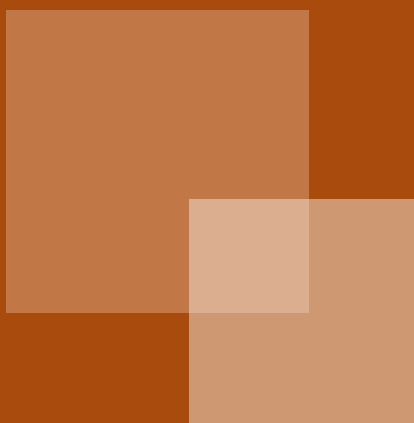




# Democracy and Service Delivery

International IDEA Policy Dialogue  
23–24 November 2015  
Pretoria, South Africa



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# Executive Summary

The Policy Dialogue on Democracy and Service Delivery took place in Pretoria, South Africa, on 23–24 November 2015. The event was timely, as it unfolded in a context of a growing and common concern, among all of the collaborating partners, with service delivery challenges in the region and their potential impact on governance and democracy. The purpose of the deliberations was to allow for wider and deeper reflections on the complex relationship between service delivery and governance, and establish perspectives on policy and research that would be relevant for future engagements.

The dialogue was structured as a multi-stakeholder event, with active participation from civil society organizations, academics, and governmental practitioners and policymakers with experience of and perspectives on democracy and development. The event benefitted from structured inputs by panellists over ten sessions and from related participant inputs and discussions. To facilitate engagement, a brief and interpretative summary of the core issues that emerged during the deliberations is provided below, organized in accordance with the objectives established for the dialogue.

## ***1. The complexities of service delivery challenges and the responses by countries within the region***

The service delivery challenges that confront countries in the region cannot be understood outside of a political-economy lens and the influence of history on power distribution and related service contestations. State delivery weaknesses are often a product of ill-informed reforms and the manner in which power is distributed and accountability exercised.

## ***2. The consequences of the challenge of delivery and the manner in which it affects democracy and politics in the region***

Service delivery failures deepen and are deepened by high levels of patrimonialism and rent seeking behaviour by private and public sector actors. Conflation of the ruling political party and the state serves to entrench failing delivery approaches and the use of the state for private distribution. Hence, the region is witnessing the emergence of parallel state institutions and the middle classes using these while opting out of the delivery system to secure their interests over poorer segments of society.

## ***3. The continuing and likely socio-economic impact of service delivery challenges in countries***

The economic and social consequences of state weakness are increased resource outflows and the failure to act against private interests that are undermining delivery and limit the availability of resources for social development. The composition of society has changed and most countries have to contend with a youthful population that, while

recognizing history, does not [understand or accept] the limitations it places on their development prospects and opportunities.

#### ***4. Exploring possible approaches to deepening the legitimacy of democracy through better service delivery***

Existing liberal institutions are struggling to retain their legitimacy as avenues for policy contestation and deeper consultation with and participation by communities. Governance legitimacy could be better established through a better ‘tooling of the state’ and by exploring how issue-based social movements can bring about wider social and economic change for more inclusive development.

#### ***5. National and regional strategies, and policy research would assist in overcoming service delivery challenges, and the role of different stakeholders in this process***

There are no easy practical solutions to the governance and development challenge. This requires an understanding that the content and shape of democratic governance can vary within and between countries, and that there is no single pathway to a better future.

This synopsis of the central issues that emerged during the dialogue does not capture the full and rich tapestry of the perspectives exchanged. A broader and richer summary of the guiding inputs and discussion is contained in each section of the report. One overarching need identified by all the collaborative partners and participants was for more substantive policy research on issues of service delivery and to support more substantive dialogue sessions with political parties and senior policymakers in the region.

# Introduction

The Policy Dialogue on Democracy and Service Delivery took place in Pretoria, South Africa, on 23–24 November 2015. The event was arranged as part of the 2015 Policy Dialogue Series by International IDEA Africa and West Asia Regional Programme, and organized in collaboration with the Thabo Mbeki Africa Leadership Institute (TMALI), Trust Africa and the Southern Africa Trust (SAT). The dialogue was broadly directed at engaging with the difficult and complex relationship between democracy and service delivery. The dialogue took place in the context of growing levels of disaffection and contestation over delivery among citizens in the region and beyond.

The dialogue process was planned as a multi-stakeholder event, with active participation by regional and local civil society, academics and governmental practitioners and policymakers with experience of and perspectives on the complex interplay between democracy and development. It took place in an atmosphere of widening concern about levels of inequality in the region and the proliferation of service delivery protests in some countries of the region. The dialogue deliberations sought to engage with the challenges of service delivery as a basis for crafting potential pathways for better democratic performance, as may be reflected in improved citizen well-being.

The dialogue sessions were structured to maximize interchange between participants as the foundations for building a fuller understanding of the causes and consequences of service delivery challenges in the Southern African region and to provide a basis for shaping future policy-oriented actions and related policy research. A full list of participants is attached in the Annex. The overall purpose of the dialogue was that it would serve as an additional platform for collaboration within the region and hence to influence discourse on the actions that need be taken to affect democratic pathways and realize the value that can be derived from democratic practice.

In view of the broader established purpose of the event, the following summary objectives (extracted from the Concept Note) served to guide the event programme and inputs from participants:

- Building an understanding of the complexities of the service delivery challenges and responses by countries within the region;
- Appreciating the consequences of the challenge of delivery and the manner in which it impacts on democracy and politics within the region.
- Assessing the continuing and likely socio-economic effects of service delivery challenges in countries.
- Exploring possible approaches to deepening the legitimacy of democracy through better service delivery.

- Engaging with possible national and regional strategies and policy research that help to overcome service delivery challenges, and the role of different stakeholders in this process.

This report provides a broad summary of the inputs from the various panellists as well as the ensuing discussions with participants. The dialogue programme broadly followed the pattern of the objectives outlined above and elaborated on in the Concept Note (see Annex). Some adjustments were made to panellist and sessions chairpersons due to late cancellations. The actual chairs and presentations are as is reflected in the detail of this report.

The report aims to capture, in summary interpretive form, the substance of the issues presented by the panel members and that arose from the discussion. It is not a verbatim account of the presentations and therefore should not be used as a basis for attribution.



# 1. Opening Session

The opening session focused on outlining the broad parameters for the dialogue and the nature of the delivery and democracy concerns that confront stakeholders in the region. The session was moderated by Thoko Didiza, MP, a trustee of the Thabo Mbeki Leadership Institute (TMLI). Didiza broadly outlined the urgency of engaging with the issue of service delivery as it is central to the social contract between the state and citizens. She explained the importance of reflecting on the nature of democratic engagement and the need to go beyond perceiving ‘people’ as passive recipients of services, towards modalities that engage with the construct that ‘the people shall govern’. The International IDEA Regional Director for Africa and West Asia, Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, provided the Welcome Address. This was followed by an Opening Statement from Siphosami Mahlunga, Executive Director of the Open Society Institute of Southern Africa, and a Goodwill Message from Professor Emmanuel Nnadozie, the Executive Secretary of the African Capacity Building Foundation. During the Opening Session a moment of silence was observed for Professor Sam Moyo from Zimbabwe who passed on while attending a conference in India.

## **Professor Adebayo Olukoshi: Welcome address**

Professor Adebayo Olukoshi began by thanking the collaborating organizations within the region for their positive response and partnership on the dialogue. He outlined that the Southern African dialogue was the first in a series of regional dialogues that will be held in Africa to focus on the critical interplay between democracy and development. He pointed out that the focus on delivery was fundamental and reflects an important step in engaging with the critical issue of securing the connection between the manner in which people are governed and the results that people anticipate from governance.

