

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED) INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL  
MUNICIPALITY**

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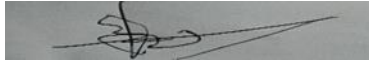
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## DECLARATION

**I, THABELO, SANDRA KONE**, hereby declare that the mini dissertation for the Master in Public Management Degree in the Department of Oliver Tambo Institute of Governance and Policy Studies, Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other institution, and that this is my work in design and execution and that all reference materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

Signature:



Date; 11/05/2023

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All thanks the Lord God Almighty for his great love, guidance, and ever-enduring faithfulness throughout my life and studies. I will always have hope, love, and praise for Him more and more.

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- ❖ My mother Mrs. S. S Kone, the most adorable woman in my life, who is my inspiration and anchor of success.
- ❖ My dearest brother, Thendo, and my elder sister Mpho Bonyane for unreservedly giving me all their remarkable love, support, and encouragement through thick and thin..

## DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this mini dissertation to my father, Dr. LR Kone. It is through his academic excellence that I have managed to become the person I am today by following in his footsteps.

## ABSTRACT

In its Integrated Development Plan (IDP), the Thulamela Local Municipality stipulates that its core mandate is to provide a climate that will attract investment and reduce unemployment through the promotion of economic development. In line with the Municipality's mandate, it has to be pointed out that the most pressing questions that remain are whether local municipalities have in place the plans to revive some defunct infrastructure projects and to make sure that the newly constructed projects are used for the maximum benefit of the local communities. This study assesses the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. Thulamela Local Municipality is classified as a Category B Municipality and for this study, indicators of economic growth were used as a measure. The variables that were considered are: Growth Rate of National Income Per Capita Income PCI, Per Capita Consumption PCC, Physical Quality Life Index PQLI, Human Development Index HDI, Industrial Progress and Capital Information. Health and Education were used to assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. Purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, was used in this study. Data was collected from the community members and traditional leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, Traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality, and the people working at Thulamela Local Municipality. A qualitative research methodology was used in this study where a desktop review was utilized for data gathering. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS Version 28 was used for analysing quantitative data and Atlas ti Version 22 was used for analysing qualitative data. The views gathered from participants in this study show that LED programs that were operational in Thulamela Local Municipality during the pandemic included fishing, mining, farming, and services provision.

Findings in this study show that the outbreak of Covid-19 greatly affected LED objectives. Thulamela Local Municipality failed to achieve its intended purposes during the pandemic as some resources ended up being diverted to meet other life-saving immediate needs by the national government. Another significant finding from this study is that the municipality alone cannot create jobs or meaningful economic initiatives without partnering with external players and businesses. In proposing recommendations, the strategies that were formulated in this study were informed by

the participants' views. Some of the recommendations are that Thulamela Local Municipality has to strengthen its relationship with stakeholders such as communities and local businesses because it is through these partnerships that the lives of people can be changed. Further, it is recommended that the Municipality must ensure proper management of the projects in the area.

**Keywords:** Local Economic Development LED, Local Government, Development Projects, COVID-19.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

HSRC: Human Sciences Research Council

IDP: Integrated Development Plan

LED: Local Economic Development

NDEDP: National Directorate of Economic Development and Planning

SALGA: South African Local Government Association

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study assesses the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality, Limpopo Province. The development of an effective and integrated LED strategy requires a clear understanding of development priorities and an identification of opportunities at the local level. This reflects the existence of strong demand for goods and services and the growth of the tourism industry. In terms of employment, the number of formally employed people in Vhembe counted 202 000 in 2018, which is about 67.20% of total employment, while the number of people employed in the informal sector counted 98 800 or 32.80% of the total employment (Thulamela Local Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2020). Informal employment in Vhembe increased from 62 100 in 2008 to an estimated 98 800 in 2018. The concern however is that instead of unemployment decreasing, it is increasing. Vhembe District Municipality has a predominantly young population with 74.99% of the population 35 years of age and below (Vhembe District Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2020). The people are at an opportune age to be trained and acquire the skills necessary for the development of the economy.

#### 1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

LED is seen as one of the most important ways of reducing poverty. The primary purpose of LED is to create jobs by enabling the development of the local economy (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, 2020). This means that more businesses and factories should be started in public areas. The key participants in a city must meet to reach an agreement and take decisions on the economic development and thereby creating income generation opportunities for more people, especially the poor. The national government devises strategies, provides funding, and assists with capacity building and other support for local economic development. Municipalities decide on Local Economic Development plans and the procedure of building economic development plans must be part of another process

(Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, 2020). The LED plans should be based on the overall idea outlined in other processes and should take into consideration the consequence of the analysis done to classify difficulties and arrange development projects. It should also look at economic development enablers like mixing our residential and work areas, building development corridors between areas, and supporting the economy with good public transport.

In South Africa, rural development strategies are mainly informed by the definition of the term “rural”, which until 1995 referred to households in areas that are not located in officially designated towns. Most of these areas recognized as rural areas were, in fact, urban areas that lacked basic services (Fobosi, 2013). However, during the post-apartheid era, the term “rural areas” has derived a new meaning from the Rural Development Framework (RSA, 1997) that uses it to describe the sparsely populated areas, where individuals rely mainly on farming or natural resources and live in villages, and small towns dispersed throughout these areas. The key thinking behind a local economic development agency is to use private-sector means to achieve public-sector goals. Although several agencies are having success, the ability to access the required skills, the willingness by the local authority to embrace this approach to LED (not just in theory, but in practice through the allocation of resources), and the ability of the agency to build private-public sector partnerships are key stumbling blocks (National Treasury, 2017). The failure of LED to achieve its objectives in many of South Africa’s poorest areas is a key issue behind much of the social unrest that we have seen over the past few years. As a result, the government has realized that it needs a proactive and structured approach toward LED. The Department of Provincial and Local Government DPLG’s 2006 LED Framework aims to create a more united approach towards LED and to provide much more in the way of concrete guidelines for local authorities. Given the key role of local development initiatives in addressing the huge unemployment issue, we would expect that more focus will be placed on supporting LED over the next few years.

Vhembe District Municipality is situated in the northmost part of South Africa. It is the last district of both the Limpopo province and South Africa. It shares the borders with three Southern African Development Community countries. These are Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. The Vhembe District Municipality appointed Kayamandi Development Services (Pty) Ltd to undertake a Local Economic Development Strategy

(LED) for the district. The LED is a component of the Municipality's overall strategic plan as outlined in the Integrated Development Planning process. The strategy provides the District Municipality with guidelines to create and facilitate economic development, realize the underlying economic development potential, and encourage private sector investment and job creation.

The core mandates of Thulamela Local Municipality, as outlined in the Integrated Development Plan, 2020-2023, state that Thulamela Local Municipality seeks:

- i. To ensure integration in rural, and urban development and land use control to promote sustainable Integrated spatial Development by June 2021.
- ii. To ensure integration in rural and urban development, and land use control to promote sustainable Integrated Spatial Development by June 2021.
- iii. To ensure integration in rural, and urban development and land use control to promote sustainable Integrated Spatial Development by June 2021.
- iv. To ensure integration in rural, and urban development and land use control to promote sustainable Integrated Spatial Development by June 2021.

### **1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Ensuring rural development is one of the policy challenges facing post-apartheid South Africa. Apartheid spatial development led to extreme inequality between rural and urban areas in terms of infrastructure and access to basic services. Reducing this inequality, as well as alleviating poverty by increasing income through job creation, remains the main priority in rural development strategies in South Africa. Municipalities play an important role in service delivery as stipulated in Chapter 7, Section 152(i) and Schedule 4 Part B of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. The problem in this research is the impacts of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic on the Local Economic Development LED initiatives of the local communities of Thulamela Local Municipality. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has brought widespread upheavals across the globe and South Africa has not been spared by these upheavals. The continued lockdown alert levels since March 2020 have affected normal activities from the National Government to the Local Government level (and in this case, Thulamela Local Municipality). Several projects had to be halted due to the social distancing rules and this has meant that a lot of Local Economic Development initiatives have largely been left unfulfilled. Thulamela Municipality has failed to initiate

several economic development projects that were set for 2020 and this has meant a decline of economic activities within the municipality.

In Thulamela Local Municipality, the virus (covid-19) disrupted life in general and affected economic activities negatively and this led to the whole country, including Thulamela Local municipality, to come to a grinding halt with the lockdown. To avoid a massive surge in infection and an uncontrollable increase of COVID-19 cases in South Africa, the President announced a national lockdown on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 with strict guidelines which affected the IDP/Budget/Tariffs Public Participation Programme negatively. In the Financial Year of 2020, Thulamela Local Municipality began on a sad note with the outbreak of the Corona Virus known as COVID-19. The aftermath of the epidemic has disrupted the municipality's economy, government services, and the municipality's plans. The government is now forced to re-direct and reprioritize all energy and plans to fight this invincible enemy called "Coronavirus". Due to this outbreak and in line with the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002 and subsequent regulations, Thulamela Local Municipality was unable to conduct public participation processes to deepen local communities' participation the way it used to be done for IDP/Budget and Tariffs Reviews.

#### **1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality in order to recommend strategies for combatting unemployment and the level of poverty caused by Covid-19.

#### **1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives in this study describe what the researcher intends to achieve by carrying out this study. The fulfilment of the set objectives will enable the researcher to arrive at accurate conclusions in this study on the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. The objectives of this study are laid out as follows:

- i. To describe the Covid-19 pandemic in Thulamela Local Municipality,
- ii. To establish LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality,

- iii. To determine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Local Economic Development LED programs in Thulamela Municipality,
- iv. To recommend strategies to combat unemployment in Thulamela Local Municipality.

## **1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has brought some structural changes that will need to be addressed in all aspects of our lives. The questions that the researcher has set for this study will seek to find answers to some of the drivers of the changed environment in which we live and work.. The research questions that the researcher will address in this study are laid as follows:

- i. What is the state of the Covid-19 pandemic in Thulamela Local Municipality?
- ii. Which LED initiatives are available in Thulamela Municipality?
- iii. How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted Local Economic Development LED programs in Thulamela Municipality?
- iv. What strategies can be put in place to combat unemployment in Thulamela Local Municipality?

## **1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

A study on the Local Economic Development LED initiatives at this point is very crucial as it addresses the economic activities that the South African government has set, called the “Agenda 2030”. Local Economic Development programs at the local government level are fundamental to the development and improvement of the lives of people living in rural areas. Also, by documenting the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality, the researcher looks forward to identifying the problems that the coronavirus pandemic has brought on the planning for Local Economic Development (LED) programs in Thulamela Local Municipality. Recommendations based on the findings of the research study will guide possible models for future rural development initiatives. Thus, the researcher envisages that the study will provide a different perspective on the contribution of rural development initiatives to the well-being of rural communities.

## 1.8. DEFINITION OF KEYWORDS

### **Local Economic Development**

According to the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) (1998, 2), Local Economic Development is an outcome-based local initiative driven by local stakeholders. It involves identifying and using primarily local resources, ideas, and skills to stimulate economic growth and development (South Africa, 1996). Local Economic Development is an economic development approach that emphasizes the importance of local activities: a participatory process where local people from all sectors work together to stimulate local commercial activity, resulting in a resilient and sustainable economy. Local Economic Development (LED) is a result of joint planning by the municipality, its communities, and the business sector. Canzanelli (2001: 9) defines local economic development (LED) as an inclusive process whereby the public sector is mandated to create a conducive environment for the private sector to lead in the development of the economy to benefit local communities. LED is a collective process where key stakeholders, the public sector, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) come together to devise initiatives to meet the socio-economic challenges that are prevalent in communities (Helmsing, 2001:11). Rodriguez-Pose (2018:10) argues that for LED to become a reality, strategies should be devised to take advantage of prevailing development potential.

### **Effective Development**

Development effectiveness is sometimes understood as the evaluation of interventions that aid economic growth. However, the argument is that this conceptualization fails to cover the full range of consequences of development aid provided by development agencies (Prizzon, 2017: 141), or of any other government spending. The UNDP views development effectiveness as reflecting the extent to which an institution-led intervention has led to the sustainable transformation of the livelihoods of individual beneficiaries.

### **Local Government**

In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (1996:84) local government is the sphere of government that consists of municipalities that must be established

for the whole of the territory of the Republic. The municipality has the right to govern, on its initiative, the local government affairs of its community, subject to national and provincial legislations as provided for in the Constitution.

## **Sustainable Development**

The concept of sustainable development states that human civilizations must survive and fulfill their expectations without jeopardizing future generations' ability to cope using their resources. The Brundtland Report (1987), was one of the earliest to provide an "official" definition for the concept of sustainable development. There has also been agreement that the notion of "sustainable development" does not concentrate simply on environmental challenges. Economic development, social development, and environmental protection are the three most important, interrelated, and complementary pillars of sustainable development, while governance has since been added as an important pillar or dimension.

## **Development Projects**

Development projects are projects which are the most common additions to the country's capital stock and may involve improvements in infrastructure, educational facilities, and discovery or development of natural resources (International Monetary Fund. 2019).

## **1.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The researcher observed the following ethical considerations in conducting this study:

### **1.9.1. Informed consent**

The researchers obtained informed consent from all study participants, including the LED initiative members, community leaders, and stakeholders. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, their role in the study, the potential risks and benefits of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time.

### **1.9.2. Confidentiality and anonymity**

To protect the privacy of study participants, the researchers ensured that all data collected was kept confidential and anonymous. Data should be stored securely and only accessible to the research team.

### **1.9.3. Avoiding harm**

The researchers should take all necessary steps to avoid causing harm to study participants or the community. They should conduct the study in a manner that respects the dignity and autonomy of the participants, and not ask questions that may cause emotional distress.

### **1.9.4. Transparency**

The researcher was transparent about the study's purpose, methodology, and findings. The researcher also made the study's findings accessible to the community and stakeholders and ensured that the results are reported accurately and objectively.

## **1.10. CONCLUSION**

In summarising the above, this study aimed to assess the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Local Economic Development initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality and recommend strategies to combat unemployment and poverty caused by the pandemic. Through the research objectives, questions, and the significance of the study, the researcher has provided a clear understanding of the state of the pandemic in the area, the available LED initiatives, the impact of the pandemic on LED programs, and possible strategies to combat unemployment. The study has highlighted the significance of LED programs in rural areas and the need to address the challenges brought by the pandemic. The findings and recommendations of the study can guide future rural development initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality and beyond.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

There are key principles underlined by the local economic development government including poverty and unemployment which are the main challenges facing South Africa. Local Economic Development plans must prioritize job creation and poverty alleviation. The Local Economic Development must target previously poor people, downgraded communities and geographical regions, and black economic empowerment enterprises to permit them to contribute completely to the economic life of the country. There is no single style to Local Economic Development. Each locality may grow a method that is best appropriate to its local context.

#### 2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The development theories that link key economic sectors and local economic development include Traditional Theories, Classical Theories, and Location Theories. Traditional theorists, including the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish economist and moral philosopher (Smith, 1778), recommend the agricultural sector as the major contributing sector to economic development. It is still pivotal for rural communities to engage in the agricultural sector. Every local municipality should develop agricultural projects for sustenance. This ought to be one of the many strategies to reduce the number of poor people in a region. When agriculture is undertaken on a large scale, it will create employment and improve local economic growth (Sloman, 1994).

In contrast to the abovementioned traditional theorists, the classical theorists of economic development deviate from the traditional theorists. In their structural change model, these theorists shift the emphasis from agricultural activities to modern sectors (Todaro and Smith, 2006). This implies that some of the factors of production should be moved from the primary sectors to the modern sectors. The modern sectors include the finance sector, the community service sector, and the transport sector as well as the tourism sector, just to name a few (Dang and Pheng, 2015). The sectors mentioned are classified as high-productivity and modern sectors. Thus, capital and labour should be shifted to the high-productivity sector for poverty alleviation, employment

creation, and improved economic growth. For local government to alleviate poverty, solve unemployment and improve economic growth, modern sectors should be promoted to attract investment and accumulate capital in the region.

In addition, providing a different perspective on the theories supporting job creation and economic growth at the local level, the location theories specifically focus on the growth pole theory. The former was formulated by Perroux around the 1950s; he stated that local growth takes place in one place at a time, known as a growth point (Perroux, 1955). Growth will then spread out to different places, for instance, if one sector improves significantly, all other sectors will eventually increase. Monsted (2006) further outlined that growth will occur in a sector where there is high interaction compared to other sectors. Generally, growth is experienced in sectors such as automobile, electronics, steel, and agriculture (Garidzirai, 2017). Therefore, the growth of other industries means improved economic growth, employment, and a reduction of poverty.

### **2.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Rodriguez-Pose and Tijmstra (2005: 2) refer to LED as an alternative form of development in South Africa aimed at improving livelihoods with job creation at the centre. The word “local” in the phrase “local economic development”, abbreviated as LED, means a particular area; therefore, LED refers to economic development that benefits a particular (local) community (Rodriguez-Pose, 2002:1). Rogerson (2006) argues that LED initiatives have been motivated by the continuing growth of the unemployment rate and increasing poverty. According to Rodriguez-Pose and Tijmstra (2005:2), existing development strategies are either complemented or substituted by LED, as it is seen as a panacea for developing countries.

