Trying to be too many things to too many people is a sure-fire recipe for total failure.

Khululekani would do well to consider the idea of maintaining an information 'hotline' would warrant pursuing for a number of cogent reasons. Such reasons range from enhancing accessibility and credibility of the organisation through to providing an opportunity for the enhancement of the information dissemination skills for Khululekani staff.

Khululekani would do well to consider co-opting members of the various community forums in the broader constituency onto an advisory panel. Although such a panel would be (and should remain) a purely advisory panel, public participation and acceptance could easily be enhanced at very little cost or effort.



## **Closure**

This report is the second in the projected series and covers the Khululekani Institute for Democracy. The first report covered the Parliamentary Constituency Office at Dobsonville. The creation of this second report showed that there were a number of tangents and a number of generic similarities that would need attention in this report. After more interviews and investigations, as well as the further refinement of Khululekani's mandate, a more comprehensive document will be produced to create a strategy discussion document for all interested parties in the democratic process to peruse and comment on.

This second report is by no means exhaustive, but it does outline the gist of the discussions and the possible solutions to the myriad of problems and opportunities that arise in the pursuit of such an exercise. The first series of meetings with the various role-players should be seen as the first step on a long road that has not yet been properly charted.

It is pertinent to reiterate at this stage that there are no textbooks and no previously defined models to show what must be done, how it should be done and what the costs are in terms of manpower, technology needed, time or money. In such a *de novo* exercise, intangibles such as knowledge, expertise, commitment, drive, participation, support and a large amount of goodwill are necessary prerequisites for success.

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\* document compiled by jd berlyn of the centre for policy & information, dbsa



# **REPORT ON MEETINGS HELD WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCTS, CAPE TOWN.**

## **MEETINGS HELD ON 12 - 15 MARCH 1996**

Khululekani Institute for Democracy facilitator:  
Sr. B Ncube, MP

DBSA Development Information Service:  
Dr SS Mncube  
Dr JD Berlyn

### **Expectations of meetings**

The aggregated expectations of those present at the various individual and small group meetings were:

- that there should be a report on the information collected during the meetings.
- the report of the information needs of Parliamentarians should be categorised and should be matched with suggestions on how to meet the expressed needs.
- the report should be circulated to interviewees.
- there should be an indication in the report of the planning strategies necessary for interaction with the various role-players in the local and in the broader community

### **Guiding thought**

It is the message that matters, not the messenger...  
(anonymous)

### **Approach used in this report**

This report is based on the identification of various needs related to information flow from MP's and senators to communities. The perceived needs have been categorised into groups of linkages, as in the case of the



initial Constituency Office investigation conducted in Dobsonville and the subsequent meeting at Khululekani held in Edenvale.

The reason for using the same generic approach in this investigation as that employed in the previous investigations is one of simplicity and continuity: the needs remain the same and it is only the personalities of those who articulated them which were different.

As was expected (due to previous experience in this study), the meetings with the Parliamentarians on their 'home ground' raised far more questions than answers. It is for this reason and for the sake of continuity that, instead of repeating the questions hereunder, it was felt that it would be best to start at an aggregated level and give further attention to points of interest as they arise. This is the same approach as previously applied and could thus lead to some form of action by the recipients of this report.

#### **Information resource interfacing**

In the discussions with MP's and senators, attention was given to the various components of information resource interfacing so as to elicit responses that could be broadly categorised, but mainly to determine the **linkages** inherent in the information process.

#### **Type of information**

#### **Examples**

verbal component	one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many, etc.
paper component	newspapers, letters, books/magazines, etc.
automation component	fax, telephone, E-mail, TV, radio
service component	Enquiry function, Information kiosk, HelpDesk, etc.

#### **Linkages**

The linkage groupings for this report are the following:

- linkages to constituents
- linkages to networks
- linkages to the public at large
  
- building linkages
- maintaining linkages
  
- community interaction
- media interaction



### **Linkages to constituents**

"The constituents" in this case are defined in exactly the same way as "the public" or "the people". The kind of information needed by the constituents will largely depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents at any given point in time. The comforting factor is that the groupings will remain more or less the same, even though the emphasis and priorities might change.