Given the current backdrop of challenges to the democratic state, Professor Olukoshi emphasized the need to push the boundaries of reflection and action to engage with a higher level of concern with state capability for service delivery as a basis for consolidating the gains that arise from democratic transition. In particular, there is an urgent need to tackle high levels of unemployment and inequality, the service demands of people, and the state of infrastructure across the continent. He also emphasized the importance of engaging with the nature of the social contract that is established between the state and society. In particular, the nature of the democratic systems, the role of political parties and the substantive questions that people are raising on the ability of the system to deliver societal needs.

Professor Olukoshi noted that the Southern Africa region is confronting intense social activism around public service delivery, and that this is placing immense pressure on state capability and the productive sectors of society. He highlighted some of the scholarly reflections on the relationship between democracy and development, and the

importance of appreciating the value of the democratic space as a basis for engagement on improving development. In response to some of the debates around development and democracy, Professor Olukoshi maintained that the manner in which people are governed cannot be separated from the content of what is delivered, and hence democracy and development are linked and cannot be separated. He argued further that there needs to be more substantive engagement with the socio-economic component of democracy, as people are increasingly questioning the nature and value of democratic systems. He concluded his welcome by encouraging wider reflection on the issues as a basis for engaging in the debate on democracy and development that is currently affecting all regions of the world.

### **Siphosami Mahlunga : Opening statement**

In his opening statement, Siphosami Mahlunga outlined that his intention was to raise issues from a civil society perspective and hence as a basis for provoking deeper reflection on the issues of service delivery. He argued that one of the challenges the continent faces is the obsession with democracy delivery. He further highlighted the importance of the state and the reality that in many instances, the state is a 'hollow shell' that is incapable of delivering what arises from the democratic space. He noted that the system of delivery is often very weak and that part of the challenge resides with the people who occupy and control the larger state system.

In detailing his perspective, Mahlunga alluded to some of the factors that impact on the nature and functioning of the state. He noted that in many cases, predatory political and economic elites have acted in ways that have served to deplete the trust that people would conventionally have in government and its ability to deliver services. He stated that economic and political power is often used to extract wider rents and for purposes of elite accumulation, and argued that citizens are often repressed or deliberately disempowered by failed service delivery. He concluded by noting that the ability of the middle class to adapt and opt out of the system is detrimental to the progress of democratic culture and practice on the continent.

### **Professor Emmanuel Nnadozie: Goodwill message**

Professor Nnadozie started his intervention by arguing that if governments do not succeed in the provision and delivery of services, they run the risk of deeper governance failures. He underscored the strategic importance of dealing with the intolerable level of youth unemployment in a context where many young people have a formal education but remain unemployable or incapable of self-employment. He noted that the current context raises fundamental questions about whether a democracy is able to deliver quality services to its population. He argued further that there is a need to question the validity of a discourse that suggests that democracies deliver better. In this respect he noted that it is often only the elite that benefit from state institutions.

Professor Nnadozie asserted that it is not possible to appreciate the current reality without engaging with the historical legacies that arise from colonialism. Such reflections on the past would serve to create some appreciation of the journey travelled and of some of the successes on the continent. These inherited realities however also highlight the

importance of politics and the larger economic environment when engaging on issues of service delivery. The larger environment, he asserted, requires that there be a constant assessment or reassessment of service delivery and the limits that arise from existing constraints, such as budgetary resources. In conclusion, Professor Nnadozie emphasized the importance of drawing on private sector experiences, especially customer focused approaches, and establishing strategies for monitoring and evaluation, such as the statistical capacity for collecting and collating data. He further highlighted the importance of capacity building, especially at the local level, and the imperatives of engaging in institutional reform to overcome the absence of coordination.

## 2. Contemporary Service Delivery Challenges: Domains and Dimensions

The second session focused on building an understanding of the service delivery challenges in the region and on engaging with the terrains where these are particularly important for future reflection and intervention. The session was chaired by the Thoko Didiza MP. Guiding inputs were provided by Dr Matlotleng Matlou from the Afrika Leadership Development Institute of South Africa and Professor Alinah Segobye from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). In opening the session, the Chairperson emphasized the importance of focusing on the relationship between citizens and governments in the region.

### **Matlotleng Matlou**

Matlotleng Matlou began by indicating that it was necessary to analyse internal developments in the region from a wider perspective and hence draw on experiences in other regions of the world. In so doing, he emphasized the importance of recognizing that the continent has come a long way and that there is substantive hope for the future, but this continues to be strangled by a difficult history and its location within a wider history of exploitation and dispossession. In his reflections, Matlou argued that among the main impediments to development are leadership and resources, and in particular the failure of the state to collect revenue in a context where there is substantial resource flow. In this respect, he pointed out that this is often because of corruption that has its roots in the political and economic history of the continent and its location within the international system.

In elaborating his perspective Matlou outlined that a considerable amount of the outward resource flows from the continent are illicit and hence serve to deprive the continent of financial resources that are strategic for its socio-economic development. To understand this reality, he emphasized the difficulties that arise from the continent's integration into the international capitalist system. Matlou concluded by indicating that the main strategy for moving beyond the current challenge should be centred on building the capacity of people to contribute to development. In particular, he argued that a change in leadership psychology in the region is essential.

### **Professor Alinah Segobye**

Professor Segobye began her presentation by highlighting the importance of constant adaptation to respond to service challenges. In particular, she outlined the importance

of understanding the current environment as it pertains to the actual delivery of services and the manner in which institutions need to adapt to meet the challenges. Like Dr Matlou, she noted that one of the major issues in the delivery process is the level of corruption that currently exists and the manner in which it distorts delivery. She noted that some realities are pushing people and civil society towards greater agency and hence different modalities for delivering and accessing services.

Citing her own analysis of service delivery issues in the region, Professor Segoybe noted that some of the challenges arise from failures of policy coordination at both the regional and the national levels, and the absence of a deeper conceptualization of the services that can and should be delivered by the state. As a step forward she urged better engagement with the idea of regional citizenship, as it provides the foundation for a better use of available capacities across countries in the region. After outlining some of the active service challenges in areas of vulnerability, such as health, education and housing delivery, Professor Segoybe concluded that regional integration would help to shape common approaches to delivery.

## Discussion

- The psychological impact of the past should not be underestimated. It has affected people on the continent and their willingness to exercise agency to shape the future. The exercise of leadership and agency for development is fundamental to change and to securing a better future.
- The role of traditional leaders requires much more reflection. These individuals often exercise a high level of local agency and this often has an impact on the choices people make in electoral processes. People are often not aware of issues that serve to keep them poor, hence there is a need for further and ongoing engagement with communities.
- There is a deep disconnect or agency gap between reflective individuals (intellectuals) and the transformative agenda on the continent. There is insufficient mobilization of these individuals through policy dialogue and to drive wider societal change.
- There should be more focus on tax regimes for extracting tax from resources in the private sector. Resources often leave the continent in legitimate ways, but are not optimally taxed to extract the finances needed for development.

### 3. Political Impact and Consequences of Service Delivery Challenges

Ellos Lodzeni moderated this session. The session built on the initial dialogue on challenges in the region and more specifically on engaging with some of the detail on the likely impact on politics in the wider Southern Africa sphere. In opening the dialogue, the Chairperson noted that service delivery realities are intimately linked with the role of political parties in the regions. Guiding inputs were provided by Dr Mataywa Busieka, from the Department of Public Service and Administration, South Africa; and Mr Yacoob Abba Omar, of the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA).

#### **Mataywa Busieka**

Mataywa Busieka began his presentation by referring to the state-enhancing objectives outlined in the Agenda 2063 strategy of the African Union (AU), and specifically the goal of establishing accountable and transparent institutions for service delivery. He argued that it is only through processes of assessment and follow-up that it will be possible to generate an increase in openness, transparency and accessibility for citizens. He suggested that service delivery institutions should increase their proximity to communities by establishing and cultivating direct relations between citizens and policymakers. In particular, Dr Busieka emphasized that citizens do not have choices in the delivery process and hence the importance of providing channels for reporting on delivery challenges.