Economic development based on a locally oriented approach requires all stakeholders to come on board in devising strategies for LED (Rodriguez-Pose, 2002:1). Pawar and Torres (2011:3) argue that bringing stakeholders together for LED is meant to avoid duplication of scarce economic resources. However, Rodriguez-Pose (2002:9) argues that regardless of the strategies to achieve LED, sometimes foreign countries control factors that are key to economic development. In LED, the public sector is mandated to create a conducive environment for the private sector to lead in the development of

the economy, with communities as beneficiaries or a resource for development (Canzanelli, 2001:9). According to Joseph (2002:1), local government, which comprises municipalities, is not responsible for job creation but is expected to play an important role in job creation by creating an enabling environment for the private sector and NGOs to operate.

Nwanko and Okeke (2017) conducted a study on rural entrepreneurship and rural development in Nigeria. They define rural development as a strategy intended to enhance the economic and social life of the rural poor. In addition, they argue that rural development, if properly implemented, might result in reorganizing the rural economy by creating activities that simultaneously generate income and create employment. Specific approaches should be followed to ensure rural development, including modernization, agriculture, transformation, and demonstration approaches, which have been adopted in the past.

However, Nwanko and Okeke (2017) argue that rural entrepreneurship adds a new dimension to rural development, which should identify specific activities to enhance income from private enterprise. Rural development should involve nurturing and promoting rural entrepreneurship, by creating an enabling environment; encouraging innovation through extension services, providing skills, managerial and entrepreneurial training, setting up credit services, addressing obstacles and bottlenecks (including legal frameworks), supporting business associations; and providing help with marketing products (Nwanko & Okeke 2017). Another study conducted by Tersoo (2013) in Nigeria identifies agribusiness as a strategy for rural development. Agribusiness divides the production process into substructures that can be combined administratively. These substructures include inputs, farm production, and marketing of processed products. Tersoo (2013) argues that integrating agribusiness into rural development could generate income and employment.

Agribusiness ensures the improvement of livelihoods by rural farmers, although agriculture remains the main goal of rural development, Ngorora and Mago (2018) argue that sustainable entrepreneurship using social capital can create employment for rural communities in areas such as catering, tourism, carpentry, spinning, and blacksmithing. There has been an increase in non-agricultural activities that lead to employment and rural development. Dapira and Mpongwana (2018) conducted a

study to explore specific local opportunities to enhance rural economies and employment in the Eastern Cape. They argue that rural underdevelopment is not only due to a lack of resources but also the underuse of opportunities available locally. In addition, the maximum use of local resources stimulates small businesses, which improves the competitiveness of the resource and, subsequently, stimulates employment in rural areas.

Musvoto, Nortje, de Wet, Mahumani, and Nahman (2015) argue that rural development should ensure what is termed “a green economy”. This might include encouraging afforestation, the use of non-fossil fuels, and water conservation. In other words, economic activities should be environmentally responsible, although in rural areas, transitioning to a green economy is difficult in light of technological developments and market pressures. However, the reduction of poverty and economic growth can only be achieved if natural resources are sustained.

The chronicle surrounding the economy of South Africa during the apartheid era finally came to an end after an extensive series of negotiations amongst political parties which led to the first-ever free elections. Consequently, the 1994 elections gave birth to democracy in South Africa (Nel, 2016). The apartheid regime’s economic policies were deemed unfair because of race-based segregation. Nevertheless, the end of that system introduced the concept of local economic development (LED) in South Africa and was included in the functions of local government in Section 153 of the Constitution (RSA Constitution, 1996). This shifted the prerogative from the national to the local government, suggesting that societies and local governments have a duty to local development. By definition, LED is an economic process whereby government, private institutions, and communities join to facilitate job creation, alleviate poverty and improve economic growth at the local level (Trousdale, 2005; World Bank, 2016).

According to the White Paper on Local Government Section B, citizens and communities are concerned about access to services and economic opportunities, mobility, safety, absence of pollution and congestion, and proximity to social and recreational facilities. The local government can impact all these facets of the lives of citizens and communities. Local government can play an important role in promoting job creation and boosting the local economy as per the White Paper on Local Government, Section B. The key starting point is investing in the basics by providing

good cost-effective services and by making the local area a pleasant place to live and work in. The White Paper further indicates that local government is responsible for promoting the social and economic development of communities. This gives municipalities a mandate to provide special economic services or to assist other agencies with the provision of such services, where appropriate.

The role of local government at the district level with respect to local economic development entails the following, amongst others:

### **Supporting**

Local government has a responsibility to provide support to local municipalities in the implementation of local economic development. LED has become a global concept that is generally utilized to address poverty and to create jobs in urban and rural localities. The greatest potential for development support exists at the local government level, with a focus on attracting investments, creating jobs, and boosting demand. In South Africa, since 1994, the local government's role has expanded from providing public goods and basic social services to include LED (Local Government Support Program, ARMM, 2009).

### **Marketing**

It is a duty of local government, through district municipalities, to develop and implement competent marketing or public relations programs for the districts. Local Economic Development is an interdisciplinary field of study that encompasses physical planning, economics, and marketing. Within the interdisciplinary context, LED has a goal of building the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all (Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs, 2015); (World Bank, 2010). Internationally, Local Economic Development has been prioritized as a socio-economic development vehicle to address challenges of development, poverty, unemployment, and a remedy for market failures (World Bank, 2016).

### **Promoting**

Local government must continue to promote local economic development as a core developmental strategy of the district and local municipalities. Local Economic Development encourages using local resources in a way that enhances economic

opportunities while improving social conditions in a sustainable way (Abugamea, 2017). LED initiatives are often implemented to overcome economic crises and to increase opportunities for disadvantaged communities (Pike, Marlow, McCarthy, O'Brien & Tomaney, 2015). LED is based on localizing economics, and as a community-centered process, it blends social and economic development to foster the economic, social, ecological, and cultural well-being of communities (Phutiagae, 2020). According to Feekings, O'Neill, Krag, Ulrich, and Malta (2019), LED in Africa is more focused on tackling the competition between the local industry and imports and exports. This means that the importance of improving the local industry competitiveness is considered important, alongside promoting infrastructure and development as well as providing survival jobs through the LED micro-economic strategies such as EPWP, and SMMEs (Zeller, Diagne & Mataya, 2017). The potential of investing through the private sector and creating firm partnerships between the private sector and the public sector, encourages equality through promoting local inclusive economies, and in all actions, the government should be at the centre (Sienkiewicz, 2014).

The Government's commitment to promoting active labour market policies and guaranteeing the quality of training and education provided is well demonstrated in the Skills Development Act (1998), for Human Resource Development (Leigh & Backely, 2016). Human Resource Development aims to develop local skills by improving the foundations for human development. Improving the supply of high-quality skills (particularly scarce skills), which are more responsive to societal and economic needs (Glasmeier & Christopherson, 2015).

### **Intelligence**

It is the responsibility of the local government, through the district municipalities to provide intelligence, that is, appropriate information in support of local economic development initiatives. Implementing LED helps to address market failures by removing barriers to entering markets for small businesses and the availability of information (Sienkiewicz, 2014). LED is also about creating positive conditions for business development (Meyer, 2014). According to Malizia, Feser, Renski, and Drucker (2020), LED is a process whereby the public, business, and non-governmental sectors work jointly and severally as partners to create a better quality

of life for residents through economic development. LED has become a global concept that is generally utilized to address poverty and to create jobs in urban and rural localities (Nel & Rogerson, 2016). The greatest potential for development support exists at the local government level, with a focus on attracting investments, creating jobs, and boosting demand.

### **Funding**

It is also the responsibility of the local government to provide funding for strategic infrastructure projects which will open up opportunities for local economic development. The government is also expected to display responsibility when funding the Local Economic Development projects by making equitable allocations between the private businesses empowerment and integration of the unemployed within the labour market. If LED practitioners do not build their unique vision for their funders, their organizations will be now compelled to rely on the government (Sejkora & Sankot, 2017). This means, for the LED to become an effective tool for economic change, conditions must be respected. Firstly, Local Economic Development projects need a dominant, clear, profound, political, social, and economic organization. Local people should be empowered through direct participation rather than being always represented by certain parties, and during this process an effective outreach of educational strategy is necessary.

### **Monitoring**

The local government should establish and maintain a system for monitoring the successful implementation of local economic development. The aim of Act No 32 on Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 2000 is that the local government must provide the core principles, mechanisms, and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities. It further provides for how municipal powers and functions are exercised and performed to provide for community participation and to provide basic services to all our people and specifically the poor and the disadvantaged.

These roles and duties are further enshrined in the constitutional principles and values of The Public Service Commission (South Africa: 2006:13). Nine constitutional principles and values were given, and one of the principles calls for efficiency, economy, and effectiveness in the use of resources. This principle requires the public

service to have the capacity for sound financial management. Furthermore, departments need to have the ability to understand the policies and programs of government and to have the ability to determine successes and failures in the course of implementing these. The inability to do all these very often costs service delivery dearly. Essential for achieving this is the capacity to manage performance in the public service and to monitor and evaluate it.

The other principle of the state of the Public Service Report (2006: 13) is on developmental orientation and requires government departments to have the ability to design and implement effective poverty reduction interventions to create a better life for its primary stakeholders, the citizenry. The capacity to do this must also include the ability to integrate development needs and poverty reduction into all the work of the public service.

### **2.3.1 Development Effectiveness as Overall Development Outcomes**

This perspective overlaps with the other interpretations of development effectiveness defined here and is the most significant of the four. Development effectiveness is measured in terms of the general development process and is not confined to outcomes from aid. It integrates external and internal elements and affects non-aid sectors. Significantly, development outcomes cannot be attributed to one actor (Winterford & Gero, 2017). An autonomous review of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) refers to two forms of effectiveness: operational and development (Kindornay & Morton, 2009: 4). According to the review, operational effectiveness is based on performance measurement of the contribution of the project, but it does not account for the overall outcomes. Development effectiveness refers to the overall outcome attributed to various actors. There are limitations to measuring development effectiveness, and these challenges are diverse and sophisticated. Gauging development effectiveness needs a sufficient and spatially disaggregated set of indicators of development. It also requires drawing causal relations between finely divided interventions and the relatively intangible development process (Choi & Bak, 2019). There is usually a reliance on project evaluations, which typically focus on the quality of design and implementation and the achievement of outputs and specific goals. This implies that the evaluations reflect a restricted picture of development effectiveness. However, most of these evaluations

do provide information on the impact of specific projects on target groups, and this can be regarded as essential gauging of development effectiveness.

The impact is related to the general effect of a project on the community that is receiving the assistance (Dipama, 2019). Impact evaluations attempt to capture the social, economic, environmental, and other development improvements that arise because of a project or program. Quantitative data is the most significant source of knowledge about project planning, execution, and so on. This is justified by the fact that unlike qualitative data, it is not prone to errors and bias. The Knowledge Sheet for Project Assessment, previously known as the Project Evaluation Information Sheet (PEIS), was used for all project appraisals. This is mainly used to monitor and evaluate development projects proposed by the UNDP and other international agencies. The PEIS was a detailed questionnaire that incorporated a valuable purpose and a quantitative measure for evaluations of projects. The PEIS weaknesses became obvious over time, not least because of the increasing number of implications that the style of questionnaires showed, which was subject to diverse understandings.

### **2.3.2 Criteria for Measuring Development Effectiveness**

Projects remain the major instruments for the development and implementation of activities funded by the UNDP. The focus on UNDP is mainly based on the fact that in recent years the UNDP has come up with a benchmark for measuring development. Any review of UNDP's development effectiveness must also necessarily provide a thorough examination of how UNDP has performed in developing and providing its project-based support. UNDP has implemented a relatively decentralized project assessment system (Rahman & Farin, 2019). Country offices have the lead role in deciding which projects are to be evaluated at the country level. That being said, all projects with budgets exceeding \$1 million need to be assessed. The UNDP Evaluation Office plays an important role in the tactical and conceptual assessments, while somehow representing the main conduit through which assessments of the project are discussed across the organization.

The UNDP Evaluation Office controls UNDP's overall monitoring and evaluation system, with an emphasis on the UNDP field network's assessment compliance. The Office of Assessment also assists the company in taking lessons learned from interpretative research being carried out (Song, Yang, Chang, Li & Wu, 2019). Before

each programming cycle starts, country offices classify which projects will be assessed. The Evaluation Office, which reports directly to the UNDP Administrator, conveys this information and centralizes it at UNDP headquarters (Besharati, 2016). Evaluations of projects typically focus on three dimensions: Firstly, there is relevance, which is the extent to which the objectives of a project remain justified and essential within the immediate circumstance and external environment of that project, either as initially planned or consequently transformed according to shifting circumstances. Secondly, there is the performance dimension, which includes the progress or improvement made by the program or project, relative to its objectives. Thirdly, as previous assessments of performance tended to emphasize the transformation of inputs into outputs, with limited reference to immediate and long-term development outcomes, the new monitoring and evaluation framework, which has been constructed in the previous ten years, gives more significance to results (Maruta, 2019). According to Lightfoot and Kim (2017), two essential criteria for performance analysis include efficiency, which refers to the suitable transformation of inputs into outputs, and effectiveness, which is the degree to which a program or project brings about desired results. Another essential factor in performance is project design, which is also taken into consideration in the course of analysis. Success is the degree to which a project has brought about transformation to target groups and communities. According to Lin, Vu, and Hartley (2020), success as a criterion for development effectiveness is mainly based on three benchmarks:

Firstly, there is impact, which revolves around the general impact of an intervention. The impact goes beyond the confines of achievement of outputs and immediate objectives and attempts to zero in on the social, economic, environmental, and other developmental transformations that have occurred because of the project or program. Secondly, there is sustainability, which is the durability of positive project outcomes after the termination of the project (Karlan and Wood, 2017).

The third criterion focuses on the contribution to capacity or institution building, which is the degree to which a project allows target groups to be self-dependent and enables governmental institutions, the private sector and civil service organizations to utilize positive experiences with the project in tackling wider development aspects. On the following Tables, Table 2.1 shows criteria and indicators for assessing the effectiveness of sustainable development, based on several sources and Table 2.2

shows the Social Development Programmes: 2019/20 Financial Year Undertaken within Thulamela Local Municipality assessing the effectiveness of sustainable development:

**Table 2.1: Criteria for assessing the effectiveness of sustainable development**

Dimension	Indicator	Source
Environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystem integrity</li> <li>• Enhanced biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• Improved land use planning and management</li> </ul>	(Hockings Stolton Corrau Dudley & Parrish, 2006)
Economic sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable distribution and access to resources</li> <li>• Improved employment opportunities</li> <li>• Trade openness</li> </ul>	Strezov & Evans, 2017)
Social sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable distribution and access to resources</li> <li>• Poverty reduction</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Social investment</li> <li>• Institutional stability</li> </ul>	Khan (2016)
Governance dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance dynamics</li> <li>• Governance strategy</li> <li>• Governance capacity</li> </ul>	(Capano, Howlett & Ramesh, 2015)

**Table 2.2: Social Development Programmes: 2019/20 Financial Year Undertaken within Thulamela Local Municipality**

<b>HIV/AIDS, TB, AND GENDER</b>	
<b>Programs</b>	<b>Time Schedule</b>
NPO forum AND Home-Based Care	First quarter
Technical Aids Council and Local aids council	Second quarter
Gender Forum and Men's Forum	Third quarter
Women's Forum and Civil Society Forum	Fourth quarter
<b>MORAL REGENERATION YOUTH AND CHILDREN: 2019/20 FY</b>	
<b>Programs</b>	<b>Time Schedule</b>
MRM forum, Youth forum, and ECD forum	First quarter
The children's music festival, Children's cultural festival, and Children's sports day	Second quarter
Launching of the youth council and Moral regeneration campaign	Third quarter
ECD seminar and Entrepreneurship	Fourth quarter
<b>DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZENS: 2019/20 FY</b>	
<b>Programs</b>	<b>Time Schedule</b>
Disability and Disability build-up event	First quarter
Goalball for visually impaired and Senior citizens forum	Second quarter
Golden games	Fourth quarter
Senior citizen's education trip and Senior citizens annual day celebration	Third quarter
	Fourth quarter

(Thulamela Local Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2020/21-2022/23)

Thulamela holds the following events: Annual celebration of youth month, Children's Rights Month, Older person month, Hold Young Women in Dialogue, 16 Days of Activism, and National days: National Women Day, Heritage Day, Human Rights Day, Day of Reconciliation, Freedom Day, Workers Day and World Aids Day. Thulamela also recognizes Programmes and Activities for People with Disabilities.

