



NDA

National
Development
Agency

THE NDA DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL (DDM) EVALUATION REPORT

MARCH 2024



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ISBN: 978-1-77997-065-7

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the NDA conducted a programme assessment of the District Development Model (DDM) as implemented by the NDA. The DDM is an initiative that was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2019 to deal with a lack of coherence in planning and implementation of service delivery which makes it difficult for the government to conduct oversight. The evaluation of the DDM will assist in determining whether the NDA is better placed to lead and coordinate stakeholders in implementing DDM activities in various Districts. The NDA has been involved in the DDM as an extension of its responsibility as defined in its mandate which requires the NDA to work with other stakeholders to realise that mandate.

Background

The recent drive of the NDA emphasises the importance of the DDM to be one pioneering intervention in realising community development. The recent NDA programme reconfiguration embraces the DDM model to be the basis of programme implementation for eradicating poverty for the people of South Africa. This has become evident in several districts that the NDA has been participating in ensuring that DDM is realised. The NDA has been playing a pivotal role in ensuring coordination and facilitating intergovernmental stakeholders to convene about DDM initiatives.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this evaluation is to assess the plans, and monitor areas of importance in making DDM a success and the performance of the NDA on the role and contribution it makes in the implementation of the DDM programme in various provinces.

Objectives of the Evaluation Study

- To assess the extent to which the NDA is contributing to the planning and facilitation of the DDM programme interventions.
- To assess the implementation of DDM-specific projects/initiatives that comes from the NDA including the quality and quantity of services provided.

- To identify lessons that can be learned for the improvement of the NDA's DDM programme interventions.

Challenges experienced during the implementation of the DDM Programme

a) Misunderstanding of the DDM by Partners

Most stakeholders seem to have little understanding of the programme. The DDM was introduced in 2019 and to date, very few in the municipality space understand the concept and how it must be implemented. They have not yet been convinced that the DDM could be feasible in reducing the poverty levels in the communities. This causes little participation from those stakeholders in the DDM programme. District Departments continue with their Annual Performance Plans to deliver services with little effort to integrate them within the DDM. Despite the existence of the One plan, Districts continue to utilise their old plans to deliver services.

b) Funding for the DDM Activities

The DDM calls for One Plan, One Budget. The evidence to date indicates that there is a limited budget set aside for the DDM despite the existence of One Plan in most districts. As much as the NDA tries to lead the coordination of some activities under the banner of the DDM, various stakeholders continue to do their business without the guidance of the DDM. There is no One budget put together to realise the goals of DDM in the provinces. The main cause thereof could be the absence of those budgets, and the fear for accountability of such budgets once they are committed to the DDM. Most of the DDM plans do not have a budget allocated to them. The planning in the district remains fragmented as their budget is not integrated into the DDM plans.

c) Lack of Proper DDM Coordination

Despite the fact DDM has positioned government to improve service delivery, there is minimal understanding of the DDM in most district municipality. The common finding during the interviews was that no one knows who should lead or coordinate the DDM in the municipalities. While other views pointed out that the office of the premier should lead, others argued that COGTA is the custodian of the DDM planning.

d) Stalling of DDM initiatives in pilot sites

In all these sites the DDM implementation has stalled owing to various impediments. This challenge is also compounded by resistance to change by government departments. It will therefore take a bit longer for the government officials to adapt to the new dispensation of DDM.

e) Lack of legislative Framework

The DDM operates without a proper legislative framework. There is no Legal Act that mandates the districts to plan and budget for DDM activities. It is therefore cumbersome for the municipalities to shift responsibilities to accommodate the priorities of the DDM.

d) Key success factors of the DDM

The challenges that threaten the implementation of the DDM do not imply that DDM is completely doomed as there are key highlights of success in the programme. The fact that the municipalities and other stakeholders embrace the DDM is the first positive step for success.

Recommendations

The study has identified several challenges facing proper implementation of the DDM programme:

Poor stakeholder engagement- Involve all relevant agencies and stakeholders in decision-making, fostering democratic participation in district development by civil society and community stakeholders.

Slow Implementation of DDM- Draw on the reviews of local governance and international experience of district development model implementation and on the empirical findings of the study underpinning this policy brief in formulating implementation strategies for the DDM. The government should consider replicating the pilot projects of the DDM in all districts. That will assist in customising and localising DDM in different provincial environments.

Poor Governance- Develop an accountability mechanism for DDM implementation, ensuring that the DDM has measurable outcomes, deliverables, and performance contracts for officials.

Lack of Legislative Framework for the Programme-Create an enabling environment for implementing the DDM by legislating the DDM, passing and implementing municipal by-laws, and reducing bureaucracy.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	6
2. Background.....	7
2.1. Literature Review.....	8
2.1.2. Lessons from International Experience.....	10
3. Methodology	11
3.1 Aims and Objectives.....	11
3.2. Objectives of the evaluation study	11
3.3. Rationale	11
3.4 Approach.....	12
3.5. Sampling	12
3.6. Data Collection	13
3.7. Key Questions	13
3.8. Data Analyses	14
4. Evaluation Findings.....	14
4.1. Understanding of the DDM by stakeholders.....	14
4.2. Implementation of DDM Programmatic Interventions.....	15
4.3. Efficiency of the DDM Programme.....	17
4.4. Services Provided under DDM Programme	19
4.5. Sustaining DDM Initiatives in the Districts.....	20
4.5.1. Potential to respond in addressing poverty and its causes.	21
4.5.2. NDA Contribution in planning for DDM programme interventions	22
4.5.3. Challenges experienced during the implementation of the DDM	22
Programme.....	22
4.5.4. Lessons learned from the NDA’s DDM programme interventions.....	25
5. Recommendations	26
6. Conclusion	27
7.References	29
8. Annexure: NDA DDM Evaluation Interview Guide	30
NDA Staff / Stakeholders	30
SECTION A: CONSENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	30
SECTION D: PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION	32
SECTION E: LEARNINGS AND GOOD PRACTICE.....	33

ACRONYMS

COE-Community Owned Enterprises

COGTA- Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

DDM- District Development Model

DPME- Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

DSD- Department of Social Development

HSRC- Human Sciences Research Council

IDP- integrated Development Plan

IGR- Intergovernmental Relations

KZN- KwaZulu Natal

MTSF-Medium-Term Strategic Framework

NDA – National Development Agency

NPD- National Development Plan (NDP) and

1. Introduction

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the NDA conducted a programme assessment of the District Development Model (DDM) as implemented by the NDA. The DDM is an initiative announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2019 to deal with a lack of coherence in planning and implementation of service delivery, which makes it difficult for the government to conduct oversight. The evaluation of the DDM will assist in determining whether the NDA is better placed to lead and coordinate stakeholders in implementing DDM activities in various Districts. The NDA has been involved in the DDM as an extension of its responsibility as defined in its mandate which requires the NDA to work with other stakeholders to realise that mandate.

