

# Information campaigns and local authorities: a DSC case study

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## Abstract

*The new constitution links the duties of local governments to development, implying that the financial dilemma of local authorities caused by the culture of non-payment for municipal services, should be seen in the light of the development-orientated situation in South Africa. As the failures of the authoritarian top-down development approach became evident, it is not a solution to remove the electricity cables of non-payers, neither is it a solution to modify behaviour only. The motivation behind a campaign aiming at correcting the situation should focus on the capacity building in the community, which is in line with participatory development and DSC thinking. This can only be done in a participatory situation, where information is released about the operations of the local authority, and the community is educated about the functions and processes taking place in the local authority. In a workshop situation, the needs of the community should be prioritised, in order to address those needs. It is believed that by understanding the various functions and operations of the local authority, attitudes of the community will change towards the local authority, and that such change might lead to a change in the culture of non-payment.*

## The developmental duty of local authorities

The culture of non-payment for municipal services burdens local authorities in South Africa with financial problems. Two main remedies are usually offered in an attempt to reverse this culture. The first method suggests the physical removal of electricity supply cables, resulting in the discontinuation of electricity supplies (until the accounts in arrears are settled or until an agreement between the community and the local authority is reached). The second, more peaceful method, employs the services of a communication consultant to administer and execute a communication campaign aimed at the modification of behaviour.

It is expected of local governments, according to South Africa's new constitution (1996:81-81, 107 and 127) to stimulate development and enhance democracy by involving the community in matters of local government. This necessitates

communication with the communities they serve. Local governments should therefore strive to inform their communities about financial matters and to sketch the bigger financial picture. The result of this interpretation of the constitution is an interaction between local governments and communities. Communities should therefore be supplied with accurate information to reach ordinary citizens in good time and in an accessible format in order to prepare them for the task of participatory policy-making.

Against a development-orientated background, communication strategies and methods of information sharing which aim at addressing the relational problems between local authorities and communities will be discussed. This article will further suggest a communication strategy which could be used to address the culture of non-payment for municipal services, but it should be adjusted to the individual needs of each local authority.

## Communication strategies

From a communication point of view various strategies can be devised in order to address the culture of non-payment for municipal services. Since Kotler and Zaltman (1971) suggested the concept of social marketing whereby social ideas are marketed in the same way as products, a number of models were formulated as how to market social ideas such as road safety, anti-smoking campaigns, and later the payment for municipal rates and services. Various communication campaign models aim at giving step-by-step guidelines for the process of communicating to a large (usually mass) audience. Examples are found in the fields of marketing, advertising, public relations, corporate social investment, health-care and general communication studies.

The PRISA (Public Relations Institute of South Africa) model is often used in industry to promote the image of an organisation. The seven key stages in the public relations programme according to Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner (1995: 156) are:

1. Defining the situation / situation analysis and techniques used including a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or problems)
2. Setting objectives
3. Determining the target audience
4. Developing the message
5. Determine public relations strategies and action plans
6. Budgeting
7. Review and evaluation.

The marketing model suggests the use of four basis elements, namely aspects around product, pricing, distribution (place) and promotion (Four P's). Rensburg and Angelopulo (1996:43-45) suggest the following steps for a marketing plan:

1. Situation analysis
2. Problems and opportunities analysis
3. Setting of marketing objectives
4. Designing a marketing strategy
5. Implementation and evaluation of the campaign.

Advertising models concentrate on the commercial promotion of the product or service (Rensburg & Angelopulo, 1996: 45-46 and 50). The advertising model includes a:

- Situational analysis
- Setting of objectives and creative strategies
- Media planning
- The sales promotion plan
- Approval from the client and research testing the success of the campaign (cf. Sinclair & Barenblatt, 1990:129-130; and Bovée *et. al.*, 1995:163-184).

The AIDA model of advertising is used as a quick analysis whether an advertisement "looks right" in terms of (a) the attention it commands, (b) the interest it creates in the product, (c) the desire it creates for the product, and (d) whether it inspires action from the consumer (Wilmshurst, 1989:201). This model is not often used to plan communication campaigns, but merely serves as a last-minute analysis.

These models represent similar stages and processes. The planning of a typical communication campaign will include the following steps: situation analysis, determining the goals and strategy, media planning, promotion/marketing plan, obtaining approval from the client, implementation and finally the evaluation of the campaign.