Thulamela Local Municipality organized a pre-event celebration of the youth day to galvanize communities to support the National and Provincial event of the day. The following Youth Events: Young Women in Dialogue, Youth Parliament, “Go back to School” campaigns, and Municipality Youth Election Seminar is celebrated. The purpose of the Young Women in dialogue was to interact on the socio-economic and political issues that affect women. Youth parliament’s main purpose was to deliberate on issues that affect Youth and the Go back to school campaign to encourage learners to take their studies seriously. There is a partnership with the Local Youth Council on the training of young entrepreneurs who registered in the Municipality’s Database. Children Advisory Councils were launched, and the children's forum is functional in the Municipality. Children’s rights months are also celebrated in the Municipality.

The Municipality facilitated a Campaign on abuse of elders and Municipal Celebration events at Thohoyandou Magistrate and Town Hall in Thulamela Local Municipality. The main aim was to do an awareness campaign on abuse of elders by the public and bring together Senior citizens and stakeholders to share challenges. The senior citizens recommended the establishment of Pensioners Committees in pay points and ward structures. There is a joint Adult Basic Education Training ABET program between the municipality and the Department of Education. The challenges are a lack of programs empowering the aged through establishing socio-economic projects and a lack of indigenous knowledge imparting plan /policy in the district municipality.

**Table 2.3: Employment status in Thulamela Municipality**

	<b>Thulamela</b>
Employed	75592
Unemployed	58917
Discouraged work-seekers	33530
Not economically active	195493
Not applicable	254929
Grand Total	618462

Source: Census 2011

### 2.3.3 Local Economic Development and Rural Development

Rodriguez-Pose and Tijmstra (2005: 2) refer to LED as an alternative form of development in South Africa aimed at improving livelihoods with job creation at the centre. The word “local” in the phrase “local economic development”, abbreviated as LED, means a particular area; therefore, LED refers to economic development that benefits a particular (local) community (Rodriguez-Pose, 2002:1). Rogerson (2006) argues that LED initiatives have been triggered by the continuing growth of the unemployment rate and increasing poverty. According to Rodriguez-Pose and Tijmstra (2005:2), existing development strategies are either complemented or substituted by LED, as it is seen as a panacea for developing countries.

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In LED, the public sector is mandated to create a conducive environment for the private sector to lead in the development of the economy, with communities as beneficiaries or a resource for development (Canzanelli, 2001:9). According to Joseph (2002:1), local government, which comprises municipalities, is not responsible for job creation but is expected to play an important role in job creation by creating an enabling environment for the private sector and NGOs to operate.

The review above shows that Local economic development (LED) and rural development are two distinct but related concepts. Local economic development refers to the strategies and actions taken by local governments, businesses, and communities to create and retain jobs, support existing businesses, attract new investments, and enhance the economic vitality of a specific geographic area. This can involve a range of activities, such as improving infrastructure, promoting entrepreneurship, building partnerships with local businesses, and creating incentives for economic development.

Rural development, on the other hand, focuses on improving the economic, social, and environmental conditions of rural areas. This can involve a range of activities, such as improving access to basic services like healthcare and education, promoting sustainable agriculture, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, and enhancing rural infrastructure.

While there is some overlap between the two concepts, rural development often focuses on addressing the unique challenges facing rural communities, such as population decline, limited access to services, and a reliance on agriculture and natural resource-based industries. Local economic development, meanwhile, may be more focused on promoting economic growth and job creation in a specific geographic area, regardless of whether it is rural or urban. In practice, LED and rural development often work together, as improving the economic conditions of rural areas can help to attract new businesses and investments and create new job opportunities, while LED strategies can help to build the infrastructure and partnerships necessary to support sustainable rural development.

#### **2.4. NEXUS OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED) PROGRAMS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH**

One of the aims of LED is to try to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment in communities, especially the poor and disadvantaged groups. As part of the LED strategy, community development projects were identified as a means towards upliftment, empowerment, capacity building, and skills transfer for such communities. The main problem remains the lack of management skills in planning and implementing such projects.

The impact of key economic sectors on LED cannot be isolated from the previous literature. Moreover, there is limited literature that makes a direct link between economic sectors and LED. However, a few studies focused on this phenomenon (Mogalakwena Local Municipality, 2006; Musakwa, 2009; Nel and Binns, 2003; Notre Europe, 2011; Pedrana, 2013; Triegaardt, 2014; Valdes and Foster, 2005). Pedrana (2013) conducted a study in Europe to investigate the impact of tourism on LED in 2012. The study used the Pike, Pose, and Tomaney (2006) development model and found that tourism makes a positive impact on LED. Valdes and Foster (2005)

obtained conflicting results and they used a survey to investigate the impact of key economic sectors on poverty. The study revealed that agriculture does contribute to poverty alleviation. However, it is important to note that the two authors concluded that agriculture alone cannot sustain economic development. To further the Valdes and Foster (2005) idea, a research institute, Notre Europe (2011) conducted a survey in Ireland on how to improve LED using a theoretical model. The results of the study revealed that the service sector, transport sector, and community service sector contribute significantly to LED. Later on, the same study was conducted by the International Labour Organisation (2015) in Bangladesh. The study utilized a different approach by using a desktop analysis and found that trade, agriculture, tourism and forestry, and fisheries all promoted LED.

In South Africa, Triegaardt (2014), using interviews and surveys, investigated local economic sectors to determine which sector contributes the most to LED. The author found tourism to be the sector that contributed most to LED. On the other hand, the Mogalakwena Local Municipality (2006) used a Local Economic Potential Analysis and found that the government sector and transport sector are the major contributors to employment in that region. The same study was conducted in the Molemole Local Municipality (2006); it was discovered that the agricultural sector, finance, wholesale and retail sector were the major sectors influencing local development in that area. Various stakeholders in the public sector, the private sector, and non-profit organizations investigated the key economic sectors in the Stellenbosch Municipality in 2006. The study aimed at formulating strategies for the improvement of these key economic sectors and activities. All these stakeholders collaborated to improve the services, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, and construction sectors in the region (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2008).

South Africa LED literature has grown over the past two decades. From the literature archive, most of the studies undertaken on LED were based on surveys, interviews, and analyses of specific projects. Furthermore, the majority of these studies were national studies and just a few were local case studies. Relatively few studies were undertaken at the district level and the studies were more inclined to a qualitative approach than a quantitative approach. This study bridges this gap by providing a quantitative approach to the measurement of the relationship between the key economic sectors and LED.

The South African Local Government has still not gained direction to attain acceptable levels of economic viability and social stability even in the post-apartheid era. In this regard, the White Paper on Local Government (South Africa, 1998) has given much-needed direction to the South African Local Government (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2008: 96). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996: 84) empowers and requires that municipalities take responsibility for socio-economic development in their areas, thereby contributing to more sources of income and employment opportunities. This means that the South African local authorities must become catalysts of growth and development (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2008: 97). It is further stated that the South African local authorities have to play a crucial role in the South African economy. The authorities must become the engine rooms for local economic development. De Beer and Swanepoel (2008:98) argue further that local government has to promote the growth of the local economy, increase job opportunities within its jurisdictional area and utilize local resources wisely to improve the quality of life for all its inhabitants.

Most of the infrastructure projects in South Africa were intentionally designed to help the communities in which they were built, but they do not contribute towards local economic growth and poverty alleviation. Kemp (2014), thinks that the problem with many projects is that they do not succeed. Some projects fail altogether, costing time and money and delivering very little. He further indicates that other projects solve the wrong problems, delivering a lot less value than expected. Chapter 7 of the Constitution of South Africa stipulates that the South African government has now put in place local municipalities in each province under district municipalities to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner.

National Land Transport Transition Act, Act 22 of 2000, section 18 (1), (2), and (3) stipulates that Land Transport planning must be integrated with the land development process and must be carried out to cover both public and private transport and all modes of land transport relevant in the area concerned and must focus on the most effective and economic way of moving from one point to another in the system. Transport plans must be developed to enhance the effective functioning of cities, towns, and rural areas through Integrated Transport Planning of transport infrastructure and facilities, transport operations including freight movement, bulk services, and public transport services.

The national land transport act requires municipalities to develop their ITPs that comply with the minimum requirements as set out in the: “Minimum requirements for preparation of Integrated Transport Plans” published 30 November 2007. Transport vision is an integrated safe, reliable, efficient, affordable, and sustainable multimodal transport system and adequate infrastructure. South Africa’s transportation system is inadequate to meet the basic needs for accessibility to work, health care, schools, shops, and for many developing rural and urban areas. To meet these basic accessibility needs, the transport services offered must be affordable for the user. The transport system must aim to minimize the constraints on the mobility of passengers and goods, maximizing speed and service, while allowing customers a choice of transport mode or combination of thereof where it is economically and financially viable to offer a choice of modes. This demands a flexible transport system and transport planning process that can respond to customer requirements while providing online information to the user to allow choices to be made.

The National Development Plan indicates that to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth by 2030 south Africa needs to invest in a strong network of economic infrastructure designed to support the country’s long-term objectives. This is possible if there is targeted development of transport, energy, water resources, and information and communication technology (ICT) networks. South Africa has a relatively good core network of national economic infrastructure. The challenge is to maintain and grow it to address the demands of the economy effectively and efficiently. The current investment level is insufficient and maintenance programs are seriously lagging. Government can achieve a better outcome by improving the coordination of integrated development approaches, particularly by pivotal development points, to ensure full benefits for the country. The district, therefore, aims to improve access to water through the provision, operation, and maintenance of socio-economic water infrastructure.

To show the intention to improve the access to service, the district has Comprehensive Infrastructure Investment Plan (CIIP), to deal with district infrastructure development. This is in line with National Development Plan Vision 2030. The district has Water Services Development Plan (WSDP) to deal with water and sanitation infrastructure as a water services authority and provider. Eskom has Energy Master Plan to deal

with electricity infrastructure. The Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) of the district deals with transport services.

The review above shows that Local Economic Development (LED) programs are designed to enhance economic growth and improve the quality of life in local communities. The nexus between LED programs and economic growth can be explained in several ways. LED programs often aim to stimulate economic activity by creating new jobs, improving local infrastructure, and attracting investment. These initiatives can help to boost local economies by increasing the availability of goods and services, creating more job opportunities, and increasing the overall level of economic activity. LED programs can also help to create a more supportive business environment by providing training and support to local entrepreneurs and businesses. By enhancing the skills and knowledge of local businesses, LED programs can help to improve the competitiveness of local industries, attract new investment, and create new market opportunities. LED programs can also help to leverage local resources and assets in order to generate economic growth. This can involve identifying and developing local industry clusters, promoting the use of local resources, and fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

Overall, the nexus between LED programs and economic growth is complex and multifaceted. While LED programs may not directly cause economic growth, they can play an important role in creating the conditions and opportunities that enable economic growth to occur. By enhancing local resources and capabilities, promoting business development, and creating a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and innovation, LED programs can help to unlock the potential for economic growth in local communities.

#### **2.4.1 Development from Below, Bottom-up Approach or People-centred Development**

The approach “development from below” can also be called “people-centred development”, which is inspired by what people want, as opposed to what organizations want (Thecla, 2011: 2). According to Mazibuko (2017:14), development from below, also known as the “bottom-up approach”, requires the facilitation of capacity building programs to enable communities to assume the responsibilities assigned to them fully during program planning; implementation; and monitoring and

evaluation. Theron (2005:116), argues that the bottom-up approach will stimulate the community's appetite to take ownership and be in control, even after the program managers have moved to other development programs.

Mazibuko (2017:15) adds that the decision to adopt the bottom-up approach is motivated by the need to ensure that communities own the development process and define what is best for them. This approach is in line with the requirements of democratic development that is centred on the principle of developing rural communities with communities, rather than developing communities for communities (Coetzee & Graaff, 2001:25). According to Theron and Mchunu (2016:26), democratic development gives community. Furthermore, Theron, Ceasar, Mchunu, and Draai (2016:115) emphasize that the essence of democratic development is active and meaningful participation by communities. Swanepoel and De Beer (2011:26) argue that the fact that communities are not educated does not mean they have nothing to offer, and local knowledge is key to the success of rural development. Cornwell (2010:47-50) argues that the best suitable combination of planning modes for the bottom-up approach is rational-comprehensive planning, (which is defined as the use of reasoning), and learning process planning, (which implies that no final decision is made before implementation). The planning combination, which is not suited to the bottom-up approach, includes blueprint planning, (which encourages the top-down approach to development), and disjointed-incremental planning, (which excludes communities from the formulation of program objectives and acceptance of those objectives) (Cornwell, 2010:47-50).

Governments cannot achieve their intended objectives without community participation. Ivanovic, Khunou, Reynish, Pawson, Tseane, and Wassung (2009:200-300) sets out the steps to encourage community participation, with the development of a public participation program as the first step. In the second stage, there is a need to come up with effective initiatives and strategies. This might comprise proposing suitable actions and strategies that might be conducive to community participation. The third step includes describing the human environment, whilst the fourth identify possible impact. This is important since it will result in establishing any issue which might influence community participation. The fifth phase includes determining probable impacts. In addition, the next phase comprises recommending changes to proposed actions. The seventh phase comprises developing and implementing a

repair initiative. The last plan comprises developing and implementing a monitoring plan and the opportunity to make decisions in all stages of program management.

Cloete and Thornhill (2005:132), indicate that chapter 2 Section 153 of the Constitution of South Africa, (1996) provides that a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting, and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community. Section 195 (1) provides that public administration in all spheres of government must promote efficient, economic, and effective use of resources and be accountable. Cloete and Thornhill further state that an accounting officer is guilty if he/she fails to take reasonable steps to prevent fruitless and wasteful expenditure as set out in the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 2003 (Act 56 of 2003).

#### **2.4.2. Responsibilities of the Government in Community Development Projects**

The National Directorate of Economic Development and Planning within SALGA is responsible for promoting economic development, development planning, overseeing integrated development planning, environmental issues, tourism promotion, and improved municipal financial management. The key objectives for this Directorate are:

- a. To assist local government in developing LED programs that ensure that priorities and policies determined at a national level are rolled out at the provincial and local levels.
- b. To represent local government on initiatives of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA).
- c. To be involved in the next phase of EPWP.

As part of the process to develop a detailed strategic plan of action and business plan for the Directorate of Economic Development and Planning, SALGA has appointed an expert to undertake research to provide input in the area of local economic development. In line with the above, the key objective of this study is to document the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. Documenting the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic will enable Thulamela Local Municipality to realize areas where

they will need to reform or realign with the current state of affairs to make Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives a success.

In an attempt to ensure that local authorities do focus on LED as a priority area, it is now compulsory for all local authorities to draw up (among other things) an annual and five-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which plan must contain an LED strategy (Section 26, Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000). Until very recently, the main focus of most municipal LED initiatives was community economic development projects, the majority of which proved unsustainable once donor or public-sector funding disappeared, and so had no real long-term impact on poverty reduction. The Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) is now clear that municipalities have a key role in creating a conducive environment for investment through the provision of infrastructure and quality services, rather than by developing programs and attempting to create jobs directly.

The 2000 LED Guidelines to Institutional Arrangements and the 2002 Draft LED Policy focused on “pro-poor development”. Although this focus is logical, given the high levels of poverty and inequality, the institutional response towards this requirement of “pro-poor” development has been very different in different areas. In the larger metropolitan areas, most LED officials have adopted an approach that is focused on creating a more supportive and competitive business environment, investment in infrastructure that reduces the cost of business, the regeneration of the inner city and township areas, and research around and institutional support to new sectors with high growth and employment potential. In contrast, most of the smaller centres have focused on increased service delivery, an extension of the social grant system, public works, and SMME initiatives.

According to the DPLG (2006 National Framework for LED in South Africa) Local Government now has three key roles to play in LED:

- a. To provide leadership and direction in policy making (by-laws and processes to regulate land in a manner that reduces the costs of doing business and maximizes the involvement of people in the local economy).
- b. To administer policy, programs, and projects (the core function of anybody or structure responsible for LED is to coordinate and maximize the impact of programs and projects concerning growth and development).

- c. To be the main initiator of economic development programs through public spending, regulatory powers, and (in the case of larger municipalities) their promotion of industrial, small business development, social enterprises, and cooperatives. (DPLG, 2006 LED Policy Framework).

Coetzee, Graaf, Hendricks, and Wood (2011: 553), maintain that local government has to play a developmental role and that municipalities are given developmental duties which are defined as the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and economic development of the community. Developmental Local Governments are defined by Coetzee *et al.*, (2011: 553) as Local Governments committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic, and material needs and to improve the quality of their lives. They further state that the Department of Public Works envisages a greater role for local government in the community-based public works program. With all these intentions, it is clear that many local authorities cannot initiate or implement developmental programs. Municipalities are experiencing financial stress, and in some instances, crises that result in service backlogs, collapsing or deteriorating infrastructure, and deteriorating creditworthiness and borrowing capacity. However, the analysis suggests that the weakness of local authorities is deeper than financial management.

Councillors are inexperienced in local government, party-political conflict is much more pronounced, and some municipalities have become administratively bloated and key administrative staff have vacated their posts. This shows that the performance of local government needs to be improved, monitored, and evaluated. Coetzee *et al.*, (2011: 555) maintain that the importance of performance management resides in the fact that it is an approach to management that emphasizes output, results, delivery, training, and productivity of both individual officials as well as the institution as a whole. It is further mentioned that projects have to be evaluated in terms of their ability to make meaningful and lasting contributions to people's lives.