The kind of information needed by the constituents themselves from Parliamentarians will also depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents in response to the information imparted to them in the first instance during report-back sessions. The kind of information needed by the representatives of the constituents (i.e. Parliamentarians, and by implication, also provincial legislators and local councillors) will also depend on the range and type of needs articulated by the constituents.

The most effective information flow between the constituents, MP's in the constituency and Parliament itself should be facilitated by the Parliamentary Constituency Offices. In discussion with MP's and senators, it was apparent that they also perceived the Khululekani Institute for Democracy to have emerged as a potential major player in this field. While competition is healthy in some cases, it can cause fragmentation of effort, confusion and even resentment or resistance in some cases. It would still appear that the best case scenario is that Khululekani be contracted to by those providing the Parliamentary Constituency Offices to do the necessary training and performance monitoring.

It is important to remember that information gathering is not a one way exercise and should be a participative process; the same truism applies to information dissemination. The expectations of the constituents as to the nature, depth and kind of information flowing from Parliament via MP's should be tempered by some form of screening, categorisation and guidance: it would be useless to ask an MP about an individual's child's lack of progress at a local school!

An ideal situation is that there would be a continuous incoming flow of articulated information needs from constituents to the MP's to enable them to be aware and responsive. This presupposes that the MP's really want to be aware and responsive to the people.

Past experience has shown that the euphoria lasts until the session after the election (the so-called 'honeymoon' period) and flares up again when the MP's thoughts turn to re-election. It is thus important that an organisation like Khululekani should remain as a pro-active conduit to the community and thus keep the Parliamentary Constituency Offices and the constituency MP's on their toes.



### **Linkages to networks**

Networks are a necessary survival mechanism for anybody in public life, even Parliamentarians. The caution here, however, is for the public person to balance sources within the network that has been created and to harness its synergy for constructive purposes. A network is far more than just a mutual admiration society.

The various types of networks and some of their constituent components will be outlined below as a prelude to the discussion thereafter:

#### **Types of networks:**

##### **Personal network**

broader family  
friends  
colleagues  
acquaintances  
party whip  
community structures  
support units  
telephone  
fax  
personal letters

##### **Privileged network**

caucus briefings  
closed committees  
ministerial contact  
confidential issues  
secret issues  
consultants  
close family  
political allies  
business associates  
client relations

##### **Public network**

TV  
radio  
newspapers  
SACS / Yellow Pages  
clipping services  
speeches  
meetings, seminars, etc.  
Internet / E-mail  
circulars  
Libraries

#### **To illustrate the above:**

- Most MP's and senators interviewed appeared to have a personal network to which relatively few constituents would ordinarily have access.
- MP's and senators all have access to a privileged network that has relevance to the type of work that they do, the committees they belong to and the groupings in which they assimilate.
- MP's, senators, constituents and the public at large all have access to public networks, possibly in differing degrees of scope and extent, for their information. The extent to which they utilise this access is beyond the scope of this report.

There are a number of matters in the above reasoning that need attention. The first step in this regard is that it is now quite clear that Khululekani should create a directory of contacts for own use (per se) and ultimately its Parliamentary clients and other valued contacts.

Using Khululekani needs and interests as a starting point for the creation of such a directory could quite conceivably lead to linking the directory up with all the various Parliamentary Constituency Offices in South Africa.



It would also not be too presumptuous to envisage that, in addition to the creation of a national directory, a directory for each of the provinces and possibly even local level directories for the larger centres and combined directories for groups of the smaller units, Khululekani could broaden its own database to such a significant extent that it becomes an invaluable resource. The viability, logistics and planning of such an exercise would need careful attention and are beyond the scope of this report.

### **Linkages to the public at large**

It would appear as if Khululekani should assess the on-going creation in the disadvantaged areas of 'multi-purpose community centres' as a matter of urgency. It is quite feasible that Khululekani offices, Khululekani Information kiosks or even Khululekani-run Parliamentary Constituency Offices could be attached to or situated in the vicinity of these 'multi-purpose community centres'.

