



**University of Pretoria**  
**School of Public Management and Administration**

**Theme: Resilience in the wake of disaster - the municipal voice.**

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# Introduction

- ❖ Covid-19 outbreak was declared a global pandemic by WHO in March 2020.
- ❖ South African Government declared a National State of Disaster and President Cyril Ramaphosa effected a nation-wide lockdown from **27th March 2020**.
- ❖ During this period, Restriction on movement of goods and humans were restricted.
- ❖ Yet, Municipalities are expected to provide “Essential Services” to its communities without fail
- ❖ The impact of the lockdown and both local and global restrictions have negatively impacted communities at a social and economic level.
- ❖ Moving from regional to global pandemics.
- ❖ Limited human rights as the government tries to prevent the spread of COVID19.



# Legislative framework

- ❖ Disaster Management Act no 57 of 2002
- ❖ Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act no.13, of 2005 , provides clear guideline for the national, provincial and local government in terms of facilitating intergovernmental relations.
- ❖ Municipal Finance Management Act Circulars (e.g. Circular 100 to 103.
- ❖ Health Act (Environmental Health Practitioners)
- ❖ Various Regulations, Directives and Regulations as published by departments



# Intergovernmental structure

The structure failed to recognise the distinctive, interdependence and interrelationship of the three spheres of government.



# Key Controversial Decisions

- ❖ Top-down decision-making, during Alert Level 5 ( Essential services enabled by non-Essential services , Overlooking of the township economy in the provision of goods and services)
- ❖ Unscientific decision making , during Alert Level 4 a percentage of the workforce (33%) was allowed back into the economy and taxis were compelled to adhere to the same standards
- ❖ In its communications, the National Command Council applied a monologic approach in communication, overlooking legislative imperatives (e.g. Business permits issuance )
- ❖ Packaging information and communication was disaster (government speaking to itself and sending contradicting messages, i.e. cigarettes)
- ❖ Both National and Provincial government made decisions without consultation with Local Government primarily distribution of resources and budget (some municipalities overlooked)
- ❖ Covid-19 obscured thinking and decision making process
- ❖ Some business sectors not adhering to lockdown regulations (taxis) with no consequences