## **2.5. The Batho Pele Principles on Development Projects**

The *Batho Pele* initiative was first introduced by the Mandela Administration on October 1, 1997, to stand for better delivery of goods and services to the public. The *Batho Pele* initiative is now used to imply the dissolution of government organizations

deemed corrupt or obsolete. The initiative aims to enhance the quality and accessibility of government services by improving efficiency and accountability to the recipients of public goods and services. *Batho Pele* requires eight principles, but for this study, only three will be dealt with namely: consultation, information, and value for money. These three were chosen because they impact directly on issues of involvement and participation in the development projects.

### **2.5.1 Consultation**

“People must tell the government what they want.” According to the Batho Pele Principles, people will be asked for their views on existing public services and may also tell the government what new basic services they would like. All levels of society will be consulted, and people’s feelings will be conveyed to ministers, members of the executive committee, and legislators. People should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, where possible, should be given a choice about the services that they are offered (Government of South Africa’s Document on *Batho-Pele* principles). Consultation is crucial, especially during the project identification phase of the project cycle. Through interactive consultation communities are assisted to assess their developmental needs.

### **2.5.2. Information**

“Society is entitled to full particulars/ provides more and better information about services”. According to Batho Pele Principles, society will get full, accurate, and up-to-date facts about services it is entitled to. Information should be provided at service points and in local media and languages. Contact numbers and names should appear in all departmental communications systems. For the community and other stakeholders to participate fully and to be involved in any development project, full information about the project must be provided so that they will be able to transmit their views, wishes, and interests.

### **2.5.3 Value for Money**

“People’s money should be employed wisely [give the best possible value for money]”. According to the South African government document on Batho-Pele principles, it is acknowledged that people pay income tax, VAT, and other taxes to finance the

administration of the country. People have, therefore, the right to insist that their money should be used properly. Departments owe people proof that efficiency savings and improved service delivery are on the agenda. It is important that managers do not waste the country's scarce resources and that they must deliver services that are as cost-effective and efficient as possible. The three principles discussed above clearly indicate that people or communities should not be left out in any community programs or community development projects which directly affect them as beneficiaries.

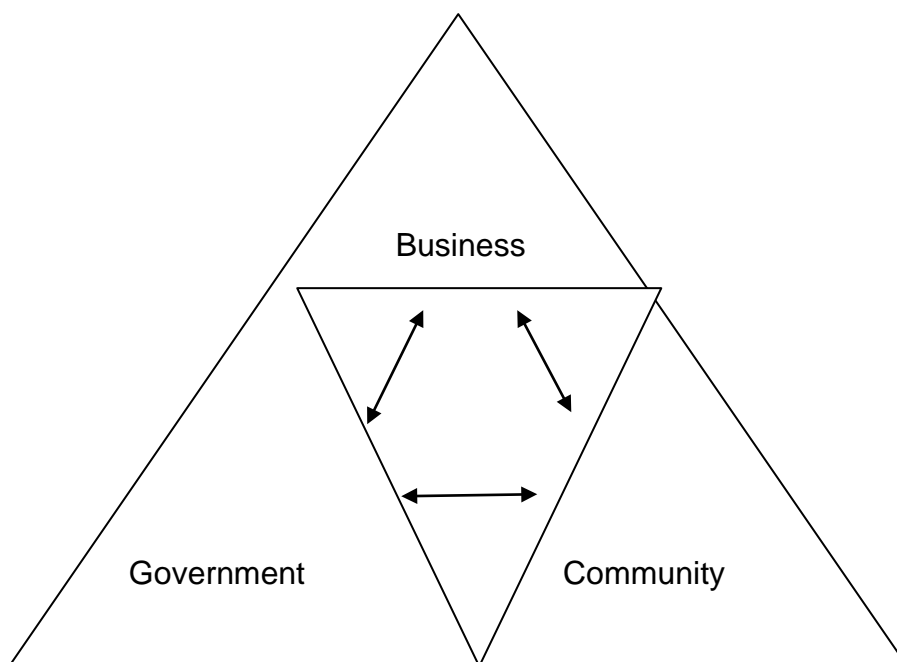
**Table 2.4: External opportunities and external threats**

<b>THULAMELA</b>	
<b>Basic Services Delivery and Infrastructure Development</b>	
Availability of water sources and Service Infrastructure (Dams, Reservoirs, Boreholes, water networks)	
<b>Local Economic Development (LED)</b>	
i.	Land Available for future development
ii.	Tourism attraction areas(destinations)
iii.	Agriculture and Tourism opportunities
iv.	Favourable climatic conditions for Agriculture
v.	Twinning agreements University of Venda (UNIVEN)
vi.	Training support from various sectors and training support from various sectors
vii.	Good communication and Transport network
<b>External Threats</b>	
<b>Basic Services Delivery and Infrastructure Development</b>	
i.	Land invasion and delay in settling claims
ii.	Illegal demarcation of sites
iii.	Illegal water and electricity connections
iv.	Theft and vandalism of infrastructure
v.	Illegal Immigrants
vi.	Protests and violence
vii.	Inadequate water infrastructure in the municipal areas
viii.	Natural Disasters (Drought, Floods, Wildfires, Storms, Landslides)

ix.	Increase in rate of HIV/AIDS
<b>Threats to Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives</b>	
i.	Illegal public transport operations
ii.	Poverty and unemployment
iii.	Stray animals
iv.	Labour unrest
v.	Low literacy rates

From the SWOT analysis of the Thulamela Local Municipality as indicated in Table 1.3 above, it will therefore be apt to say that the municipality has everything to make the area a huge South African success story and that weaknesses can be addressed through political and administrative will. It also reveals that the focus should be broadened to facilitate economic growth through a visionary approach and commitment.

**Figure 2.1: Interaction between government, community, and business**



## **2.6. CONTEXTUALISING THE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT LED**

The concept of Local Economic Development (LED) is defined by Sebola and Fourie (2007: 34), as the process that aims at redistributing resources and opening up opportunities to benefit residents. The purpose of Local Economic Development (LED) is to build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business, and non-governmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation. It is further indicated that local economic development offers local government, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and local communities the opportunity to work together to improve the local economy. It focuses on competitiveness, increasing sustainable growth, and ensuring that growth is inclusive. LED encompasses a range of disciplines including physical planning, economics, and marketing. It also incorporates many local government and private sector functions including environmental planning, business development, infrastructure provision, real estate development, and finance.

Planning of LED projects plays a crucial role as De Beer and Swanepoel (2008:139) indicate, pointing out that every plan aims to reach a goal or to achieve objectives. Planning aims at determining the future actions of an institution and individual and identifying guidelines that are necessary to achieve objectives. One of the manifestations of planning involves forecasting or making predictions about what is likely to happen in the future or even predicting alternative outcomes. Planning must also schedule future activities (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2008: 141).

According to the Toolbox on LED, it is seen as one of the most important ways of alleviating poverty. It must aim to create jobs by making the local economy grow. As part of the IDP (Integrated Development Programme), key stakeholders in a municipality must come together to reach an agreement and take decisions to make the economy grow and create income opportunities for more people, especially the poor. The national government makes policy and provides funds, research, and other support for Local Economic Development. While municipalities will then decide on LED strategies, the process of arriving at such LED strategies must be part of the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process. The LED strategies should be based

on the overall vision outlined in the IDP and should, therefore, take into account the results of the analysis that is done to identify the problems and prioritize development projects.

Stakeholders in LED. According to the Toolkit on Local Economic Development, the national government, and in particular, the Department of Provincial and Local government, acknowledged the need for all actors at all levels of South African society to shape their environment and economic destiny. The nature of the challenges facing the country suggests that creativity and innovation are needed at all levels and from all groups in the country, which means that LED calls for cooperation. The Toolkit further recommends that in adopting LED as a strategy, the South African government is encouraging people at all levels of society to participate in economic decision-making, an act that will explore creativity and build entrepreneurship. Given the challenges that are faced by the government in job creation and poverty eradication, LED builds a platform for bringing people together to work towards solutions. LED is therefore the result of joint planning by a municipality, its community, and business sectors, that is, all economic forces in the local situation have to be brought on board to identify resources, understand needs and work out plans to find the best ways of making the local economy fully functional, investor-friendly and competitively productive. LED is usually strategically planned by the local government along with its public (other levels and agencies of the government), private sector, and the community.

### **2.6.1. The Legislative and Policy Environment**

The regulatory framework for LED has many fragmented components at present. These include Integrated Development Planning, Spatial Development Frameworks, land and zoning regulations, public-private partnerships, business enterprise support, by-laws, special purpose vehicles for development, asset disposal, and the "linkage" strategy.

There are key pieces of legislation and related documentation relevant to LED, which provide a context for LED in South Africa, such as the Constitution (1996). The Constitution recognizes the importance of local government in economic development. A case in point is the following statement: "A municipality must structure and manage its administration, and budgeting and planning processes to give priority

to the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and economic development of the community”. The White Paper on Local Government (1998), which introduced the concept of “developmental local government”, defined as: “Local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs, and improve the quality of their lives”. The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (2000), makes integrated development planning compulsory and has legislated several key LED functions, roles, and responsibilities. The Act aims to provide for the “core principles, mechanisms, and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities”. The LED Guidelines (issued in 2000) include Refocusing Development on the Poor: LED Policy Paper (2001), The Draft LED Policy (2002). The National Spatial Development Perspective has made a key contribution to the LED policy debate through its assertion that some areas are better suited to business development and growth, while others should simply be allocated for government services and transfers. The Policy Guidelines for Implementing LED in South Africa (2005). The National Framework for LED in South Africa (2006), aims to build a shared understanding of good LED practice and motivate more effective implementation.

Although there is general agreement on the desired outcomes of LED reduced poverty levels, higher employment, and better equality, there have been (and still are in many instances) considerable differences between what the role of local government should be in achieving these outcomes and ???. In very simple terms, one key policy debate has been between those who believe that LED should provide a direct solution (through job-creating projects) and those who believe LED should provide an indirect solution (through the creation of an enabling environment to encourage business development and growth and increased skills demand and supply). This debate, together with the problems experienced by many local authorities in designing and implementing an effective LED strategy, resulted in two major efforts by the DPLG to formulate a national policy framework for LED. The first resulted in a document entitled Refocusing Development on the Poor (in 2001) and the second resulted in the Policy Guidelines for Implementing Local Economic Development in South Africa (in 2005). The latter contains some key policy shifts, enhancements, and clarifications. Importantly, the Guidelines are an attempt to align national policy initiatives (such as

broad-based empowerment and the focus on the “second economy”) with LED efforts by local government.

The main role of the national government in LED is described in the Guidelines as that of coordination of public policies and investment programs. The role of the provincial government is described as having two main parts: Firstly, each province has a coordination role: They are responsible for resources allocated from the national to provincial government and for ensuring that these are correlated with the priorities of the various IDPs. The Guidelines indicate that provinces should establish LED fora to carry out the work of the National LED Forum at the provincial level.

Secondly, provinces have a role to play in building the capacity of municipalities to undertake LED and in supporting them in its implementation. According to the Guidelines, dedicated LED units should be set up in all provincial governments, district and metropolitan municipalities and, where possible, in local municipalities. The Guidelines indicate that district municipalities and metros should play a “leading role” in LED. Finally, the Guidelines emphasize the importance of including a range of local stakeholders in “LED networks”.

In addition to the various spheres of government, the Sector Education Training Authorities (SETAs) and SEDA (Small Enterprise Development Agency) all have a potential role to play in supporting LED initiatives. The Local Economic Development Agency (LEDA) is a relative newcomer to LED in South Africa. There are currently more than 30 LEDAs across South Africa, operating at the District and Local Municipality level. However, they have had very different levels of success, and there is not always agreement among the various LED role players as to exactly how these agencies should operate and how their mandate should differ from and be integrated with the LED responsibilities of the local authorities. Certainly, agencies can provide a more focused forum for building strategic partnerships with the private sector; have a more “logical” spatial component to their strategies since they are not bound to a local area; and are generally in a better position to leverage LED funding than individual local authorities.

Experience has shown that LEDAs work if there is a clear strategy in place, strong leadership, political and private support, and driven and highly competent experts. The positioning of the LEDA at the district, rather than local level also appears to be a

factor in leveraging more effective and practical spatial development strategies. Certain foreign donor organisations in South Africa have a specific focus on LED issues. The most important country in this regard is Germany, whose main focal sectors are local government and good governance. The EU itself has focused LED support in KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, and Limpopo. All three of these programs have a strong focus on increasing the capacity required for more effective LED.

## **2.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Development projects are defined as projects which are intended to increase developing countries' ability to produce in the future. Such projects are the most common additions to the country's capital stock, but they may involve improvements in infrastructure, educational facilities, discovery or development of natural resources.

De Beer and Swanepoel (2008:1), hold the view that community development dates back to the history of early civilizations when mankind initiated actions from which groups or parts of groups benefited in some way or the other. Throughout the history of community development, key themes stand out, namely, participation, institutions, project management, community, coordination, funding, and the influence of politics. Community development invariably takes place through projects which have two related characteristics, that is, they are either referred to as sets of technical and organizational measures or they are associated with some particular objective. It is further indicated that the project has become the accepted way in which development efforts can be brought to the ground level. It is also indicated that projects can be used to channel development resources to a specific group of beneficiaries and particular locations (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2008: 49).

De Beer and Swanepoel (2008:50) stress that although there are advantages to community projects, there is also an inherent weakness of projects for community development purposes. Projects are often managed badly and therefore do not reach their goals. Projects have become extremely important channels through resources??? and, because projects are regarded by their sponsors as manageable sets of activities, they are likely to remain the primary means of translating development policies into programs of action. Theron (2008:4), shows that development takes place through rigid and prescriptive projects. Development is

introduced by development institutions and input, meaning that development institutions are input oriented.

Projects are therefore mostly delivered by change agents from the outside, employing a mechanistic approach and through highly technical modes. Theron (2008:4-5) supports De Beer and Swanepoel by indicating that these projects tend to be planned and administered in a top-down manner. The projects are one-dimensional and often lack participation from the intended project beneficiaries. Theron (2008:4-5) also indicates that state departments or ministries often plan in isolation. There is poor communication among departments or ministries which leads to uncoordinated planning and poor participation from the intended beneficiaries of development.

The Toolkit for LED also emphasizes the need for inclusivity in LED processes. The document categorically states that it is often interpreted in such a way as to place the sole responsibility for LED on local government which could risk the exclusion of some role-players, such as the business and civil society organizations. The document supports the notion that sustainable LED requires clear economic thinking and performance, based on economic dynamics and business principles. Local government is not well-equipped, nor does it have the necessary capacity to solely drive it. The role of local government is to facilitate or integrate participation across civil society and the business sector. Local government is both a role player and an integrating force in LED. Its role is to manage the creation of a favourable business climate on the one hand, and on the other to construct and maintain infrastructure towards business growth and healthy lifestyles for the communities in its area. A further role of the local government as a leader in LED processes is to form partnerships with businesses and civil society and to mobilize support and participation.

From the studies done on LED in South Africa, there is no consensus regarding economic sectors that impact the most on LED. Some researchers list the number of projects, and some the number of people employed after the completion of the project as the main indicators of success of LED (Machala, 2012; Nghonyana, 2011). This study employed a different methodology in the analysis of LED by developing a new LED measurement to capture development at the local and regional level in analyzing key economic sectors promoting LED. Thus, the study tested the new LED measure

and employed a panel Autoregressive Lag (ARDL) econometric model in analyzing the relationship between LED and various sectors.

## **2.8. CHALLENGES IN STIMULATING AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMIES**

The main areas where there is a divergence of opinion are around what constitutes an effective and sustainable LED strategy and the role of the local authority in that strategy. What policymakers and legislators are realizing is that the fact of having an LED plan does not automatically mean that LED will occur. The large body of policy and legislative documents that bear on LED in many ways are contributing to the confusion since it is not always clear exactly how practitioners in local authorities are meant to prioritize, interpret and apply the various policies (Global Insight, 2017).

Further, there is no real central and effective oversight of the content of IDPs, from a qualitative point of view. It is also not always clear to many smaller local authorities exactly what their planning priorities should be, in the face of conflicting signals from the central government, which often have unintended consequences. One good example of this is the recent focus on disaster management planning which has resulted in the IDPs of many smaller local authorities having much more space devoted to disaster management than to LED. This is indicative of the fact that these municipalities do not grasp the fact that LED should be a central priority area for them.

Another area where the lack of common understanding is contributing to poor LED results is that of the respective roles of various key parties, particularly between the province, the district, and the local municipality. It is not at all clear that there is an effective alignment of priorities, and often the various stakeholders do not work together to achieve a common goal.