The National Development Agency (NDA) derive its legislative mandate from the NDA Act 1998, as amended, the primary mandate of the NDA is defined in section 3 (1) as follows:

3. (1) *“The primary object of the NDA is to contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by granting funds to civil society organisations for the purposes of-*
- (a) carrying out projects or programmes aimed at meeting the development needs of poor communities; and*
 - (b) strengthening the institutional capacity of other civil society organisations involved in direct service provision to poor communities”*

Drawing from this mandate the NDA is participating in the National District Development Model (DDM) as called by the government in 2019. The DDM (dubbed “Khawuleza”) was launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the presidential Imbizo in OR Tambo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape in 2019 to address social and economic ills plaguing the province. The initiative has since been expanded and piloted to other district Municipalities in the country, these included Waterberg in Limpopo Province and Ethekewini Metropolitan Municipality in KwaZulu Natal Province. The model is today expanded to include all district municipalities in the country.

The NDA adopted the DDM as one way of fighting poverty with other role players in municipalities and other spheres of government. Since the inception phase of the DDM initiative, the NDA has been upfront in contributing towards the model through stakeholder facilitation and programmatic interventions wherever necessary in the

pilot sites. Since the 2022/23 financial year the NDA resolved to replicate and implement the DDM in all the districts of its operation. It is against this backdrop that the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the NDA conducted a Process evaluation to assess if the NDA interventions implemented under the DDM model are yielding desirable results as planned at the output level. The DDM is an operational model for improving cooperative governance to build a capable, ethical and developmental state (Priority 1 of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019-2024).¹ The evaluation seeks to evaluate the areas of implementation and suggests improvement wherever is necessary as well as to develop a theory of change for the NDA projects within the wider DDM initiative.

2. Background

Three spheres of government in South Africa are National, Provincial and Local government. These spheres are defined as distinctive, interdependent, and interrelated as per the constitution of South Africa. Coordination between these three spheres of government and other organs of state is vital for developing the country and its communities. To address the critical challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment, the President of South Africa through the 2019 Budget Speech responded to the potential threat of working in silos. A key reason for this is the tendency of government – at national, provincial and local levels – to operate in silos. The effects of this are felt most acutely in the local sphere of government.² The District Development Model (DDM) was deemed as the new paradigm shift which will focus on the implementation of immediate priority projects through integrated planning, budgeting and delivery of services between all three spheres of government and all other state organs.

The DDM model has since commenced and is currently being implemented by government in different district municipalities in South Africa. The District Development Model intends to undertake more intensive work in the pilot areas and to mobilise resources to facilitate the shift towards joint planning, budgeting and implementation approaches. The implementation of the DDM is anchored on the One Plan formulation

¹ DPME 2020

² HSRC Policy Brief: 2023

process. The 'One Plan' is not plans that are developed by the districts/metros, instead, these plans are intergovernmental plans that require the involvement and participation of all identified stakeholders, and each stakeholder is required to perform their part in the process.³ Each One Plan is standardized in terms of format but differentiated in terms of content and substance based on the different conditions and different priorities in each space.

The NDA as an organ of state that has a core mandate to eradicate poverty is playing a crucial role in planning and facilitating activities that need to be implemented by various stakeholders in the pilot municipalities. Even though it is still indistinct to many stakeholders on the roles they should play in implementing the DDM, the role of the NDA seems to be distinct since the commencement of the programme. The NDA in various provinces has been participating in developing plans for interventions that aim in eradicating poverty, and municipalities are funding and/or have committed to fund such initiatives in the near future.

The recent drive of the NDA emphasises the importance of the DDM to be one pioneering intervention in realising community development. The recent NDA programme reconfiguration embraces the DDM model to be the basis of programme implementation for eradicating poverty for the people of South Africa. This has become evident in several districts that the NDA has been participating in ensuring that DDM is realised. The NDA has been playing a pivotal role in ensuring coordination and facilitating intergovernmental stakeholders to convene about DDM initiatives.

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. District Development Planning

The discourse of District Development Model in South Africa is centred around integrated development planning which can get its better expression in the municipal legislative framework that includes the White Paper on Local Government (1998), Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) and Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998). All

³ National Cooperative Governance: Circular No. 10 OF 2022:

these acts emphasize the need for developing appropriate mechanisms such as an integrated development plan (IDP) relevant now within district development model, which will facilitate public participation, collaboration, and coordination among different stakeholders and ultimately resolve service delivery backlogs and a lack of coherence in planning and implementation”.⁴

The District Development Model (DDM) introduced in South Africa in September 2019, aims to enhance coordinated planning and implementation of government programmes such as integrated development plans and services such as water and sanitation at the district level. By fostering collaboration between different levels of government, departments, and stakeholders, it intends to address service delivery, economic development, and governance issues. Despite the fact that there is limited literature pertaining the DDM in the public space, there have been various attempts to conceptualize the district development discourse which has left various stakeholders involved in the process, confused and not clear on how to implement the programme. The lack of a clear-cut legislative mandate has left stakeholders scrambling on who should take the lead in pioneering the DDM in provinces. The emphasis on DDM as defined by Sausi et al is that at the centre of DDM is an intergovernmental relations mechanism aiming for a single, strategically focused "One Plan" and "One Budget" for 44 districts and 8 metropolitan areas to address socio-economic and service delivery challenges, is not enough because the way in which all these are achieved is not fully defined. It therefore leaves the stakeholders to decide by themselves how that should be, and it has, on many occasions, proven difficult to achieve.