There are many types of modern information dispensing techniques that could be used but, because people from all walks of life are involved, provision should still be made for personal contact as a matter of course. Members of Parliament would have to be accessible to the 'people' they continuously claim to represent and these multi-purpose community centres would be a good starting point, even if it is just to see what is going on in their own constituencies.

The problem of information 'bottlenecking' between the various levels of government, MP's and constituents is a very real one and demands urgent attention. Any discernible arrogance on the part of the MP's or the Khululekani information disseminators or even not enough respect for the constituents can lead to information flow and street-credibility problems that would alienate the potential audiences and sources of community-level information.

The well-publicised principle of 'transparency' often looks and sounds good in theory, but sometimes too much openness can also backfire: very few constituents would ever need information to the most minute level of detail, but the information should be available if required and so this cautionary note should not be treated with disdain.

It was evident from the discussions with MP's and senators that the previously mentioned maxim of "unknown = unloved" should be borne in mind not only by themselves, but also by Khululekani and its staff at all times. This simple truism should always guide the actions of people working for what is perceived to be the common good of others. The same generalisation is as valid for public representatives as it is for those at Khululekani: if they want the support and respect of the constituents they are supposed to serve, then they will have to earn it by their wisdom, deeds and words.



It is apparent that some agency, possibly even Khululekani, might have to assist MP's to define their own personal and generic roles in the constituencies they are supposed to serve, especially when the MP's actually stand for election in specific constituencies and not on a proportional representation system as was previously the case. In the same vein, they will have to be helped to define their roles as Parliamentarians in a democratic society.

All constituents have a democratic right to expect regular Parliamentary briefings from their MP's and regular feedback in session time, in person, by their elected representative. If this does not happen, or if the feedback is not as desired, then Khululekani and other NGO's, as well as the various Parliamentary Constituency Offices, would have to step into the breach in the interests of not only the democratic process, but also in the interests of the constituents.

### **Building linkages**

The discussion on the three types of networks would seem to indicate that Khululekani has two choices. Khululekani would either tediously have to establish and build its networks and linkages or save its scarce resources by 'piggybacking' onto established linkages and tapping into the established networks. This is especially true if Khululekani desired to become a major player in information dissemination and the vastly untapped Parliament - public contact arena.

The strategic decisions surrounding this issue should also be researched as a matter of urgency.

It was observed after the visit to the Dobsonville Parliamentary Constituency Office that it would be essential for ALL Parliamentary Constituency Offices in South Africa to be linked with each other. Such a step would not only be good for co-ordination and standardisation of actions, but would also provide the best possible flow of information and the maintenance of a high standard of service to the public. After discussions with MP's and senators, this observation was reinforced, but reservations were expressed as to political dominance in certain areas not making this a practical solution.

Co-ordination and standardisation also presuppose the creation of a structured communication format so that information is collected, transmitted and/or disseminated within a logical framework.

Previously, it was proposed in the report to the Dobsonville Parliamentary Constituency Office that an idea that might be worth pursuing is the necessity of each Parliamentary Constituency Office being required to render a (say) weekly report to a **central point** for collation, refining and distribution to



Parliament, the media and the Parliamentary Constituency Office. Discussions with MP's and senators in this latest investigation reinforced this observation, but doubts were raised as to the neutrality and veracity of this information.

Khululekani could quite easily become the central contact point described above if the assignment was within or was arranged to fall within the Khululekani mandate: is merely a question of positioning and the creation of a collection and delivery system.

While the idea of a regular report to a higher structure might just have a smack of bureaucracy about it, immediate detractors would do well to take note of the fact that public money is being utilised and public accountability must therefore be exercised. Here again, an organisation like Khululekani could step in, reduce the accusations of bureaucracy to a minimum and perform a very necessary service to Parliament (as the ultimate controller of state funds) and the public at large.

The real point that should not be missed is that this is arguably the most effective way of gathering and collating information to show just what the 'grassroots' (synonymous with aggregations such as 'the public', 'the community', 'the people') are really thinking and talking about. Such a presentation of facts would cut out a lot of uninformed guesswork of the part of decisionmakers inside Parliament and out.

