MITIGATING SERVICE DELIVERY PROTEST THROUGH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

RESEARCH PROJECT COMMISSIONED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETA

FINAL REPORT

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Introduction

Over the past decade, service delivery protests have dominated local politics. These conflicts have often escalated into violence, with running street battles between the police and communities. At the core of this conflict between citizens and municipalities are difficulties in obtaining government housing for the poor; access to running water; provision of electricity or affordable rates for electricity; paved or tarred roads; removal of sewage, etc.

Many of the participants in these protests are a new generation of unemployed young people. They are more than likely to be schooled beyond grade 9 and many will have National Senior Certificates. Yet, they live in a context characterized by rising levels of inequalities, rampant urbanization, poor living conditions and little prospect of finding employment. They have also been witness to, participants in and instigators of violence directed at local governance structures. Violence may be an expression of legitimate anger, but often also spills over into social relations and breeds fear amongst communities.

The specific aim of this research is to explore how to mitigate violence associated with service delivery protests through skills development programmes targeted at youth. If local government is to heal relations with young people, could skills development programmes act as a mediator? What would such skills programmes include to be successful?

It needs to be said at the outset that this research has faith that skills development programmes can have a positive impact on young people and may mitigate their involvement in perpetrating violence during service delivery protests. At the same time, we do not claim that skills programmes will solve failures in service delivery or prevent protests. The intention is not to delegitimize protest action against local government. Rather, the aim is to understand how local government ought to be implementing youth development programmes and how it does so in practice. The gap between policy intention and implementation is what the research hopes to explain.

The research is, however, only exploratory. Since empirical work was conducted only in one site – in Bekkersdal – this research is not a comprehensive analysis of all communities, youth and protest action. It does however provide pointers to the criteria for successful interventions in youth development at a local government level.

This report begins by providing background to the service delivery protests and the role of youth in those protests. It then looks to the obligations local government has to youth in policy. Finally, the report turns to the case of Bekkersdal and how relations between local government and youth are worked out in practice. The report concludes with some policy recommendations.

Background to service delivery protests

Service delivery protests are a relatively recent phenomenon and really only came into public consciousness in the mid-2000s. The protests were quick to escalate.

A study by Powell, Donovan and De Visser (2015) traced protests throughout South Africa during the period 2007-2014. Their findings pointed to discernible trends. For example:

1. An increase in the number of protests seems to coincide with the election years.
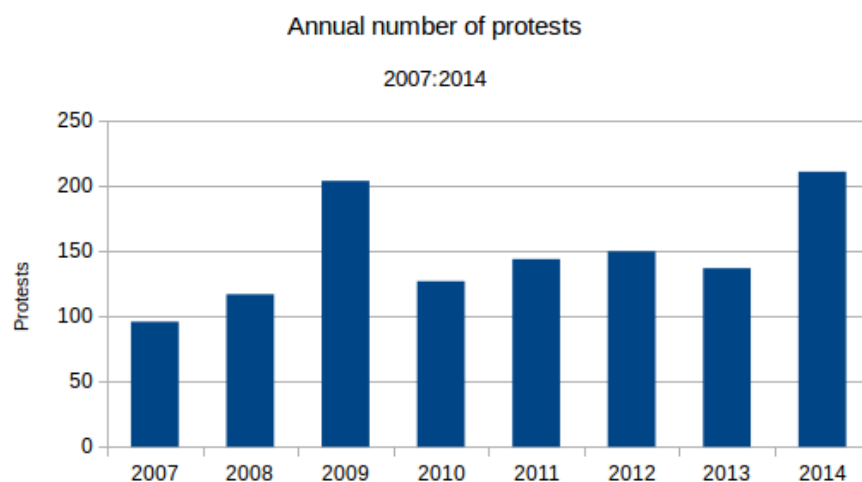
The spike in the two graphs is in 2009 and 2014, both being election years. Between the elections there is an observable decline in the occurrence of public protests. The last election year (2014) was marred by the most protests (218) as compared to 204 in 2009.

2. The more affluent provinces seem to experience more protests than their poorer counterparts.
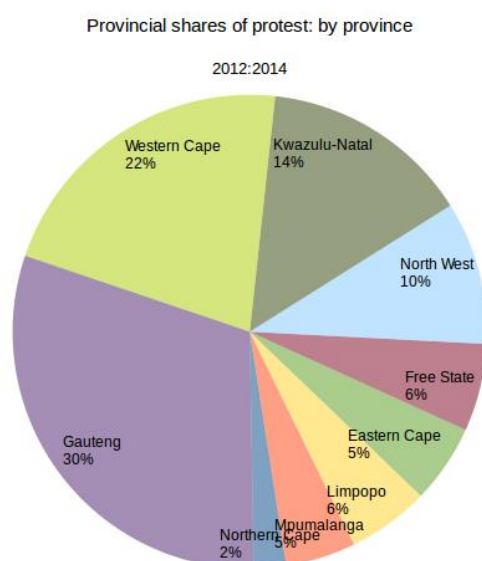
The metropolitan areas, which are the largest cities in the country, account for 50% of all protests in the country. This points to a strong connection between poverty in the midst of observable wealth. In other words, the poor living in close proximity of the wealthy are more likely to protest than the poor who live far away from wealth.

However, if one takes into account the proportion to both total and urban populations, the two wealthiest provinces, Gauteng and the Western Cape, had relatively fewer gatherings than the others, and North West had the highest total.

3. On a yearly basis, there seems to be an increase in the element of violence in the protests that take place.

Proportion of protests involving violence
2007:2014
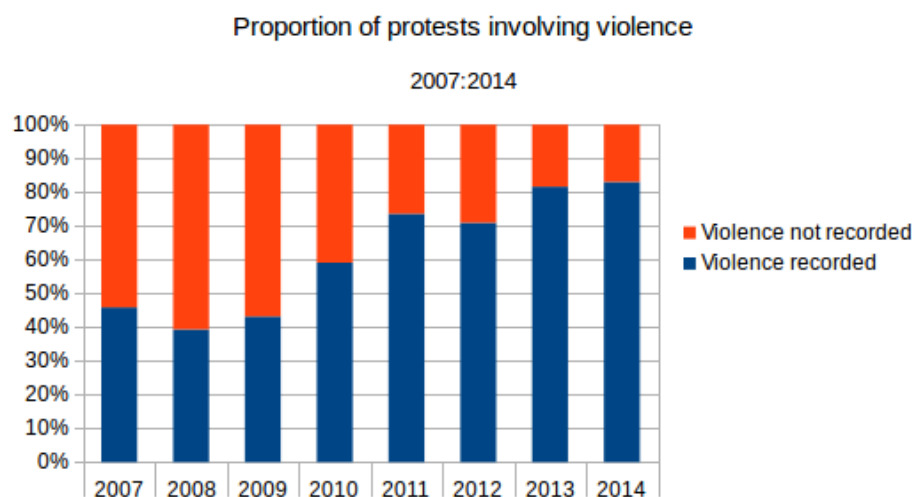
The elements of violence include: intimidation, personal attacks, arson, damage to property, and looting, with intimidation and destruction of property rating very high whilst physical attacks to individuals were less prominent, although still high (315). In some cases physical attacks resulted in deaths of individuals.

4. Grievances behind the protests seem to vary, targeting service delivery in municipalities as well as those services falling outside of the municipality remit.

What is behind these protests?

Several explanations have been put forward for what lies behind the protests.

The first explanation, and perhaps most obviously, is that the failure in service delivery sparks protests. Booysen, for example, writes of "grass-roots protests against both the quality of service delivery and public representation of grass-roots' service delivery needs" (2007, p. 21). The causes include aging infrastructure, population pressures on existing infrastructure and insufficient resourcing of local government.

In data from Powell et.al. (2015), grievances cited by protesters include:

a. Municipal services like the provision of water and electricity;
b. Municipal governance, e.g. financial mismanagement or corruption;
c. Non-municipal services that are the responsibility of either the national or provincial governments, e.g. education and policing services;
d. Party political within and between political parties;
e. Socio-economic matters relating to issues like jobs and land distribution.

Grievance categories cited by protesters
2012:2014

Pie chart legend:
- Non-municipal services
- Party Political
- Municipal governance
- Socio-economic
- Unspecified services
- Municipal services

Pie chart values: 11%, 12%, 7%, 16%, 9%, 45%
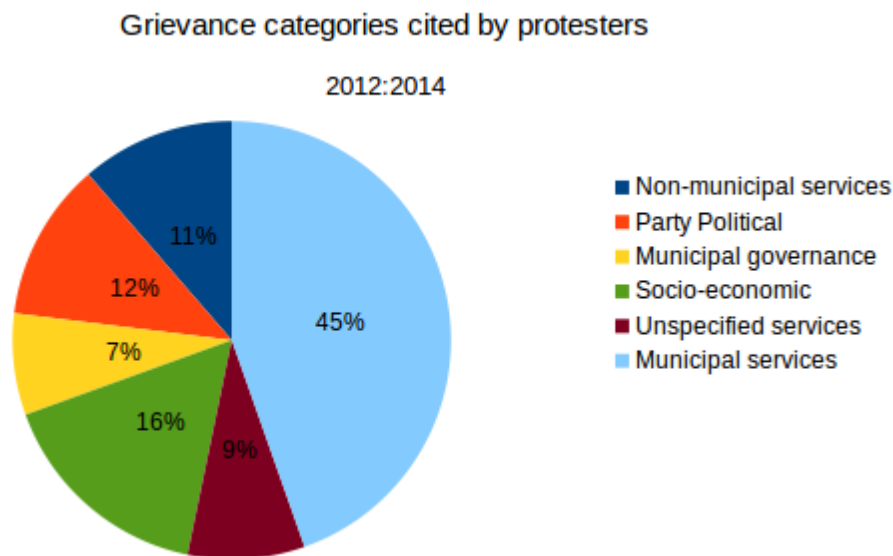
Managerial failure to see to it that services are provided is often blamed on corruption – especially where nepotism plays a part in hiring people without the necessary skills.