## Development approaches

In the field of development two main paradigms determine communication in a development situation, namely the *dominant paradigm* and the *new paradigm* (cf. Melkote, 1991), referred to within the communication field as *Development Communication* (DC) and *Development Support Communication* (DSC) (cf. Malan, 1996). The new paradigm and the DSC approach support the argument of community-centred development that will ultimately lead to sustainable development (cf. Swanepoel and De Beer, 1997).

From a DSC perspective, criticism against the communication strategies mentioned above is that they are preoccupied with the needs of the communicator. Therefore top-down, authoritarian, one-way communication and controlling stakeholders predominate the process by controlling the message, using the mass media from a centralised venue, keeping power with the initial communicators. It is also in line

with DC thinking. In most cases the intention of the communicator or communication planner includes an element of persuasion either to, sell an idea or product or to change or modify behaviour or perceptions. A typical DC approach will be to diffuse information but still aim at controlling the information reaching the community, thus retaining power. A number of interactive models of communication campaigns are designed in an attempt to take the needs of the beneficiary into account, but these do not start with the needs of the beneficiary but merely take them into account when formulating or negotiating a message. Although such models are interactive, true participation as suggested by the DSC perspective does not take place, because the beneficiaries do not take final ownership of the message (cf. Rensburg & Angelopulo, 1996:51-71).

### **Masakhane case study**

During the first two years of the Masakhane campaign, nationwide roadshows were used to explain reasons for payment and to motivate audiences to pay for their municipal services. These roadshows offer a suitable example of a DC campaign, mainly because of its inherent top-down communication methods.

Survey results obtained from interviews after one of these Masakhane roadshows in Esikhawini (near Richards Bay) proved that the show was enjoyed by many respondents, despite the top-down diffusion of information, but after the show a large percentage of respondents indicated that they still needed more information regarding the campaign topics (cf. Burger, 1995). In general, the findings of the Esikhawini Masakhane roadshow were that it was seen to bring information to the community. A large percentage of respondents indicated that the message of Masakhane are revolving around unity within a community. A smaller percentage of respondents indicated that they thought by paying for rent, services and taxes, funds would be raised for physical developments (infrastructure) in their communities. They offered reasons for non-payment as inaffordability (half of respondents), lack of information about the operation of the system (about a quarter of respondents), mistrusting the system, and dissatisfaction with services. Almost a quarter of respondents indicated that they needed more information about the whole system and the reasons for payment, which is also evident from the previous responses. Although many respondents of the Esikhawini Masakhane roadshow, indicated that the audience had received information through the roadshow, a large portion of respondents still indicated a lack of information (Burger, 1995), and no dramatic change in the non-payment culture was seen. Not even the emotive Masakhane campaign slogans suggesting *unity* amongst community members and *pride* in a community, could bring about a change in payment behaviour. Reasons for the failure of the Masakhane campaign during the first two years were amongst others, little community involvement and capacity building, a lack of communication based at grassroots level as well as tension between local government and society (Masakhane National Workshop, 1997:1 and 4-6).

Moerneka (1991:23-24) argues that the *felt needs* of the community should be taken into account, and that cannot happen if a communicator outside the community formulates the messages. He further suggests involving the community in the planning and production of the messages, after a thorough analysis of the situation and taking all information into consideration, which is in line with DSC thinking. Coldevin (1991:33-39) indicates that a growing list of projects failed, owing to insufficient information about the community's *felt needs* and not upholding a "receiver-oriented" communication for the duration of a project. The final result is that the project is not self-sustainable.

This article argues that the need for information can only be satisfied through intensive and sustained two-way communication, which will lead to a better understanding between the community and the local authority.

## **Information campaigns vs. one-way communication campaigns**

There are various reasons suggesting that an information campaign is preferred to one-way communication campaigns (cf. Burger, 1995; Coldevin, 1991:33-39). A communication campaign motivating people to pay for municipal services and taxes might lead to more mistrust and misinformation between the local authority and its community, if it is seen as authoritarian, manipulative and one-way communication. Secondly, a democratic elected local authority in South Africa can hardly make use of an authoritarian top-down process of one-way communication against the background of the new constitution and political climate in the country. Thirdly, a large body of research proves the failure of such top-down "development" projects in South Africa and the rest of the world shifting the focus to DSC principles (cf. Melkote, 1991:134; and Mowlana & Wilson, 1990:67).