To build linkages is not easy. Khululekani must be intensely aware of this and possibly even take the lead in the creation of an easily used and understood (i.e. 'user-friendly') glossary for the definition of words, terms and jargon that abound in Parliament and the information universe. A reasonably 'user-friendly' but comprehensive glossary would go a long way to smoothing contact between linkage points and would even assist the vocabulary of the illiterates in their struggle to explain themselves and their circumstances.

### **Maintaining linkages**

It is self-evident that creating and maintaining quality linkages in any type of formalised information system would require certain bureaucratic structures. The nature of the various linkages used would have to determine the 'rules of play' or procedural measures.

Maintaining linkages is a broad-based exercise that extends from the low-intensity level oral linkage with constituents through to the more demanding exigencies of the media, MP's and Parliament.

Maintaining laboriously created linkages is a costly but cost-effective exercise if undertaken in a co-ordinated manner. Private sector involvement as part of



a corporate social responsibility programme would go a long way to solving the problem of maintaining linkages.

Here too, Khululekani Institute for Democracy could become a prominent player in this regard, especially since it already has the leadership, the personnel and the necessary accounting and accountability structures. Material and intellectual help and expertise emanating from those corporate social responsibility programmes to responsible institutions that do not just throw money at what they perceive the problem to be could well provide an answer to this particular problem.

Maintaining those linkages referred to earlier in this report would tend to point matters in the direction of an information officer or a particular structure in Khululekani that could co-ordinate efforts in this regard.

Maintaining these linkages would also entail Khululekani maintaining of strong linkages with both the political and executive (bureaucratic) administration of Parliament for reasons of continuity, especially if this was a source of funds or even the home of the bureaucratic structure mentioned earlier.

Maintaining linkages means that the links between the formal information infrastructure (infostructure) and the more informal networks should be maintained and broadened to the benefit of all parties concerned. This would be an important area for Khululekani to operate in, not only in terms of credibility / legitimacy, but also in terms of becoming and remaining a major player in information dissemination and the Parliament // people initiative.

### **Media interaction**

Linkages and interaction with all aspects of the media (be they radio, TV or print media) are essential for spreading news and bridging the gap between the (rightly or wrongly) perceived elites on the national, provincial and local political levels and their constituents. A significant number of those consulted in Parliament felt that even here, the presence, expertise and experience of Khululekani can be used to the advantage of the democratic process.

While it is true that good news rarely sells newspapers, a good idea for Khululekani to pursue is the fact that good community news (not propaganda!) is needed by commercial and community radio, by some TV programmes and welcomed by the local 'knock and drop' newspapers. The Communications Task Group set up by Deputy President Mbeki is concerned with how the government-of-the-day can get its message across to the people (i.e. the official message). In pursuit of the interests of democracy, Khululekani could quite easily dispense the news referred to in the first sentence of this paragraph without incurring a 'government' tag and losing credibility (often termed 'street credibility' in the 'peoples' jargon).



### **Community interaction**

In most communities with an oral tradition, community interaction and therefore information transference is not as much of a problem as in those communities where houses are separated by walls and people are separated or divided by real or imagined differences.

Although the matter was referred to earlier under the heading of 'Linkages to the public at large', the capacity to create an infrastructure for information and communication in each constituency could quite easily be housed in the 'multi-purpose community centres' which are now being created. This is an area where both the local Parliamentary Constituency Office and Khululekani can co-operate if no other agreements (of the type mentioned earlier in this text) are in place.

Success in this field would be an indicator of the efficiency of the performance of the co-operation between that particular office and Khululekani. Failure would indicate a serious problem in making information from MP's and Parliament free and accessible to all, while the community conduits would also not produce the vitally necessary feedback to keep the process alive.

The Khululekani offices could also interact with the community by being a referral agency to a particular source of information, thus enhancing credibility while not actually spending too much time on one constituent to the detriment of the others. This is where Khululekani's possible connection to a 'multi-purpose community centre' would be a definite plus; especially since such a positive step would be even further enhanced by participation in a type of information kiosk operation

A word of caution at this stage: the idea of Khululekani acting as an information source for matters other than its clearly defined role might be very tempting, but that should be avoided. Trying to be too many things to too many people is a sure-fire recipe for total failure.