To remedy the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, Dr Busieka suggested that it was essential for service delivery procedures and practices to be simplified in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of government agencies. In particular, he argued that service delivery accountability should be more clearly defined, and that strategies of decentralization should be adopted and implemented—chiefly as it pertains to human resource distribution. He made further reference to the experience with ‘community development workers’ in South Africa and the need to move beyond a constant fixation with planning. He noted that despite the importance of state capacity and service delivery, these do not feature in the SADC regional plan.

#### **Abba Omar**

Drawing on recent experiences in North Africa and the wider literature on social movements, Mr Abba Omar pointed out that people will act against governments

where there is a failure to be inclusive and where there is deep material deprivation. He further indicated that people were targeting symbolic landmarks of power as a mean to express their needs and grievances, which they perceive as resulting from cumulative injustices. He noted that there are wider expectations across the world and these serve to push wider reform and sometimes revolution. Many social movements cut across social class and are often driven by rising expectations as economies start to grow, as is currently the case in many African countries.

Omar contended that there is a need to channel and harness the power exercised by citizens to encourage positive action by government agencies and to reshape the relationship between the state and civil society. He noted that the realities of increased exclusion coupled with the ability to mobilize using new technologies will create fundamental challenges for the state and society. In concluding, he argued that we should not be trapped by inherited failures, but rise up and focus on a better future. He noted that the challenge in South Africa is that there are not the state resources and capacity to deliver on all expectations, and hence there is a need for more collective approaches and compacts among all sectors of society. Without these, it will not be possible to overcome current challenges.

## Discussion

- The issue of illicit resource flows remains fundamental to tackling many of the resource challenges that the continent faces. This needs to be engaged with at multiple levels to capture more resources for productive purposes. However, erivce intervention must be rooted in the realities of existing resources. There is a need for realism and hence an acceptance that there are resource limitations. A partnership approach or social compact would help to deal with this reality. We must guard against having plans that do not result in substantive change. We should not however dismiss all planning efforts, as plans can serve to mobilize and build the required delivery compacts.
- We need to guard against hasty generalization as there is great diversity across the continent. What may be good for some may not be relevant for others. Even as we engage with history and appreciate its impact, the challenge is to deal with the inherited reality and move forward in a manner that serves to create a better future for all. We should not overstate the role of corruption in Africa as it happens in many countries across the world.
- It is important to define the roles of the private sector and civil society in the service delivery process. There is a need to first conceptualize the nature of the state and then define the functions and responsibilities of that particular state. It is important to recognize that surveys suggest that for many people employment remains the fundamental issue for governments in the region. There is often a mismatch between what governments can do and the realities of what citizens want.
- Memory and the past continue to shape current realities. We should not lose sight of the impact of colonialism and the past, as it shapes current realities. South Africa continues to be shaped by its past. Memory of the past is important for moving to a better future securing change and even transformation.

- There needs to be some rethinking of the state and the manner in which it delivers. In particular, state fragmentation has not been conducive to a comprehensive social policy approach. A new social bargain will be important for re-establishing state capacity. Such a bargain would be fundamental to the social cohesion needed to ensure that the state has the capacity to deliver as expected. This would help counter some of the instruments and institutions that seek to minimize the role of the state.



## 4. Socio-Economic Impact and Consequences of Service Delivery Challenges

This session was chaired by Francois Ekoko from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and focused on the social and economic impact and consequences of contemporary service delivery challenges. Guiding inputs were provided by Dr Onalenna Selolwane from the University of Botswana and Brian Kagoro from Zimbabwe. As an introduction to the session, Ekoko drew on his own research to highlight the importance of incentive-based and values-based motivational approaches to enhancing service delivery. He noted that complex incentives drive people's voting patterns during elections and in particular in shape networks that are functional for service delivery. He described how incentives for service delivery can be linked to material benefits for those who engage in the political process and in the exercise of delivery.

The main driver of a values-based service delivery approach is the need to make a difference and to engage professionally. This entails having individuals who are driven by a sense of contribution, which means being motivated by a higher sense of responsibility to the community. From this perspective, people are not influenced as much by material incentives. This type of motivation is often prevalent in traditional societies. Building on the approaches articulated, Dr Selolwane concluded that there is a need to engage on how a values-based model might help overcome existing service delivery challenges.

### **Onalenna Selolwane**

Onalenna Selolwane started her contribution by noting that countries are being confronted by the reality that the composition of their population has changed. Many young adults have no memory of a colonial past and are therefore different to the generation that benefited from the fruits of liberation. The new generation poses a fundamental challenge to government and, as recent experiences suggest, are much more willing to engage in a level of activism to effect change. She also noted that governments are struggling to keep up with the demands of this generation.

In the light of these challenges, Selolwane argued that the importance of focusing on the availability of public resources and, in particular, on illicit flows out of the country. She noted that without engaging with these realities, there will be no way to overcome current service delivery challenges. In particular, she emphasized the need to harness local resources as a basis for overcoming existing resource challenges. She further noted that corruption is often driven by the realities of poverty. In conclusion, Dr Selolwane emphasized the importance of resolving the issues related to resource outflows.

## Brian Kagoro

Brian Kagoro started his input by pointing out that it is imperative to continue to tackle the financial and resource outflows from the continent. He noted that finance capital and the private sector act with a level of sophistication when withdrawing resources from the continent. For this reason, he argued that it would be naive to call on the private sector to drive economic growth. The private sector is not innocent regarding questionable outflows and is often supported by the African bureaucracy and African elites.

In overcoming the challenges of such outflows, and the exploitation—or looting—of Africa, Kagoro noted that the biggest challenge is to develop the state capacity required to intervene and deal with the level of sophistication exercised by the private sector. He noted that there is a limited financial capacity in the state and in civil society. The reasons for state weakness include limited available resources and incentives. The state often attracts weak individuals and there has been a reduction in investment in training.

Kagoro noted that the capacity dilemma is very serious across the continent and that leadership development among public servants cannot be left to chance. This is closely related to failures in human resource development and in the provision of the tools required for service delivery. In conclusion, he noted that the solution lies in building state capacity and linking social and economic policy. He argued for more investment in the public sector and the importance of ensuring that the state has the capacity to lead, as provided for in the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration.

## Discussion

Many skilled Africans leave the continent. To rebuild the state and improve development, it is important to reflect on the role of the diaspora and the actions that can be taken to draw on the wider skills base of Africans. In many cases, African countries are importing skills from other countries when they have already invested in developing skills. Better strategies are required to draw on the skills developed and from Africans who have left the continent. It is also important to have people who believe in a progressive agenda and who have the national interest at heart.

In many cases, countries are driven by external policy diktats and related global developments. One consequence of this is constantly shifting agendas that detract from countries' capacities to focus on historical or established agendas. Part of the solution to avoid constant changes, is to engage the political level and secure training for people who enter political office or who are in legislative structures. It is noted that SADC does not have the public service as a priority in its regional plan.

## 5. Options for Regional-Level Actions Within SADC

This session focused on exploring options for regional level actions and in particular the role that SADC can play. The session was chaired by Mr Ozias Tungawara from the Open Society Institute. He introduced the session by indicating that the central challenge would be to identify the range of policies and implementation interventions that would assist in overcoming service delivery challenges. Guiding inputs were provided by Lucy Muyoyeta from Zambia and Professor Kealeboga Maphunye from the University of South Africa.

### **Lucy Muyoyeta**

Lucy Muyoyeta began by pointing out that there are a number of areas in which SADC needs to be active, such as investment in people, financing and resourcing development, science and research, and infrastructure. She noted that SADC has the potential, through its regional integration and democratic instruments, to lobby for and influence the establishment of a system of competent service provision.

Muyoyeta noted that the SADC has normative codes and legally binding standards to ensure better service delivery and better quality services. She also noted that SADC has notable objectives, but that these would need to be operationalized to make a substantive difference. To this end, she argued that it is important to engage existing constraints through deeper analysis.