But a key complaint has been that lack of skills is the underlying reason behind failure to deliver services. The claim involves lack of skills on the part of the local government to manage and deploy the resources at their disposal; the lack of technical skills to render and maintain municipal services; and the lack of skills amongst the youth to be engaged in positive activities or in employment. According to the LG SETA's SSP, municipalities average staff vacancy rates of 36 – 38%, the bulk of which are in elementary occupation (p4). For Alexander: "Inadequate investment in public goods has produced a shortage of people with the skills necessary to administer local government and maintain municipal services (especially outside the metropolitan areas)."

Kanyane (2006, 112-118) too contends that municipalities are generally in crisis and that 2/3 of municipalities are said to have failed to spend capital budgets (M&G, 6-12 July 2007). There is a "capacity gap" that Kanyane says necessitates a skills revolution.

Atkinson (2007) points out that failure at the level of maintenance and repairs of infrastructure requires that more attention should be paid to technical issues and skills development.

The skills mismatch explanation focuses on the supply side of the labour market. In this approach the main question that is being asked is whether or not a particular geography can supply the skills that are required for the jobs available. (Houston, 2005). The inability of an area to supply the skills required can often be explained beyond the concept of under skilled and under educated labour force. Studies that concentrate on spatial inequalities show evidence that this phenomenon in unequal societies tends to be concentrated in specific areas, which are deprived neighbourhoods. In other words, it can be expected that people who are not employed, who are under skilled and with less education, and those who possess skills not in high demand by the labour market can be found in concentrated areas (Green, 2011; Houston, 2005; Weller, 2008).

In contrast to these technical explanations, there is a more political argument. The protests arise not just out of the letdown on the part of municipalities to deliver services, but the rising consciousness amongst communities that they have a right to make demands for services. Alexander, for example, calls the protests: the "rebellion of the poor". And Pithouse (2007) argues that the protests are about 'citizenship', understood as "the material benefits of full social inclusion . . . as well as the right to be taken seriously when thinking and speaking through community organisations."

South Africa has a long history of 'outsiders' and 'outsiders' throughout the different historical periods. Kirsten & Von Holdt (2011) for example, writing about class formation in South Africa, explain the protests in the South African thus:

> … a new elite is emerging and, on the other. A large underclass of unemployed and precariously employed, together with the dislocation of the transitions from apartheid to democracy – is generating fierce struggles over inclusion and exclusion both within the elite, between the elites and subalterns, and within the subaltern class themselves. These struggles are in part marked by contestation over the meaning and content of citizenship. While the processes of class formation are producing what Hanson (2008:7-9) calls 'differentiated citizenship' – which distributes treatment, rights and privileges differentially among formally equal citizens according to differences of education, property, race, gender and occupations – subaltern groups respond by mobilising an 'insurgent, citizenship' around claims that 'destabilise the differentiated' (p.6-7).

During apartheid, a struggle with violent practices was established against the regime. Von Holdt et.al. (2011) have likened the struggles against apartheid to the current public protests in that at the centre of both there seems to be a 'cry' for citizenship.

A useful theory through which to understand the participation of young people in protests is that of Bourdieu's theory of social differentiation. It helps explain the way social divisions are reproduced and how 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are constituted. For example, in his classic work, *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984) argues that class structure is reproduced through the accumulation of cultural capital, which can provide access to high-status occupations and social circles. According to him, a class society is reproduced because upper class students are more likely to have the cultural capital favoured by the education system (itself an agent of upper class). Central to this argument is the assumption that what constitutes cultural capital is agreed upon by all segments of

society, else there would be alternate markets in which those lacking legitimate cultural capital could succeed.

Although Bourdieu's theory is more complex than the paraphrase above, it does provide us with a framework in which to see social divisions, which we will try and apply it in the current South African context. During apartheid, the boundaries were clear as race was the dividing line. Nowadays race is no longer the dividing line as a new elite class has emerged in the black townships. It is these new elites that are pitted against the subalterns during the periods of public protests. In their study, von Holdt et.al., explain how the new elites living amongst the poor have been able to accumulate, namely through the local states and the various contracts; limited local business opportunities, and in informal settlements the 'land grabs'. Local and other levels of government provide the primary base for elite formation, through the dispensation of jobs and tenders. Through the distribution of treatment, rights and privileges differentially among formally equal citizens there is an emergence of a 'differentiated citizenship' in the townships and informal settlements. This differentiation has produced 'social distances', identified by Bourdieu in communities that had a history of sameness. For the citizens who have been waiting for their constitutional rights to be fulfilled in the form of housing, jobs, electricity, water etc., in the midst of corruption, nepotism and seemingly growing affluence for a few, it all boils down to justice being denied.

The struggle against apartheid was fundamentally a struggle for black citizenship and a differentiated citizenship evokes similar sentiments from the underclass / excluded. Citizens are ready to resort to repertoires of the past in attacking state property and responding with violence to the violence of police. In this circle of violence, the youth are always the face as the protest leaders remain in the background. Violence is understood as a language that both the protesters and authorities understand well.

> "The premier undermines us. He will see by the smoke we're calling him"……
> "Actually, when we fought, we were sending a message to the top, to the provincial capital. Because we could see, even people at the top, they know what is going on" (von Holdt, 2011, et.al. p.27).

For those who argue that the protests are about demanding rights to citizenship, the claim that lack of skills is a causal factor in the failure to deliver services must be controversial. There is a danger in reducing an often highly politicized event to a technical problem that has an easy technical solution. If the technical issues around constraints over skills suggest an easy solution – that is to simply invest in skills development – the socio-political explanations require much more. Training alone cannot solve service delivery.

But that line of argument assumes that skills are a depoliticized, technical issue. They are not. The development and training of skilled people is a politically contentious issue, as is the way in which certification and educational requirements are used to stratify status groups and ring-fence employment opportunities. To claim that skills development may contribute to mitigating violence is not to offer an easy solution to the protests.

As we show in the next section, any programme aimed at youth must respond to the issues youth face and engage them as citizens. Once we understand how youth are constituted as 'outsiders', we can more practically see how local government must intervene to redraw the sociological maps so that they become 'insiders'.

Youth participants in service delivery protests

One of the striking observations of service delivery protests over the past decade in South Africa has been the role of youth in spearheading the often violent actions against municipalities (Kirsten and von Holdt). According to Alexander: "A key feature has been mass participation by a new generation of fighters, especially unemployed youth but also school students" (p.25).

Against the background of the service delivery protests the role of young people in communities is very sharply revealed. In a context of violent action, the stereotypes defining youth tend to be exaggerated. On the one hand, young protestors are described as simply available, emasculated (mainly) men, taken up by the thrill of the battle and so are easy recruits for the organisers of protests. On the other hand, the youth are seen to be politically conscientised and organised around claiming their rights. Those exaggerations are useful in so far as it helps unwind the continuum along which local government relates to youth.

If we could better understand why young people engage in protest action, and the ways in which they are positioned in relation to governance structures, then we might begin to understand how to shift young people from the margins to be more readily included in the social and economic mainstream. In this section, we are interested in the discourses that are used to explain the role young people play in service delivery protests – and how this has strained the relationship between local government and youth. Tending to this central tension will be an important step before local government is able to make good on its formal obligations to youth development. As Akinloye et al point out: "Explanations of this phenomenon [protesting youth] could highlight the import of organizational ties and affiliations to which policy makers could address social dialogue" (2014, p4).

Relating to youth

There are two divergent descriptions of local government's association with young people.

The first explanation points to young people involved in protests as uneducated (even if they have been schooled) and unskilled and therefore easily manipulated. Moreover, as Akinloye et al point out, "Because of their age and limited labour market participation, students are often considered to be ideal protestors because they are more likely to have time and energy to participate in protest activities" (2014, p4). Such youth might be dismissed as a 'lost generation'.

Booysens and Crause describe these youth as living an existence of "bleak monotony and pervasive sense of helplessness" and that such individual social exclusion compounds into a national crisis (Booyens & Crause, 2014, p. 256). It begins with an appalling schooling, which leads to a large number of drop-outs at the senior secondary phase and finally helplessness on street corners. This is inevitably continued into a cycle of substance abuse and teenage pregnancy. The adage "NEETs" (Not in Employment, Education or Training) sticks fast and the possibilities of breaking the cycle appear to be ever fewer.

It's this generation of youth who are driven by emotions and frustration rather than rational thought and if asked to explain why they are involved in protest, are unlikely to repeat more than a slogan.

That stereotype is easy enough to latch on to – and government too is often seen to repeat it. Collins Chabane, then Minister in the Presidency, for example, is reported to have claimed that young people are exploited in service delivery protests because they are vulnerable. At a Youth Day event in Port Elizabeth in 2012, Chabane said:

"We call on young people to resist this exploitation and focus on their education and uplifting their lives ... You should rather play a significant role in uplifting your communities than destroying it through the violent protests we have witnessed in recent times." (News24, 2012)

More recently, under the headline "Gauteng government slams community leaders for using youth in violent protests", the Gauteng MEC for Human Settlements is reported to have said that he no longer wants to see children involved in service delivery protests (Enca, 2015).

Young people, it seems to be suggested, are to be blamed for not focusing on their studies and older activists are culpable for taking advantage of the youth for their own political ends. Government's role was to ensure access to education and skills development "so they could participate in the economy" (News24, 2012).

On this analysis, youth development and skills programmes can offer a solution to service delivery failures and therefore staunch the protests that follow. These would simultaneously keep young people productively occupied and help develop the technical and administrative skills that lead to service delivery in the first place.