The NDA has recently placed DDM as one of its key programmatic drivers in realising its mandate to eradicate poverty. This will be achieved through fostering the creation of community-owned enterprises (COE). Beyond NDA's obligation to work towards the creation of community-owned NDA has taken a lead in facilitating and coordinating the development of DDM initiatives. The NDA does not have a clear conceptual framework that guide the implementation of t initiatives under the DDM programme but follows other programmatic frameworks published by the presidency and district municipalities. The literature that exists within the NDA are district One Plans. The

⁴ Mamokhere,J:2023:364

NDA follows the priorities of districts and customises its interventions along those priorities. The NDA is however using its programmes to intervene in the priority wards of the districts. It is for that reason that the only existing literature at the NDA that discusses DDM at the NDA are mainly progress reports that focus on the interventions the NDA is making in the priority districts. To this end, this study has reviewed all the reports accessed from the three pilot district municipalities.

2.1.2. Lessons from International Experience.

The introduction of the DDM in Africa is not new as similar planning programmes have been implemented in countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda. Despite the fact that results of the model have not always yielded long term results, DDM has always been a desired planning model for broad based development of the poor people. Similar approach was witnessed in Asian countries as well in countries such as Sri Lanka and India. China has been one of the greatest successes in the Asian states to utilise the centralised approach in its planning. The HSRC reports that district development planning into India in the 1960's was a success and remain the bases of its planning to date.

In India, for example, district development planning came in the 1960s to be seen as an integral part of national development planning, and the concept of service centre planning became mainstream in the two decades that followed. Such planning was based on the socioeconomic needs of a district, which were derived from information from the households, villages or towns of that district or region (Wanmali & Islam 1995).

In China the administrative structure of the People's Republic of China implemented a similar planning programme whereby revenue and expenditure functions are centrally controlled. The organisation advances and implements the strategies for coordinated regional development which include urbanisation strategy, regional development, formulation of regional development plans, resuscitation of old industrial bases. What is also central from the Chinese experience is the long-term developmental planning in that country.⁵

The African experience of district planning can be traced back in 1980s when the government of led by the National Resistance Movement devolved power and

⁵ Xesibe Holdings: 2022:18

authority over resource mobilisation, planning and delivery of services.⁶ The argument presented here indicate that the Ugandan experience resembles the South African Model where they conduct situational analysis, a strategic direction and plan, it include coordination and partnership communication strategy. In Uganda the sector departments are required to develop long term national development plans which provide strategic direction over key sectors.⁷ Those plans are periodically reviewed to ensure that they align with the need of the people. What can be learned from the Ugandan experience is that South Africa must strengthen the funding of the DDM interventions particularly from the local partnerships and all that must continuously be reviewed to ensure proper alignment of district plans to the national plans.

3. Methodology

3.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this evaluation is to assess the plans, monitor areas of importance in making DDM a success and the performance of the NDA on the role and contribution it makes in the implementation of the DDM programme in various provinces.

3.2. Objectives of the evaluation study

- To assess the extent to which the NDA is contributing to the planning and facilitation of the DDM programme interventions.
- To assess the implementation of DDM specific projects/initiatives that comes from the NDA including the quality and quantity of services provided.
- To identify lessons that can be learned for the improvement of the NDA's DDM programme interventions.

3.3. Rationale

The DDM model is a national initiative that has been adopted by the NDA. The hitherto implementation reports indicate the confusion, overlaps and duplication with regards to roles that stakeholders should play in implementing the programme. The NDA has

⁶ ECSECC:2023:22

⁷ Ibid

been involved in many platforms which the DDM was discussed in the districts. It is therefore imperative that the role and the mileage which the NDA has gone with regards to DDM is assessed. The fact that the NDA through its turnaround strategy is planning to adopt and use the DDM model as one of its guiding initiatives in fighting poverty, makes the assessment of this programme to be critical. The evaluation may identify the gaps and areas of improvement that will enable to NDA to optimally participate in the DDM programme.

3.4 Approach

This evaluation will use existing data collected over the period of three years (2020-2023), and in-depth interviews with NDA staff and beneficiaries that implemented the programme to gain insight on how the programme has been implemented. A multi-case study approach using a qualitative method, was used to gather the data that can inform the Agency on the programme. Qualitative method was used during in-depth interviews to collect more elaborative data.

3.5. Sampling

The used a multi-case qualitative study will collect most of the qualitative data for analyses. The DDM programme was initially piloted in three provinces namely: Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo provinces. The study will use purposive (also known as purposeful) sampling to select DDM interventions in those provinces. The DDM projects in Ingquza Hill Municipality, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, and Waterberg District Municipality were selected for assessment. Key Informants and project beneficiaries in those municipalities were selected to participate in the study.

The study will also utilise a simple random sampling technique to select municipalities that have DDM programme implemented on them. The randomly selected municipalities' data was used to understand global performance of the DDM programme in all municipalities. The reports coming from these municipalities were used to analyse the performance of the programme.

3.6. Data Collection

This is an inhouse evaluation study conducted by the NDA staff. The study will use secondary data where desktop research will be conducted for the purposes of perusing existing information relating to the DDM initiative to form part of the literature review phase of the study. Monitoring reports will also be utilised to determine the status quo of the NDA's progress in terms of implementing the DDM initiative to date. To collect primary data, the study will use semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews through focus group discussions. The rest of the information will be collected using online questionnaires that will be administered by the NDA M&E staff. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected by the NDA staff.

In-depth Interviews- the NDA staff developed the interview schedule to be administered by M&E interviewers during focus group interviews with beneficiaries. The interviews were conducted with the identified Key-Informants of projects interventions such as NDA Development Practitioners and other involved collaborative stakeholders at all spheres of government. The data was recorded on an electronic gadget during interviews.

3.7. Key Questions

- Does the DDM initiative has potential to respond in addressing poverty and its causes?
- Are DDM initiatives responding to the needs of the communities?
- What are the key contributions of the NDA in terms of planning and facilitation of the DDM programme interventions?
- What are the main DDM related projects/initiatives that come from the NDA?
- Is there uniformity in the way DDM is being implemented across the identified pilot districts?
- What are the quality standards of services provided in the DDM programme implemented by the NDA?
- What is the project reach when quantified in terms of beneficiaries supported by the NDA through the DDM programme and stakeholders leveraged on?