In many instances people resist change, such as decentralization, because of political imperatives. The overall emphasis for the future should be on research coupled with analysis of particular sectors and the specific constraints they face. Of particular importance will be working with SADC to overcome challenges and as a basis for dealing with corruption. The region needs better interaction between think tanks and those involved in shaping policies and interventions.

### **Professor Kealeboga Maphunye**

Professor Maphunye began by noting that it is crucial to move beyond the current fixation with borders in the region. He argued that regional integration provides a substantive basis for deeper engagement and for overcoming existing challenges. As part of this, there is a need to incorporate reflections on other institutions involved in democracy building, such as independent election bodies.

While discussing some of the more detailed issues related to improving service delivery, Professor Maphunye noted that it is becoming increasingly important to engage with

new technologies that facilitate improvements. He noted that some of these technologies provide opportunities to overcome physical constraints on delivery.

Professor Maphunye argued that it is important to engage with the substance of existing regional instruments for improved service delivery, most notably the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance as well as the values and principles of public service and administration that might help SADC and other relevant regional stakeholders tackle the hurdles of regional integration.

## **Discussion**

- It is imperative to examine the impediments to service delivery and develop an understanding of the role that regional bodies can play in this process. There are many commitments to more substantive engagement, but the processes are slow. This requires engagement with the reality that some elites benefit from existing arrangements.
- Much more needs to be done to enhance public service practice. Corruption in public service is highly complex and we often fail to understand the challenges that confront public servants. In many instances, public servants are in difficult positions and pressured by other actors to act in a certain manner. Public servants need to be supported and provided with the skills to resist corruption pressures. Member states can be held accountable on these issues through existing SADC and AU instruments.
- People in the region are often subject to exploitation as they move for economic and employment reasons. There is a need to strike a balance so that people do not feel excluded and that the system of regional integration does not disadvantage them. We need to explore avenues for assisting people to attain deeper integration. SADC needs to become a more people-centred entity and thereby establish a deeper relevance for people.

## 6. Options for Citizen Engagement

The session examined the manner in which citizen engagement can be used as a positive force for service delivery in the region. The session was moderated by Matshhidiso Kgothatso Semela-Serote from International IDEA. Presentations were made by Advocate Libakiso Matlho from Women and Law in Southern Africa, based in Lesotho, and Steven Gruzd from the South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA).

### **Libakiso Mathlo**

Mathlo began by stating that citizen engagement is fundamental to democratic governance. She noted that this is particularly relevant when reflecting on the interface between citizens and those who construct policy and deliver services, and that interactive consultative processes should be predicated on a common perspective on the future. Without such a common perspective, civil society interactions are often misunderstood as reflecting a lack of patriotism.

Mathlo outlined some of the challenges embodied in democratic interactions. People often feel threatened by the government of the day and are frequently forced into situations in which they become passive observers or party to corrupt activities. She noted that it is imperative that elected leaders engage with citizens. Without citizens' engagement, people will not be able to appreciate what is unfolding in the development process. It is imperative that spaces be opened up to facilitate citizens' engagement. In situations of insecurity people often do not want to interact and are forced into passivity.

### **Steven Gruzd**

Steven Gruzd began by indicating that his input was based on his experience of supporting the African Peer Review Process (APRM). He noted that a number of countries in Southern Africa have been reviewed, and that service delivery has emerged as a key issue in all of the countries. The general thread is that people are often frustrated by the absence of channels for active engagement on service delivery. During the APRM process people use the available platforms to articulate the challenges they are facing.

Drawing from the APRM experience, Gruzd noted that people genuinely want the opportunity to engage on service delivery issues. In the case of South Africa, people contribute through local development planning processes. Gruzd noted, however, that where there is a failure to deliver, that is, when existing channels fail or when they are absent, people will often create their own spaces for interaction. Gruzd concluded by indicating that a lot more needs to be done to understand the social movements and

protest activities through which people demonstrate that they have opted out of the system of representation and accountability.

## Discussion

- There is a need to think about the nature of how people engage with government. People often seem to be disengaging from the state and from their own government. It will be critical to think about how people can see themselves as part of and not separate from the state system. People sometimes act against their own interests and are sometimes used to serve elite interests through protest actions. It is imperative to problematize the nature and form of protests around service delivery. Violence is sometimes driven by specific interests and aspirations, including a strong materialist sentiments.
- There is a need to move beyond generalized stereotypes as people think about their governance system. In this respect, there is a need to think beyond party politics and other patterns of interaction. We might want to consider the role of traditional leaders and other structures as people become increasingly disillusioned with party politics. To accommodate younger people and women, we need to think about their perspectives and interests. NGOs can provide a useful channel for improving service delivery and engaging citizens as active participants in the service delivery process.
- The Pan African Parliament (PAP) has been established to play a role in active citizen participation across the continent. However, the role of the PAP has not been fully clarified and the organization has not been provided with an appropriate budget. As with national parliaments, the PAP can provide an essential channel for citizens, but this requires that parliamentarians rise above their own party interests. Parliaments can hold public hearings and these can be taken advantage of in order to deepen democracy.
- There is a need to guard against the development of an anti-intellectual culture. Intellectuals and others have been perceived in a negative manner. This has reduced their agency in countries and precluded the use of their evidence to counter other perspectives on optimal development paths.
- The focus on inequality has shifted attention away from poverty. This can be a challenge as people can lose sight of the depth of poverty in the region and the extent to which many people are struggling to survive. Poverty is hardly mentioned in policy deliberations and often serves to further deepen the challenges confronting poor people.

## 7. Harnessing Civil Society and Trade Union Engagements

This session was moderated by Professor Onalenna Selolwane from the University of Botswana. It concentrated on the role of civil society and trade union engagement in service delivery. Guiding input for discussion was provided by Ebrahim Fakir from the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa (EISA).

### Ebrahim Fakir

Ebrahim Fakir began by raising the problematic of the engagement of civil society and trade unions in matters of service delivery. He argued that this is not their mandate and that delivery is a matter for government. Fakir argued further that when civil society engages in delivery, this should be in exceptional circumstances and would represent a parallel state. Service delivery is the responsibility of the state. A parallel state can often emerge in the fields of security, health, education and social security.

Fakir noted that it is generally a negative development when a parallel state emerges as this often signifies the hollowing out of the state. The middle classes can 'bargain' and have the power to sustain what is necessary when a state has been hollowed out, but this often has negative impacts on the poor and the marginalized. Elite bargaining often has wider economic and social consequences, including deepening patrimonialism and related economic challenges. A key feature of such bargaining is the establishment of compacts that exercise power outside of formal structures of representation.

Fakir posited that elite bargaining often emerges in a context where the state has been hollowed out by the application of neoliberal public service strategies. A hollow state, when coupled with social dialogue and bargaining often results in a system that benefits the private sector and other elites over poor communities. Compacts also serve to undermine competition and distort economic growth. Social compact processes are not necessarily good for society.

Fakir noted that compacts can be positive for service delivery in a well-functioning system because such arrangements can lead to better oversight and accountability. What is most important is the exercise of accountability more generally. He cautioned against the notion of harnessing civil society and trade unions in a general way. It is possible for civil society and trade unions to engage in activism in a similar way to the Arab Spring. However, even in these instances, there has often been a reversal and these movements have not necessarily been progressive. Where civil society engages in championing single issues, the impact can be very positive. However, even in these

instances, it would require many single issue engagements for there to be a positive impact across the whole of society.

In concluding, Fakir focused on the impact of civil society and trade unions on the functioning of democratic institutions. He argued that this has not really been positive, as many institutions are functioning sub optimally. Patrimonial practices and poor ethical practices have also permeated public institutions and civil society. As a step forward there needs to be some reflection on the value of single issue social movements as opposed to broader social movements, and some reflection on the manner in which the state is organized and what is delivered for development purposes.

