

- b) Inform each other and be informed and involve ourselves so as to gain knowledge of and an insight into matters that concern and/or are clear to us.
- c) Understand that any intervention, however trivial it may be, must be carefully considered and the full intention and scope understood by the target group.
- d) That both an internal and external monitoring and evaluation process be implemented by the development agent.
- e) Do not neglect the rural areas whilst paying attention to the development within urban areas and vice versa, so as to achieve as harmonious and balanced a development as possible.
- f) If at all possible, acquire a working knowledge of each others' language.

## PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL ATTITUDES ON ACCESS TO SERVICES (2)

by Thulani Mthembu

The movement of people from rural areas to cities predominantly takes place among a poor, ill-educated and unsophisticated population which ventures thereto in search of employment and to partake of the opportunities of city life. There are usually a number of reasons urging them to elect to move to cities, e.g. drought, floods and hunger.

In moving to cities, they usually leave behind a life which had no or little state intervention, in that the only visible statal or para-statal activity they know of is livestock dipping tanks operated once a week or month by authorities from the local Magistrate's Court, and pension payments. The only services which are provided are those engineered by the community at large. Let us now tackle those basic services that make human life possible.

### Essential services

#### Water

In the countryside, communities live on natural springs or rain water. Springs are usually communal, having been protected by the neighbourhood as an entity and used strictly by the families which partook in its protection activities.

Moving to cities, they find the only source of water to be stand-pipes along the roads or water-kiosks as we see them in Inanda and in parts of Edendale. In most cases, this facility has to be paid for in monetary terms. In this case if you have no money, you become automatically excluded from this facility or service.

#### Attitudes

To an unsophisticated person having to pay for a natural commodity like water is difficult to understand, let alone accept. The comment - "Oh! the state is now selling God's water to us" - is heard all around. Such

comments lead naturally to bitterness and to the vandalism of water-kiosks and other metered water sources. This attitude, of course, changes as people become more and more aware of the difference between hygienically treated water and natural spring water. The need for education becomes clear here.

### Effluent Disposal

Since in the rural areas, people have been using pit-latrines which are self-built and monitored, little or no difficulty is experienced in urban areas where pit latrines or water-borne sewerage is used. With proper building material, they are able to put up suitable superstructures themselves.

#### Attitudes

Difficulties in urban townships have arisen where the dreaded bucket system is largely used and not constantly emptied by authorities. It is true that this effluent disposal method has never been acceptable to the black community and is considered as the worst service ever encouraged by the state. In Clermont, for instance, the service is so badly handled that on any given day, walking on the pavements you find spilled effluent, if not uncollected buckets full of effluent. The Sanitation Project survey conducted by the University of Zululand has revealed that the majority of Inanda people will only use pit latrines, be they VIP's (Ventilated Improved Privies) or Aqua Privies, as temporary sanitation measure until waterborne sewerage is provided. The question of costs seems not to be problematic.

### Refuse Collection

In rural areas this is usually an individual family task. Each family will, within its premises, dig a pit, for the disposal of its solid waste. As soon as the pit is full another pit is made.

In the urban townships, this has not created problems, as authorities have encouraged families to keep their own refuse drums, which are emptied by private contractors on a regular basis and for a fee which is largely affordable. Problems have been experienced in informal areas like Bambayi, Gandhi Settlement and Congo (in Inanda) where shacks are built so close to one another, leaving no open space between them. Residents eventually empty their refuse bins into the river or stream banks or on any space they find open on their way to shops or to collect water etc.

#### **Attitudes**

Surveys have found that people detest seeing rubbish dumps in front of their houses and feel this encourages scavenging and dumping of unwanted new-born babies etc. It is true that their lives are also threatened by this sort of uncontrolled refuse disposal. For instance since the Department of Development Aid introduced waste disposal skips, as a trial run, in Inanda, this service has been extensively supported by the locals and has proved effective.

#### **Transport**

Whilst transport service available in rural areas functions as a link between town and the countryside, in urban areas, transport makes life manageable in that it is faster, nearer the people and cheaper. It thus makes it possible to carry out your business within a short space of time. With the introduction and expansion of taxi businesses, access to employment, shopping and trade centres has been made affordable and the competition between buses and taxis results in more efficient service.

#### **Attitudes**

Our cities are growing through the rapid expansion on their peripheries of areas almost exclusively occupied by blacks, most of whom are of low-income groupings. People are forced to travel considerable distances to work, shops etc. This imposes enormous costs. In short, people's earnings are drained by travelling costs, leaving them with little to support their families. This is unacceptable and detested. In Inanda, for instance, the only mode of transport other than by expensive taxi, is by bus. When recently we experienced a bus strike, most people could not make it to work, schools, etc.

People need reliable transport services. It has been demonstrated on more than one occasion that the community prefer squatting near busy roads. After being settled at Goqokazi, a number of people left the area and moved towards major bus routes like the Soweto squatter area and Ntuzuma Unit G near Dalmeny Road.

#### **Light/Electricity**

Light brings so many things to people in their residential environment. It creates a sense of security and it is

inexpensive and safe if properly used. People argue that all electrical appliances have a longer life-span.

#### **Attitudes**

Electricity/light is considered the ultimate requirement in a residential environment. In places like Inanda this service is still not largely used and is only accessible to a few affluent members of the community because of the costs involved in its installation. People are forming clubs to combine their resources to acquire this service which they need so much. The process is slow at the moment. The provision of electricity is perceived as an enabling service that will promote continued development in the broadest possible way.

I have endeavoured to touch briefly on those services which are essential both to urban and rural communities. There are other services like health, education etc. which are of great importance to both communities. Educational services in the rural area, unlike in an urban environment, are always perceived as not being sufficiently provided. For instance, teachers in rural areas do not have teaching qualifications, and usually have no inclination to better or further their qualifications. Schools are poorly equipped.

Health services are provided on a satisfactory scale. In rural areas health assistants are employed to run health points in areas far from clinics. These officials are trained to handle and treat common ailments and refer serious cases to local clinics. People accept this service and make use thereof extensively.

Perceptions in urban areas on access to health facilities are usually bad. This attitude results from staff shortages and overcrowded and inadequate health services. Inanda, for instance, with a population of half a million is serviced by the King Edward VIII Hospital which serves all the Durban Metropolitan areas. The need for a regional hospital in Inanda has always been emphasised by the community. Fortunately, it appears the authorities are now addressing this problem.

#### **Conclusion**

Finally, the community of Inanda seems satisfied with the notion that it should be the government's task to provide all those services needed in a residential area. The perception is that housing needs should be left to individuals. Provision of services should be heavily subsidised by the state and be left open for the full and fair use by every member of the community.

It must also be remembered that rural communities have a strong anti-urbanisation attitude and consequently guard against any drastic changes in their life styles. They perceive development as a direct invasion of their traditionally based way of life and urban life is accepted as a last resort. □