- Is there collaboration between NDA and other spheres of government in the implementation of the DDM programme?
- How well are the resources being utilised during the implementation of the DDM programme?
- What are the key challenges experienced during the implementation of the DDM Programme?
- How are the challenges being addressed or resolved?
- What have been observed as key success factors?
- What lessons can be learned for the improvement of the NDA's DDM programme interventions?

3.8. Data Analyses

The study had limited quantitative information; therefore, therefore it did not analyse quantitative data. The study has instead analysed qualitative data that include information coming from different district municipalities in terms of the DDM initiated projects. The study will used themes to analyse the variables in the programmes. Information from different projects and interviews will be packaged and analysed according to their thematic areas.

4. Evaluation Findings

This section discusses the results of the assessment as drawn from three provinces and their selected districts. The evaluator conducted interviews with various stakeholders involved in the DDM programme. Interviews in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo province were conducted physically using the focus group with different stakeholders. In the KwaZulu Natal Province interviews were held virtually due to time constraints during data gathering. The appointments to conduct face-to-face in KwaZulu Natal were cancelled due to time constraints by the evaluator, hence virtual interviews were used to interview relevant stakeholders.

4.1. Understanding of the DDM by stakeholders.

The initial question that was asked to all the interviewees in this study was regarding their understanding of the District Development Model. Of all the interviewees it was indicated that they do understanding what the DDM is all about. Interviewees

emphasised the relevance of integrated planning and the importance of funded mandates. In the Eastern Cape it was emphasised that everyone in the municipality is important. The stakeholders are well aware who should form part of the DDM, but the challenge are the roles that each stakeholder must play. It was argued that the roles in the DDM are not the same, they will always vary between the municipalities as have different needs. In Limpopo province the overlaps and confusion as to who should play which role in the DDM was evident. It was argued that despite the fact that the DDM states what should happen, it was not clearly defined who should play which role. The DDM is therefore remaining good on paper, but difficult to implement.

The prevailing confusion in implementing the DDM has cause other stakeholders to be left behind in terms of planning and implementing the DDM. In the Eastern Cape some well started interventions have now stalled due to competition on who should take a lead in the community development through DDM. It is argued that there is no equal understanding of the DDM, therefore some stakeholders are lagging. According to the representative in Social Development in Mnquma Local Municipality, the local government is taking the back sit, and they seem to be confused what their role is with regards to the DDM. The NDA officials are however understanding their position and they were able to articulate very well what their positions and roles should be in the DDM programme. They attribute their understanding to thorough attention they have paid to the programme through workshops and DDM meetings they have been attending since 2022. The understanding of the DDM is required by everyone that is involved in the programme. It is critical that the local municipalities understand what the programme is all about, in order for them to plan and implement the programme effectively. According to the KZN official, this is the reason the NDA is at the forefront in implementing the DDM in the area. The NDA seems to understand the programme better.

4.2. Implementation of DDM Programmatic Interventions

The DDM programme has been designed to responds to specific needs in each municipality. The DDM implementation varies according to the needs it seeks to address in each municipality. All stakeholders have the common understanding that the DDM is geared towards planning together to deal with poverty, unemployment and other societal ills. While the NDA is identified as a key stakeholder in community development, it is less clear from other stakeholders what their roles are in DDM

implementation, except for their support in the developmental initiatives in their municipalities. In the case of the NDA there are various community interventions which are deemed relevant as per the developmental service pack of the agency that are offered in the DDM programme. These are not limited to food security, ECD and income generation projects, but covers other relevant community developmental service the agency frequently partners with other stakeholders. In the Eastern Cape province for example, the NDA has been involved in the fight against hunger by facilitating access to food through funding the CNDCs and food parcels. This is evident in the various districts in the province with the exception of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality. The same goes to the KwaZulu Natal province and Limpopo provinces.

In the Limpopo Province the DDM intervention is still slow, and many activities have not started except for sporadic meetings that took place among the stakeholders to plan for the implementation. NDA staff contend that there is no ownership or proper direction with regards to implementation of the DDM by stakeholders in the province. The NDA is the only stakeholders that is pushing for cooperation among the identified role players in the DDM interventions in provinces. NDA is expected to lead and fund the initiatives it is coming up with.

Generally, the programme has not been effective and that is compounded by little willingness to participate in by various stakeholders in the programme as there no clear-cut roles in the programme. There are no budgets set aside for the DDM in most municipalities, nor integration in terms of planning the funding of activities. There is poor coordination in the districts with regards to the programme. This confirms what the HSRC narrative that “ the DDM has to resolve a lot of challenges ranging from a lack of coherence in planning, budgeting and implementation to weak sector departmental involvement in integrated development planning processes, short-termism manifested in constant changes in priorities and programmes, poor utilisation of IGR mechanisms to enable joint work and integration, limited localisation of the National Development Plan (NDP) and Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)”.⁸ In the KwaZulu Natal it has not been different as various stakeholders are not bringing any integrated implementation of the programme despite that there is one plan in

⁸ HSRC: 2023

place. The NDA with its limited resources leads the implementation of the programme. Other partners seem less interested in partaking in the DDM initiatives.

At Tshelimnyama, the first pilot site of the in the eThekweni Metro, development activities have since stalled despite various pledges since the flood disaster in the township. The NDA has assisted in facilitating various developmental initiatives such as formalisation and registration of cooperatives, profiling of the households to determine the needs, project formulation and drafting of project proposals. In this intervention led by the Shekinah Ministries (faith based organisation) various stakeholders pledged to support the initiatives which included enterprise development for job creation, support of established cooperatives, refurbishment and resourcing of the Soup Kitchen facility, and other interventions to alleviate the poverty related effects caused by 2019 and 2022 floods in Tshelimnyama, as well as the effects of Covid 19.

Generally, the implementation of the DDM programme in the pilot site has been spontaneous, depending on which district is managing the programme better. In spite of One plan that have been produced, the challenges of implementing programme activities in the district marred proper results of such efforts. Activities in all three pilot sites in the provinces of Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal have stalled owing to the contestation and reluctance among key stakeholder to support and implement the programme. Mamokhere (2023) argues that it is still early to judge the implementation of the DDM, but what is evident wherever the NDA is involved, it remains difficult for the programme to yield positive results. There has been challenges on who should coordinate and lead the programme.