An information campaign can be described as a non-commercial communication process with the purpose of disseminating information in order to inform, to create awareness and to educate within a development context (cf. Rensburg & Angelopulo, 1996:11) focusing on capacity building, empowerment and information sharing between all parties involved. The principles of DSC are likely to succeed to inform, to educate and to create awareness about the operation of a local authority. Although the process of diffusing information is inherently one-way, the processes around it should be participatory (not only interactive) and dialogic employing two-way communication in a face-to-face context. The element of persuasion is therefore not associated with a DSC campaign. In a DSC information campaign the needs of the community predominate the communication process, and the release of information aims at helping community members to empower themselves (cf. Melkote, 1991:263).

## Message

A local authority information campaign regarding the payment of municipal services should therefore aim at improving the relationship between the authority and the community in order to create an atmosphere of trust, by releasing information about the operations and functions of the local authority. The local government is impelled to install a democratic culture and to clear possible negative attitudes amongst its staff members. Misuse of power/position and ineffective provision of services have to be addressed and an effective billing system has to be developed. The community will receive information about the operations of the local authority and participate in aspects of governing processes such as the prioritisation of their needs. In the second phase of such a campaign the financial implications of the non-payment culture should be explained to the community.

The reason why a local authority wants to communicate information about its operations should be stated clearly in the first phases of the project, and it should set the example by not having hidden agendas.

## Towards a communication strategy for information campaigns

Various scholars suggest the combination of the positive aspects of the DC with that of the DSC approach (cf. Malan, 1996:6-14). The aspects of the DC that are used, include the initiative taken by the local government to suggest an information campaign as well as the diffusion of information about the operations of the local authority, including the basic principles of budgeting as well as the scientific analysis of the research section. The positive aspects of the DSC approach which will be included in this strategy include the emphasis on the participatory approach, which manifests in valuing the views, opinions and perceptions of the community, allowing the community to prioritise their needs by participating in the drawing up of a budget, inviting the community to participate in workshops, planning the campaign, creating materials, and determining the media used, as well as involving community facilitators.

Although in an ideal DSC situation the decision to embark upon an information campaign should be taken jointly by the community and the local authority, in practice the local authority often takes this decision after problems, such as the non-payment culture has arisen. In a setting where all the role players are involved for the sake of development with no hidden agendas, a DSC process will demand that all role players have equal status and respect, and that a process of dialogue will be implemented, and participation is achieved throughout the process. This is however not always possible, but the local authority will nevertheless have to set the example through open communication and by releasing all information regarding its activities.

## Local authority

The local authority should aim at contributing the following to the process:

- Establishing a cost-effective work ethic amongst its employees giving the community value for their money
- Providing a quality service
- A continual evaluation of costs for services and costs reducing measures
- Empathy towards municipal needs of community
- Inviting community input
- Transparency in all actions
- Effective information release
- Development, empowerment, information sharing and participation of community should be invited, encouraged and supported.

## Communication consultants and independent evaluation

A lack of resources often forces local authorities to employ professional communication consultants. The following aspects may impair the work of such consultants:

- Community perception that consultants promote the views of the local authority
- A lack of information about the prevailing political climate between the community and the local authority
- A lack of information about the prevailing political climate (and power-play) within the community, and within the local authority.

Because of the high costs involved in embarking upon such a campaign, little attention is paid to research and testing the results of such a campaign, and evaluation is often undertaken by the consultants themselves. The Masakhane National Workshop (1997:6) found that one of the failures of the campaign is directly linked to a lack of such evaluation, monitoring and research. With regard to evaluation, it is therefore suggested that:

- the intolerance of independent research should be overcome in order to enhance objectivity, resulting in objective evaluation results;
- continual evaluation including a pre-test, post-test and during and after each phase is included;
- the fact that behaviour and perceptions are often uncorrelated should be accepted and incorporated in the campaign planning (cf. DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989:179);
- all external factors (such as party political change) must be evaluated in order to determine their contribution to the overall success of the campaign.

## Research<sup>1</sup>

The DSC approach suggests that research should be kept simple and be of a participatory nature (cf. Malan, 1996: 34-35). This approach is ideal in a small community, but another strategy will have to be designed for large scale projects. It is often possible to train community members to act as field workers for quantitative research and as facilitators of participatory research such as participatory rural appraisals and focus groups. It should be taken into account that results obtained through the latter are usually preliminary and exploratory only and are not indicative or representative of the larger population. Research undertaken in the group context is more in line with DSC thinking, because of its participatory nature, but since results are preliminary they are often used in conjunction with surveys using questionnaires. For more accurate and indicative research results probability samples will have to be used.