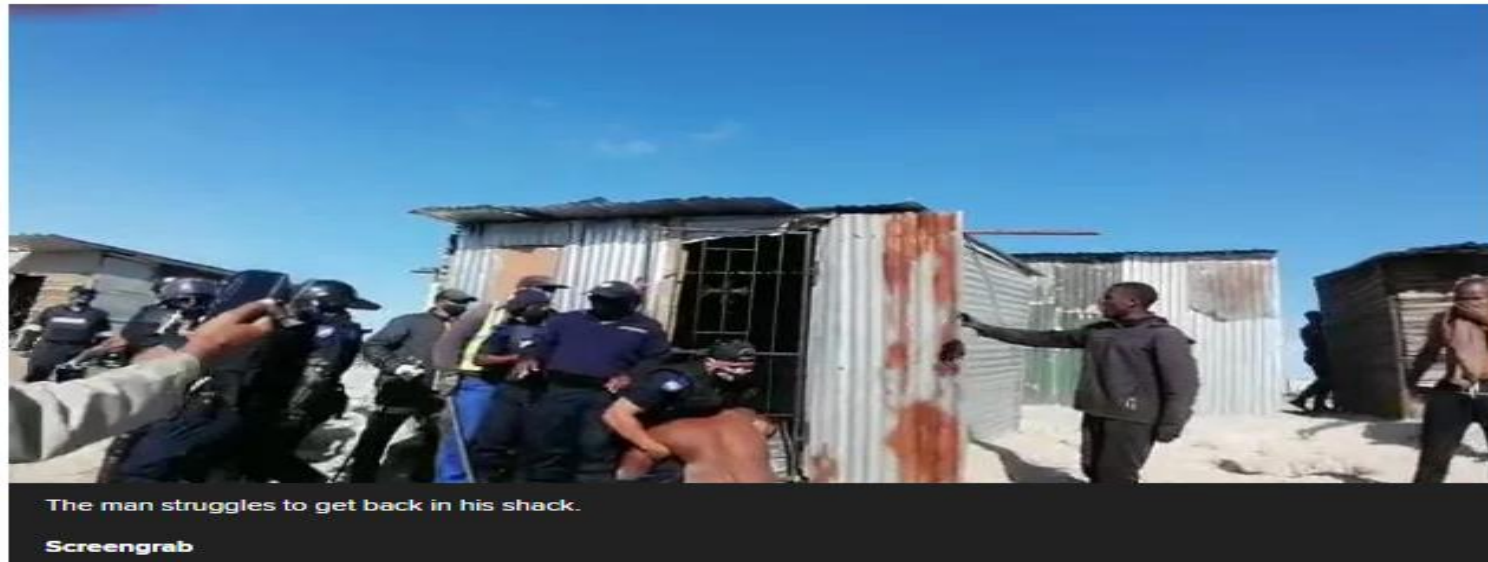
# Applicable Social Policies

- ❖ Social Assistance Act No. 13 of 2004 [Competency – Minister]
  - Provides that the Minister in concurrence with the minister of Finance make available child support grants, care dependency grant, foster child grant, disability grant, older persons grant, war veterans grant, and grant in aid.
  - Social relief of distress grant – Applied for food parcels and is open for possible abuse outside of a National disaster.
- ❖ South African Social Security Agency Act No. 9 of 2004 [Competency – Minister]
- ❖ Plus 15 other applicable legislations for the Department of Social Development in South Africa



# Challenges faced by Local Government during COVID 19

- ❖ Land invasions – Evictions and demolition of illegal building structures were restricted by Covid-19 Regulations but less action was taken from community members that illegally occupied land



- The Housing Assembly welcomed a landmark judgment interdicting the City of Cape Town's evictions during the Covid-19 declaration of a disaster, without a court order.
- The judges lambasted the City for not following due process and SAPS who were monitoring evictions, but not ensuring they were done lawfully.
- The court also ordered the return of the possessions of those evicted.





# Challenges faced by Local Government during COVID 19

- ❖ Pressure on health services – competency of Provincial government but rendered by municipality on Agency basis
- ❖ Government machinery miscommunication – leading to decline in municipal revenue (R 20 Billion stimulus package)
- ❖ Municipal planning and budget circles disrupted
- ❖ Unemployment and closure of businesses – revenue streams blocked
- ❖ Provision of special paid leave during lockdown and having to pay those who rendered essential service



# Challenges faced by Local Government during COVID 19

- ❖ Stoppage of major service delivery projects and having shift funds to PPE or other Covid-19 related projects (Provision of shelter and food to homeless people)
- ❖ Reporting fatigue without getting feedback and directions
- ❖ Loss of revenue
- ❖ Increase in the number of Indigents
- ❖ Non-compliance with Municipal By-laws and regulations
- ❖ Effects Financial viability and liquidity



# Policy Reforms to accommodate co-production with Private Partnership

- ❖ Disaster Management Act no 57 of 2002, Contents of disaster management framework, Section 7, provides that the framework must facilitates :
  - The involvement of the private sector , non-governmental organisations, traditional healers, technical experts and volunteers in disaster management
  - Community participation in disaster management
  - Partnerships between organs of state and the private sector , non-governmental organisations and communities.
  - Creation of Ward Base War Room to address service delivery challenges of each ward and resources such war rooms