The draft of the National Framework for Local Economic Development in South Africa (April: 2006) identifies certain challenges that stand in the way of stimulating and developing sustainable economies. Local governments and municipalities still experience a shortage of human resources at all levels and sections of different departments. There is also a problem of lack of skilled employees at all levels including the management level. In most cases, the strategies and plans do not consider the background of the communities in question as well as the poverty level, culture, and

interests of the local people. Participation by all stakeholders is crucial in the design of LED strategies and plans. Participation and involvement by the local community, the business sector, and the government play a pivotal role. This participation should involve community-based organizations. In most cases, the consultants who design LED programs are not local consultants and therefore, are not familiar with the communities in which they work and do not fully understand and know the needs of the community.

The persistence of global poverty is both disturbing and humbling. Policymakers have long recognized the moral and practical importance of addressing the needs of millions of people who lack access to adequate nutrition, housing, education, or opportunities (Giordani, 2012). One of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is poverty eradication, and the target is to halve the fraction of those with an income below one United States dollar per day and to halve the number of people who suffer from hunger (Theron, 2008: 24).

The Failure and Success of Projects. More often than not, projects fail to achieve their intended objectives, while others achieve the intended objectives. Kerzner (2006:7,) defines project success to include among others the completion within the allocated period, within the budgeted cost, at the proper performance or specification level, and with acceptance by the customer or the user. Kerzner (2006:61) states that project failure is when the final results are not what we expected, and further defines failure as an unmet expectation which is called a planning failure and is the difference between what was planned and what was achieved. Knipe, Van der Waldt, Niekerk, Burger, and Nell (2018:17) define projects, facilities, and products as follows: projects are undertaken by organizations to deliver, construct, maintain, or renew facilities. Projects are the vehicles consisting of a scope of work and project organization required to deliver facilities.

Facilities are then required to produce the products. Facilities may be factories and equipment, product design, management process, or an organized group of people. A facility is a product that a project delivers; it is defined by the qualitative and quantitative objectives of the project. Products are what the organization is in business to make, deliver or sell, as stated in its mission. Products generate revenue and therefore deliver the purpose or benefit of the project. Rondinelli in Theron (2008:41)

categorically states that one of the most obvious reasons behind project failure relates to poor management.

Kirkpatrick (2007:4-5) writes about the case of the fall of the Madagascar Lake Alaotra Project which was funded by the World Bank. The main objectives of the project were to develop high-quality rice production and introduce crop diversification through double cropping of rice fields in an area in North-Eastern Madagascar which was producing one-third of all marketed rice in the country. Twelve years later, it was reported that the project had made no significant contribution to the economy of Madagascar, following the evaluation of the project in 2008. Kirkpatrick (2007:4-5) further points out that projects fail due to wrong assumptions, unrealistic goals, poor design and execution, institutional weakness, and inadequate supervision. Other unanticipated reasons may be socio-political problems such as poor response to the objectives of the project by the population expected to benefit from it, and worse is the government which has approved the project and then shows less commitment during its execution.

Despite the introduction of LED, high levels of poverty and unemployment have remained common to the majority of South Africans. This is exemplified by the statistics that the unemployment rate is recorded at approximately 26.7 percent (Stats SA, 2018). While the unemployment problem is common to South Africa as a whole, it is particularly dominant in the Limpopo province. Statistics South Africa (2018) identifies the province as one of the regions with the highest unemployment rates and low income. Within the province, the Capricorn District Municipality has the highest unemployment rate of 51 percent and 41 percent of people are living in poverty (Vhembe District Municipality, 2018).

Although stagnant economic growth and high levels of poverty and unemployment are prevalent in the abovementioned municipal region, the key economic sectors should act as catalysts for LED. Several studies have engaged in the relationship between LED and key sectors. For instance, Binns and Nel, (2002), Kirsten, Van Zyl, and Vink, (2010), Nel (2005), and SALGA (2010), used interviews and surveys to investigate the impact of key economic sectors on LED in South Africa. The authors found that tourism, manufacturing, community service, mining, agriculture, trade, business, and finance are the key sectors that contribute to local development. Mbeba (2005) pointed

out that tourism is the primary contributor to job creation, economic growth, and poverty alleviation, particularly in more rural regions. Furthermore, the Human Sciences Research Council (2003) used interviews to assess the impact of key economic sectors on LED. Results revealed that tourism, community service, and agriculture were the major contributing sectors.

### **2.8.1. Managing Community Development Projects**

Thornhill (2009: 411) asserts that the three spheres of government are faced with obstacles and the fact that the administrative structures have deteriorated to such an extent that those services cannot be delivered at an acceptable level. It is further indicated that corruption has increased and proof of officials guilty of unethical conduct centred on inefficiency appears to be rampant. The ideals of Batho Pele (People First) are simply flaunted by officials. It is also indicated that it is important for the government in all spheres to focus its attention on the administrative and managerial capacities of officials so that the desired results are produced. Much of service delivery failures could be blamed on lack of resources; however, about 70% of the success of any job depends on the incumbent of that position. The provision of services could improve if there could be an improvement in the managerial quality of the senior officials of the political office. It could therefore be concluded that the lack of service delivery can largely be attributed to lack of management or management skills. Luthuli (2009: 463) points out that public service managers need to be motivated towards being innovative and able to take risks if service delivery is to move beyond experimentation.

## **2.9. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

One of the aims of LED is to try to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment in communities, especially the poor and disadvantaged groups. As part of the LED strategy, community development projects were identified as a means towards the upliftment, empowerment, capacity building, and skills transfer of such communities. The main problem remains the lack of management skills in planning and implementing such projects.

Social upliftment must take place in both urban and rural areas. Various policies and other documents urge citizens, as well as the responsible authorities to take decisive

actions to uplift the people of South Africa. This, more often, means the introduction of development or upliftment projects (Van der Waldt and Knipe, 2018:106). Many African countries have been exposed over the past decade and have been obliged to implement far-reaching socio-economic and administrative reforms, to correct internal imbalances and inequalities and re-establish growth. Social upliftment programs and projects are helping some communities and individuals to withstand the belt-tightening that comes with structural adjustment and strategic change.

Communities in South Africa need to be uplifted socially and economically. At the moment, poverty is one of the major issues hampering development projects in various parts of the country. Poverty is also responsible for the emergence of informal settlements and the general pattern of urban settlement. These structures and living conditions are more often the result of societal imbalances and inequalities and the desperate lack of effective social upliftment programs in the country. In South Africa, poverty is linked to large-scale unemployment, hunger, malnutrition, an inability to pay for medical care and basic services, the break-up of families, homelessness, and sheer helplessness. The burden of poverty also weighs much more heavily on women and children than on men (Van der Waldt *et al.*, 2018:107).

The characteristics of the extent of poverty in South Africa involves among others, a relationship between poverty and race where 95% of poor people are black; between poverty and rural communities where 75% of South Africa's poor people live in rural areas; the fact that very few of the poor people who can work have jobs; forty-five percent of the poor people in South Africa are children below the age of 16 and finally poverty in South Africa can be linked to gender (Wallis & Reddy, 2012). In this case, households that are headed by women are generally much poorer than those headed by men.

The other aspect in this regard is empowerment, as Sebola (2014) argues that supporting development projects entails the strengthening of community or local capacity. In the past, approaches to development tended to undermine the importance of appropriate local or community institutional structures and processes. Participation by the local organizations was not given much recognition. As a result, most development agencies now have institution building as one of their major objectives. The process includes institution building at the local level since, in the final stage, it is

the local people who must make sustained development happen. Local organizations can supplement and make more effective individual efforts, making a local community organization more effective which is a key development strategy.

The transfer of skills is another important aspect of capacity building meant to empower local communities. During the implementation stage of projects, in particular, more attention should be directed towards the transfer of hard skills (technical training, management, and supervision as examples) which will enable members of the community to perform specialized tasks. The main objective should be to equip people with capacities that could be utilized beyond the project's implementation stage. Training programs during implementation usually focus on the transfer of accredited training, which will enable community members to officiate their acquired skills, thus enhancing opportunities for finding permanent employment.

## **2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter reviewed the available literature on assessing the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. The focus was on the contribution of rural development to the creation of employment in rural communities, including a perspective of the socio-economic situation, development, rural development, and community development. The review of the literature showed that there is a relationship between development, rural development, and community development, especially from the perspective of sustainable development, with four different dimensions, namely the environmental, economic, social, and governance dimensions.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

Research methodology is defined as the rationale behind research methods and systems. It covers a wider scope than research methods and techniques (Welman *et al.*, 2005). Research methodology indicates the logic of development of the process used to generate theory, that is, the procedural framework within which the research is conducted (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998).

#### 3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Singh (2006), a research design is a statement of the objectives of the investigation and the tactics for gathering data, studying the evidence, and reporting the results. Research design is the plan of how to approach answering research questions. It highlights the objectives of the research questions and specifies sources from which data will be collected and the analysis of the data collected. It is also concerned with ethical matters and issues together with constraints encountered during the study (Nishishiba *et al.*, 2014).

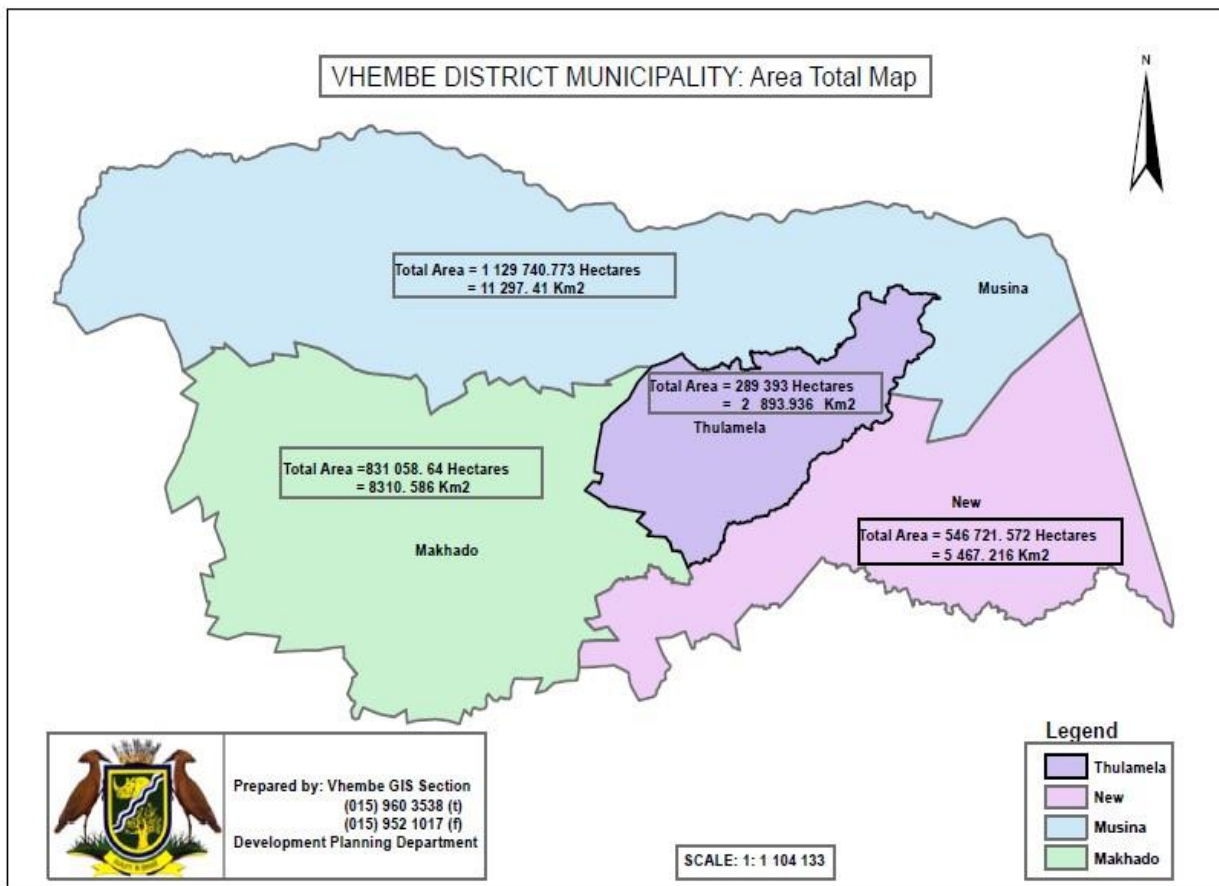
This study adopted the qualitative research approach. According to Creswell (2015), the qualitative approach is primarily exploratory research that provides an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. A qualitative research approach has been chosen because it will provide insight into the perceived impacts of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality, providing ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. The qualitative approach involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data which includes in-depth analysis of texts, videos, or audio to give an understanding of the concept. Therefore, for this study, the indicators, including the Growth Rate of National Income Per Capita Income PCI, Per Capita Consumption PCC, Physical Quality Life Index PQLI, Human Development Index HDI, Industrial Progress and Capital Information, Health, and Education will be used to assess the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

### 3.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

The study will be conducted at Thulamela Local Municipality under Vhembe District Municipality in Limpopo Province. It was observed during the Limpopo Community Survey (2016) that there was an increase in poverty headcount in almost all district municipalities in South Africa between 2011 and 2016, except Vhembe which decreased from 13% in 2011 to 12, 8% in 2016. The lowest poverty headcounts, albeit having increased in comparison with 2011, were recorded in Capricorn (8, 5%) and Waterberg (9%).

Thulamela Municipality is an area covering a vast track of lands mainly tribal, and Thohoyandou is its political, administrative, and commercial centre. In terms of population, it is the second largest of all the municipalities in Limpopo Province. The political leadership of the municipality is vested in the Municipal Council comprising 81 Councillors of whom 41 are Ward or directly elected Councillors, and 40 are Proportional Representatives (PR). These councillors represent political parties on the strength of their performance in the August 2016 Local Government Elections. The Thulamela municipal code is LIM 343. The Mayor chairs Executive Committee meetings, while the Speaker presides over Council meetings. Additional members of the Council are 7 Senior Traditional Leaders or their representatives who sit on the Council as Ex-Officio members representing the traditional systems of governance. 6 departments form the basis of Administration. The administration is responsible for strategic day-to-day operational matters of the municipality, implementation of the Council's resolutions, as well as providing technical, and professional support and advice to the Council.

**Figure 3.1: Local and Description of Thulamela Municipality in Terms of Provincial Context**



### 3.4. POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A population is the set of features that the research emphasizes and has been chosen for a particular purpose and to which the results gained by testing the sample should be generalized (Leedy, 2013). Bryman (2008) defines population as the universe of units from which a sample is selected. The target population for this study was personnel working in local government within Thulamela Local Municipality, that is, municipal officials, councillors, stakeholders, and community members. Data was collected from the community members and traditional leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality, and the people working for Thulamela Local Municipality.

Purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling method was employed in this study. According to Jackson (2008), purposive sampling is based on the

characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Firstly, a detailed plan of the Thulamela Local Municipality Integrated Development Plans from 2010-2021 was obtained. A selection was made for analysis from a list of these Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). The list will also provide the selection of economic endeavours or programs for the upliftment of the lives of community members.

**Table 3.1: Population Groups**

AREA	LIM343: THULAMELA
AGE	NUMBER
0-14 (Children)	168496
15-34 (Youth)	192769
35-64 (Adults)	102497
65+ (Elderly)	33475

*Stats SA: Community Survey, 2016*

### 3.5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection is a process of gathering and categorizing relevant information which can be used to make decisions about specific situations.. Primary data is data that the researcher collects and interprets for the first time. Primary data is collected directly from the source, which could be in-person interviews, surveys sent out to the audience, or even courses. For the study, primary data was collected. There are multiple data collection methods. A selected data-collecting method depends on the goal of the research and the tools available for analysis (Mertens, 2010). This study adopted the interviewing method. Interviews are the ideal data collection method because the researcher can read body language, and facial expressions and pair them with the responses being provided (Brink, 2006).

Boyce and Neale (2006), contend that an in-depth interview assists the researcher and provides much more detailed information than what is normally available through other data collection methods such as surveys. Furthermore, in-depth interviews permit the researcher to cross the boundary into another's perspective about a

circumstance or event (Mears, 2012). In-depth interviews also allow the researcher to understand the experiences of people and what those experiences mean to them. The purpose of in-depth interviews in this study is to gather detailed information on the perceived impact of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

The researcher carried out one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Research interview questions were printed and then handed over to participants. This method was chosen due to the restrictions that were in place to control the spread of the coronavirus. However, in situations where translations and further clarity on the interview questions were needed, the researcher had to recite the questions and rephrased them in a way that would make it easier to be understood by the participants of the study. The study adopted the semi-structured interview to generate more information based on the respondents' understanding and experiences of the phenomena. According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delpont, (2015), a semi-structured interview has a general guideline but gives the interviewer the leeway to explore different areas based on the responses received. Secondary data was also obtained from published books, journal articles, credible internet sources, and government documents were also used as a method of inquiry in this study.

### **3.5.1 Documentations**

Documentations form part of secondary sources. This means the study of documents, that is, the written material that contains information about the phenomenon that is being researched (De Vos, *et al.*, 2015:314). Documentation was from the municipality and government files on its planned activities. The documents included articles, LED documents, books, and government legislation and policies.