The strong point of this analysis is that it recognises the need for local government to intervene and to improve access to opportunities. As Booysens and Crause explain it: "Individual agency (actions) has to be supported by strong institutional interventions"(Booyens & Crause, 2014, p. 257).

Moreover, such skills need to be relevant, linked and integrated with the needs of local government. It offers the opportunity for apprenticeships that mix the theoretical and knowledge base of skills with its practical component.

On the other hand, this vision for youth development seems overly optimistic and hands too much authority to local government to decide on the needs and mechanics of youth development. It offers no scope for youth agency and the explanation also appears to reduce young people to nothing more than puppets.

More gravely though is that it probably misdiagnoses the cause of service delivery failures. Lack of skills are unlikely to be the main cause of protests in the face of allegations of corruption, nepotism and political interference. According to an OECD study on political involvement in bureaucracies, South Africa came near the top of culprits. A crude form of patronage which involves the appointment of families and friends to government posts was found to be most pronounced at local government level (Cameron, P687).

The alternative version of youth participation in service delivery protests gives youth much more agency in their own actions. It sees young people as instigators of protest, politically involved and assumes that the youth are already educated to a substantial degree. An Afrobarometer survey in 2012, for example, suggested that the segment of the population with the greatest propensity to attend protests was people with some university education but who had not completed it. That is exactly as Kunene discovered in his research on the composition of the Crisis Committee in Phomolong who were behind the service protests there. The Committee was made up of young, unemployed people and at least three had been unable to complete higher education due to a combination of lack of financial and academic support.

Young people have political acumen and it's a sense of injustice or legitimate anger that motivates their participation in protest action. Von Holdt et. al. explain the predicament of youth:

Theirs, they feel, is a half-life, as they are unable to participate as full citizens in the economy and society. Impoverished young men, in particular, experience this as the undermining of their masculinity as they are unable to establish families. Protest provides them with an opportunity to exert their masculinity through violence and to experience themselves as representing the community and fighting on its behalf" (smoke that calls, p3).

In an article on the service delivery protests in Balfour, Alexander and Pffafer distinguish between the role of workers and youth. If workers represent a stable and conservative core in the community, then the youth represent its radical and rebellious side. They write:

> The existence of an unemployed grouping separate from the youth was a surprise. The former appeared to understand 'unemployed' as 'formerly employed' and 'available to work'. The 'youth' also emphasised the importance of work, but placed this within a wider context that enabled them to think and act more politically. We were also taken aback by the gulf between, on the one hand, the youth and older residents and, on the other, workers living in the township. The image of lumpen youth attacking workers is haunting. In the eyes of many residents, the workers were fortunate and should have been doing more to assist the struggle. In contrast, the workers viewed themselves as attempting to hang on to precarious jobs and objected strongly to intimidation. Although some wanted to participate in community activities, involvement was limited by time constraints. (P216)

Alexander and Pffafer suggest that there is conflict between workers and youth – that youth have been excluded from employment opportunities – despite being skilled. It might then be possible to layer over this division between workers and youth a further element – which is that workers have ties to political parties. Politicisation (corruption and networks of patronage) had meant that older workers were favoured when opportunities became available. Youth do not have those connections are excluded from employment within government. Cameron argues that this "partisan control of the bureaucracy" (p677) is the main reason behind the service delivery failures.

On this account, the delivery of skills programmes has no real role to play in mitigating service delivery protests. (Nor does the lack of skills programmes appear to stoke the protests.)

The main problem here is not the level or nature of skills young people have. Rather, it is argued that lack of employment is one of the main sparks to the embers of complaints. According to a City Press report, Mr Manamela said that although communities claimed that the protests were about water, electricity and housing, 'at the centre of most is the issue of the youth not having jobs' [*City Press* 18 January 2015]. One of the reasons given for protests in Mpumalanga, according to an EFF spokesperson was that the municipality wasn't doing enough to pressurise the private sector into employing local people [*City Press* 25 January 2015].

Similarly, Banjo and Jili (2013) show that unemployment was one of the main reasons young people gave for protesting in Wesselton and Siyathemba townships (also in Mpumalanga). The youth in their study also complained of the general failure of services (particularly of housing,

water and sanitation and electricity) and they proffered as reasons for such: corruption, nepotism and poor management and maladministration.

The young people on this view were claiming their rights as citizens. They were demanding from government to deliver on Constitutional rights and they were insisting on being recognised as citizens.

But while this second explanation of the role of youth in service delivery protests is stronger than the first, it is not without limitations.

The first problem is that although youth development programmes are not given much credence, simultaneously the solution (by Cameron) for service delivery failure is that appointments need to be made on merit. Yet at least one measure of merit must include skills. If skills became the main determinant in hiring, then that would immediately solve the technical aspects behind the service delivery protests (maintenance etc could be done) and cool down the tensions over hiring practices by making the process more transparent.

The second limitation is that the politicisation of youth remains unexplained. Who or what is responsible for the mediation of these political acts? If it is older activists, then how can we be sure it is not of the manipulative kind previously discussed? But more significantly, it seems to ignore the 'politicisation' that education may have played.

These limitations point to the need to ensure that where skills development programmes are provided, they do not ignore the needs for a democratic and citizenship component. Even vocational students need to understand the bigger role their skills play in building their communities and contributing to improving society.

In sum, the service delivery protests help highlight two very different images of youth: while the first downplays the agency young people have; the second perhaps overestimates it; and while the first over-emphasizes the role of skills development as a solution; the second under-estimates it.

In practice there is probably a mix of these two extreme positions: some young people have sure political footing; others may simply be swayed by the mob. But the advantage of teasing out the two stereotypes is that it helps show up the various forms of exclusion – social, economic and political.

The SAIRR assess the problem as having its roots in: "a relationship between economic exclusion and political alienation. The 'born free' generation, primarily for reasons of poor education and limited labour market access, are a highly frustrated generation. That frustration may be driving a crisis of confidence in democratic institutions as well as explaining low voter registration figures and growing numbers of street protests" (SAIRR : born free but still in chains p23).

The main form of political inclusion now appears to be through violent protests - as the title of the report "The Smoke that Calls" suggests. Based on a case study, that report points out: "An

important aspect to be noted is that many members of this community (especially the youth) now felt that the use of violence was a solution to all their problems" (p49).

The main problem with violent protests is that while it raises awareness of service delivery failures and may even get the attention of higher level officials, there's little chance of the protests (or the promises of politicians) to solve the crisis if lack of capacity is one of the main reasons for delivery failures in the first place. That is where the importance of skills programmes surfaces. Good youth development programmes should slot into the wider economic development agenda. They should provide the kind of skills to be used in delivering services and providing job opportunities. Moreover, skills programmes can and should raise political consciousness. But where violence has become proof of political empowerment for the youth, it stands in the way of education and skills programmes to do the same.

Conclusion

This study is not about finding explanations for public protests but it is about the youth who find themselves in this divided society where their chances are reduced in the first place because of where they were born; secondly because of the quality of opportunities available for them and thirdly about the lack of interventions planned by their government to improve their future.

The next section reviews whether in fact local government has any obligations in relation to youth.

Local governance and youth

The previous section unpacked the two main discourses youth are described as relating to local government. It helps explain how municipalities view their responsibilities towards youth development and empowerment. Do they see the need to get directly involved with skills and training? Do they engage with youth around the kind of development young people specifically need?

This section reviews the literature around the legal responsibilities municipalities have for youth development and the difficulties they have in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Planning at the Local Government - Integrated Development Plans

The post-1994 Constitution introduced a new system of government, the national, provincial and local government (SA Constitution, 1996 (40) (1). These spheres of government had to be distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. It was envisaged that such relationship between the different government spheres would allow greater coordination and integration which would then ensure effective planning between these spheres and sector departments within them. Important to note thought is the fact that these still had their own powers and functions to exercise within their areas of jurisdiction (Schedule 4 and 5B of the Constitution).

In a departure from former centralised tier system of government, the Constitution gave new meaning to local government through defining mandates, powers and functions of this sphere (See S (156) Constitution, 1996). In the new meaning of local government, municipalities no longer only have the task of providing basic local administration, but are expected to play an important role in the country's struggle against poverty and underdevelopment. Simply put, local government is now expected to contribute to economic growth, job creation, social development and participation within its area of jurisdiction, in addition to its traditional service delivery role (CoGTA, 2007 and Tsatsire, 2008).

Municipalities are therefore expected to satisfy the following objectives:
- to provide democratic and accountable government of local communities
- to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner
- to promote social and economic development
- to promote a safe and healthy environment, and
- to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisation in the matters of local government (S (152) Constitution, 1996).

To achieve this, strategic tools had to be introduced, and thus the birth of integrated development plans (IDPs).

Clear policies that local municipalities and councillors should be sensitive to community views and responsive to local problems. Partnerships should be built between civil society and local government to address local issues. A number of laws outline participation processes that municipalities have to use to consult the community. IDPs are at the centre of partnerships and communication relationships between different stakeholders institutions existing in municipalities.

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a principal instrument that guides and informs budgeting, management and decision-making related to service delivery and development in a municipality. The IDP process enables municipalities to work together with communities and other stakeholders to find innovative and cost effective ways of eradicating poverty and growing the local economy (CoGTA, 2007).

Local government's legal responsibilities for youth development
Local government is the sphere of governance closest to the people. It has the potential to draw people into participating through democratic processes in development objectives while also being the frontline of delivering services.