4.3. Efficiency of the DDM Programme

It has been evident from different interviews conducted that there is no optimal efficiency in the implementation of the DDM programme. The programme is not well coordinated hence most One Plans have to be implemented. Various stakeholders including District Municipalities are not taking the lead in implementing activities in One Plans. The plans are either not budgeted for by municipalities, or the key roles players do not have capacity to implement them. In the Waterberg District Municipality activities have not started despite the existence of One Plan. The tribal chief and district council do not agree on what needs to happen in the community. In Lusikisiki

where the DDM was launched in the Eastern Cape, it is alleged that developmental initiatives in the community have stalled owing to power wrangling between the independent ward councillor, the tribal leadership and the municipality. The contestation on who should lead the community projects remains a challenge. All these challenges delay and collapse the implementation of the DDM programme. In those instances, the NDA remains as one organisation that tries to facilitate development.

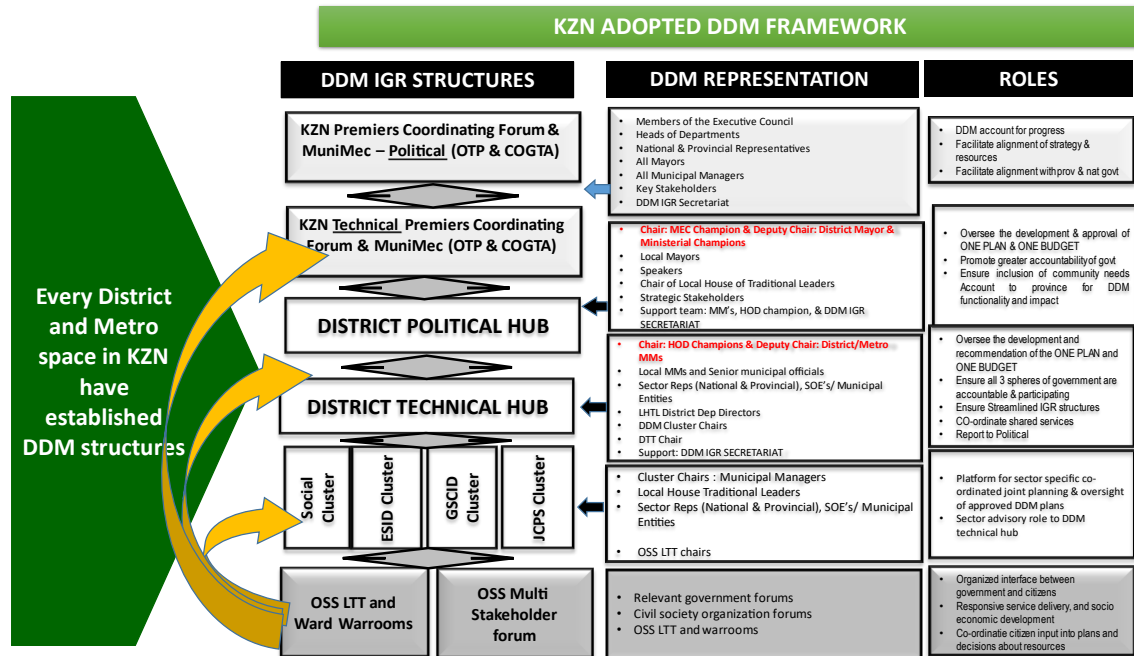
Inadequate budget is another challenge in the District Municipalities. Very few stakeholders have committed budgets to the activities in One Plans. Department prefer to spend their budgets outside the DDM auspices. In Limpopo province DDM is not well funded. The Department of Social Development hardly partake into the activities and fund them but utilises what come as a result of NDA efforts. The same happens with other two pilot district whereby the NDA leads developmental interventions. This makes the DDM programme to be less efficient.

There is no dedicated staff for the DDM programme in various districts. Staff from various municipalities claim that it is not their responsibility to facilitate the DDM in the districts. In Mnquma Local Municipality staff explains that Department of Cooperative Government should lead their implementation of the DDM. In Limpopo Province they say may be the office if the Premier should lead the facilitation together with the specific district office. This has resulted in confusion on who should lead the convenor of the DDM in the province. The NDA district coordinator in Limpopo explained that it has been difficult to hold a meeting with stakeholders as they are not readily available. The difficulties in Limpopo Province have resulted in the NDA contemplating moving the pilot site of the DDM in Limpopo from GaSeleka in Waterberg, to Mapela in Mkgalakwena Municipality. The movement was not yet activated at the time of this study.

In KwaZulu Natal the DDM intervention varies. The province has started introducing the DDM to other District such as Umgungundlovu, and Newcastle Municipalities. The programme intervention is starting to gain momentum with stakeholders participating in the programme. In March 2024 the Deputy Minister of National Department of Social Development led the DDM activities in Newcastle Municipality whereby the NDA is funding projects. Unlike in some districts in other provinces, the KZN province has

attempted to establish DDM in all the district. The province has attempted to standardise DDM intervention across all districts. The model of the DDM set up in the KZN province is illustrated in the figure below:

Fig.1 KZN DDM Model



The model is inclusive of all stakeholders that must support all relevant initiatives defined and required in the district model. The model also defines the roles that those stakeholders play in the implementation of activities. This will assist the province in defining who plays which role in ensuring that the implementation DDM programme is successful in the province.

4.4. Services Provided under the DDM Programme

As it has been discussed in the previous sections of this study, the DDM programme offers various services depending on the One Plan of the district; and the needs of the poor people on the ground. Each participating stakeholder brings its financial resources to accelerate the delivery of services as put in One Plan. The challenge is lack of legislative framework that mandates those stakeholders to commit into the programme implementation. In the NDA participating districts the NDA has been providing it's the services under its programmes such as ECD and food security intervention. The NDA has been through the DDM prioritising identified wards to implement the DDM. In KwaZulu Natal's Tshelimnyama Township the NDA has taken the wholistic approach of implementing the entire NDA package of services using the

CSO development model. The NDA has identified individuals and organisations that needed support and formalised them into legal entities, and assisted them to register with the aim of utilising those CSOs for community Development.