## Discussion

- We need to engage on how civil society functions and the manner in which individual leadership is key to single issue advocacy success, such as in the health sector experiences in South Africa. In practice, it is often a compact between civil society organizations that leads to success. This path was not necessarily successful in the area of social activism on anti-corruption.
- There has to be some reflection on the value and role of workers in the delivery process, especially since they are represented by trade unions. In some countries, trade unions have limited room to engage and limited ability to influence the trajectory of development. Working class organizations have changed and often no longer exercise power in a manner that is progressive for wider society.
- We have to think about rational institutional systems and better state practices in order to control the delivery process. Delivery can be complex and we have to appreciate that in many instances, parallel organizations can emerge in a context of the delivery difficulties that the state faces. There has to be some reflection on the involvement of communities and the private sector in the service delivery process. We need to be cautious about the notion of co-production, as often such initiatives arise when the state has failed. A parallel state often benefits the middle class and not the poor and marginalized.
- There needs to be deeper analysis of what service delivery is and how services are delivered. People are part of the delivery process and we cannot therefore view delivery as purely a matter of state delivery. We have to engage on the detail of which services the state must deliver at the most basic level. We also have to engage more deeply in the detail of the notion of the moral decline in the delivery of public services. The issue of corruption is often complex and requires greater engagement with the detail of what unfolds in practice.



## 8. The Role of Political Parties

This session focused on the role and value of political parties in service delivery. It sought to engage with how political parties can be vehicles for improving accountability and oversight over the delivery process. The session was moderated by Calixte Mbari from the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union (AU). Guiding presentations were provided by Gordon Moyo, a former minister and parliamentarian from Zimbabwe, and Daisy Bathusi, a former Botswanan parliamentarian.

### **Gorden Moyo**

Gordon Moyo began his input by sketching out the recent political history of Zimbabwe. He outlined the collapse of service delivery and the economic crisis that the country faces. More recently, many companies have closed and the crisis of development has deepened. He argued that an appreciation of history is important to understand the narratives established by the ruling elites in Zimbabwe. He Moyo outlined the manner in which the ruling party in Zimbabwe gradually shifted to become part of the state system. As part of this strategy, the party deployed its cadres into state institutions. The state and the party have effectively been merged in Zimbabwe. Moyo outlined how the state bankrolls the party in overt ways, including in the manner in which services are delivered. In this process of conflation, the role of the military has been critical and former military officials continue to play a controlling role in various state enterprises.

Moyo detailed the way in which the state has been captured by the ruling elites in Zimbabwe. In some instances, military officials were deployed to organizations in which they had no real role and were there only to receive salaries. Sustaining the living standards of military officials is a key element of the Zimbabwe strategy. Military officials control many companies and have effectively taken ownership of the mining sector. Given the conflation of party and state in Zimbabwe, Dr Moyo argued that other political parties struggle because they do not have access to resources. Reliance on outside sources is difficult and often results in accusations of outside control. In concluding, Moyo postulated that there needs to be some rethinking about how to sustain and lead parties that can engage in providing a new and better future.

### **Daisy Bathusi**

Daisy Bathusi focused her input on her experience as a political representative in Botswana. She outlined the history of Botswana and the fact that it has been a multiparty democracy since independence. She noted however that there has been one dominant party throughout Botswana's short history. This has changed and in the past

year, however, and the dominant party no longer has a majority in parliament. She indicated that despite historical success in delivery, there has been a downturn in the quality and quantity of service delivery since 2008.

Bathusi demonstrated that the dominance of the ruling party in Botswana has effectively resulted in some conflation of party and state. This conflation has often served to undermine the authority of parliament and its accountability for service delivery. People often perceive service delivery as a favour rather than a right. Service delivery has declined in recent years and the state often functions in a manner that is only supportive of the ruling elites.

Bathusi argued that the state has become weaker in Botswana, and that this is demonstrated by the lack of future-oriented planning and by service delivery failures. Corruption and poor procurement have created major challenges in the delivery of infrastructure for electricity generation. She concluded by arguing that there needs to be better funding for political parties so that there can be better representation. This should be coupled with civic education so that people recognize the importance of political parties and the role they can play in making a government accountable. She concluded by arguing that greater party cooperation would also serve to assist in shaping responses to service delivery challenges.

## Discussion

- Citizens often adjust to service delivery collapses as these unfold over a period of time. It is important to have multiple voices for accountability purposes. The media is important, but it is also crucial to look at how the conversations on the Internet can be harnessed for deeper accountability. It must be recalled that the current generation has no sense of history and the approaches were established by dominant ruling parties. People are becoming increasingly disillusioned with party politics and the democratic system, as elections often fail to reflect the deeper sentiments in society.
- Elected officials often struggle to balance their responsibilities to parties with their accountability to communities. Parties can play a positive role in driving social transformation. For example, in some countries parties have driven forward the empowerment of women in politics by championing better gender representation. Parties have to engage with their members in deeper ways. Multi-party dialogue can be useful for service delivery. The issues of party funding and transparency are important as they serve to build deeper accountability over policy and implementation.
- Opposition parties often fail to engage on the substance of delivery. Beyond elections, parties often fail to look at issues of detail when it comes to service delivery. Party members often do not engage in detailed research and are therefore unable to exercise substantive oversight. It seems to be a contradiction that in some instances, even if you have a strong opposition, there is a lower level of oversight. The fact that people often argue for alternative spaces for engagement with government brings into question the value of parliaments in many countries.

## 9. An Agenda for Policy Research

This session reflected on devising a future research that could help to shape policy agendas in the region and across the continent. The session was chaired by Maurice Enguéléguélé from International IDEA. To focus the discussion on future-oriented activities, Enguelegue outlined International IDEA's areas of work and the centrality of knowledge exchange, capacity building and critical dialogue. Guiding inputs were made by Dieudonne Tshiyoyo from UNDP and Mweenge Kana Chifewembe from the Foundation for Democratic Process in Zambia.

### **Dieudonne Tshiyoyo**

Dieudonne Tshiyoyo provided a perspective on the issues that have arisen during the dialogue and the matters that will be relevant in the future. In terms of the current reality, he noted that service delivery is often shaped by the realities of the existing political economy. Tshiyoyo outlined a conceptual framework or model that would assist further reflection and research. The framework contained three elements: structure, agency and operations.

In detailing the framework Tshiyoyo indicated that service delivery is influenced by structural realities and elements, which include the national context, a country's geography and the geopolitical realities that confront each nation state. At a secondary level, delivery is also influenced by the agencies that are part of the delivery cycle, including political parties, civil society and the private sector. At the operational level, factors include information, and human and financial elements.

### **Mweenge Kana Chifewembe**

Mweenge Kana Chifewembe centred his presentation on the experience of Zambia. He noted that service delivery is not a right entrenched in the Constitution in Zambia, and is hence not legally enforceable in any way. He argued that this means that the government cannot really be held accountable for the services that need to be delivered. Government does not have a legal obligation to deliver and there is limited room for citizens to hold government accountable. He also noted that because there is a thin line between the legislature and the executive, accountability is weakened.

Chifewembe noted that accountability is difficult within the Zambian system as there is limited separation of power. The exercise of patronage further reduces the levels of accountability. According to Chifewembe, access to information is vital for accountability purposes. It is often difficult to get information to secure accountability.

Chifwembe concluded by raising questions on the need to think through deeper forms of accountability, including citizen participation, the separation of powers and the manner in which elected representatives are made accountable to constituencies.

## **Discussion**

- There needs to be greater focus on the role of the state at both the national and the regional levels. These institutions must function in accordance with their mandate and they should be held accountable in accordance with the agency they exercise. We need to engage with the manner in which these institutions are financed and the control that might be exercised by donors. As part of future research we must also focus some attention on international agreements and the way in which they affect local service delivery.
- There needs to be some reflection on the future and the actions that can be taken to deepen debate and policy engagement on the matters discussed during the dialogue. In this respect, it is vital to identify areas where further research should be conducted, including issues of financial flows and resource availability in agencies active in shaping and influencing service delivery.
- We need to engage in more detailed discussion about the role of philanthropy in many countries. In many instances, these resources are poorly invested, not optimally utilized or used to deepen corruption or rent seeking behaviour. We often know very little about the flows from the global level and flows within specific countries. We have to think about what services are delivered and the manner in which private sector actors engage in the delivery process. How delivery by private sector actors is regulated is of particular importance.