Chapter 7 of the Constitution gives local government its status as an important sphere of government within its financial and administrative capacity to achieve the following:
- to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities
- to ensure the provision of service to communities in a sustainable manners
- to promote social and economic development
- to promote a safe and a healthy environment
- to encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in local government

Those principles are repeated in the White Paper on Local Government which commits to: exercising municipal powers and functions in a manner which maximises their impact on social development and economic growth; democratising development; and building social capital through providing community leadership and vision, and seeking to empower marginalised and excluded groups within the community.

The White Paper specifically mentions marginalisation on the basis of class, race, gender, location (e.g. rural) and, to a lesser extent, disability or sexual orientation. Only occasional mention is made on youth involvement in development projects.

Van Donk notes that although the White Paper has an inclusive vision that "opens the door for a progressive and proactive engagement by municipalities with cross-cutting issues like … youth development … it does not give municipalities clear guidance on how to interpret the vision and guiding principles" (p6). The White Paper is a strategic policy document and so it is left to municipalities and local actors to interpret and act on it.

The Municipal Structures Act makes no reference to the representation of youth, while the Municipal Systems Act speaks in a very non-specific way of the need for the municipality to "respect the rights of citizens and those of other persons protected by the Bill of Rights".

Other national policy frameworks that deal specifically with youth – such as the National Youth Commission Act (1996), the National Youth Policy (1997); the National Youth Development Policy Framework etc. – do not help municipalities with details on exactly what they need to do to meet the needs of youth. Van Donk notes that this may have positive aspects "in that this allows for local responses and local creativity to emerge, the flipside of it is that municipalities may not know how best to bring about the desired outcomes or where to start" (p8). There has also been insufficient attention given to the development of appropriate indicators against which to measure progress.

Responsibilities for the development of youth are cross-cutting. Various ministries have youth desks, for example, who carry out youth service initiatives under the guidance of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). The NYDA is mandated by the NYDA Act (2008) to "initiate, design, coordinate, evaluate and monitor all programmes that aim to integrate the youth into the economy and society in general" (Ref page number?). The NYDA is therefore expected to promote a uniform approach to youth development across all organs of state, the private sector and NGOs.

The obstacles to implementing youth development programmes
Despite the mention of youth as a specific category to whom government has a responsibility, there are several obstacles that stand in the way of implementing youth development programmes.

While the policy objective may be to mainstream youth programmes, the institutions do not have legal obligations to each other. The latest National Youth Policy 2015-2020 admits that: "The absence of a regulatory framework for youth work has played a major role in limiting the policy's implementation" (p4, NYP 2015-2020).

Because the NYDA Act (2008) is a Section 75 bill, it has no authority over provincial governments. Moreover, post-school education and training – the sphere most likely to encompass youth over the age of 15 – is co-ordinated between the Department of Higher Education and Training and various SETAs. But it is not clear how all these institutions relate to municipalities.

The National Youth Policy, 2015-2020, adds that the lack of clear mandates across institutions (such as between the NYDA and the Youth Directorate in The Presidency) has resulted in "messy and time-wasting duplication of efforts" (p9). Cross referencing of roles and responsibilities also makes it difficult to hold institutions accountable or to evaluate programmes.

In addition, those tasked with implementing the mainstreaming of youth (and gender and people with disabilities etc) issues across government often do not have the seniority and competencies to make the strategic decisions that are necessary to be effective.

There are also a number of practical constraints that bedevil youth development. Lack of capacity and funding in the face of sheer demand for opportunities may be a central limiting factor for programme implementation. The NYP 2015-2020 notes, for example, that only 44 percent of NYDA offices were functioning at capacity in August 2014 and that high personnel costs had crowded out funding needed for the actual implementation of projects (NYP, 2015-2020, p10).

The high cost of transport and the physical distance to youth projects may add further expenses. Youth programmes also invariably include a training component which can add substantially to the budget.

But many of these constraints are common to all projects. They can be overcome with improved management and resources. There is, however, one issue that specifically relates to local government programmes – and that's the close relationship it has with the people it serves. In policy it is a relationship defined through citizenship rather than client-ship. Services provided by municipalities have the distinction of being rights-based and although most socio-economic rights are conditional on availability of funding, provision must be fulfilled as is possible. Citizens have rights to be heard and consulted over how they are governed.

According to Etzo: "top-down, supply-driven, approach reflects the diminished capacity of the state (particularly evident at the municipal level) whose role is that of enabling the provision of services (delivered by the private sector), and reduces citizens to passive recipients of rights. Social protests are a call for the democratic institutions to be valued" (Etzo, p565).

In the event of service delivery protests, the nature and strength of the citizenship relationship is tested. Interestingly, as protests against local government have escalated so measures of trust have declined. According to the HSRC Voter Participation Survey 2014, trust in the national government has fallen from 61 percent in 2009 to 44 percent in 2013. Only 44 percent trust their provincial government and barely a third (34 percent) trust their local government.

An earlier Human Science Research Council (HSRC) (2012) study in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality found that only 34.5 % of community members in regularly participated in imbizos, ward committee and council meetings and 65.5 % did not. The study identifies some reasons for poor public participation including:
- poor youth attendance at meetings;
- poor distribution of invitation letters;
- lack of feedback on grievances raised in previous meetings, and the recurrence of the same problems, which implies that nothing had been done to rectify them;
- Officials use these meetings to tell citizens of service delivery projects they had not been consulted about;

- There are perceptions that the process of electing the ward committees is fraudulent. It is widely felt that committee members represent their own self-interests rather than those of the community; and
- Complaints collection is not properly channelled.

It seems possible then that failures in service delivery have not only resulted in practical difficulties for communities without sufficient water, electricity, refuse removal etc, but that it has also led to a downturn in trust in the ability of local government to deliver. This in turn has resulted in strain over how citizenship is defined – whether it requires loyalty to government or the right to protest (and to protest is not to show loyalty). As a result, Koelble & Edward LiPuma suggest that local governments be freed of development responsibility that they cannot anyway fulfil, and focus instead on their democratic role.

Government's position appears to be a reflex to try to quell protest action through rebuilding relationships of loyalty and fidelity. The latest NYP, 2015-2020, draws attention to nation building and social cohesion as priority issues in the years ahead. It argues that: "Trust is an essential element of healing and nation-building, and it is also necessary to construct the long-term compacts required to deal with the underlying causes of inequality and exclusion" (p14).

The suggestion in the NYP, therefore, is that trust is both a condition for and a result of government programmes. As people's lives improve, as inequality levels out and as people feel included in economic and democratic systems, their trust in government climbs. But, at the same time, government can only implement programmes to deliver the services meant to improve the lives of citizens if citizens trust government to do so. Citizens need to trust that government has the capacity to deliver without the stigma of corruption.

The challenge for government is to rise out of that catch-22 situation just as service delivery protests sound the alarm that crisis has been reached. Bridging the fault-lines means establishing relationships with youth who are often at the forefront of these protests, but who are pictured as furtherest from reconciliation.

Conclusion

Municipalities have responsibilities to youth that cover both a practical element of providing services and the more intangible democratic assent. These two responsibilities work in a complex web – without services, democratic processes are threatened by violence; and democracy has also become an underpinning principle for the delivery of services.

These conditions appear to be the same for youth development and skills programmes. They need to both deliver on promised skills and in a way underpinned by democracy. If youth development programmes are to succeed, they need themselves to overcome the stereotypes of youth. They are not only the unwitting puppets in service delivery protests nor the only radical instigators.

As the NYP, 2015-2020 puts it:

The effective implementation of this policy depends on optimising intergovernmental relations between national, provincial and local government. All spheres of government need to work alongside the youth to involve them in planning and decisionmaking; build connections between the youth, national priorities and local communities; challenge stereotypes depicting youth as a 'social problem'; channel the energy, leadership and fresh perspectives of the population into social, economic, cultural and environmental renewal; and promote young people as active citizens who are able to tackle social problems and act on opportunities. (p28)

So far we have made a number of assertions, which start building our hypotheses in this study:

a. That young people were demanding from government to deliver on their Constitutional rights and they are demanding on being recognised as citizens;
b. That there is a relationship between economic exclusion and political alienation
c. That if skills and qualifications have been used to exclude; the service delivery protests have been a demand to be included.
d. That between youth agency, skills development and deployment, there is a possibility to mitigate the violence in public protests dominated by the youth.

In the next section, we look more closely at how these are reflected in the findings of a case study of Bekkersdal.

A case study of Bekkersdal

The objective of this study was to explore the possibility of skills development and employment programmes in mitigating the violence associated with service delivery protests, and in particular the role that can be played by the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA).

The empirical work in Bekkersdal township aimed to gather information on:

- What skills programmes were available to young people;
- How these programmes responded to the crisis around service delivery;
- The obstacles youth have in accessing skills development programmes.

With those three objectives we could begin to analyse whether skills programmes were even considered as part of the policy response to service protests. The analysis would also help generate a list of considerations that would need to be taken into account when designing such programmes.

Methodology

There were two sources of information for this study:

1. Participants interviews
2. Document analysis

With the assistance of Local Government SETA, we identified the participants in a community where interviews will be conducted, namely Bekkersdal. This community had experienced repeated service delivery protests since 2013. Interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders:

a. Councillors – for development plans and socio-economic projects of the local government in the identified area;
b. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Post-school institutions intervening in both the supply and demand sides of skills development in the area;
c. Local Government SETA individuals responsible for training programmes development and provision;
d. Two Youth political structures active in the area;
e. Employment creation projects.

Semi-structured interview questionnaires were used to obtain information. Interviews were conducted individually (one-on-one) and where necessary and appropriate, in focus groups, where the informants are unlikely to be compromised. Participants' anonymity was respected where required to do so. The study was limited by time constraints and the availability of interviewees. However, this research was in the main exploratory and should be followed-up with an extended study.