The impression was gained from a number of MP's and senators that Khululekani would do well to consider the idea of maintaining an information 'hotline'. The idea, while it has been raised in previous reports and is therefore not particularly new, would warrant pursuing for a number of cogent reasons. Such reasons range from enhancing accessibility and credibility of the organisation through to providing an opportunity for the enhancement of the information dissemination skills for Khululekani staff.



Khululekani would do well to consider co-opting members of the various community forums in the broader constituency onto an Advisory Panel. Although such a Panel would be (and should remain) a purely advisory panel, public participation and acceptance could easily be enhanced at very little cost or effort. The important element of community networking and capacity-building at minimal outlay and maximal return would be an added bonus.

### **Closure**

This report is the third and last in the projected series and covers the information needs of Members of Parliament and senators. The first report covered the Parliamentary Constituency Office at Dobsonville. The second report dealt with a regional profile of discussions held at the Khululekani Institute for Democracy and showed that there were a number of tangents and a number of generic similarities that would need attention in this third report.

This report was compiled from interviews and group discussions in the precincts of Parliament with representatives of all political persuasions. After circulation of this draft report to those who took part in the investigations, as well as the further refinement of Khululekani's mandate, a compendium document will be produced to further discussion by all interested parties in the democratic process.

This third report is by no means exhaustive, but it does outline the gist of the discussions and the possible solutions to the myriad of problems and opportunities that arise in the pursuit of such an exercise, especially when the investigation has ranged from constituent to Member of Parliament. The Annexure attached to the third report gives a broad categorisation of the direction in which the strategic discussions could flow, but it is only a summary and by no means prescriptive.

There are no textbooks and no previously defined models to show what must be done, how it should be done and what the costs are in terms of manpower, technology needed, time or money to achieve the initial goal, i.e. determining the information needs of Parliamentarians and constituents in a newly democratised society.

The series of meetings with the various role-players should be seen as the first step on a long road that has not yet been properly charted. In such a *de novo* exercise, intangibles such as knowledge, expertise, commitment, drive, participation, support and a large amount of goodwill are necessary prerequisites for success.



## ANNEXURE I

### EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED IN ANNEXURE II

#### General comment

The list of problems or issues found in Annexure II is neither exhaustive nor particular to the information needs of Parliamentarians. What is unique, however, is the list of categories used in the mapping to show the areas in which the perceived problem or issue lies.

The idea of mapping the various elements is to illustrate that even the simplest of problems involving human interaction and information flow has a multi-faceted solution and thus warrants more than just cursory attention.

#### Categorisation: Information element and group divisions

The listing of '**information element**' is the categorisation used to encapsulate the basic thrust of the problem or issue derived from discussion with respondents and the various elements are listed against the left hand margin.

The four major GROUP divisions are placed in boxes across the top of the page and are explained in context below:

### GROUP 1

#### The nature of the issue

The initial categorisation of the issue or problem is that it is either of a structural or of a functional nature

#### structural

An issue classified as 'structural' is the initial indicator of the fact that the problem is likely to be less easily solved. It denotes that something set or standard has to be **changed** to accommodate the solution to the problem.

#### functional

A 'functional' issue is one where a simple **adjustment** to a procedure, way of thinking or even action modification is necessary to achieve the desired outcome.



## **GROUP 2**

### **The information / communication dichotomy**

#### **information**

This serves to denote that the essence of the **content** (the 'what') of the issue is of importance and should be considered in this light.

#### **communication**

This has to do with the **method** (the 'how') of expressing the content of the issue. It is also an indication that a transmission medium for the content could play a role in the solution of the problem.

## **GROUP 3**

### **Information flow agents**

This grouping serves to indicate the possible roleplayers in the resolution of the perceived problem or issue. This means that the classification could entail the source of the problem or the solution to it.

#### **Parliamentarian**

This collective classification refers to the elected Members of Parliament, be they from the National Assembly or the second chamber. It can also have singular or plural connotations and can even be used as a collective aggregation of those elected public persons within the precincts of Parliament.