## 10. Wrap-up Session: Next Steps

This session focused on bringing together some of the critical issues that emerged during the dialogue. The sessions were moderated by David Maimela from MISTRA. In introducing the session, Maimela outlined some of the challenges for service delivery as they pertain to the Developmental State. Guiding inputs were provided by Professor Sarah Bracking from the University of Kwazulu Natal and Lawson Naidoo from the Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution (CASAC).

### Professor Sarah Bracking

Sarah Bracking focused her input on raising wider problematics as they pertain to service delivery. She outlined that these are the issues of: the logic of governance; the conflation of state and party; and the manner in which global power relationships shape local level service delivery. In illustrating the challenge, Professor Bracking made reference to research conducted at the local level in Kwazulu Natal. One of the conclusions derived from the research is that how power is exercised locally is a reflection of wider global developments. Like global financialization, local individuals also view access to power as a means of personal accumulation.

Bracking noted that in Southern Africa there is a disconnect between governance outcomes and the manner in which governance is engaged in by different actors. This disconnect is demonstrated by corruption and low levels of service delivery. There are competing logics of governance, each of which creates different incentives and narratives for local actors. The wider consequences for citizens are dire. Local approaches often serve to create the semblance of accountability, but the reality is very different and often rooted in how power is exercised and for what purpose. The contradictions are glossed over and mediated by management instruments and measures that ignore the reality of delivery.

According to Professor Bracking, the link between globalized processes and local level mediation has led to new alliances that further entrench corrupt practices and create the impression that service delivery will unfold as expected. She further argued that, in such a context, two alternative forms of power emerge: philanthropy and the appearance of the 'spectacle of care'. Politics becomes a focus on process rather than outcomes. Delivery does not happen, but the system continues to create the semblance that it is delivering and accountable. Promises will often be made that cannot be delivered. In conclusion, Professor Bracking argued that financialization deepens the current situation of non-delivery and state failure.

## Lawson Naidoo

Lawson Naidoo began by indicating that one of the gaps in the analysis of service delivery is the lack of focus on legal instruments, including documents such as the Freedom Charter. It should be remembered that in South Africa, the Constitution embodies rights of access to services. Naidoo argued that there is a legal basis for holding people accountable for failing to provide services. There have been numerous court cases in South Africa where people have taken the government to court to force it to uphold rights that are enshrined in the Constitution.

Naidoo raised the issue of democracy and development. He argued that there cannot be sustainable democracy if the government fails to deliver on its mandate. Governments will not survive and there will be an increase in the number of protests and challenges to government. He expressed the view that the current system of government allows for accountability. The mechanisms already in place are clearly not working, however, because of the political system and the distribution of power and resources in society.

Naidoo raised the issue of financing and the manner in which political parties are funded. In particular, he argued that the channels of party-funding are often used to control what gets delivered and by whom. There needs to be compliance with AU Anti-Corruption provisions on party funding. State capture often results in a failure to deliver. On a positive note, he noted that where there is political will, delivery can follow, as in the case of social grants in South Africa. It will be particularly important to reflect on how to restructure government and the architecture of the state for better service delivery. We also need to reflect on the sources of funding for service delivery and consequently have another look at the budgeting system.

In concluding, Naidoo focused on the issues of regional integration and the need for enhanced mobility. He urged the need to think about how this might affect people and to use joint infrastructure development as a vehicle for integration. He also urged the need for greater scrutiny of the accountability of regional structures and the authority they exercise over integration. As a final word, he pointed out that there is a need for deeper independent research on issues of public policy and service delivery and on the role and value of structures of representation, such as parliamentary structures.

## Discussion

- The idea of ‘future fixing’ is interesting, and the state is sometimes driven to do this in order to manage conflict. Future fixing can be problematic as it seems to dismiss the construct of planning for the future. Planning remains important and provides a basis for investment in the future. Planning also provides a tool for building partnerships that will be functional for development. Planning is sometimes used to mediate contestation rather than effect change for people.
- In a democracy, it is important to think about ways of encouraging people to exercise agency. People can be supported to develop housing; and the state has to play a role in helping people to engage with alternative possibilities. Future fixing helps people appreciate current constraints. To engage more deeply, there must be an appreciation of power relationships at the local level. Housing issues are often

related to access to other resources, such as land.

- Africa has been a recipient of ideas and interventions from across the world. This has created great confusion and deepened contradictions. It may well be prudent to push for more indigenous and endogenous reflections on policy and the choices that need to be made. We cannot however engage with the future without an appreciation of current thinking and how it shapes existing power relationships. Part of the challenge for Southern Africa is the global economy and the manner in which macro-policy choices are made at the local level.
- We have to understand that the state and the manner in which accountability is exercised is part of modernity and it is difficult to get around this. A competitive parliament is vital to achieving improvements in society. We cannot remove the need for such competition without obviating the notion of consensus. We cannot fix the operation of government by tinkering with the overall structure of the state and the separation of powers.
- There is a need to think of more indigenous methodologies of service delivery. Many of these lead to greater local level participation. We have to open ourselves up to such possibilities as experience across the continent has shown that these work. These delivery experiences, including ethnic voting patterns, raise some challenges for the liberal model of governance and forces us to think about alternative approaches. The capacity realities facing many public services are acute and we need to think about these in more detail.
- There needs to be a more detailed reflection on the size of government. It should not be assumed that a larger state system will be good for society or for delivery. Of particular importance is the issue of accountability. Increased resources for the public sector might not resolve social challenges as resources might be further misused.
- Experiences of other countries may be useful for assessing the value of democracy for development. Asian experience suggests that in the take-off phase, a strong government may actually be functional for development. We cannot be complacent about these issues and need to think about what is good for the development of our societies. We should not be confined by the notion of modernity in the simplistic sense that we have to choose between a liberal democracy (modernity) and another system. There is a need to think about reconstructing the post-colonial state and the capacity of the state.

# 11. Closing Session

In closing the Dialogue, Professor Adebayo Olukoshi reiterated some of the more substantive issues that had emerged. He noted that the language of service delivery is more recent, as in the 1980s the term social provision was used within the framework of structural adjustment. Professor Olukoshi noted that the issue of the relationship between democracy and development remains on the agenda and is something that requires constant engagement and reflection.

Professor Olukoshi postulated that even among the most ardent defenders of democracy, questions about what a particular mode of governance produces do arise. This is a particularly important matter for this region. It should be understood that there is not just one path to democracy. Democracy building can differ from country to country according to its history and current reality. International IDEA hopes to take these issues forward through more detailed engagement, including with political parties across the continent. Of particular importance is building party capacity for more programmatic approaches.

In conclusion, Professor Olukoshi noted that the debates had raised some areas for future research and hence established an agenda for the future. He also noted the importance of research for engaging with power relationships and the role of different state institutions and relationships with other sectors. Of particular importance is examining the development plans generated within the region and the manner in which they are used to establish a new social bargain. Professor Olukoshi advanced the suggestion that in the future, efforts will be focused on engaging with senior political leaders and on bringing them together for substantive conversations on emerging concerns. With reference to the work of his organization, Professor Olukoshi made a commitment that the focus would be on making International IDEA work for Africa. He concluded by thanking the participants for their inputs and all the partners for their collaboration and efforts.