# Policy Reforms to accommodate co-production with Private Partnership

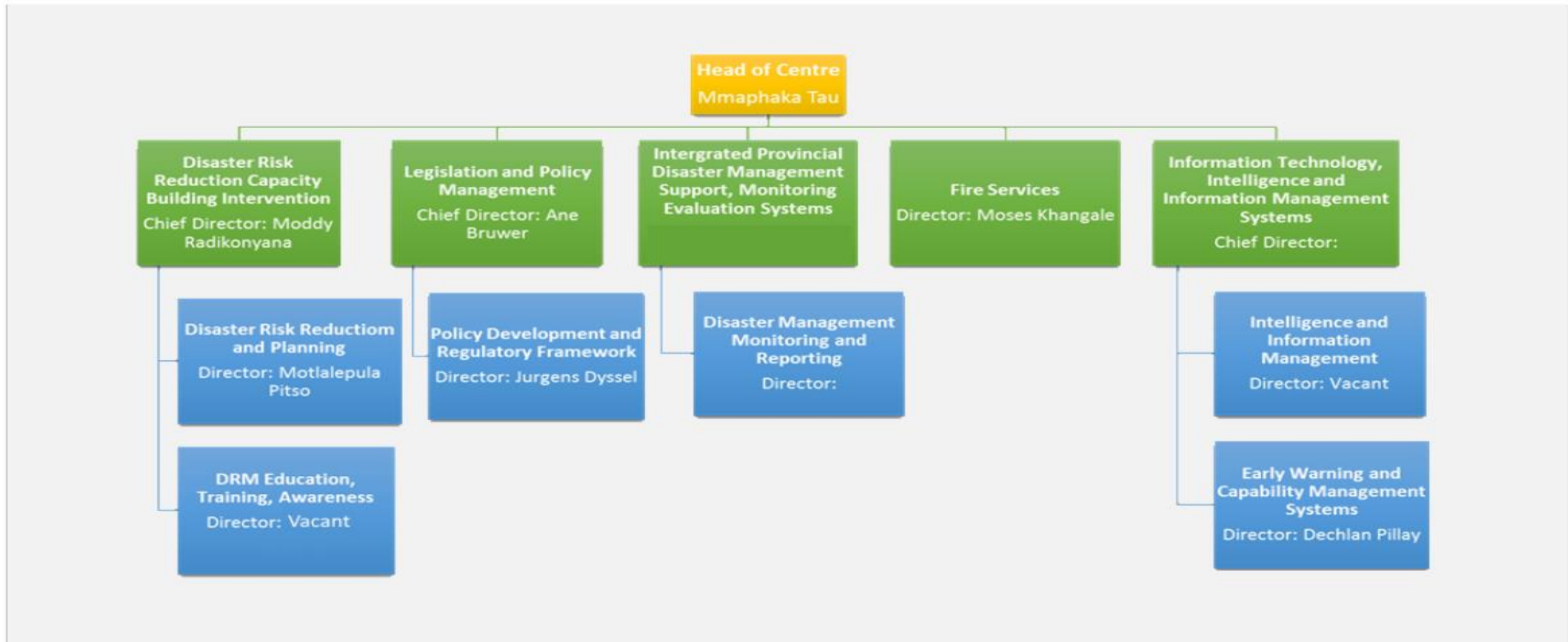
## National Disaster Management Advisory Forum

5. (1) The Minister must establish a National Disaster Management Advisory Forum consisting of— 5
- (a) the Head of the National Centre;
  - (b) a senior representative of each national department whose Minister is a member of the Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management, designated by that Minister; 10
  - (c) a senior representative of each provincial department whose MEC is a member of that Committee, designated by that MEC;
  - (d) municipal officials selected by the South African Local Government Association;
  - (e) representatives of other disaster management role-players designated by the Minister, which may include— 15
    - (i) organised business;
    - (ii) the Chamber of Mines;
    - (iii) organised labour;
    - (iv) the insurance industry; 20
    - (v) organised agriculture;
    - (vi) traditional leaders;
    - (vii) religious and welfare organisations;
    - (viii) medical, paramedical and hospital organisations;
    - (ix) organisations representing disaster management professions in South Africa; 25
    - (x) other relevant non-governmental and international organisations and relief agencies;
    - (xi) statutory bodies regulating safety standards in particular industries;
    - (xii) institutions of higher education; and 30
    - (xiii) institutions that can provide scientific and technological advice or support to disaster management;
  - (f) experts in disaster management designated by the Minister; and
  - (g) persons co-opted by the Forum for a specific period or specific discussions. 35
- (2) The Head of the National Centre is the chairperson of the Forum.
- (3) (a) The Forum is a body in which national, provincial and local government and other disaster management role-players consult one another and co-ordinate their actions on matters relating to disaster management.



