

# Taking the bull by the horns

Key local government leaders from across the country gathered at Salga's National General Council (NGC) in November 2002 to consider critical issues currently facing the sector. The resolutions that emerged will set the pace of local government transformation for many years and a brief synopsis of some of them follows. See [www.salga.org.za](http://www.salga.org.za) for a comprehensive NGC report.

## **Peer review and learning networks**

Salga should support the learning networks programme and garner resources to ensure the networks' sustainability. The programme must benefit both rural and urban communities. Municipalities must ensure effective implementation of the peer review system, and Salga must facilitate partnerships between differently resourced municipalities to ensure its success.

## **Single tier in non-metro areas**

Salga must advocate for a coherent system of local government that can be implemented with relative ease. The authorisations of the Minister and the MECs must be aligned and a transitional fund must be established to assist municipalities to implement them. The Structures Act must be amended to reflect the authorisations by the Minister. The efficacy of the two-tier system in non-metro areas must be examined.

## **IGR framework**

Taking all legislative implications into account, Salga needs full-time councillors to represent local government in key IGR structures. Organised local government must have observer status in provincial legislatures and must play a prominent role in provincial IGR. Municipalities must establish IGR units to focus on alignment issues. Salga must manage the relations between local and district municipalities.

## **Council governance**

Salga must advocate for a fair and equitable remuneration system for councillors, develop guidelines on support to municipal leadership, affirm the role of mayors as the public face of municipalities, and affirm the role of speakers within the

legislative function of councils. Political and administrative peer support programmes must be put in place in municipalities to promote good governance.

## **Women in local government**

A quota must be introduced to ensure women's participation in local governance and this must be coupled with targeted capacity building. Ward candidate lists must include more women. Municipalities must develop strategies to prioritise women and children in service delivery, consult women's organisations in developing IDPs, provide gender awareness training to councillors, and educate and capacitate women on procurement policies and procedures.

## **Operationalising the IDP**

Salga must deploy hands-on experts to municipalities to assist in IDP processes. It must also establish a learning network on effective ways of operationalising the IDP and develop a training programme to build strategic and project management skills. Salga must develop approaches to enhance community participation in IDP processes, and urgently address the lack of financial resources to implement IDPs.

## **An integrated support and capacity building strategy**

Salga must affirm its responsibility for defining the overall capacity building strategy for the sector and its integrated capacity building and support framework must be endorsed. Capacity building must be aimed at building the in-house capacity of municipalities. The establishment of a SA Local Government Workplace College must be explored.

## **Building a strong local government leadership cadre**

The Local Government Leadership Academy must be established during the next financial year.

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