# 12. Annexes

## 1. Concept note

### *Introduction*

Recently, concerns have been mushrooming over the quality of democracy in Southern Africa with particular emphasis on the capacity of a growing list of elected governments to meet citizen expectations in the delivery of the services that are critical to the welfare of the populace and – arguably—the dividends of democratic governance. From problems of housing, the delivery of affordable health and public transportation services, and the quality of educational services to manifest difficulties with the supply of electricity and potable water, there is evidence of widespread challenges at different levels of administration and governance with meeting the needs of citizens. Service delivery demonstrations are rife in different countries even as debates have proliferated on the root causes and possible consequences of the shortfalls in the quality and quantity of essential, sometimes basic services in different countries. Although the perspectives that have been tabled are numerous, there is a common awareness that widening inequality and growing corruption have not helped matters much and will need to be addressed as part of a comprehensive effort to move democracy in Southern Africa to a qualitatively higher level.

International IDEA which counts the highest number of its current African Member States from the Southern Africa region (Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa), and which has a long history of engagement with various democracy actors across different countries, aims to contribute to the quest for effective responses to the crisis of service delivery in the area by convening a two-day policy dialogue. The dialogue is structured as a two-day multi-stakeholder event designed to concentrate minds on the political economy of service delivery in contemporary Southern Africa as a barometer for the state of democracy in the region. In doing so, it will contribute to an identification of key reform issues that deserve the urgent attention of political leaders across the board and which could constitute a part of the agenda of work for institutions like International IDEA in supporting efforts at the deepening of democratic governance in the region. It will also afford the Institute an opportunity to share with participants key elements of the new direction that it intends to follow in engaging both with its African Member States and various other countries that expressly request its services.

### *Background context*

The Southern Africa region has been the site of some of the most intense struggles for democracy in the history of Africa. Arguably, these struggles go back to the very beginning of the process of formation of political communities in the region; some of these political communities were to evolve into elaborate state systems whose

emergence, consolidation, decline, decomposition and re-composition comprise an important part of the history of old Africa. In more recent times, democratic struggles in Southern Africa, as elsewhere across the African continent, were organized around the resistance to and fight against colonialism and racial discrimination. It was out of these more recent struggles that the African National Congress was born in 1912 to become a pioneer—and pioneering—African political party. Its agenda of leading the campaign for freedom and dignity for the colonized was to inspire the emergence of other liberation movements in Southern Africa and beyond. The 1955 Freedom Charter which it adopted was to similarly inspire and mobilize freedom fighters across Africa and beyond; its principles remain an important cornerstone of contemporary democracy-building efforts in the region generally and South Africa in particular.

Although many of the countries of Southern Africa attained independence and freedom only after waging armed liberation struggles over many years, the region has, on aggregate, established a reputation as one of the relatively more stable and advanced parts of the African continent in the building and deepening of democratic governance. Direct military rule as experienced in other parts of Africa has been more a rare exception than the rule. A strong tradition of political mobilization and party organization has gone hand-in-hand with broad respect for rights and an acceptance of media and other mainstream pluralisms. Furthermore, some of the more advanced institutional expressions of democratic governance in Africa are established in the region and open electoral competition is generally respected in most of the countries of the region. The alternation of power within and between political parties is also commonplace, which also features some of the most interesting experiments in Africa in the use of one form or another of proportionality and party lists to manage the electoral and political party systems.

It is true that the experience of democracy-building in Southern Africa has not been without its discontents, hitches and setbacks. The legacy of decades of settler colonial rule and institutionalized racism continues to weigh heavily on contemporary politics, the economy and society in the region. Faced with multiple and interlocking internal and external challenges, some of the countries of the region have suffered regressions, including political assassinations, direct military interventions, blatant electoral malpractice, a subversion and weakening of parliament and the judiciary in the face of a new or resurgent presidentialism, an increased and overtly partisan militarization of politics, and direct pressures on civil society groups, opposition parties and the media aimed at restricting them—and narrowing the political space.

In addition, negative identity politics that have been deployed by politicians in a quest for advantage, and recurrent xenophobic attacks which have taken place underpin some of the incidents of violence which have been witnessed in the region in recent times. The overarching context for the challenges which Southern African countries face are such issues as widening inequality, persistent poverty, high levels of unemployment and an increased incidence of corruption and abuse of authority.

### ***Meeting the challenge of service delivery***

All democracies around the world contend with seasons of recession and discontent from time to time but the test of the robustness of their systems and processes is their capacity to forge responses that enable them not only to tackle contemporary problems

according to democratic norms and practices but also to renew and reinforce their democratic order. In the face of the structural and/or conjunctural constraints faced by the countries of Southern Africa in governing their political economies, the question of service delivery to the citizenry has come to occupy a place of prominence on account of the immediacy of its impact on the lives and welfare of the people.

Although the service delivery difficulties faced by the region are symptoms of broader contradictions and underlying problems in most of the countries, including the absence or failures of national planning systems, the perceptible decline in the quality and quantity of services in such areas as housing, education, power supply, public transportation, healthcare and water services, their political import and impact cannot and should not be underestimated as they bear directly on citizen assessment of governmental performance and the confidence invested in the politico-governance system by the people. In short, they have a direct effect, both in the short term and over the long haul, on the legitimacy of governments and perceptions of the efficacy of democratic systems to produce and sustain results.

During an earlier phase in the recent transition to democracy-building in Africa, overwhelming attention was paid by various actors to the establishment of the basic mechanics of putting a functioning democratic system in place. Some 25 years after the contemporary democratic transitions began, citizens are increasingly looking beyond elections for their engagements with and assessment of the democratic system. Nowhere is this more so than in Southern Africa, which enjoys some of the most robust—even if still very much imperfect—electoral and multiparty systems in Africa.

Looking beyond elections, quality, efficient and sufficient service delivery will rank as among the critical domains in which citizen expectations of the enjoyment of democracy is located—and the performance of democratically elected governments is often judged by their record in this area. Growing citizen dissatisfaction with service delivery has come to occupy a place of frontline importance in virtually all of the countries of the region; governmental responses to the failures experienced have not always been as robust or convincing as many might expect.

Amid the public demonstrations and debates that have accompanied the service delivery problems in Southern Africa, questions have been raised about the exact causes of the difficulties that have been encountered, the responsive capacity of governments, how citizens are gauging the performance of the political-administrative system and what might be the long-term consequences of the failures that have been registered, especially if adequate resources are not mobilized to redress them and win back citizen confidence.

These questions will be revisited at the regional policy dialogue on democracy and service delivery which International IDEA is convening and which draws participation from various political actors coming from the different countries that make up Southern Africa. They will, inevitably, provoke conversations about what is needed in Southern Africa to move the process of democratization to a new level where development challenges are treated as an integral part of the democratic project, with citizen well-being placed at the centre of development policy.

### ***Objectives of the Dialogue***

The Dialogue is designed to offer invited participants an opportunity to undertake a collective reflection on the growing challenges of service delivery to citizens in Southern Africa with a view to:

- Unpacking the complexities of the problem both nationally and regionally;
- Gauging its effects on democratic politics and governance in Southern Africa;
- Assessing the responses which governments have proffered to date;
- Exploring avenues for deepening the nexus between democracy and development in the region;
- Reflecting on avenues and mechanisms by which Southern African countries might move towards the goal of nurturing developmental democracies; and
- Developing an agenda for further action by various democracy actors, including areas for which deeper knowledge of the dynamics at play would be required.

### ***Participation***

Participants in the dialogue will be drawn from different tiers and arms of government (especially the executive and legislature, and national, provincial and local administration), political parties, civil society and community organizations, the media, business groups and professional associations. They will come from the different countries that make up the Southern Africa region and represent a balanced gender and inter-generational mix that will allow for an open exchange of experiences and perspectives. Participation in the dialogue is by invitation.

### ***Expected outcomes***

The Dialogue is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the roots, effects and consequences of the service delivery deficits facing the countries of Southern Africa. The knowledge-sharing and exchange of ideas about the particular situation and context in different countries will contribute to a better nuanced assessment of the overall service delivery situation in the region and enable participants to delineate a plan that can serve as a basis for further action at different levels.