### **3.6. DATA ANALYSIS METHODS**

Data were analyzed by computer (CD-ROM databases). Municipal and governmental documents were also studied and analyzed. According to Henning (2014:98), documents can reveal meaning and have content value. Documents are collected as entities of data and follow the same route through analysis and interpretation.

### **3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to Newman (2000), ethical considerations require balancing the value of advancing knowledge against the value of non-interference in the lives of others. Barbour (2015), asserts that consent must be managed as a process rather than an agreement when dealing with ethical considerations. The study was conducted following the code of ethics outlined as per the procedure of the University of Venda Research Ethics Committee to adhere to permission to conduct the study, and authority to conduct the study before the study is conducted. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Venda Research Ethics Committee.

#### **3.7.1 Ethical Clearance**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University's Research Ethics Committee (REC) in the case where the study involves human subjects.

#### **3.7.2 Informed consent**

The researcher explained to all participants the nature and purpose of the study and emphasize that their participation is voluntary, meaning that at any time if they so wished, they could withdraw. The principle of honesty relates to truthfulness in giving participants all necessary information about the study. In this study, this information enabled participants to make an informed decision as to whether or not to participate. Consent forms were prepared, and participants were asked to sign them to confirm their willingness to participate. To ensure informed consent, the researcher made provisions for the Informed Consent Form for each participant before responding to the interview questions so that the participants could understand that their participation in this study did not award them any benefits and the principal investigator made sure that their responses were kept confidential.

#### **3.7.3 Privacy and confidentiality**

Any individual participating in a research study has a reasonable expectation that privacy will be guaranteed. Consequently, no identifying information about the individual should be revealed in written or other communication. Further, any group or

organization participating in a research study has a reasonable expectation that its identity will not be revealed. As a measure of ensuring privacy, confidentiality, and no harm to the study's participants, the names of participants were not disclosed except with their (participants') written consent. In this study, permission to record interviews and focus group discussions with participants was sought from participants because, in some instances, the researcher may not recall all of the information as was said by the participants. So, to avoid distortion and deviation, and misrepresenting of information given by the participants, the need to record interviews and focus group discussions was essential for maintaining accuracy and avoiding violating the rights of participants as well.

The information obtained in this study will only be used for academic purposes or the purposes for carrying out this study, which is to find out the perceived impact of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic on the economic activities in Thulamela Local Municipality. The principal investigator's contact details was provided in the Consent Forms so that if any of the participants wished to have any clarity on anything concerning the information that they gave, they would be able to get that clarity from the principal investigator in this study. Furthermore, the principal investigator made the participants to aware that this study would be published on the University of Venda Library Portal where other students' studies have been uploaded and this is one of the ways in which feedback (with participants) on the findings of this study was achieved.

#### **3.7.4 No harm to participants**

There should be a reasonable expectation by those participating in a research study that they will not be involved in any situation in which they might be harmed. Apart from the physical form, harm can also be of a mental, emotional, and psychological nature and these can arise from the type of questions that are asked or how they are asked. In this study, avoidance of harm was achieved through, among other measures, careful design of questions to avoid any offence, and avoiding language that may be too explicit. Depending on cultural norms and values (for example, crafting questions around sexual practices and behaviours, ethnicity, and race, has to consider cultural context and settings). Data collected from the respondents and Department of Social Development records were used for the study and nothing else.

### **3.7.5 Data interpretation**

A researcher is expected to analyze data in a manner that avoids misstatements, misinterpretations, or fraudulent analysis. Data interpretation also involves the researcher's interaction with the participants in a study. This principle guides the researcher to use research data to fairly represent facts as they appear in real life.

### **3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter 3 presented the research methodology that was used in this study. For each step that was carried out, there was sufficient justification for all the selected procedures that included the number of participants/sample size and the method of analysing data. The researcher discussed the research design, purpose of the study, population and location, sampling procedure, data collection methods, data collection instrument, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research findings, analysis, and interpretation of results. Chapter 4 presents the results gathered in this study on “evaluating the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development, LED initiatives/programs in Thulamela Local Municipality. Descriptive analysis and thematic content analysis were used in the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.

#### 4.2 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC AND BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study were drawn from Thulamela Local Municipality in Vhembe District. Data were drawn from the Community Members and Traditional Leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, Traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality, and the people working for Thulamela Local Municipality.

**Table 4.1 Demographic and biographic details of participants**

Category	Group (Yrs.)	Frequency	Valid %
<b>Age</b>	18-35	16	21%
	36-49	37	47%
	50 and above	25	32%
	<b>Thulamela Local Municipality participants</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Budeli Mphireleni Village		
	Male	6	8%
	Female	10	13%
	SANCO Members		
	Thohoyandou Block F		
Male	9	12%	
Female	14	18%	
	Traditional Leaders and Community Members		

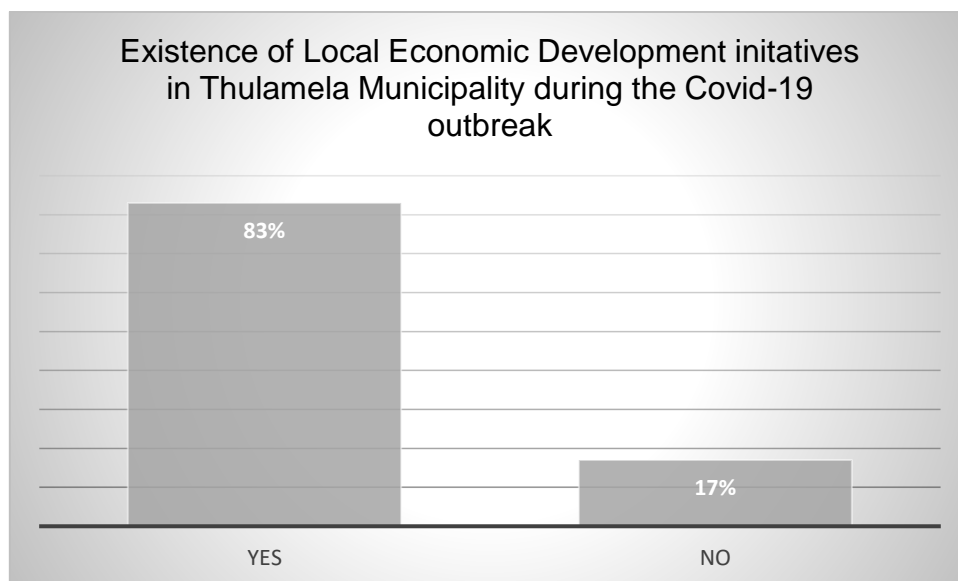
	(Thulamela Local Municipality) Male Female	10 6	13% 8%
	Municipality Staff (Thulamela Local Municipality) Male Female	13 10	17% 13%
<b>Education</b>	Lower matric	12	15%
	Matric	21	27%
	Tertiary	45	58%

From Table 4.1 on the demographic and biographic details of participants, 78 participants responded to the questionnaire and interview questions. On the age of participants, Table 4.1 shows that the majority of participants in this study, aged 36-49, constituted 47%, followed by those aged 50 and above with 37%, and those within the age range of 18-35 made up 21% of the total sample of the population. On the gender of participants, the researcher cross-tabulated the findings according to each set of participants. Results shown in Table 4.1 indicate that for Budeli Mphireleni Village, a total of 16 participants responded to the questionnaire, with 6 males making up 8% of the sample and 10 females, making up 13% of the total sample. For SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, 23 participants responded to the interview questions and questionnaire with 9 males who made up 12% of the sample and 14 females who made up 18% of the sample of this study's population. On traditional leaders and Community members from Thulamela Local Municipality, males constituted 8% and females accounted for 8%, and lastly, on municipality staff from Thulamela Local Municipality, male participants were 13 which accounted for 17% and female participants were 10, which amounted to 13% of the total sample of the population in this study. On the participants' education level, those with tertiary education constituted 58%, followed by 27% for those with Matric and lastly, those without matric qualifications amounted to 15% of the total sample of the population. Participants without lower matric qualifications were identified among community members from Budeli Mphireleni Village and among Traditional Leaders and Community Members from Thulamela Local Municipality.

### 4.3 SECTION B: IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

In this section, the researcher gathered views from the people working under Thulamela Local Municipality, community members and traditional leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality. In this section, the researcher started by presenting the views of Thulamela Municipality officials, and narration and Atlas ti version 8 was used to create relations or links on what participants had to say in responding to the interview questions and the questionnaire.

**Figure 4.1: Existence of Local Economic Development Programmes in Thulamela Local Municipality**



The question on the existence of Local Economic Development initiatives was asked as a confirmatory question to the municipality's staff. The descriptive statistics as indicated in Figure 4 shows that the majority of municipality staff, 83%, from Thulamela Local Municipality indicated that Local Economic Development Programs were in existence during the height of the Covid-19 outbreak. However, 17% of the municipality staff indicated that there were no Local Economic Development initiatives that were available at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the slightly varied confirmations by participants on the existence of Local Economic Development

initiatives, the majority indicates that these initiatives managed to achieve their intended purposes.

**Table 4.2: Rendering of the intended economic objectives to the municipality**

Rendering of the intended economic objectives to the municipality			
		Responses	
		Yes	No
Budeli Mphireleni Village	Count 16		
	% of Total 21%	16	0
Traditional Leaders and Community Members (Thulamela Local Municipality)	Count 16	16	0
	% of Total 21%	16%	0%
SANCO Members Thohoyandou Block F	Count 23	18	5
	% of Total 29%	23%	6%
Municipality Staff (Thulamela Local Municipality)	Count 26	21	5
	% of Total 33%	27%	6%

Table 4.2 shows the cross-tabulated results on the rendering of the intended economic objectives to the municipality. From Table 4.2 it is indicated that from Budeli Mphireleni Village, 21% indicated that the municipality has managed to render its intended community objectives. Likewise, the traditional leaders and community members from (Thulamela Local Municipality) indicated that the municipality has succeeded in its endeavours to render the intended economic objectives. On the other hand, the views of SANCO Members from Thohoyandou Block F and the views of Thulamela Local Municipality's staff on the rendering of the intended economic objectives to the communities differed from the views expressed by community members from Budeli Mphireleni Village and traditional leaders and community members from Thulamela Local Municipality. On the rendering of intended economic objectives to the communities, SANCO members 23% indicated that "Yes" the municipality achieved its objectives of rendering the intended services and goods at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, however, 6% among SANCO Members indicated that "No" the municipality failed to achieve this objective. Among Thulamela Municipality staff, 27% indicated

“Yes” the municipality managed to render the intended economic objectives to the communities, while 6% of the total sample indicated “No” the municipality did not manage to render its intended economic objectives during the peak of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Regarding the capacity and competency of personnel to manage and oversee LED programs, municipality staff indicated that the municipality did not have the capacity and competent personnel to run LED programs effectively and efficiently. According to the literature reviewed in this study, every project needs specialized people in that field (project management) and in most cases, the government does not employ specialists as is the case with the private sector. Governments employ general managers instead. This is an indication that the project lacks managerial expertise. This is likely to apply to other non-functional projects in the district.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), Section 152, mandates local government to provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment and encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government. Furthermore, Section 153 (1) stipulates that one of the developmental duties of all municipalities is that a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting, and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of communities, and to promote the social and economic development of such communities.

Furthermore, local government is mandated to promote the Bill of Rights which reflects the nation’s values of human dignity, equality, and freedom, and uphold the principles enshrined in the Constitution (South African Local Government Association (SALGA), 2015). The White Paper on Local Government (1998), further translated the constitutional objects and duties into the concept of developmental local government. It defines the new mandate as the local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic, and material needs and to improve the quality of their lives.

The White Paper on Local Government further identifies three key developmental outcomes that local government must focus on, which include the provision of sustainable household infrastructure and services, the creation of liveable and integrated local areas, and the promotion of LED and community empowerment and redistribution. In essence, the White Paper on Local Government suggests that local government must be developmental. To become more developmental, the instrument provides three approaches that can assist municipalities, namely integrated development planning and budgeting, performance management, and working with local citizens and partners. The local government mandate is further expressed in the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) which builds on the White Paper on Local Government to establish a new planning framework for developmental local government.

Kamara (2017); and Rogerson (2010) argue that poor performance as far as LED is concerned in South Africa is mainly associated with the shortage of resources, lack of capacity, and limited experience by the local government to promote LED. These challenges are aggravated by international trends and events such as rapid globalization, urbanization, technological advances, and the increasingly global competitive environment (Koma, 2014). These deficiencies and limited successes of LED have undermined the credibility and significance attached to LED by local government in South Africa (Kamara, 2017). Rogerson (2010), as cited in Kamara (2017: 102), identifies some of the strategic challenges bedevilling LED implementation in South Africa as lack of capacity at the local government level; lack of funding for LED; ineffective LED methodologies for planning, and poor coordination of networks. Khambule (2018) asserts that this developmental mandate is further undermined by the lack of coordination of LED within local government.

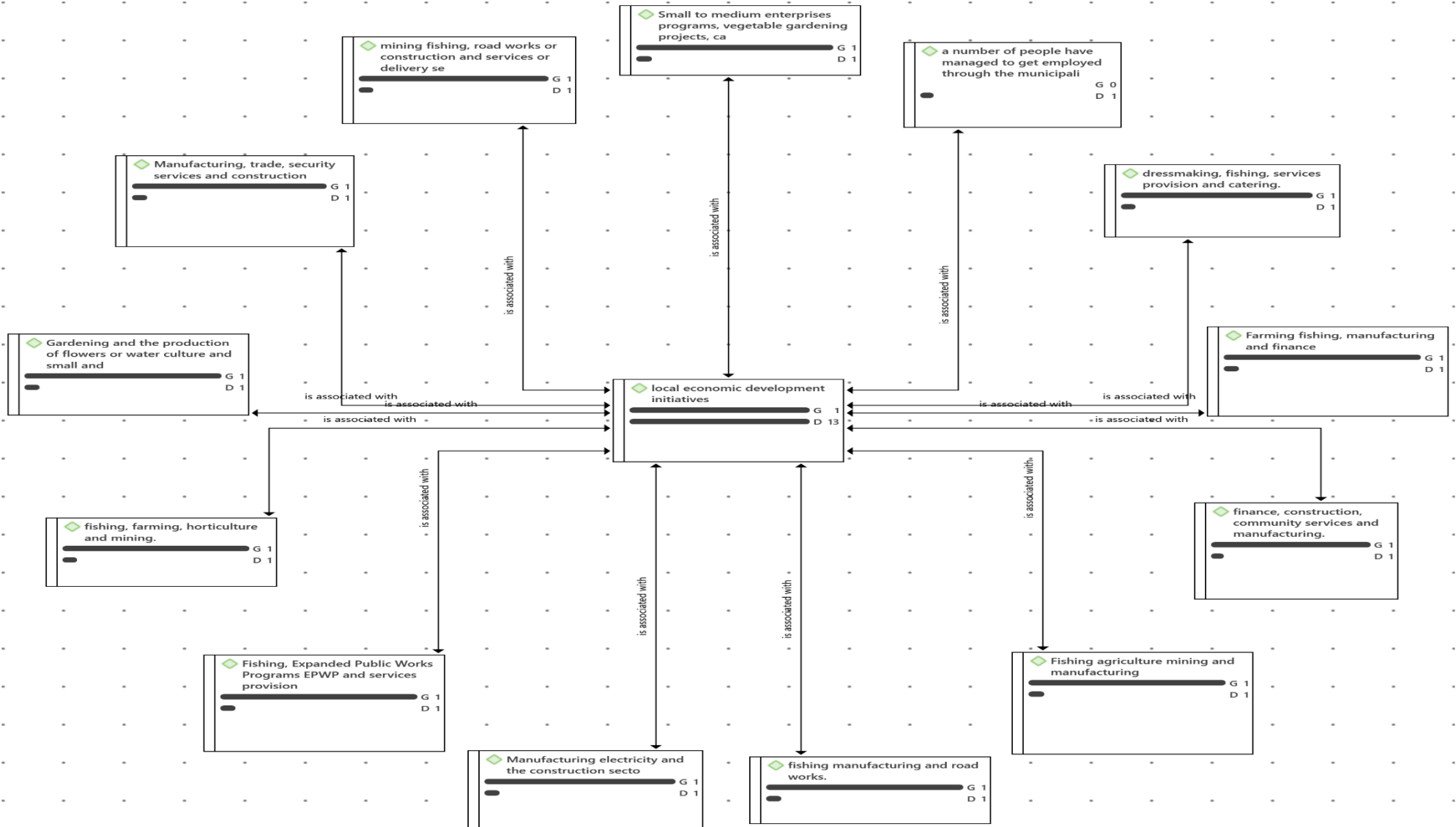
The conclusion that can be drawn from the cross-tabulated results in Table 4.2 shows that there was a common trend among community members in agreeing to the assertion that the municipality managed to render the intended economic objectives during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. The possible explanation for the views of SANCO members and the municipality staff as displayed in Table 4.2 is that these groups of people tend to be critical when looking at issues, and hence the slightly contrasting views among these groups on whether Thulamela Local Municipality

managed to achieve its intended objectives during the Covid-19 outbreak. The fundamental factor in understanding these views is that in preparation for the outbreak of pandemics in the future, these results provide insights into the recommendations that can be put in place, and chapter 5 in this study addresses these recommendations.