In the Eastern Cape the NDA is hard at work trying to facilitate the deliver services under the banner of DDM. The NDA has been very specific in ensuring that poor households benefit from its food security interventions through soup kitchens and the establishment of community gardens. The Eastern Cape has been participating in various forums in the district to ensure that the DDM programme is functional. There has been limited progress in Limpopo Provinces' DDM pilot projects due to political and administrative impediments. There have been disagreements from the local leadership in the Waterberg District on how the DDM must be implemented in the district. This resulted in the slow implementation of the DDM-sponsored activities. During the interview with the Limpopo NDA officials, it was revealed that even the tasked stakeholders in the districts are reluctant to commit their efforts to the DDM. They instead focus on what has been planned for their annual performance. To date there has been no specific intervention planned under the DDM that has been delivered by the NDA in Limpopo. This calls for a serious review of how the DDM is being planned and implemented in the provinces. There must be improvement in the manner which the DDM is being coordinated and implemented in the province. That will assist in ensuring that stakeholders participate in the programme.

4.5. Sustaining DDM Initiatives in the Districts

DDM is a bold programme that can be successful if it is implemented effectively. The programme requires well-coordinated planning and implementation. The current evidence shows that DDM has slowed down where it was initially piloted due to various challenges spanning from coordination to implementation. The planned and implemented activities have not been sustained as there was no thorough understanding of the programme. The programme is not budgeted for in most districts despite the existence of One Plan. As a result, it becomes difficult for most activities to be implemented. At Tshelimnyama in KZN, and Lusikisiski in EC the DDM activities have stalled due to misunderstanding among stakeholders. The projects that have been initiated have been stopped due to various challenges including contestations over the control of resources. This is exacerbated by lack of adequate budgets allocated to earmarked projects. Districts and Metros tend to shift DDM focus to other

localities if the prioritised ones fail. In the KZN province, the DDM activities started to gain momentum in other Districts such as Amajuba and Mgungundluvu. The initial priorities in Ethekewini Metro have taken a backfoot. The same is evident in the Eastern Cape whereby the focus has shifted to other areas in the OR Tambo district after the pilot municipality of Ingquza Hill Local Municipality stagnated. In Waterberg Municipality prevailing misunderstanding between stakeholders has completely stalled the implementation of DDM activities therefore, DDM in those piloted sites remained a failure and developmental initiatives remained in the dismal trial. In most instances, there has been no sustainability of project activities that were initiated as part of the DDM in the pilot sites identified by this study.

It will take sincere effort from various efforts to deal with continuing planning fragmentation in the districts. Mamokhere contends that the DDM needs a thorough assessment to determine the best way for improvement. The DDM still need better coordination, better budgeting and implementation. Since the DDM is an intergovernmental activity, it is the responsibility of organisations that facilitate cooperative governance to ensure better coordination at the District Level. The NDA is better placed to pioneer the implementation of the DDM; however, it will need better resources to ensure that DDM initiatives are sustained. The NDA remains one of the few organisations in the districts that is facilitating DDM activities. According to the NDA provincial managers, it takes one understanding of the concept to have an interest in the programme. One major challenge identified for the sustainability of the DDM initiative is a lack of understanding of the concept by various stakeholders. Even the ministry: DPME agreed in November 2023 that many municipalities are still grappling to understand the DDM and how it should be implemented. The Department further argues that DDM is still in the early stage of implementation, therefore there are still early implementation and solutions.⁹

4.5.1. Potential to respond in addressing poverty and its causes.

The DDM as an intergovernmental relationship effort seeks to amass available resources and direct them to an appropriate beneficiary. The initiative is good concept but falls short of proper implementation. Reviewing the Once Plans that has have been produced by district one sees awareness of the needs of the people on the ground.

⁹ DPME Portfolio Committee Meeting: 2023:02

The Plans reveal the gaps that must be closed by Municipalities to reduce poverty. The challenge remains the availability of a budget to fund poverty eradication activities. Poor coordination of the initiatives remains a major impediment in most municipalities, hence slow progress in the pilot site of the DDM.

The NDA's approach to the DDM has been to deal with poverty and its causes as its mandate dictates. To date the NDA has been active in ensuring that it coordinates DDM activities in some municipalities. Through the use of contracted volunteers, the NDA has profiled poor households to ascertain the level of interventions required in each household. In the Eastern Cape the intervention resulted in provision of food security interventions in the form of food parcels, soup kitchen and creation of household food gardens. In this manner the NDA is trying to respond to the needs of communities.

4.5.2. NDA Contribution in planning for DDM programme interventions

The NDA has been trying to provide services in identified sites where DDM is a priority. The effect of the interventions is however minimal as the entire DDM value chain remain fragmented. The fact that DDM required integration from all relevant stakeholders remains a challenge. The NDA provides what it can with its limited budget. For the DDM to succeed all identified stakeholders must equally invest in the DDM programme. The evidence coming from the three identified pilot sites points to slowing down on activities, therefore the pilot site could not be considered a success, but a lot could be learned on how the DDM can best be implemented in the future. With the exception of the Eastern Cape Mega Project on bridge construction, all other DDM pilot interventions require serious improvement on the part of stakeholder collaboration. The projects

4.5.3. Challenges experienced during the implementation of the DDM

Programme

The DDM Programme is at infant stage and is has been experiencing variety of challenges that need to be addressed urgently. Prime among these challenges is the issue actual understanding and implementation of the programme. As is has been identified by other authors of DDM discourse, the programme is currently facing various challenges. On top of these challenges is the actual implementation of the programme which arrived at the municipalities with little preparedness for

implementation. Many have been found wanting with regard to the programme. The section below discusses common challenges facing the DDM in three pilot sites in the provinces:

a) Misunderstanding of the DDM by Partners

It has come out of the study that the understanding of the DDM by the participating stakeholders remains one of the major challenges impeding proper implementation of the DDM programme. Most stakeholders seem to have little understanding of the programme. The DDM was introduced in 2019 and to date, very few in the municipality space understand the concept and how it must be implemented. They have not yet been convinced that the DDM could be feasible in reducing the poverty levels in the communities. That causes little participation from those stakeholders in the DDM programme. District Departments continue with their Annual Performance Plans to deliver services with little effort to integrate that within the DDM. Despite the existence of the One plan, Districts continue to utilise their old plans to deliver services. The DPME has attempted to assist with workshopping districts about the DDM, but to date little has changed in terms of DDM implementation by District Stakeholders. It will take more than workshops to improve the situation as the whole idea will require all stakeholders to fully buy into the DDM idea.