#### **party political**

This denotes that the fact that the issue has political connotations and that due cognisance should be taken of the aspect in attempting to solve the issue or problem.

#### **constituents**

The 'constituents' should be regarded as being synonymous with aggregations such as 'the public', 'the community', 'the people'. These 'constituents' are responsible for information flow from the bottom up. This is where the thinking and talking occurs which is so vital to the information flow being investigated in this exercise. The kind of information needed by the constituents will largely depend on the type of needs articulated by the constituents at any given point in time.



## **GROUP 4**

### **Indicators used to assist in solving more complex problems**

These indicators are merely there to point toward the possible source(s) of the problem and to highlight possible routes to problem solution.

#### **training**

The 'training' referred to in this context indicates that this could be a possible (or maybe a partial) solution to the problem at hand. Training can take many forms and may only entail correcting inefficient practices.

#### **financial**

This serves to indicate that there are financial connotations inherent in the problem or issue: resolution of this aspect could well resolve the issue identified.

#### **human resources**

This indicator serves notice that there a human element involved in the issue at hand. It could also become the forerunner of what could become a structural problem. If new posts have to be created to accommodate the problem or issue, then the categorisation is 'structural'. If, on the other hand, the type of personnel or disciplinary issues are at the root of the problem, then it is a functional issue which can be solved without changing anything significant.

#### **capacity building**

This indicator highlights a functional defect in the issue/problem. It has to do with both procedural rectification and empowerment in which specific skills are imparted so that the root cause of the problem can be solved.

#### **policy**

Certain perceived functional problems might only require a slight policy adjustment to solve the problem at hand. Certain procedural changes might also necessitate adjustments, amendments or even alignments to the existing policy to resolve the issue.

#### **ethics**

The aspect of ethics used as an indicator here serves to highlight the fact that this could be part of the problem, or at least an issue to contend with. Ethical behaviour is expected of Parliamentarians in their guise as the public representatives of the people.

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\* document compiled by jd berlyn of the centre for policy & information, dbsa



**ANNEXURE II****SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ISSUES DERIVED FROM MEETINGS WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS**

	Grp. 1		Grp. 2		Group 3			Group 4					
info element	structural	functional	information	communication	Parliamentarian	party political	constituents	training	financial	human resources	capacity bldg.	policy	ethics
access to funds to improve info flow		X	X									X	
access to info for ordinary people		X	X	X			X						
ad-hoc information & organised backup	X		X	X					X				
adequate info to take informed MP decisions		X	X	X	X								
advisory committee to the minister should have info	X		X		X								X
all affected must be informed when making of new laws		X	X	X	X		X						X
attract attention to message, not messenger		X	X					X					
better equipped if informed		X	X					X					
central point to get info		X	X	X									
communicating life-affecting decisions		X	X	X	X		X						
communities should get info on development	X	X	X	X									
constituency allocation and acceptance problems	X		X	X	X	X	X				X		
constituents do not know how to use MP's		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		
contacts for info		X	X	X	X		X	X					
crystallised or synthesised info		X	X	X									
demystification of info		X	X	X									
departments do not always give right information	X		X	X				X		X			
election-based issues info to constituents and vice-versa		X	X	X	X	X	X						
enrichment of process in imparting and receiving info		X	X	X									
essence of communication = info transference		X	X	X				X					
filtering down of info		X	X	X									
fleetness of info dissemination		X	X	X									
funding of info a problem		X	X		X				X				
gender issues: giving and getting info		X	X	X									
hard information needed (i.e. statistics)		X	X										
human side of info		X	X	X			X						
illiterates and info		X	X	X			X			X	X		
info accessible to all		X	X	X	X		X				X		
info as a strategic resource		X	X		X								
info must be an expression of reality		X	X	X									
info needs breed needs		X	X	X			X	X			X		
info search beyond libraries		X	X	X			X	X			X		
info should not be biased		X	X	X									X
info time vs. necessity		X	X	X									
info to all and sundry, not only own political party		X	X	X			X						
information/ misinformation/ disinformation		X	X	X								X	X
informing and building up relationships i.r.o. info		X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	
interaction with CBO's and NGO's re info		X	X	X									
issue orientation and info		X	X	X	X		X						
issues that affect the community i.r.o. info		X	X	X	X		X						
lack of research capacity i.r.o. information	X		X			X		X	X	X		X	
lack of resources for information (not access to info)		X	X						X	X			
learn from the people		X	X	X	X		X						
librarians in Parliament need to help more with info	X		X					X	X	X		X	
link between info and time	X	X	X	X			X						
linkages between MP's/constituents and between MP's	X	X	X	X	X		X						
lobbying (collecting & disseminating info)		X	X		X	X	X				X		



SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ISSUES DERIVED FROM MEETINGS WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS													
info element	structural	functional	information	communication	Parliamentarian	party political	constituents	training	financial	human resources	capacity bldg.	policy	ethics
macro-info for MP's		X	X		X								
media not well-versed in technical detail		X	X	X				X					
meetings with advisers (info implications)		X	X		X								
micro-info for constituents		X	X	X			X						
ministerial response not always right due to wrong info		X	X	X	X			X					
monitoring function re info		X	X										
multilingualism and info		X	X	X				X					
networking and supply of info		X	X	X			X	X					
networks		X	X	X	X		X						
organisation is the key to good information		X	X	X	X			X					
peoples forums		X	X										
personal reportbacks		X	X	X	X		X						
public hearings good but not enough		X	X	X	X		X						
reduce info to level of community		X	X	X	X		X						
reliable contacts		X	X	X			X	X					
reportbacks		X	X	X	X		X	X					
reporting ex constituency offices		X	X	X	X		X						X
research support from party not enough	X		X			X		X					
resources are thin		X	X			X			X	X			
selective info out of context		X	X	X									X
semantics of info		X	X	X									X
sharing of info		X	X	X	X	X							
shortage of issue-based info		X	X		X								
shortage of statistics		X	X		X								
simplicity of info		X	X	X									
soft information is needed for media info		X	X	X	X								
specific information for specified needs		X	X	X	X			X					
speed of dissemination		X	X	X									
structural defects in system root cause of problems	X		X	X	X	X							
time constraints require fast information		X	X	X	X								
transparency in info flow		X	X	X	X			X					
two-way flow of information		X	X	X	X		X						
unelitist nature of info		X	X				X						
user-friendly info		X	X	X	X		X						
whips should arrange for trained researchers / info types	X		X	X		X		X			X		
work through structures for dissemination of information		X	X				X						
written representations to MP's		X	X	X	X	X	X						
[ 87 possibles / maximum number] hits	12	75	84	66	38	11	34	22	6	6	9	5	7



<b>THE KHULULEKANI EXERCISE</b>				
<b>Members of Parliament who participated</b>				
<b>Surname</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Extension</b>
Bogacwi	KA	Senate		
Botha	Mrs YR	Senate		
de Lille	P	National Assembly		
Dyani	ZD	National Assembly		
Ebrahim	AG	National Assembly		
Gogotya	NJ	National Assembly		
Jana	DP	National Assembly		
Kuzwayo	Dr NEK	National Assembly		
Lebona	HJP	Senate		
Lubidla	EN	Senate		
Mkhatshwa	Fr. S	National Assembly		
Mongwaketse	SJ	Senate		
Motsuenyane	Dr SM	Senate		
Msango	NE	National Assembly		
Msomi	MD	National Assembly		
Mtshali	LPHM	National Assembly		
Mzizi	MA	National Assembly		
Ncube	Sr. SB	National Assembly		
Ndlovu	MC	National Assembly		
Ndou	RS	National Assembly		
Salojee	E (Cassim)	National Assembly		
Serote	Dr MW	National Assembly		
Shabangu	S	National Assembly		
Shope	NG	National Assembly		
Sisulu	NA	National Assembly		
Sulliman	MA	National Assembly		
Tshivhase	TJ	National Assembly		
<b>* expressed interest in outcome of The Khululekani Exercise</b>				
Rabinowitz	Dr R	Senate		
van der Merwe	JH	National Assembly		