Figure 4.2 below shows the views of Thulamela municipal workers, community members, and traditional leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, and traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality on the local economic activities in Thulamela Local Municipality during Covid-19 outbreak. The views as gathered verbatim from the municipal officials show that there were several economic activities in Thulamela Local Municipality during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, ranging from Expanded Public Work Programmes, agriculture/farming, banking/finance, manufacturing, fishing, security services, construction, and mining. From Figure 4.2, it can be realized that Expanded Public Works Programmes and fishing constituted one of the common activities indicated to have been performed by community members.

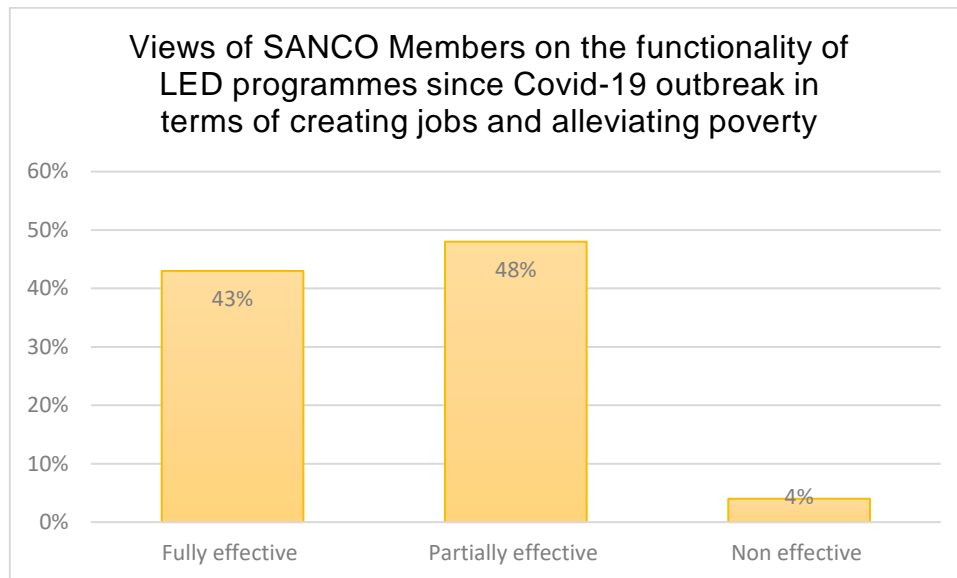
The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000), assigns municipalities to promote social and economic development, ensure access to affordable services and promote the involvement of local communities in municipal affairs. The Act provides principles, mechanisms, and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to achieve their developmental mandate. The Act requires municipalities to undertake an integrated development planning process to develop an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) which will assist local governments to achieve their objectives and give effect to their developmental duties as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. According to section 25(1) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000), each municipal council must, within a prescribed period after the beginning of its elected term, adopt a single, inclusive, and strategic plan which links, integrates and coordinates plans and takes into account proposals for the development of the municipality. The IDP specifies the development priorities and objectives of the municipal council including LED.

**Figure 4.2: Local Economic activities in Thulamela Local Municipality during the Covid-19 outbreak**



### 4.3.1 VIEWS OF SANCO MEMBERS ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Figure 4.3: Views of SANCO Members on the functionality of LED programmes in alleviating unemployment**



From Figure 4.3 above, it is noted that 48% of SANCO Members indicated that LED programmes since the outbreak of the pandemic were “partially effective” in terms of creating jobs and alleviating poverty. On the other hand, 43% of SANCO Members' indicated that LED programmes were “fully effective” and 4% indicated that LED initiatives were “non-effective”. These results show that despite the few who disagree with the functionality of LED initiatives in this aspect, it has to be acknowledged that the majority in general agree that LED initiatives were effective even though the level of effectiveness may differ from one individual to another.

All municipalities in South Africa must develop a LED strategy and integrate such a strategy into the IDP. LED is one of the most strategic tools through which local municipalities adhere to their developmental duties, as prescribed by the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998). According to Hofisi, Mbeba, Maredza, and Choga (2013: 539), as cited in Kamara (2017: 100), the LED agenda in the context of South Africa, unlike in other countries, is neither voluntary nor just a local government initiative, but a constitutional requirement.

**Table 4.3: Involvement of Community Members in the formulation of LED programs**

Involvement of Community Members in the formulation of LED programs		Responses	
		Yes	No
SANCO Members Thohoyandou Block F	Count 23	20	3
	% of Total 29%	41%	6%
Community Members (Thulamela Local Municipality)	Count 26	18	8
	% of Total 33%	37%	16%

Table 4.3 shows the cross-tabulated views of SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F and community members from Thulamela Local Municipality on the involvement of community members in the formulation of LED programs. The results in Table 4.3 indicate that 41% of SANCO members agreed that the community is involved in the formulation of LED programs and 6% indicated that “No” there was no community involvement in the formulation of LED programs during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Among community members from Thulamela Local Municipality, 37% indicated that “Yes” there was the involvement of the local community in the formulation of LED programs and 16% said that “No”, the community was not involved in the formulation of LED programs.

The above Table 4.3 indicates that Local Economic Development (LED) programs aim to improve economic growth and development at the local level, and community involvement is critical to the success of these programs. Community members should be involved in the formulation of LED programs for several reasons, including:

**Identifying local priorities:** Community members can provide valuable insights into the economic challenges and opportunities in their area. By involving community members in the formulation of LED programs, local priorities can be identified, and strategies can be developed to address them.

**Increasing ownership and commitment:** When community members are involved in the formulation of LED programs, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and commitment to the program's success. This can lead to greater participation and support, which can help ensure the sustainability of the program over the long term.

**Building partnerships:** LED programs often require partnerships between various stakeholders, including local government, businesses, and community organizations. Involving community members in the formulation of LED programs can help build these partnerships and foster collaboration among stakeholders. **Enhancing transparency and accountability:** By involving community members in the formulation of LED programs, transparency and accountability can be enhanced. Community members can provide feedback on program design and implementation, which can help ensure that the program is meeting the needs of the community.

To involve community members in the formulation of LED programs, local governments and program managers can use a range of approaches, including community meetings, surveys, focus groups, and online engagement tools. It is essential to ensure that these engagement activities are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, including those who may face barriers to participation, such as language or mobility barriers. By involving community members in the formulation of LED programs, local governments and program managers can help ensure that these programs are tailored to local needs and have a greater chance of success.

Figure 4.4: Rendering of intended economic objectives during the pandemic

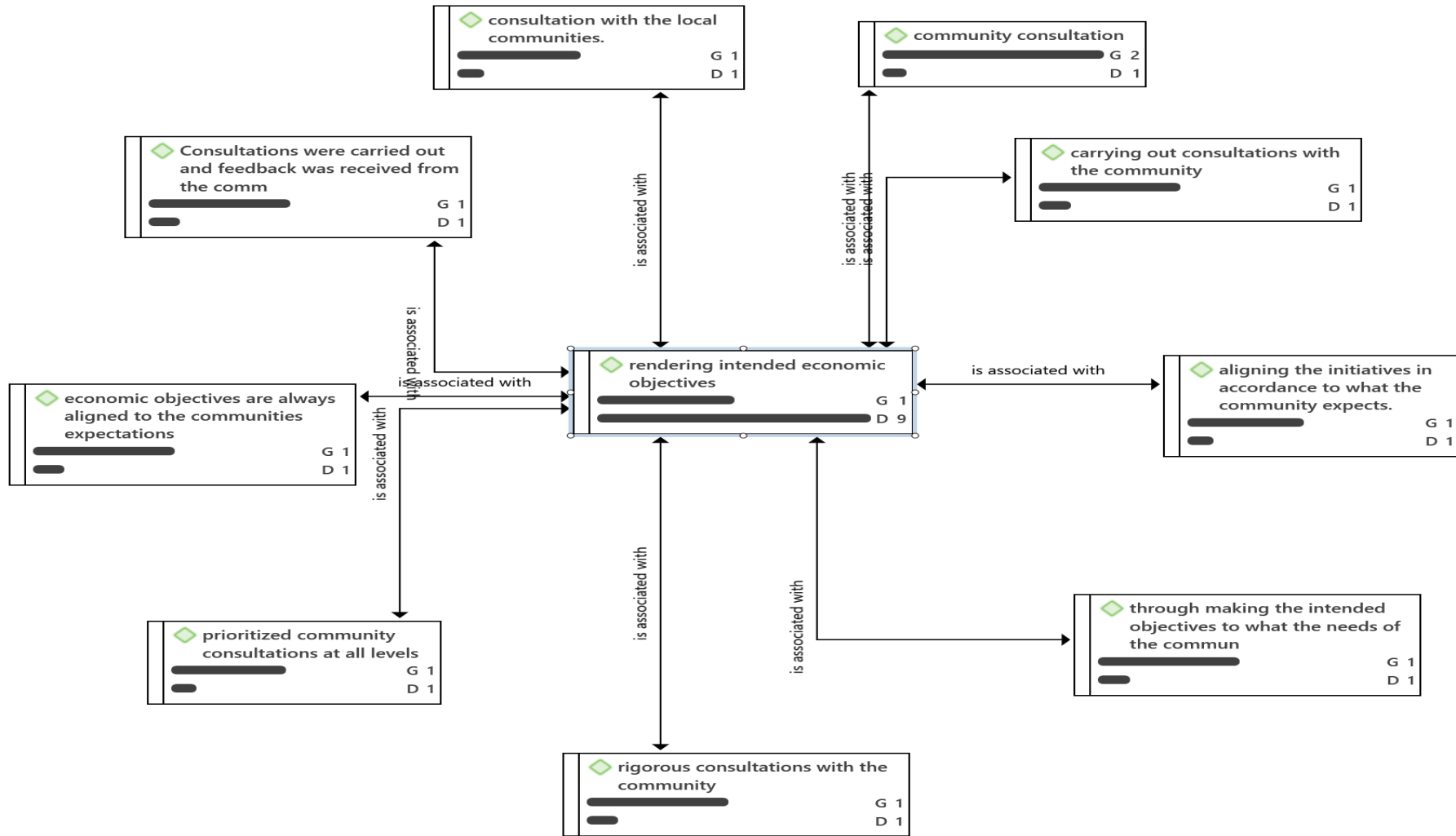


Figure 4.4 above shows the network diagram on the views of Thulamela Local Municipality officials on the rendering of intended economic objectives during the pandemic. From the views gathered from these municipal officials, one can note that the common theme that permeated their views was about community consultations which were mentioned by 7 municipal officials. Other methods that were used to make sure that the municipality managed to achieve its intended economic objectives included the aligning of economic initiatives with the community's expectations,

Meyer (2014); Triegaardt (2007) caution that local government is not responsible for creating jobs, but instead is responsible for creating an enabling environment for economic development. According to Meyer (2014), the overarching role of the local government in development is to provide an enabling environment for all its residents and businesses to prosper through the LED strategic plan which has a balanced approach between "pro-poor" and "pro-growth". In other words, local governments should create an environment that is conducive for businesses to thrive and survive which ultimately can create job opportunities, alleviate poverty and improve the living standards of local communities. This means that the local government should identify and create new opportunities that can enhance business prospects within the local communities. Accordingly, local governments should implement policies and strategies which foster LED within their jurisdiction. Local governments should also play the role of regulator, which has increased in importance with the establishment of more private enterprises and a highly important function in terms of economic development, most appropriate to the local authority (VNG International, 2007). As such, local governments generally have realized that they are but one of many players involved in LED. However, local governments face a myriad of challenges during planning and promoting LED within most local communities. Hence, the next section highlights the factors that influence effective and successful LED planning and promotion that local governments are facing.

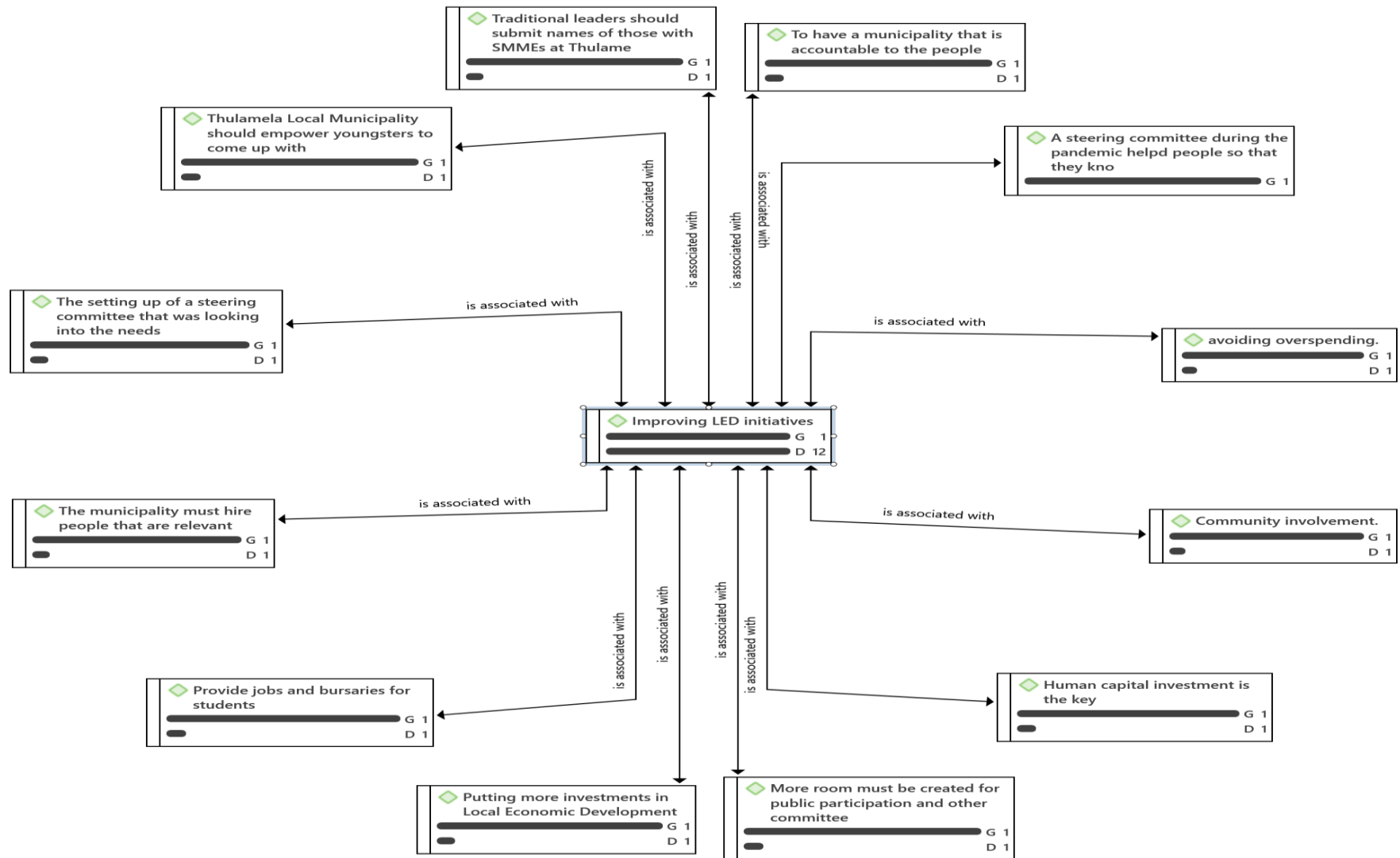
#### **4.3.3 IMPROVING LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

When community members were asked whether they are involved in the planning and development, community members indicated that the local community members appreciated the development of the project and that they were positive. The local

communities recommended that LED projects must be established, believing that they had the potential to create job opportunities. It was further indicated that all the members of the community supported the establishment of LED initiatives and they managed to benefit from some of the programs.

In terms of mechanism(s) used to involve the local traditional leaders and members of the community about the LED plans, the participants indicated that there was a steering committee that was established during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, presumably to convey the message to the community. The indication as per the responses earlier is that the method used to invite the stakeholders/ the beneficiaries did not filter through as intended, and this is supported by the earlier findings in which the majority of members of the community did not know about the economic activities envisaged at Thulamela Local Municipality.

Figure 4.5: Improving LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality



## 4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings in this study reveal that the challenges that were faced by Thulamela Local Municipality in its planning and implementation of Local Economic Development initiatives were severely exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is evident from the findings that Thulamela Local Municipality responded adequately to the threat that Covid-19 posed to the community members. For example, the municipality had to provide sanitary facilities to some communities that were left out with no sources of income due to the lockdown regulations that were imposed under the Disaster Management Act. During the peak levels of the pandemic in the level 4 lockdown, small businesses closed, and this meant that the municipality had to assist some of the residents whose livelihoods had been wiped away by the pandemic. On the hand, the provision of contracts to small businesses owned by community members in Thulamela Local Municipality was the other way in which the municipality enhanced part of LED initiatives. In this respect, residents were benefitting from getting roles of sanitizing taxi ranks and other public places to avoid the spread of the virus.