# Policy reform to ensure faster responsiveness

- ❖ Enhance the capacity of the established Disaster Management Centre



# Policy reform to ensure faster responsiveness

- ❖ Promote disaster management research
- ❖ Guide the development of comprehensive information management systems
- ❖ Establish effective communications links with role-players
- ❖ Incorporate indigenous knowledge relating to disaster management
- ❖ Provide key performance indicators (SMARTER) in respect of the various aspects of disaster management
- ❖ Conduct disaster management mock drills at regional / local level.
- ❖ Elevate the Disaster Management function to the Presidency/Premier office for effective and efficient coordination
- ❖ Municipality budget for disaster function (ringfence at National Level)

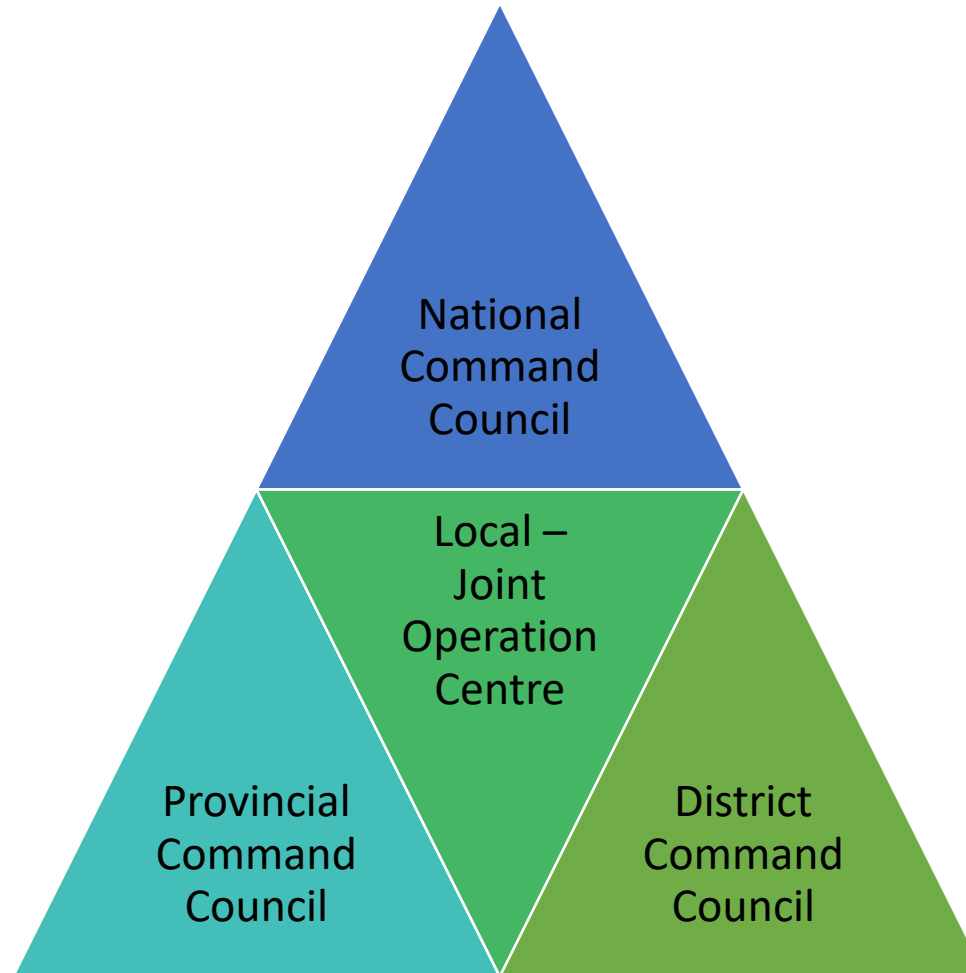


# Communications links with role-players

- ❖ The local government is on the ground and has better sight and insight of the reality of citizen's lived experiences and challenges
- ❖ At a communication level, the local government officials speak the same language spoken by the community
- ❖ Decisions that are made at national level by the interdepartmental committees or forums, these get to be implemented at local level
- ❖ Inter-governmental / departmental conflicts are experienced at local level
- ❖ Community awareness and stakeholder engagement\*
- ❖ Establishment of Steering Committees with communities for project implementations\*



# Proposed Decision making framework





# Conclusion

- Covid-19 was an “eye opener” to inefficiency of Government IGR processes
- It exposed the inequalities in the provision of services (e.g. provision of water to informal and rural areas)
- Lack of involvement of Local Government structure in National and Provincial decision making process
- The Current Disaster Management Act need major revision as it was not enacted to address issues of Covid-19 magnitude
- The need to balance pandemic and economic development (especially township economy e.g. Spaza shops were closed but Shoprite opened)
- Displaced and marginalised communities have very limited access to services