## Community groups

Various theories explain the flow of information through a community. Theories of selective influence support the two-step flow of information as well as the adoption of innovations theory. The communicator sends a message to those (opinion leaders) who are directly exposed to the message, who in turn amplify this message to people they come in contact with who had not heard or read the original message (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989:161-164, 192-194). The multiple flow (or n-step) of information developed from the two-step theory and suggests that opinion leaders may consult with others, whom they consider as opinion leaders (Tubbs and Moss, 1983:345). These theories explain how information is diffused in a community in both rural and urban societies, and suggest that the importance of the opinion leader varies in communities. The two-step flow of information theory is often associated with DC but it is still supported widely and has been proven valuable by various research results. The DSC approach involves an exchange of meaning, whereby communication takes place in two directions, because parties exchange communication roles by taking turns to be senders and receivers of messages. This two way communication process will ultimately lead to mutual understanding (Malan, 1996:19; and Coldevin, 1991:31-33). Since both these processes involve small groups, the suggested approach for an information campaign addressing the community, suggests using groups that exist within the community.

The research results regarding the biographic information, perceptions and knowledge of the community, should give some clarity regarding the profile of the community, which in turn will help the communication consultant to understand the community. The technique of market segmentation is usually employed in the field of marketing, advertising and public relations, whereby a large group or a

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<sup>1</sup> Further reading on research methodology in this field include: Du Plooy, 1995:56-64; Boveć, Dovel, Wood, 1995:144-151; Pitout, 1995:106-121; and Wimmer and Dominick, 1983:95-100)



community is divided into smaller groups (subgroups) with some homogenous characteristics, such as problems experienced in life, preferences, needs, fears, tradition, culture, hopes, purchase behaviours, desires and dreams, in order to choose the best media for a communication campaign, thus minimising costs. Market segmentation makes more efficient use of resources (money, time, people), gives a better understanding of needs of the audience as well as misconceptions (cf. Green & Lascaris, 1990:35; and Bovée *et. al.*, 1995:115-129).

Considering the research findings, groups with a similar profile can be identified and small-group communication (as suggested by DSC) can then be used to convey information. Open communication may be the result of grouping individuals with similar profiles together, especially in a development setting, where sensitive issues are often discussed. Information may then be made available to group members in a culturally acceptable format, and be discussed in a small-group context.

Scholars of the DSC approach suggest the use of small media in a dialogic, horizontal, participatory context, with the aim of self-development, i.e. beneficiaries of development projects should reach a stage where they are developing themselves. If such an approach is supported, beneficiaries are divided into smaller groups enhancing participation. The DSC approach suggests that the interests and needs of the community should be predominant and the starting point of the process, and that the traditional and cultural knowledge frameworks and existing community groupings should be incorporated in the process.

One of the goals of the research will be establishing interest groups existing within a community, and not to create new artificial groups (cf. Coldevin, 1991:31-33). Hendrix (1992:10 as quoted by Mersham *et al.*, 1995:119-120) suggests segmenting the community into the following groups:

Community media

(owners and employers)

- Mass media
- Specialised media
- Oramedia (folk or traditional media)

Community leaders

- Public officials
- Educators
- Religious leaders
- Traditional or ethnic leaders
- Professionals
- Executives
- Bankers
- Trade Union leaders
- Neighbourhood leaders

Community organisations

- Civics
- Service
- Social
- Business
- Cultural
- Religious
- Youth
- Political
- Special interest groups
- Other

## Facilitators

Methods used for the identification of facilitators guiding community group discussions and workshops, will differ from community to community. The research results (focus groups or questionnaires), ward committees and other existing groups may indicate people to be trained as facilitators. Using existing structures of communication, is supported by DSC theory and papers read at the 1996 DESCOM symposium (cf. Kerr, 1996:4-7). Such facilitators may serve on a project steering committee with representatives of local government.

Kerr (1996:6) argues that existing structures of the community should convey the development message, and the local authority and consultant should merely make information available and not manipulate the community to change. He explains that payment for facilitators may lead to facilitators becoming mercenaries promoting change as suggested by the benefactors of the project, instead of focusing on the needs and interests of the community. Facilitators may also be envied by certain parties within the community that may cause problems, but if they are selected with the full cooperation of the community, the contrary may be true.

Facilitators should be trained in terms of the project objectives, workshop techniques and information concerning activities of local government. They could also provide a wealth of information about the groups they represent. Training should therefore take place in a participatory way. Training aids may also be developed during these workshops, such as brochures and posters that will enable facilitators to either use them during future workshops or to facilitate participants in creating their own visual and teaching aids.