b) Funding for the DDM Activities

The DDM calls for One Plan, One Budget. The evidence to date indicates that there is limited budget set aside for the DDM despite existence of One Plan in most districts. As much as the NDA tries to lead the coordination of some activities under the banner of the DDM, various stakeholders continue to do their businesses without the guide of the DDM. There is no One budget put together to realise the goals of DDM in the provinces. The main cause thereof could be absence of those budgets, and the fear for accountability of such budgets once they are committed to the DDM. The HSRC has indicated that the One Plan, One Budget is not backed by “new money”.¹⁰ Most of the DDM plans do not have budget allocated in them. The planning in the district remains fragmented as their budget are not integrated into the DDM plans. District and

¹⁰ HSRC:2023:04

departments in general run DDM as separate project with its own budget, which has not come forth. This makes the implementation of the DDM difficult if not impossible.

It has come to the fore that most of the DDM Plans in the municipality are not funded. The DDM seem to be treated as a separate special project that requires separate budget. The municipalities and identified stakeholders are not ready to commit their budgets to the DDM activities. This will cause the delays in the implementation of the DDM in many districts.

c) Lack of Proper DDM Coordination

Despite the fact DDM has positioned government to improve service delivery, there is minimal understanding of the DDM in most district municipality. The common finding during the interviews was that no one knows who should lead or coordinate the DDM in the municipalities. While other views pointed that the office of the premier should lead, others argued that COGTA is the custodian of the DDM planning. In the case of the DSD portfolio, it was expected that the National DSD office should lead the DDM implementation. This remains a mystery to many government officials, and this makes DDM less coordinated. The NDA interviews points to lack of clear roles and responsibilities within the DDM concept. This creates lack of ownership of the programme.

d) Stalling of DDM initiatives in pilot sites

The programme was launched as a pilot projects in three sites in the country-in Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape, in Tshelimnyama at Ethekwini Municipality, and GaSeleka in Waterberg. In all these sites the DDM implementation has stalled owing to various impediments. In Lusikisiki the projects started very well but political interference is reported to have cause the projects to slow down. The same is happening in Limpopo Province where the tribal authority compete to control the DDM initiative with municipal council. In Ethekwini Metro most interventions have stalled due to lack of funds. Various projects initiated at Tshelimnyama have slowed down owing to the lack of funding. This challenge is also compounded by resistance to change by government departments. It will therefore take a bit longer for the government officials to adapt to the new dispensation of DDM.

e) Lack of legislative Framework

The DDM operates without a proper legislative framework. There is no Legal Act that mandate the districts to plan and budget for DDM activities. It is therefore cumbersome for the municipalities to shift responsibilities to accommodate the priorities of the DDM.

f) Key success factors of the DDM

The challenges that threaten the implementation of the DDM do not imply that DDM is completely doomed as there are key highlights of success in the programme. The fact that the municipalities and other stakeholders embrace the DDM is the first positive step for success.

One Plan, One Budget- Evidence shows that many municipalities in the country have embarked on the development of the One Plan although these plans do not have a budget allocated to them. The DPME is assisting municipalities to get the DDM off the ground in municipalities. The existence of the multiyear plans will assist municipalities in setting the trajectory that they should take in budgeting and implementing DDM activities.

The DDM presents a platform for stakeholder collaboration- The interventions in Tshelimnyama and Lusikisiki have seen various stakeholders come together to plan and implement various activities for the DDM. These partnerships must be sustained in order for the DDM to succeed. With better coordination, Tshelimnyama has seen many stakeholders come on board. This must be replicated in other municipalities for success.

NDA as a coordinator- The NDA has played a pivotal role in coordinating local meetings for the DDM. This has seen the NDA leading the discussion for integrated planning and development. Through the dialogues the NDA was able to bring various stakeholders to support community initiatives. In the Eastern Cape's OR Tambo municipality, the NDA led various DDM developmental initiatives by amassing resources from stakeholders.

4.5.4. Lessons learned from the NDA's DDM programme interventions.

There are different lessons that can be learned from the DDM implementation to date in the South Africa. Initially it must be stated that DDM is still a new programme that requires a thorough understanding by various stakeholders involved. It must also be

stated that a similar programme has been implemented in various countries in world whereby planning and implementation were centralised. In countries such as China and India, the model is still being used successfully. It is in the African countries whereby central planning did not see better results where development has not improved. Mamokhere is however arguing that in South Africa “this approach holds the potential to transform the landscape of service delivery and foster meaningful development across South African districts”¹¹. Therefore, South Africa’s DDM approach needs careful planning, budgeting and implementation.

The lessons that can be drawn from the piloted implementation so far include the need for inclusive planning by all stakeholders. The implementation of the DDM as it stands today remains fragmented. No one wants to come out clear to claim complete responsibility for the DDM in terms of coordinating it on the ground. The lesson to be taken from this is that DDM needs well-coordinated effort in order to be effectively implemented. The lead coordinator needs to be well determined by stakeholders and be known by all that are involved.

DDM is a new programme for the South African government therefore it requires proper research on how best the districts can develop and implement long-term plans around it. For now, the municipalities are required to develop one plans which locked into political electoral cycles which negates long-term development in the municipalities. Lessons from the Chinese practice is to plan for lengthy periods over generations.

5. Recommendations

The study has identified several challenges facing proper implementation of the DDM programme. Some of the challenges are beyond the NDA as they require broader governmental intervention. The DDM intervention requires all hands on deck at the district level. It is imperative that all identified deficiencies in the municipalities are addressed in order for the DDM to be effectively implemented. Those as Momokhere indicated include poor stakeholder engagement in local government affairs; poor governance in the form of corruption and fraud; poor governance in the form of a lack of accountability, responsiveness and transparency; lack of institutional capacity and

¹¹ Mamakhere: 2023:368

requisite skills; poor collaboration in the form of unstable coalition; poor financial management in the form of budget duplication and wastage¹². Out of these challenges, the following is therefore recommended:

Poor stakeholder engagement- Involve all relevant agencies and stakeholders in decision-making, fostering democratic participation in district development by civil society and community stakeholders.