### ***Information***

For further information about the Dialogue, please contact Alistair Clark, Programme Officer, International IDEA, Africa Region Office, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Email: [A.Clark@idea.int](mailto:A.Clark@idea.int)

## 2. Programme

### Day 1

09:00–10:00	<p><b>Formal Opening Session</b></p> <p>Chair: Hon Thoko Didiza, MP and House Chair, Parliament of South Africa, Cape Town, South Africa</p> <p>Welcome Remarks Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, Regional Director for Africa and West Asia, International IDEA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia</p> <p>Opening Statement Mr. Siphon Mlangha, Executive Director, Open Society Institute for Southern Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa</p> <p>Goodwill Messages H.E. Professor Emmanuel Nnadozie, Executive Secretary, Africa Capacity Building Foundation, Harare, Zimbabwe H.E. Dr. Khabele Matlosa, Director, Department of Political Affairs, Africa Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia</p> <p>Keynote Address H.E. Mr. David Makhura, Premier, Gauteng Provincial Government, Johannesburg, South Africa</p>
10:00–10:30	Group Photo and Tea/Coffee Break
10:30–11:45	<p><b>Panel 1: The Contemporary Service Delivery Challenge in Southern Africa: Domains and Dimensions</b></p> <p>Chair: H.E. Ambassador Sheila Sisulu</p> <p>Speakers: Dr. Matlotleng Matlou, Professor Alinah Segobye</p>
11:45–13:00	<p><b>Panel 2: The Political Impact and Consequences of the Contemporary Service Delivery Challenges in Southern Africa</b></p> <p>Chair: Dr. Sydney Mufamadi</p> <p>Speakers: Professor Sheila Bunwaree Mr. Gordon Moyo</p>
13:00–14:00	Lunch Break
14:00–15:15	<p><b>Panel 3: The Social and Economic Impact and Consequences of the Contemporary Service Delivery Challenges in Southern Africa</b></p> <p>Chair: Dr. Francois Ekoko</p> <p>Speakers: Dr. Onalenna Selolwane, Mr. Brian Kagoro</p>
15:15–15:30	Tea/Coffee Break

15:30–16:45	<p><b>Panel 4: Meeting the Service Delivery Challenges in Southern Africa: Options for Regional-Level Action within SADC</b></p> <p>Chair: Ozias Tungawara</p> <p>Speakers: Ms. Lucy Muyoyeta, Prof. Kealeboga Mapphunye</p>
16:45–18:00	<p><b>Panel 5: Meeting the Service Delivery Challenges in Southern Africa: Options for Citizen Engagement</b></p> <p>Chair: Matshidiso k. Semela-Serote</p> <p>Speakers: Adv. Libakiso Matlho, Professor Sarah Bracking, Mr. Mweenge Kana Chimfwembe</p>
19:00–21:30	Conference Dinner

## Day 2

09:00–11:15	<p><b>Panel 5: Meeting the Service Delivery Challenges in Southern Africa: Harnessing Civil Society and Trade Union Engagement</b></p> <p>Chair: Professor Onalenna Selolwane</p> <p>Speakers: Mr. Ebrahim Fakir Mr. David Kode Mr. Lawson Naidoo</p>
11:15–11:30	Tea/Coffee Break
11:30–12:45	<p><b>Panel 6: Meeting the Service Delivery Challenges in Southern Africa: What Role for the Political Parties</b></p> <p>Chair: Khabele Matlosa</p> <p>Speakers: Gordon Moyo Daisy Bathusi</p>
12:45–14:00	Lunch Break
14:00–17:15	<p><b>Panel 7: Meeting the Service Delivery Challenge in Southern Africa: An Agenda for Policy Research</b></p> <p>Chair: Maurice Engueleguele</p> <p>Speakers: Mr. Steven Grudz Mr. Dieudonne Tshiyoyo</p>
15:50–15:30	Tea/Coffee Break
15:30–16:45	Panel 8: Ministerial Session
16:45–17:30	Closing Session

### 3. Participants

Name	Title
Mr. Mouctar Diallo	Rapporteur
Mr. Joel Harding	Governance Advisor, DFID
Mr. Dieudonne Tshiyoyo	Regional Electoral Advisor, UNDP/RCSA
Mr. Ozias Tungwara	Regional Manager, Afrimap
Mr. Briggs Bomba	Program Officer, Trust Africa
Hon. Thoko Didiza	House Chair: Internal Arrangements, Parliament of the Republic of South Africa
Ms. Abba Omar	Director of Operations, Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection and Annual Report
Prof. Sarah Bracking	Chairperson, SARCHI
Prof. Onalenne Selowane	Professor, University of Botswana
Adv. Libakiso Matlho	National Coordinator (Lesotho), Women and Law in Southern Africa
Prof. Kealeboga Maphunye	Inaugural Chair & Research Professor, UNISA
Mr. Salim Latib	Researcher, WITS School of Governance
Mr. Steven Gruzd	Head of Programme, SAIIA
Mr. Lawson Naidoo	Executive Director, Council for the Advancement and Support of Education
Mr. Ebrahim Fakir	Programme Manager, EISA
Ms. Sofia de Souza	Deputy Head of Delegation, EU Delegation
Prof. Adebayo Olukoshi	Regional Director, International IDEA AWA Programme
Ms. Kgothatso Semela-Serote	Senior Programme Officer, International IDEA AWA Programme
Mr. Maurice Engueleguele	Senior Programme Officer, International IDEA AWA Programme
Mr. Mweenge Kana Chimfweme	FODEP
Prof. Alina Segobye	Deputy Executive Director (Research), Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria South Africa
Dr. Matlotleng Matlou	Professor, Nobel International Business School
Ms. Lucy Muyoyeta	Project Director, Opportunity Zambia
Dr. Gordon Moyo	Secretary, General of People's Democratic Party
Mr. Brian T. Kagoro	Governance Practice Leader, UNDP
Ms. Daisy Bathusi	President, Botswana Congress Party Women's League
Dr. Francois Ekoko	Regional Representative, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
Dr. Mataywa Busieka	Manager - International Cooperation Programmes, Department of (Public Service and Administration) (SA)
Ms. Mercy Moletsane	Managing Director, GLM & Associates

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Ms. Manthatisi Machepe	Legal Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources, Lesotho
Mr. Ellos Lodzeni	Executive Secretary, Malawi Office of the Ombudsman
Mrs. Josiane Wawa Dahab	Principal Clerk – Legislative Affairs, Pan African Parliament
Dr. Ndidi Abanno	Senior Committee Clerk, Pan African Parliament
Mr. Calixte Mbari	Senior Political Officer, African Union Commission
Mr. Paul Graham	Senior Adviser, Afrobarometer
Ms. Darsheenee Ramnauth	Research Assistant, African Union Commission
Mr. Marc Naba	Research Assistant, African Union Commission
Mr. Wilson Manganyi	Researcher, Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection and Annual Report
Ms. Tomika Konditi	Political Officer, US Embassy to South Africa
Ms. Sisanda Mbokotho	Political Officer, US Embassy to South Africa
Mr. Siphosami Malunga	Executive Director, OSISA



# About International IDEA

## What is International IDEA?

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. International IDEA's mission is to support sustainable democratic change by providing comparative knowledge, and assisting in democratic reform, and influencing policies and politics.

## What does International IDEA do?

In the field of elections, constitution building, political parties, gender in democracy and women's political empowerment, democracy self-assessments, and democracy and development, we undertake our work through three activity areas:

- providing comparative knowledge derived from practical experience on democracy building processes from diverse contexts around the world;
- assisting political actors in reforming democratic institutions and processes, and engaging in political processes when invited to do so; and
- influencing democracy building policies through the provision of our comparative knowledge resources and assistance to political actors.

## Where does International IDEA work?

International IDEA works worldwide. Based in Stockholm, Sweden, it has offices in Africa, the Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean.

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