The semi-structured questions focused on the following key areas:

1. Introduction and permission (as per ethics document)
2. Understanding of causes of public service delivery conflict and violence in the area
3. Nature of interventions currently running and who is responsible
4. Social and Economic development plans and projects in the area
5. Understanding of the nature of interventions needed to stop the violence
6. The scale of public jobs in the area
7. The nature of public jobs in the municipality
8. the nature of training available for the municipality jobs and projects

The following documents were analysed:

- 2011 -2016 LGSETA Sector Skills Plan
- Data available on the educational and economic profile of this Municipality from the Community Survey of 2007[1].
- High school achievements in the past 3 years.

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[1] This is outdated information, but the duration of the study did not permit us to drill down on the Census of 2011 where the latest data can be obtained.

Findings and Discussions

Bekkersdal as the Site of the Study

In many ways, Bekkersdal is a typical South African township. It is a small community of 47 000 on the outskirts of Johannesburg, in Gauteng province. It was established in 1945, as an area which would house Africans that worked in town and the surrounding gold mines, as one of apartheid's labour pools. Why then did it become a hot spot for protests? Why are the youth predominantly involved in these protests? What is the role of the municipality? Why are these youth not working? How can a skills program act as an intervention?

Bekkersdal has a long history of service delivery protests, all characterized by violence, damages in millions of rands and in some cases deaths. In March 2015 residents protested to demand that the Westonaria Municipality be placed under administration. Youth vandalized the local municipal office and looted shops. A majority of the protesters where school learners and at whom police fired rubber bullets.

In 2014 protests were led by the Greater Westonaria Group Alliance, due to an increase in grave fees from R270 to R1970 and the Bekkersdal urban renewal R1.2bn initiative dating from 2003, which had failed to meet the outcomes which were promised to community members. The municipality did not respond to the memorandum which was drawn up, therefore prompting a second march which resulted in violence and damages.

The 2013 protest had as its primary emphasis a call for the removal of the local municipality leadership for failing to provide jobs, services and for alleged cases of corruption. Premier Nomvula Mokonyane visited Bekkersdal and there was a temporary suspension of the protests, which lead one to believe that there was some sort of progress taking place.

The legacies of apartheid and continued disparities characterise Bekkersdal.

According to Census 2011, Westonaria Local Municipality has a total population of 111 769, of which 91,4% are black African, 7,0% are white, with other population groups making up the remaining 1,6%. Of those 20 years and older, 6,8 %have completed primary school, 40,1% have some secondary education, 26,2% have completed matric, 5,3% have some form of higher education.[2]

Less than 50% of the Westonaria households have access to piped water within their dwellings. This gives an idea of the conditions under which the community finds itself. A Bekkersdal community member describes the issues of Bekkersdal as being central to 3 main factors: "no basic services, constant fiddling with the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) housing lists; gangsterism".[3]

[2] Statistics South Africa, http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=993&id=westonaria-municipality
[3]Poplak, R. (2015). HANNIBAL ELECTOR: How Bekkersdal became a symbol of everything that's wrong with South Africa. Daily Maverick, South Africa

Westonaria Municipality
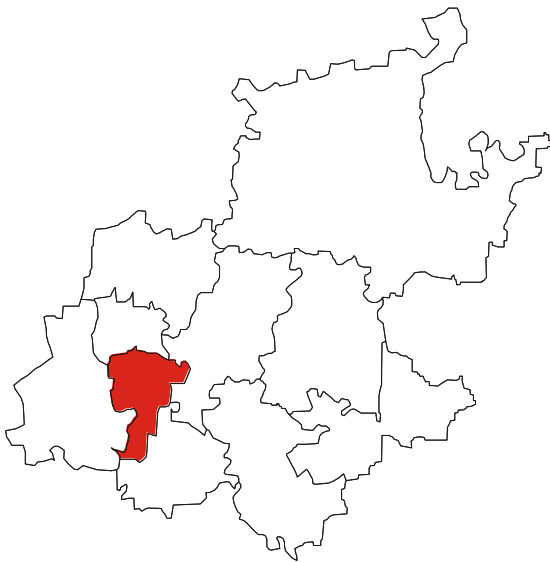
Westonaria Local Municipality is a local municipality in the West Rand District Municipality.

Westonaria was first proclaimed in 1938, although gold mining has taken place in the area since as early as 1910. The first mine shaft was Pullinger Shaft. Westonaria consists of surrounding satellite towns such as Hillshaven, Glenharvie, Venterspost, Libanon, Waterpan, Bekkersdal, Simunye. Road and rail are the main forms of access into Westonaria from metros like Johannesburg.

Demographic Analysis

There are 67 779 people in the Westonaria Local Municipality according to Statistics South Africa's Community Survey 2007 (CS 2007), between the ages of 18 – 65 (Statistics South Africa, 2008). This is illustrated below, where the specific demographic is broken down to ethnicity and gender amongst the youth.
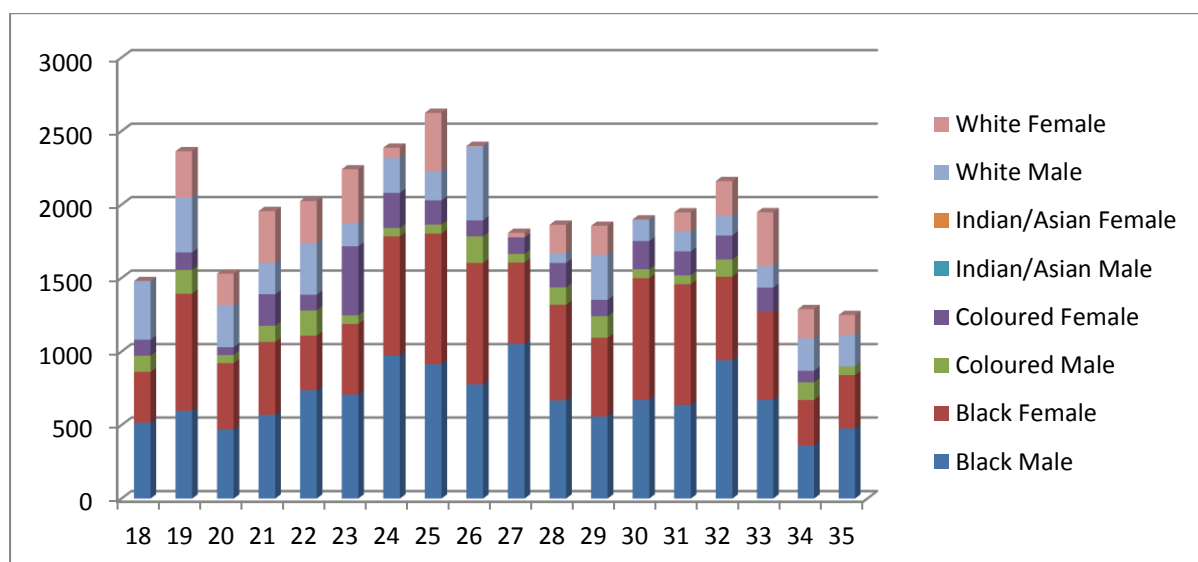
Westonaria population distribution- Ages 36 – 65

Economic Analysis- Industry Composition

Labour Force Status

	Black		Coloured		White		Indian/Asian		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
Employed	27525	4603	67	61	3633	1630	69	0	**37588**
Unemployed	5224	8873	0	55	77	382	0	0	**14611**
Not economically active	4863	9749	0	0	811	2779	0	0	**18202**
Unspecified	119	300	0	61	130	100	0	0	**710**
Total	**37731**	**23525**	**67**	**177**	**4651**	**4891**	**69**	**0**	**71111**

Employment analysis in Westonaria (%)

Of the 71 111 respondents to the CS 2007, 37 588 are employed (52.9%). Coloured, Black, and white females outnumber their males counterparts in terms of being unemployed. Only 4 603 Black females are employed compared to 27 525 Black males. This can be attributed to the main industry being mining and quarrying.

Employment per Sector
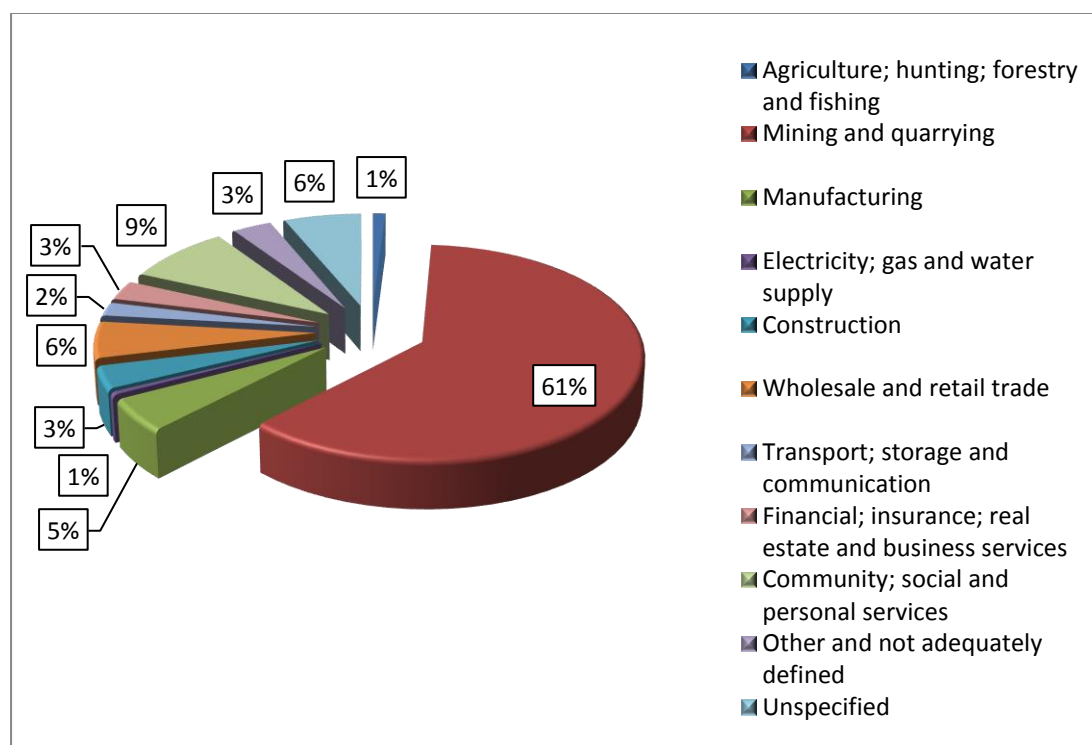
Sectoral employment in Westonaria municipality

Mining and quarrying account for 61% activity in Westonaria which are, by far the biggest employment sectors. There are no other significant sectors as the second highest employer is social and personal services at 9% (Statistics South Africa, 2008)

Occupations

26% of people in Westonaria are craft and related trade workers. The lower employment occupation is skilled agricultural and fishery workers at 2%. One may attribute this to the fact that it is an inland municipality, with no major rivers, dams, or lakes to speak of. A significant amount of people are employed as plant and machine operators 18%. Add that to the 26% craft workers, you get 44% of the work force involved in manual/technical trades. Understandable as 61% of workers are involved in mining and quarrying.