The small communication media as suggested by the DSC approach are usually used in the context of workshops, including videos, film strips, traditional media, group and interpersonal communication (Ascroft & Masilela, 1989:16-17 as quoted by Melkote, 1991:263). The message formulated for interpersonal or face-to-face communication brings the recipient in direct contact with the communicator. The nature of the messages in the small groups is often personal and exchange of information takes place in a transactional way, where immediate feedback leads to better understanding between participants (Williams, 1989:30).

## Community workshops and group discussions

In a number of recent surveys respondents in similar situations indicated that they enjoyed face-to-face communication in the small group context (cf. Burger, 1996; and Mersham & Hooyberg, 1996). The community workshops should follow the same format as the facilitators' training workshop, focusing on the diffusion of information about the activities and budget of the local authority and establishing the municipal needs of the community and prioritising it. Moemeka (1991:23)

argues that the *felt needs* of the community should be the focus of development and suggests involving the community in the planning and production of the messages. The community could be asked to develop its own visual information sheets, posters conveying information, local artists, performing arts and illustrations. This should preferably be done during the later stages of workshops after the relevant information has been made available to the participants of the workshops.

In conjunction with community workshops diffusing information, other methods of communication may be employed where the community actively participates in the process, such as the platforms of schools, churches, the workplace, social clubs, taxi ranks, marches and roadshows. Dalrymple (1996:5-10) explains how plays, games and competitions are used in participatory community and school workshops during the DramaAide-project and supports the effectiveness of these methods. Ekwueme (1992:16-19) suggests employing the performing arts and comedy in development efforts, since they proved to be powerful tools of interpersonal and mass communication in traditional societies of Africa and in the so-called "new" society in urban and semi-urban areas, which could be found in South Africa amongst others in townships. He suggests that the increasing popularity of radio and television comedy shows supports his argument. Kakan, Nturibi and Kinyua (1988:29) support this line of thinking arguing that even folk songs have become popular in choir groups, often accompanied by Western musical instruments.

## **Mass media campaign**

A mass media campaign supporting the information disseminated in the small group context, and giving the community the outcome(s) of the various small group interactions will keep the community up to date with the proceedings of the project. The media preferences will be indicated by the research undertaken in each community. The printed media (local newspaper, municipal newsletter, leaflets) may be used to display detailed information regarding the projects and the activities of the local authority using diagrams, flow charts and tables including financial statements. Radio is also useful for supplying up-to-date reports on the project progress, and providing a general awareness of the campaign.

## **Supporting projects**

Supporting projects indicating the local authority's wish to better its service to the community, may include projects implemented parallel to an information campaign, such as the upgrading of certain services, a clean-up campaign, and setting up a community information centre.

The utilisation of multipurpose community centres is not new in the field of development and communication studies (cf. Langa & Conradie, 1996; and Mafora, 1996). Such centres often provide an office for social services such as

social welfare facilities, healthcare, cultural and sports activities. A variety of communication methods and media, such as brochures, interactive electronic media and information officers, are used to convey information. As part of the services provide by such a community centre, the local authority may wish to establish an information centre regarding its activities. The local authority "kiosk" or information desk at such a venue will then spread information about the activities, procedures and role of the local authority.

## People's budget<sup>2</sup>

Another step which may be used to motivate active involvement of the community in matters of the local government, is to set up a people's budget, whereby the community is actively involved in the design of the budget. The Cape Town city council compiled a "people's budget", after extensive community consultation in 1996/7. A series of meetings, more than 40 community workshops throughout the Peninsula and educational newsletters, were used to convey and gain information. In the first half of the workshop the participants were informed and educated on how the City's budget works, and where the Council get its income, and during the second session communities discussed their municipal needs and prioritised them. At these workshops residents were given the opportunity to choose a representative to form a liaison group with the local authority.

## Sequence of events

The duration of an information campaign could be expected to influence the success rate. It could be expected that a prolonged information campaign will have a higher success rate, but a longer campaign would result in increased costs. The following section gives an outline of the events or steps suggested for such a campaign:

### Local authority

- Needs assessment of the local authority regarding the information campaign
- Local authority staff training (information regarding the project, procedures, handling complaints etc.)
- Ensuring the billing system and other systems run smoothly
- Setting up an information centre/desk/kiosk and second an official to man the kiosk.