Slow Implementation of DDM- Draw on the reviews of local governance and international experience of district development model implementation and on the empirical findings of the study underpinning this policy brief in formulating implementation strategies for the DDM. The government should consider replicating the pilot projects of the DDM in all districts. That will assist in customising and localising DDM in different provincial environments.

Poor Governance- Develop an accountability mechanism for DDM implementation, ensuring that the DDM has measurable outcomes, deliverables, and performance contracts for officials.

Lack of Legislative Framework for the Programme- Create an enabling environment for the implementation of the DDM by legislating the DDM, passing and implementing municipal by-laws, and reducing bureaucracy.

6. Conclusion

The DDM programme is still a new programme that needs to be understood and implemented with care in various district municipalities. The implementation of the programme in three pilot sites has proven difficulties inherent in the programme therefore it requires adaptation by all stakeholders involved in its implementation. It has been difficult for many stakeholders to start the programme. Most of the initiatives started in pilot sites have stalled due to disagreements on the manner in which the programme should be run. This challenge is compounded by limited budgets in the district municipalities.

As much the programme is challenging, its also come with opportunities. The implementation of the DDM in three pilot sites has provided an opportunity for the NDA

¹² Mamokhere (2023) 366

to redefine its role in the development space. The NDA has been instrumental in facilitating and coordinating the stakeholders on the ground. As the programme is expanded to other districts in the country, the NDA is in the forefront in ensuring that its developmental programmes are delivered within the DDM.

It is therefore imperative that all stakeholders involved in the programme look for better solutions on how to improve the implementation of the programme. Some of the proposals have been put as recommendations in section 5 of this report.

7.References

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- NDA (2024) District Development Model Limpopo Provincial Report
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8. Annexure: NDA DDM Evaluation Interview Guide

NDA Staff / Stakeholders

Good day and thank you for agreeing to this Interview.

My name is and I work for the National Development Agency (NDA). The NDA is conducting the evaluation ofProgramme/Project to assess if its implementation.

Our discussion will focus on your perceptions regarding the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the NDA-DDM Programme interventions.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

SECTION A: CONSENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	YES	NO
1. Do I have your consent to continue with this interview?	1	2

2. Demographic Information	
2.1 Name and Surname	
2.2 Province	
2.3 Town/Village	
2.4 Physical address	
2.5 Name of the Organisation you work for.	
2.6 What is your role in the project?	
2.7 How long have been working on the project?Years/ Months

SECTION B: AWARENESS & VISIBILITY

3. Planning and Facilitation

3.1 In your understanding, what is the role of the NDA in the implementation of DDM programme in your in the communities?

3.2 Who are the other key stakeholders involved in the DDM programme in the district you work in?

3.3 What is the role of each other stakeholders different from that of the NDA?

3.4 In your opinion, do you think there is clear separations of roles and responsibility between the NDA and other stakeholders in the DDM Programme? Explain

3.5 What overlaps if any, have you noticed and would like to bring to the attention of the implementers of the DDM Programme?

3.6 How can these overlaps be addressed?

SECTION C: PROJECT FORMULATION & THEORY OF CHANGE

4. Programmatic Interventions

4.1 What are the key needs being addressed by the DDM programme?

4.2 How were these needs identified? Explain

4.3 Was the community involved during the planning phase of the DDM programme (pre-implementation phase)?

1.	2.
Yes	No

4.4 What efforts were put in by the NDA to ensure full participation of all stakeholders during the planning phases of the DDM programme? (Pre-implementation phase)

4.4 What are the agreed-on activities for the NDA in the DDM programme?

4.5 What are the agreed-on results for the NDA in the DDM programme?

4.6 What changes does the programme want to see in the community once the results have been achieved?

SECTION D: PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

5. RELEVANCE OF THE PROGRAMME

5.1 Based on your observation, are the DDM programme identified key needs aligned to that of the community and/or beneficiaries?

1.	2.
Yes	No

If yes, skip ONLY questions 5.4 to 5.7

If no, skip ONLY questions 5.2 and 5.3

5.2 In what way did the programme addresses community/beneficiary needs? Explain

5.3 What key need/s were **NOT** addressed by the programme? List.

5.4 Was the cause for **NOT** meeting this/these key need/s?

5.5 What were the implications of NOT meeting those key needs?

5.6 What can be done to ensure that the excluded needs are also addressed in the future?

6. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME

6.1 Have the planned activities of the programme commenced?

1.	2.
Yes	No

If YES, ONLY skip questions 6.8 and 6.9.

If NO, ONLY skip questions 6.2 to 6.7.

6.2 When did activities of the programme commence?

6.7 What was the support by other stakeholders in ensuring the attainment of these deliverables?

6.8 What is the reason for non-commencement of the planned activities as planned?

6.9 What can be done to remedy the non-commencement of the planned activities on time?

7. EFFICIENCY OF THE PROGRAMME

7.1 Based on your observation, how would you describe the availability of resources for the implementation of the DDM programme in your district?

7.2 How has the availability and/or non-availability of resources affected the implementation of the DDM programme?

7.3 In your opinion, how can the utilization of available resources be improved to enhance the efficiency of the DDM programme implementation?

7.4 What inefficiencies have been identified?

7.5 What plans are in place to address these inefficiencies been addressed?

SECTION E: LEARNINGS AND GOOD PRACTICE

8. Lessons Learned & Good Practice

8.1 What have you identified as Good practice in the DDM programme?

8.2 What could have been done differently to maximize the benefits of this programme?

8.3 What could have been done differently to minimize the negative effects of the programme?

Thank you for your time.

Do you have any questions or further comments?

SECTION H: INTERVIEWER DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this interview has been completed and checked in strict accordance with the instructions given to me.

INTERVIEWER NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE	LENGTH OF INTERVIEW
..... 			