Education Profile

Westonaria has 18 006 people educated, under the parameters of this analysis. The parameters range from a Grade 12 education, up to a Ph D, as displayed in the figure below.
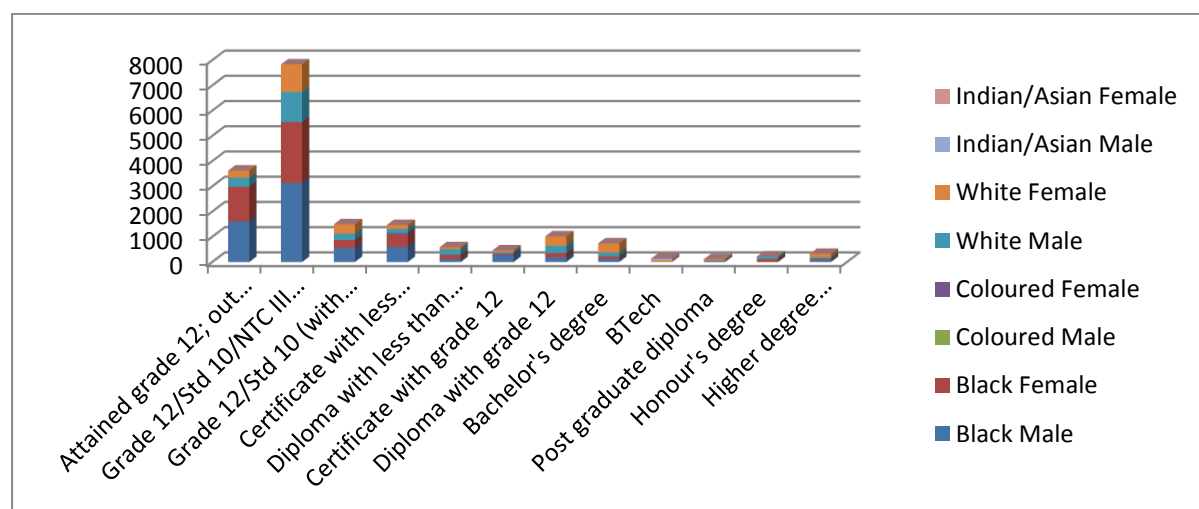
Based on the above data one can see that very few have education levels of a university level or higher. According to CS 2007, a mere 1 524 people have education of a bachelor's degree, or higher. This in turn is 8.4% of the population sampled. White females and Indian/Asian males outnumber their counterparts at the highest level of education (master's/PhD).

Findings from Bekkersdal

In this section we report on and analyse the collected information from interviews conducted with the citizens of Bekkersdal and documents on educational achievements of young people and training programmes available for the youth of Bekkersdal.

We present the findings by first looking at the role of youth in the protests, before turning to the state responses to youth in protest actions (or what youth development interventions have there been) and finally we try explain those responses.

Youth involvement in Bekkersdal protests

Despite the appearance of the protests in Bekkersdal as youthful, the young people we interviewed said that protests were not started by young people at all. They all indicated that the pattern is usually the same – that Concerned Residents (CR) will call a public meeting for residents to discuss their concerns with the political leadership. It soon becomes clear that the concerns tabled by CR cannot be addressed by the political leadership, and the CR then apply for a march (sometimes the march is illegal), and from there everything breaks loose. When asked about the members of the CR, a unanimous answer always prevailed:

> The drivers behind the CR are often disgruntled business people who are not awarded certain project they were targeting. Bekkersdal Urban Renewal is a collusion of concerned residents and business people. Business people in Bekkersdal are professional people like teachers and nurses, etc. Young people tend to be foot soldiers and the matured youth get involved to loot.

What this respondent was pointing out is that, whilst the public gets to know of legitimate concerns that affect their lives in the form of service delivery, there is often an orchestration of public protests that is not easily visible to the public who come to the public meetings. This orchestration is often self-serving but hidden. [4]

There are many similarities between our study and that of von Holdt et. al. We heard similar statements:

Von Holdt et.al. study	Our study
• The Concerned Group (CG) was given the job of clearing the sites of the destroyed buildings to pacify them • In Voortrekker the CG grew from a handful of friends who were ANC members to 30 at the height of the protests, including civil servants such	• Sometimes the Concerned Residents (CR) lie to the people because they are bribed • The drivers of public protests are mainly disgruntled business people who are not awarded certain projects they are targeting. Bekkersdal urban

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[4] This pattern was also observed in a case study (in a town named Voortrekker) in the van Holdt, et.al. research in which a "Concerned Group (CG)" was formed after prize money for a sports day organised by the town council failed to materialise. The CG included local ANC members. Although it claimed to be addressing corruption and service delivery failures, allegations were that it was supporting a faction within the town council.

as teachers, a prison warden, government clerks and traffic cops, as well as spaza shop owners and some unemployed • The premier undermines us. He will see by the smoke that we are calling him	renewal is a collusion of residents and business people. Professional people like teachers, nurses, etc. • Municipality officials must not only stay in the offices. They must get out and come and listen to the concerns of the people.

From the above statements two things come out very clearly: that the subaltern groups in these communities feel justified to organise as insurgent citizens and that violence is understood as a language or a message of calling out to higher authorities about the state of things in their communities. Young people may not necessarily be considered as full 'citizens' yet. They see their paths to realising full citizenship in the country of their birth is severely compromised. Their education leads them to *cul de sacs*, they cannot access skills development programmes and eventually prospects for jobs are diminished. After all, these are the steps young people take to transition to adulthood and full citizenship. So, if skills and qualifications have been used to exclude: the service delivery protests have been a demand to include.

It seems then that young people are used as foot soldiers, but are probably unaware of the underlying power-struggles at play. One respondent had this to say about this question:
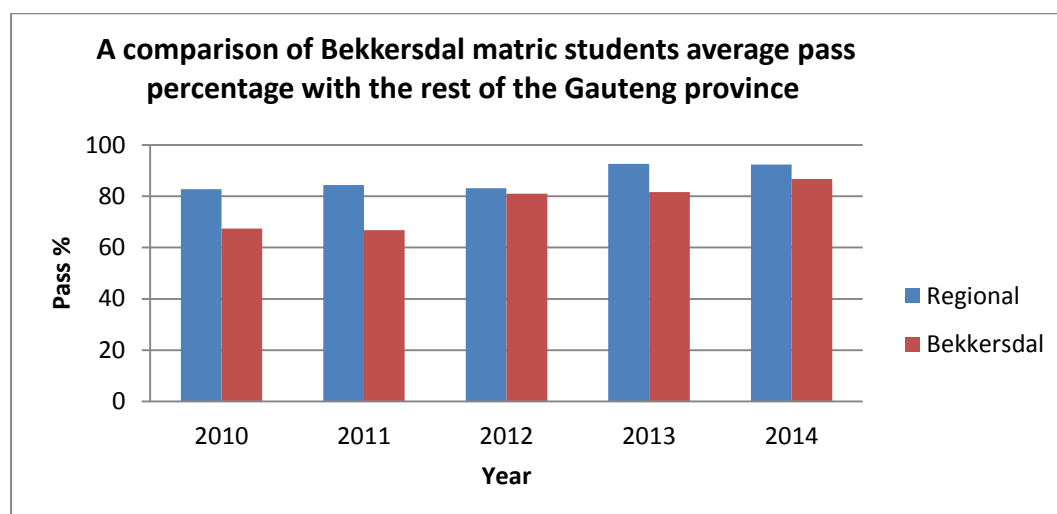
> Youth *baratadinto* (youth like things). They want to be seen in front, appearing on TV. But they are not committed to any cause. They get involved and leave – after all it is not their cause they are fighting for – it gives them opportunity to loot as well. Otherwise they do not benefit much – except the risk of being hit by a bullet – that is what is happening.