### Community liaison

- Information regarding the existence and planning of the project and the reasons for the project is explained to the community via mass media and face-to-face communication channels, through ward committees, ratepayers associations (if such committees exist), and also via posters, newspapers, and monthly account

<sup>2</sup> IMSSA (The Independent Mediation Services of South Africa) and Simeka TWS Communications were involved in this project.

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statements from municipality (for regular receivers of statements and regular payers)

- Focus group discussions with such committees will identify other groups
- Focus group discussions with such groups: other key community leaders (movers, shakers, decision makers, key role players in communities including stakeholders such as PTAs, Local Development Forums, Civic associations, religious groupings, NGOs and CBOs, ratepayers associations)
- Invitation to community to participate through ward committees, civic organisations and above focus groups
- Selecting of a project steering committee (local authority, key community leaders: movers, shakers, committee members, church groups etc.) from above focus group meetings

### **Further research**

- Research undertaken to determine perceptions, attitudes, knowledge about local authority's activities, reasons for non-payment culture, preferred methods of communication. Research methods of questionnaires/individual interviews, focus groups, participatory research are used. (If appropriate, include results of above-mentioned focus groups.)

### **Spreading information / Diffusing information**

- Materials and further strategy developed based on research results and testing materials in a pilot project, such as posters, brochures, leaflets, graphic explanations, articles in press, radio programmes, theatre and other performing arts, etc.
- Identification of facilitators - based on research findings and discussions with project steering committee
- Training of community facilitators during workshops
- Community facilitators present workshops with groups as identified by research, firstly explaining how a local authority budget works, and secondly discuss their infrastructural and service needs and prioritise their municipal needs, and choose a representative of each workshop to represent the group in a committee who mediates between the community and local authority
- Other community projects supporting the flow of information such as a clean-up campaign, information centres, marches, competitions, rewards for payment (discount and other forms of recognition, incentives), role models who pay, community setting up a budget (people's budget), etc.
- Mass media follow-up campaign with detailed information about project progress and activities of the local authority, such as rallies, concerts, mayor's open day, distributing T-shirts, peaks, brochures.

The table below suggests a time frame to the events explained above. Numbers 1-8 represent the same period of time, ideally a month, but can be reduced to a 20-day period owing to budget constraints.

<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>1.</b>	<b>2.</b>	<b>3.</b>	<b>4.</b>	<b>5.</b>	<b>6.</b>	<b>7.</b>	<b>8.</b>
<b>Local authority</b>								
• needs assessment	■							
• staff training	■							
• billing system	■							
• information centre	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Community liaison</b>								
• project announcement		■						
• identification of groups		■	■					
• focus groups		■	■					
• community invitation		■						
• project steering committee			■					
<b>Further research</b>								
• questionnaires		■	■					
• participatory research		■	■					
• focus groups		■	■					
<b>Information diffusion</b>								
• develop materials			■	■	■	■	■	■
• identify facilitators			■	■	■	■	■	■
• train facilitators			■	■	■	■	■	■
• community workshops			■	■	■	■	■	■
• supporting projects		■	■	■	■	■	■	■
• mass media reports			■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Evaluation</b>								
• reports on all phases	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
• questionnaires							■	■
• focus groups							■	■
• final report								■

**Table 1**  
**Time frame summary**

## Conclusion

The new constitution links the duties of the local governments to development, especially social and economical community development. The financial dilemma of local authorities caused by the culture of non-payment for municipal services, should therefore be seen in the light of the development-orientated situation in South Africa.

It is therefore not a solution to remove the electricity cables of non-payers, neither is it a solution to modify behaviour only. The motivation behind a campaign

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aiming at correcting the situation should focus on the capacity building in the community. This can only be done in a participatory situation, where information is released about the operations of the local authority, and the community is educated about the functions and processes taking place in the local authority. In a workshop situation, the needs of the community should be prioritised, in order to address those needs.

The communication strategy for information campaigns focuses therefore on the following aspects: streamlining the operations of the local authority, enhancing the billing system and paypoints, setting up an information "centre", close liaison with the community after "leaders" and other influential people have been identified through research, setting up a project steering committee, training of trainers and then an emphasis on small group sessions where the above information is shared and obtained. This process should be closely monitored and feedback given to the community. Other supporting projects such as a clean-up campaign may run concurrently with the information campaign.

It is believed that by understanding the various functions and operations of the local authority, attitudes of the community will change towards the local authority, and that such change might lead to a change in the culture of non-payment.

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