

Reconfiguring District Government (RDG): A Policy Process

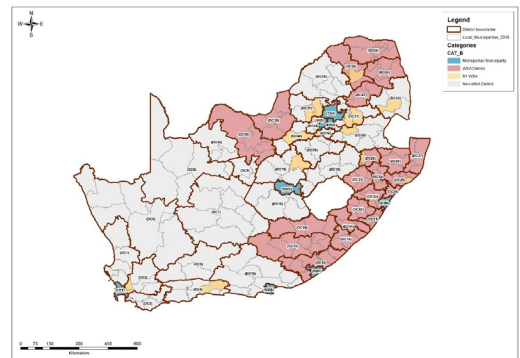


DCoG intends to reconfigure district local government with a view to improving the effectiveness of local government. This is consistent with previous policy positions taken by the Department and by the African National Congress as the ruling party. To inform this reconfiguration, the Department commissioned a report 'Synthesis report on the reconfiguring of district government (RDG)'. The primary purpose of the report was to inform future policy reforms on the two tier system of local government.

PDG was appointed to develop the above report. The report was based on a syntheses of previous work, most of this commissioned by DCoG, but included some new analysis and insights of the officials in the Department.

Based on the then (latest) policy statements and the assessment undertaken for the synthesis report, a new vision for two-tier local government was proposed as follows:

In order to promote the constitutional principle of subsidiarity, to improve the service local government provides to citizens and enterprises, and to promote cost efficient service delivery, district local government will be reconfigured. This reconfiguration will involve the establishment of more single tier municipalities which will no longer have district municipalities supporting them. This implies a change to district municipality boundaries, as well as a new look at their responsibilities. All remaining districts will continue to provide support to local municipalities and continue to undertake coordination, planning and regulatory activities. Some, not all, districts will continue to be providers of large scale services (specifically water and sanitation services). At the same time, the effectiveness of district



municipalities will be improved through ongoing support from national and provincial government'.

The recommendations included:

- Changing boundaries to expand single tier local government planning.
- Review the powers and functions allocated to district municipalities.
- Fiscal arrangements need redress where the system of transfers align with expenditure needs.
- Improved governance arrangements in terms the extent of accountability of district councils to the citizens within their area of jurisdiction, and district to local municipality relationships.
- Capacity building with a strong focus on technical capacity.

Project Leader:

Ian Palmer
+27 21 6711402 / ian@pdg.co.za

P&F10 PROJECT:

Project Profile: Reconfiguring District Government (RDG): A Policy Process

Client: Department of Cooperative Governance (DcOG)

Date: 2018