On face value this would give credence to the view that young people are mainly taken up by the 'thrill of the battle' and therefore easy recruits for the organisers of protests. It would be just too easy to accept this explanation. There are many reasons why young people get involved in public protests including being political savvy and getting swept by the moment of excitement. Young people live without all the services promised by a democratic government. They are also likely to be disgruntled as they see themselves being handed down by their parents an adulthood characterised by poverty and disenfranchisement. They also see the accumulation that goes on around them and should be filled with angst as well.
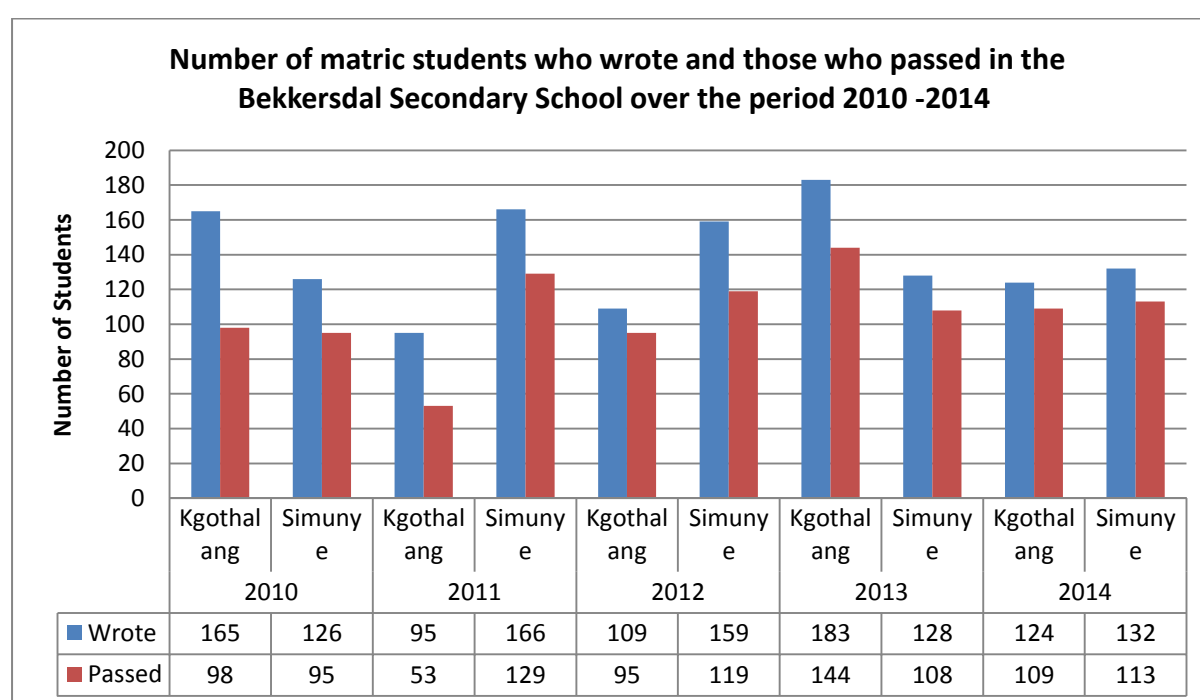
Many young people have direct experience of exclusion from educational opportunities.

Bekkersdal has two high schools serving a population of close to 50 000 inhabitants. If all young people who are born in Bekkersal had a chance to complete the 12 grades of schooling, there would not be a place for all.   According to the youth interviewed: "many young people do not complete their schooling in Bekkersdal because of finances." This is still surprising as both high schools are classified into lower quintiles (1 and 2), suggesting that they are no-fee paying schools. More likely reasons will be poor performance, failure, boredom with school work, the lure of crime, pregnancy etc. Whatever the reasons, school drop outs contribute significantly to the economic exclusion that comes in later lives.

The Bekkersdal high schools perform below the regional average in the matric exam.

A comparison of Bekkersdal matric students average pass percentage with the rest of the Gauteng province

The following is the matric pass rate of the two high schools in Bekkersdal:

Number of matric students who wrote and those who passed in the Bekkersdal Secondary School over the period 2010 -2014

| | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | |
	Kgothalang	Simunye	Kgothalang	Simunye	Kgothalang	Simunye	Kgothalang	Simunye	Kgothalang	Simunye
Wrote	165	126	95	166	109	159	183	128	124	132
Passed	98	95	53	129	95	119	144	108	109	113

These schools are not only in poor communities, but one of the schools is described by the interviewees as "not so developed – in containers and no windows – cold and hot – some people in the school not having Identification Documents."

Moreover, young people of Bekkersdal do not have adequate access points to second chance education – it is an uphill battle in a country that has put a prime in the 'matric' certificate as a starting point in recognising the worth of individuals educationally.

Youth development interventions

The opportunities for young people in Bekkersdal are extremely thin.

Post-schooling certification is an essential foundation for economic inclusion. This is a point at which young people go to university, go to a TVET college, or participate in skills development programmes. The tiny number that makes it to Grade 12 and pass the NSC examinations in Bekkersdal do not seem to have a lot of opportunities around them in this regard. The inteviewees in this study described the situation as being helpless – with no opportunities beyond 'matric', and many matriculants staying at home.

At the beginning of 2015, Western TVET College (WesCol) established a campus nearby (in Randfontein) with the help of Goldfield mines in the area. The college is still very new and offers N- courses in engineering. It is a start, but hardly matches the demand for post-school study. However, there seems to be a poor perception about college study according to one respondent: "College is seen as a place where you fail and if you do pass, there are no jobs for you."

From the interviews, we got a sense that the learnerships are few, random and most of the time young people do not know about them. Examples mentioned were in the area of traffic control, Extended Public Works (EPWP), Extended Public Works Reloaded[5], Community Public Works.

Finding gainful employment is very hard. Mining activities, the mainstay of the Bekkersdal economy has gone into decline and there does not seem to be any other industries that have since developed to provide employment for the people of this community. Surprisingly, even young people still plan their futures around mining activities.

> I was quite surprised when I passed matric. I did not study very hard - I never even envisaged going beyond Grade 10 / 11 – this would have been enough for my aspirations. I wanted to be a machine operator in the mines (ANCYL and Youth Crime Prevention Desk).

Evolutionary economic geography perspectives indicate that the economic history of particular regions and local areas shapes current and future trajectories and opportunities, so underlining the present patterns of economic opportunities are a function of the past (i.e. they reflect previous economic geographies) and current circumstances. This suggests that at a regional and local level, long-term structural decline of particular industries has a role to play in understanding spatial inequality and poverty.

Webster (2005) has argued that major job losses like in mining and manufacturing, have a long-term legacy of spatial mismatch between potential workers and jobs, with deficiencies in the labour demand playing a key role in spatial inequalities. Indeed, studies of 'hidden unemployment' suggest that those individuals with weak labour market positions (for example, due to poor skills and / or poor health) are more likely to withdraw from the labour market in areas of weak demand for labour. This is the case in Bekkersdal, where it is reported by interviewees that:

> …there are no jobs here. The few that get jobs work to control traffic, or taxi operators, or

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[5] As opposed to ordinary EPW, the reloaded programmes allows individuals to participate up to 2 years.

collect supermarket trolleys – in the mines it is difficult to get a job if you do not know people – also mines prefer to take people from outside. Some people work as gardeners.

Apart from the lack of economic opportunities, there were also scant occasion or openings within the NGO or volunteer sector. We were told of no less than 5 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), operating in the area:

- Bekkersdal Youth Friendly Adolescent Services
- Faded Black Innovation (FBI)
- Love Life
- Ground Breaking
- Greater Western Association of Youth Clubs

Undoubtedly these NGOs are servicing the population for different reasons, but they all are failing to address the core and primary source of distress for the youth in Bekkersdal, namely employment. Also, we were told that there is no coordination in their efforts to get the youth in this community into shape.

Youth political formations are present and active in Bekkersdal. But interviewees complained that they were often ignored by authorities. Interviews we conducted said:

Municipality does not engage the youth leagues (ANCYL) – youth is not included – municipality people like to stay in offices and do not go to the people – also the provincial people once elected they forget the people (statement repeated by one ANCYL after another).

In spite of this disillusionment, the young people interviewed here seemed to still pin their hopes on the ruling party. They participate actively in ANC structures, hoping for opening of resources and that they would be there when this happens. But unfortunately they also witness the corruption that occurs and talk to their colleagues about these things.

There was little evidence of the Local Government SETA in this community, with respect to skills development.

According to the 2011-16 SSP the LGSETA sees itself as operating "in support to the local government sector and its effort to achieve the outputs of Outcome 9 which is to be a 'responsive accountable effective and efficient local government system' and the NSDSIII" (p.97). The SSP then goes on to list all the critical and scarce skills needed and vacancies in the Municipality as an organisation. Further, there is a seemingly 'random' list of various skills which will be developed by the LGSETA in various municipalities without linking this to the public service demands. Also looking at the qualifications LGSETA has in its database, it is clear that the focus is about strengthening the functioning of the Municipality as an office. It is this schism between skills development, skills deployment and public service delivery that has to be problematized and the alignment is likely to mitigate public protests in municipalities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study we tried to stitch and string different things that we believe have not been put together before. First we tried to understand the nature and reasons for public and violent protests in municipalities. Then we examined the role of youth in these violent protests and deduced some plausible reasons why youth might be involved in such.

In our understanding, the reasons for youth involvement in violence during protests are not dissimilar to that of their parents. Like their parents, young people feel disenfranchised in the country of their birth and feel denied their constitutional rights. We recognized that the most pressing needs for youth should be about completing or furthering their education, accessing skills development programmes and eventually engaged in activities that support their livelihoods and their families. These are the things that are most pressing in the development of youth as they attempt to make the transition to adulthood. They therefore join organized rebellions to express pent up frustrations. We therefore proceed to suggest that helping the youth pursue and complete their basic education, providing skills development and employment should help mitigate the participation of youth in public violence whilst assisting municipalities to render the services to the citizens under their jurisdictions. This is by no means belittling the daunting requirements for service delivery, the political nature of protests and also not reducing the provision of skills to a technical matter. Instead, we are suggesting that the incidences of rising rebellions in the townships cannot be accepted as normal practices. A major disruption is needed to change this trajectory. A concerted effort is needed to solve the problem of service delivery and skills development for youth in disadvantaged areas. These, in turn, require a number of supporting undertakings.

We therefore suggest the following:

First, urbanisation has traditionally been seen as a product of economic development. As labour and capital shift from agricultural production to manufacturing, industry and services, individuals move from rural to urban areas to take advantage of employment opportunities. When particular industries like mining decline or close, there is always a need to compensate for this decline by growth in alternative employment opportunities in an area or within physical reach of local residents. The following suggestions are therefore made in this vein:

a. The Public Economy is a huge economy. Even at local level, all tiers of government are felt. For example there are budgets for building schools, clinics, roads, etc that come from the other levels of government but the projects are located at the local level.

   There are two ways that these projects can be seen as interventions to the problems of service delivery and skills development at local level. In the first place, where possible, municipalities can agitate that instead of outsourcing projects, it takes them on so that these projects generate employment for the youth locally. Because the youth are likely to be in need of training to undertake the projects, the municipality should also work with training providers and SETAs who would provide for this training. This requires a lot of project management at municipality level to pull such projects together, but the benefit of

building the skills locally and leaving the bulk of the budget with the communities is immerse.

The second way of empowering the local youth is to ensure that there is a local training and employment requirement that goes with every tender of a project that comes to a local community. For example the Queensland Government Building and Construction Policy in Australia required that a minimum of 10% of the total labour hours on any Queensland Government building or civil construction project (over Aus $250 000 for building or $500 000 for Civil Construction) be undertaken by apprentices, trainees, cadets or indigenous workers and through the upskilling of existing workers to a maximum of 25 per cent of deemed hours (Skills Queensland, 2014). What we are saying here is that the budget of the public purse is large and has to start doing things that matter for communities.

b. Our Human Resources Development is characterised mainly by a heavy concentration on the supply side and very little is done to stimulate the demand side of the equation. We suggest that Municipalities are the perfect places to start stimulating the demand at local levels of the economy. For example, Municipalities should be scanning the field to understand who is ready to invest new industries/ projects and lobby for their localities as suitable places to invest in. There should be competition about attracting investments at municipality levels because that is what will create jobs. There must also be a constant understanding of what the needs of the communities are that can be serviced by local businesses which would be supported by municipalities. A municipality office should be the first stop for people who need help in starting businesses and who need help to organise themselves for economic opportunities. Municipalities should see themselves as agents of brokering partnerships and collaboration with different stakeholders such as possible future employers, training providers, different SETAs, etc.

c. The Local Government SETA should organise itself differently in terms of who they train and how they train. Yes, a sizeable budget will go to the employees of the municipality as this is the levy paying entity. But as a public sector training authority its responsibility goes beyond just the employed. Through its discretionary grants and local industry support it must service the development of the unemployed and become a bridge between these groups of people to the labour market. The LGSETA also should use its muscle first to regroup the Public Sector SETAs so they could all have a public service orientation in their approach. In the second place, it could tap into the resources for skills development in areas it does not have expertise on from other SETAs, like Construction, Manufacturing, etc.

d. The municipality has a great responsibility in the coordination and redirecting of training in their areas. To this end, therefore, the municipality must put all efforts in bringing training and post-school activities closer to home. Although this is a DHET responsibility, the need is always felt locally. A conversation with training providers and NGOs nearby should start a process of figuring out how this could be done. Here we are talking about satellite sites to the main institutions, in mobile or makeshift dwellings and even distance

learning. Municipalities cannot wait until national government provides for their communities. The demand is too great and too urgent.

Secondly strengthening the capacity of local government to fulfil developmental mandates is essential. This is not only about managing budgets, but service delivery as well as exploring alternative ways of economic development in these areas are matters that are important to people who live there including the youth. For example, informal land and housing markets arise when property rights are poorly defined or inefficiently managed. Informal systems arise under such circumstances and the resultant ambiguity and insecurity of property ownership and occupation can translate into heavy social and economic costs. It is the most vulnerable who find themselves at the mercy of slum lords who lay claim to land and property beyond the judicious oversight of state institutions (Beall & Fox, 2011).

Thirdly, whilst policing is more visible in urban and affluent areas in the country, it is the poorer areas that need more security.

Fourth, urban planning and management are needed to improve security features in these areas and enhance public spaces. For example, the layout of streets, street lighting, the maintenance of infrastructure, and the nature of transport systems can all impact on the opportunity for incidences of violence in communities. Well planned public spaces also function to make people feel included, welcome and part of a community. Local governments should organise to provide for skills and services in these areas in which young people should play a role.

Fifthly, it is important that when there has been a spark of violence in an area, continued dialogue as an intervention should be brought in. In the von Holdt et. al. (2011) study, the difference between communities who were constantly involved in protests and those who did not and yet exhibited similar socio-economic features, seems to have been the mediation that had happened in communities without violence. Public protests always start from a politically driven contest and all political conflicts are best addressed through a dialogue. This is an important lesson in managing future conflicts in these social spaces.

In summary, we do not argue that these actions will eliminate all public protests and violence in municipalities, and recognise that youth often do not instigate the protests. We argue that it would help to draw youth away from being available foot soldiers and give them a different purpose. This would help disrupt the current hopelessness that prevails in such communities where violence seems to be the only way of engaging. Tacking these issues requires the improvement of urban governance, which requires strengthening local government capacity, addressing political obstacles to effective urban planning and management, and integrated development strategies that actively encourage the growth and diversification of economies in the local municipalities.

Implications for the Local Government SETA

The recommendations above have implications for the work of the Local Government Sector Authority (LGSETA), as well as the work the entity undertakes with other organisations. These implications also underscore the significance of the role of skills development in being the leverage for opportunities that could change social and economic dynamics in communities. It is in this context then that the LGSETA can ill afford to divorce itself from thinking about the communities served by local governments in its skills development function. In other words, it is suggested here that the role of LGSETA cannot be about empowering Local Governments as entities only, but has to go a step further, to service these communities, to facilitate certain processes, and to coordinate certain activities in its mitigating role in communities where there is or likely to be turmoil. The following list is not exhaustive but is provided here as a suggestion of interventions to start the LGSETA thinking in this way.

a. Facilitate the discussion with local authorities about the issue of violence, skills development and unemployment.

b. Review the skills needs generally required by communities, especially in poorer areas and categorise and classify them. These would comprise of a combination of services and projects to be carried out by local governments in relation to skills in the communities, beyond what Local Government employees need.

c. Coordinate and facilitate the provision of skills development with other SETAS where possible, e.g. construction with Construction SETA. The idea is that when there is money to be spent in a community, communities should also benefit from such projects and also a continuous upgrade of skills in the community be achieved.

d. Partner with Municipalities in the development of skills for local, national and foreign investors in areas. Communities should compete with their 'better' labour supply when investors are deciding on locations for investments.

e. Facilitate the development of skills in the informal sector of the poor communities where most individuals irk a living with very little support for improving their products. This is also true of the many micro-enterprises that characterise these areas.

f. Organise itself differently in terms of who they train and content of their training they provide or support. At the moment, the focus seems to be exclusively on municipality employees, especially in financial management matters. A lot of service delivery gripes are a direct result of weak technical skills in local governments that have to provide the services and a strategic plan to build this capacity in local government is needed.

g. Coordinate the training initiatives on the ground on behalf of local governments. In other words, communities and local governments stand to gain if the interventions in their communities are not isolated and sporadic. It is logical that LGSETA should play a central role in ensuring that these benefits are maximised for the benefit of communities.

h. Strengthen local governments in managing their supply and demand on skills.

Lastly, the list may be daunting, but it is necessary. It is only LGSETA who can act authoritatively in coordinating other departments, entities, providers, etc.; be a conduit of services; and make a meaningful difference in the area of skills development and deployment at a local level. This suggested approach has implications for differences between public service and private SETAS. The two cannot approach the task of skills development and deployment same way.

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Appendix 1:Questionnaire

Questionnaire For Bekkersdal

1. **General**

   1.1. How can you characterise the community of Bekkersdal?
   1.2. Tell us about your organisation
   1.3. Are there more organisations like yours in Bekkersdal?

2. **About the protesters**

   2.1. Can you describe who are the main groups of people who lead / participate in public service delivery in your area?
   2.2. What are the reasons for public protests here?
   2.3. Why do you think this particular group lead / participate?
   2.4. Can you describe the patterns of public protests in your area- how does it start, unfold and eventually end?
   2.5. How often have you had public service delivery protests here in the past2 years?
   2.6. Are the protests here different from those in other communities and why?

3. **Skills Development:**
   3.1. What is the general educational profile in your area?
   3.2. When are the post-school opportunities available in your area?
   3.3. What are the barriers for accessing these opportunities by young people?
   3.4. What are employment opportunities available in this area?
   3.5. What are the employment opportunities planned for youth in this area?

4. **Volunteer opportunities for youth**
   4.1. Do youth volunteer to do work?
   4.2. Which youth volunteer and for what work?
   4.3. Would they expect to be trained/paid/guaranteed work after?
5. **Interventions**
   5.1. What is planned to improve the service delivery?
   5.2. What is being done to address the concerns of the public protesters?
   5.3. What are the challenges faced by the municipality?
   5.4. Who is responsible for making things work better?
   5.5. What is the capacity levels for dealing with the problems of (a) service delivery; (b) developing and deploying skills in the community; (c) engaging young people

6. **Any other comments?**

Appendix 2: Interviewees

Interviewees List

POSITION
ANCYL
Youth Crime Prevention Desk member
ANCYL Chairman
BekkersdalANCYL Deputy Chairperson, Community Activist
Counsellor
Bekkersdal Youth Friendly Adolescence Services, CEO
WESTCOL Administrator
WESTCOL Administration Assistant