### 4.4.1 Local Economic Development initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality

Findings in this study show that Local Economic Development initiatives can create employment and improve livelihoods by identifying specific community projects that can bring extra income, build specific skills, and generate employment in rural areas. Community projects, which may lead to sustainable economic development, including public works in which youth are employed, gardening projects, as well as small scale animal husbandry projects. The common goals of community projects are that they should prioritize the welfare of the community and solve the main problems facing the community, especially economic and job creation challenges in local communities (Arensberg, 2017). The essence of community projects is that people who live in a particular geographic location should combine and prioritize the socio-economic development of the community through systematic approaches. A municipal employee noted the following about the nature of community projects:

*The economic activities being undertaken in the municipality include dressmaking, fishing, services provision, and catering. In the*

*municipality's Integrated Development Plan, the intended objectives have been achieved by making sure that the economic objectives are always aligned with the communities' expectations.*

Like most communities in South Africa, communities in Thulamela Local Municipality lack the resources and technical knowledge to solve their problems on their own. Therefore, community projects might combine the strength of various stakeholders to help them find solutions (Edwards & Jones, 2019). Such stakeholders might include NGOs, national governments, municipalities, provincial governments, and research institutions. However, many community projects in developing countries are usually led by NGOs who, with their technical knowledge and skilled personnel, are well-suited to lead community projects. However, communities must participate in the selection, implementation, and management of these projects since they are supposed to benefit from them. In addition, it is understood that these projects would enable communities to learn new skills that would help them in the future (Popple, 2018).

Community projects, for instance, agricultural projects, which are at the heart of rural development initiatives, are usually based on helping the community face its main challenges. However, challenges, such as a lack of access to sustainable financial services, should also be addressed. Rural projects that encourage communities to pool their resources might address this problem. Community development projects are generally viewed as effective and sustainable instruments to enhance the living conditions and the economic status of disadvantaged communities (Islam, 2017). Social and infrastructure development initiatives include projects that enhance access to basic education as well as health and social services in low-income communities.

One of the crucial roles of rural development is employment creation, through initiating and supporting activities that generate income for specific geographic areas recognized as rural (Grindle, 2019:6). However, a rural development strategy that only uses agriculture to improve people's livelihoods will not lead to sustainable development. On the challenges of employment creation, a research participant who was a municipal employee noted the following:

*One of the challenges that people in rural areas face is failing to convert rural economic activities into sustainable employment opportunities, if this rural development as a process and program can provide capacity, skills, and training to ensure that rural economic activities, for instance, agriculture, tourism can create employment for those in rural areas.*

Rural areas tend to depend on specific activities that include agriculture, fish farming, tourism, and both small-scale and full-scale mining. However, rural people are constrained by a lack of sufficient resources, financial credit, and training, especially small-scale farmers (Sumberg, Anyidoho & Chasukwa, 2015). When developing specific sectors crucial to rural economies, such as agriculture, the focus should be on aspects that are in abundance, namely land and natural resources. Rural development initiatives might create employment through increasing production in specific activities like small-scale farming, which has always been at the heart of the rural economy.

However, the majority of small-scale farms do not provide sustainable incomes or employment, and thus the cycle of poverty and marginalization continues. Rural development initiatives should assist rural farmers in increasing their production and yields through extension services. Moreover, these services could link the farmers to specific markets for their products, which might create employment (Vorley, Fearne & Ray, 2016). In this context, a municipal employee stated the following:

*By linking small-scale farmers from rural areas with buyers of their products, rural development can ensure that farming and economic activity can create employment in rural areas, especially in sectors that rely on agriculture to function, for instance, agro processing.*

Because rural development projects focused on creating employment, improving livelihoods, and breaking the cycle of poverty through agriculture have proved to be insufficient, rural economies have had to look at different economic and social development approaches that target other sectors, such as rural tourism, mining, processing and marketing of agriculture products (Rogerson, 2020; Saha, 2019). Rural tourism in particular has emerged as a new sector through which rural economies can be developed to compensate for the drastic downturn in traditional agriculture, with

dropping employment and income levels adding to a vicious circle of socio-economic challenges (Truchakev, 2014:3052). The close interaction between rural tourism and local culture (cultural tourism), includes portraying native arts and an area's heritage in their natural surroundings (Raj & Gupta, 2018). Moreover, rural areas can be used for farm tourism, adventure tourism, nature tourism, green tourism, and eco-tourism. However, it is important to preserve the natural and cultural environment of these aforementioned types of tourism. In addition, the conservation of landscapes links to the concept of a green economy, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Musvoto, Nortje, de Wet, Mahumani & Nahman, 2015). Besides rural tourism, rural entrepreneurship, agribusinesses (or Agri-enterprises) and agro-industrial ventures create employment. Rural entrepreneurship includes activities such as catering, carpentry, wool spinning, and blacksmithing, while agribusinesses refer to the processing and marketing of farm products, including biofuels, animal feed, farming implements, and machinery. Agro-industrial initiatives involves agriculture on an industrial scale and includes packaging, storing, processing, and manufacturing.

#### **4.4.2 Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on Local Economic Development Programmes in Thulamela Local Municipality**

Findings in this study reveal that the spread of COVID-19 had a dramatic tremendous impact on the general economy and local communities in Thulamela Local Municipality. The economic effects were also exacerbated by emergency strategies such as lockdowns. During the Covid-19 period, the community had to stay at home, and this strongly affected the local economy. The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to be a threat stressor, reinforcing existing as well as generating new forms of tension and conflicts in South Africa. As the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) (2020) indicates, the Covid-19 pandemic contributed to the additional stress of a pre-existing mix of economic, social, and political tensions which among a variety of other influences, are also aggravated by climate-related security and developmental risks. The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the world's social and economic order (Horowitz, 2020). It gravely affected the sustainability and growth of not only the healthcare services supply industry but also other industrial sectors (Ozili, 2020). It inadvertently led to serious economic disruptions, job loss, and the smooth functioning of the South African economy (Georgieva, 2020).

Thulamela Local Municipality, just like other municipalities across South Africa, also depends on income from residents and businesses. However, the Covid-19 financial crisis has also decimated the income that the municipality could expect to generate from residents and businesses. Traditional municipal credit control measures were largely ineffective because many residents simply did not have income. Dearth of skills, rampant corruption, mismanagement, and inefficiencies, rendered Thulamela Municipality unfit or unable to deal with the impact of the local households and business crises on their operations. The battered economy, the collapse of businesses, and rising unemployment reduced revenue for the focus of the local municipality as austerity measures were introduced, cutting budgets and reprioritizing spending.

The enforcement of local institutions in rural areas and capacity building as fundamental elements of strategies for rural poverty alleviation is necessary. Local economic growth, as a poverty alleviation strategy, is a people-centred process and circumstance specific. Common parameters for such growth include improved health facilities, infrastructure services, sanitation facilities, and educational services. Other than the above parameters for local and sustainable development, local communities have vast indigenous knowledge that can be used to facilitate sustainable development.

Several government institutions at different levels (local, provincial, and national government) in Thulamela Local Municipality are credited by different participants with varying contributions to the sustainability of rural development initiatives. Such contributions are critical in terms of the resources that are needed for the economic upliftment of rural communities. On the contrary, many such institutions were not physically present, and neither are they availing the resources needed to sustain rural development programs. This finding and analysis are consistent with that of Molefe *et al.*, (2018) who point out the need to resolve local institutional constraints to create a sustainable environment for communities.

#### **4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, an analysis of the research findings was done according to the following category of participants: views of traditional leaders and community members from Mphireleni Village. Data was collected from community members and traditional leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, Traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality, and the people working for Thulamela Local Municipality. The next chapter, chapter five, concludes the research findings and makes recommendations.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations for the evaluation of the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development, and LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

#### 5.2 SUMMARY

In summarizing this study, the researcher carried out a recapitulation of the objectives as outlined in chapter 1 to ascertain how each objective was achieved during the study.

##### 5.2.1 Local Economic Development initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality

To determine the extent to which the local community around Thulamela Local Municipality benefits from the LED project, municipal workers were asked questions based on the following aspects: community members benefiting from the LED project, benefits by the local community in terms of employment, skills development, and training.

To assess the extent to which the communities benefited from LED programs, traditional leaders from Mphireleni Village responded to questions based on the following aspects: the importance of LED programs to traditional leaders and the functionality of these programs in terms of job creation and the alleviation of poverty.

On the question about the role played by the traditional leaders in the formulation of LED programs, the participants indicated that they were involved as a project advisory committee (to advise) on all processes and issues around the day-to-day running of projects in the municipality. Traditional leaders from Mphireleni Village also indicated that they were involved as the steering committee, and they always sent a member or members of the council to meetings. The indication as stated above is that it seems the traditional council was well conversant with issues relating to the planning and implementation of LED programs than either community members or the councillors.

The findings of the study show that several LED programs were put in place in Thulamela Local Municipality during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The economic activities in Thulamela Local Municipality are however mostly concentrated on agricultural activities. This might be because the municipality lies in the region that receives rainfall levels that are above average as compared to the surrounding areas. It would consequently make sense that several economic activities during the outbreak of the pandemic were agrarian based. The research findings indicated that some of the SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F and a portion of municipal workers from Thulamela Local Municipality believe that the municipality has not rendered its intended economic objectives to the local community during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **5.2.2 Determining the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) programs in Thulamela Municipality**

From the findings, it is evident that the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on LED plans in the municipality. It has to be pointed out that LED initiatives are closely tied to the small businesses that are operated by community members in Thulamela Local Municipality, and with the outbreak of Covid-19, widespread lockdowns meant that some of these small business operators were severely affected. For example, widespread unemployment forced the government to set up an unemployment benefit grant for those whose livelihoods were affected, and this step is an indication of the negative impacts that were posed by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Municipal staff from Thulamela Local Municipality were honest when they indicated that most of the Local Economic Development initiatives could only become successful if there was a partner to inject capital and skills development and that the strategic partner would have to oversee the success of some of the projects. This is an indication that Thulamela Local Municipality to some extent acknowledges that it cannot, on its own, initiate Local Economic Development programs without external funders or players.

To determine the contribution made by the traditional leaders in terms of involvement and participation, the traditional leaders responded to the questions based on the following aspects: the role played by traditional leaders from Mphireleni Village in the planning and development of LED programs, the role played by traditional leaders in involving community members from the planning stage of the project, approval of the project by community members, the period since the traditional leaders have been working with the municipality officials and information about community building and the developments taking place within the municipality.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The main objective of this study was to assess the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality in order to recommend strategies for combatting unemployment and the level of poverty caused by Covid-19. This section dwells on the recommended strategies to combat unemployment in Thulamela Local Municipality and to set up mechanisms to be better prepared for the outbreak of any pandemic in the future. The proposition of recommendations in this section was informed by the responses of participants concerning the interview questions and the questionnaire that was distributed. The inability of the government to address the increasing levels of various social and economic problems in South Africa has amplified the need to develop new approaches that could ensure adequate service delivery and create systems that are more sustainable for local communities. The complete dependence on the government in providing most of the services to the people has been identified by some researchers as one of the problems hindering growth in local communities (Steinerowski & Steinerowska-Streb, 2012; Olutuyi, 2016; Moses & Olokundun, 2014). Hence, it is suggested that more people should participate in the development and delivery of services to ensure the sustainability of their communities (Olutuyi, 2016; Moses & Olokundun 2014; Littlewood & Holt, 2018). Some of the recommendations as informed by the findings were formulated as follows:

#### **5.3.1 Community involvement and participation**

Findings from this study point to the fact that Thulamela Local Municipality needs to be more responsive to citizens and use limited resources more efficiently. There is demonstrable need for catalytic investments in infrastructure, new development projects, and programs. Where possible, neighbouring municipalities should explore shared services with each other. They must use citizens, communities, and civil society organizations more to provide services, maintenance, and oversight. The media, civil society, and citizens must monitor municipal services and the municipality must be responsive to criticisms, complaints, and protests. The municipality must become more investor friendly to attract investments. This will mean cutting red tape, operating honestly, and ending corruption. Focus should be on building clusters of industries, by expanding current ones or establishing new ones, based on endowments.

Theron (2008:4-5), indicates that state departments or ministries often plan in isolation, and projects are planned and administered in a top-down manner. It is therefore recommended that communities must be involved in development projects in which they are beneficiaries. Municipalities could follow a people-centred development approach that involves the majority of the population, especially the previously excluded components, such as women, youth, and the illiterate (Coetzee *et al.*, 1996: 317). Involvement by the community in the initiation, planning, implementation, operation, and maintenance of development projects tends to lead to more sustainable results. The municipalities are further referred to the success story of SEIDET in which the community was involved, local businesspeople, the private sector, some universities, people from commerce and management, teaching, and general humanities as well as His Majesty King Mayisha III were all involved (Phahlamohlaka, 2008:3- 11).

It is recommended that the following could be probable solutions to improve LED contributions to the local community:

- i. The powers of the municipality are structured in such a way as to accommodate government, business, and community partnerships.
- ii. Municipality to ensure proper management of the projects in the district and where possible managers of projects should be taken through workshops
- iii. and the issue of ownership should be resolved as a matter of urgency.

- iv. Thulamela Local Municipality must ensure maximum participation by all stakeholders.
- v. Thulamela Local Municipality must not lose focus of the objectives and goals for which the projects were intended to achieve.

Finally, the chapters in this research study were outlined as follows:

**Chapter one:** The chapter indicated the background of the study that forms the basis of the present research process. A detailed account of the statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study, the research questions, the definition of concepts, the significance of the study, and the research design was given in this chapter.

**Chapter two:** In this chapter, the literature review formed the theoretical framework for the research study. This chapter focused on the views of various authors on the duties and responsibilities of the government, local governments, and local municipalities on issues concerning Local Economic Development initiatives to benefit the community. The literature also reviewed stories of success and failure of some projects in other parts of the country and the world. This chapter highlighted the history of LED, the future of development projects in Thulamela Local Municipality, and the concept of LED. The chapter further dealt with poverty alleviation initiatives and the extent of community involvement in development project initiatives.

**Chapter three:** The chapter dealt with the research methodology, giving an explicit analysis of the research design used, the area covered by the research study, the population of the study, sample selection method and sample size as well as data collection and data analysis methods. The study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The study targeted community Mmembers and traditional leaders in Budeli Mphireleni Village, SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, Traditional leaders from Thulamela Local Municipality, and the people working for Thulamela Local Municipality. The study utilized purposive participants from Thulamela Local Municipality, since they were likely to have more information about Local Economic Development Programmes in the area during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Chapter four:** The chapter dealt with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation

of data. The responses gathered through a structured interview questionnaire were sorted, coded, organized, and indexed. The responses were then analyzed and interpreted. The sample size consisted of 78 participants, 16 participants from Budeli Mphireleni Village, 23 SANCO members from Thohoyandou Block F, 16 traditional leaders, and community members from Thulamela Local Municipality and 23 municipality staff from Thulamela Local Municipality.

**Chapter five:** The chapter presented the conclusion drawn from the research based on the literature review and the findings of the research study. Recommendations were also made in this chapter.

#### **5.4. CONCLUSION**

Finally, local governments in the Republic of South Africa, through the municipalities, must play their role in ensuring that they can face the challenges brought about by local economic development dynamics and avoid establishing non-functional structures. Community development projects must be properly planned and must serve the purpose for which they were intended to achieve. Stakeholders must be involved at all times. Finally, all the efforts on development projects for communities must aim at creating job opportunities and alleviating poverty.

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## LIST OF APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

## FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT, COMMERCE & LAW

### RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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**ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE: CATEGORY ONE**

**NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:** KONE THABELO SANDRA  
**STAFF/STUDENT#:** 14001493

**PROJECT TITLE:** ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE NO:** FMCL/22/PDN/21

**SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS**

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
PPROF N NKUNA	OR TAMBO INSTITUTE	MAIN SUPERVISOR
KONE THABELO SANDRA	OR TAMBO INSTITUTE	INVESTIGATOR-STUDENT

**TYPE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:** *Honours Project/Masters Research/Doctorate Research*  
**Risk:** No risk to humans, animals, or the environment (Category One: straightforward research without ethical concerns)

**Approval Period:** NOV 2022 – OCT 2023

The Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) of the Faculty of Management, Commerce & Law (FMCL) hereby approves your project as indicated above.

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*General Conditions*


While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
  - Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
  - Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the project.
  - Annually, research projects may be randomly selected for auditing.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Should a change to the protocol be deemed necessary during the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes before their implementation. Should there be a deviation from the study protocol, without the necessary approval for the change, the ethics approval is automatically forfeited?
- The date of approval indicates the earliest date that the project may begin. Should the project have to continue after the expiry date; a new application must be made, and a new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the FREC retains the right to:
  - Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project,
  - To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require further a modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
  - withdraw or postpone approval if:
  - Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
  - It becomes apparent that relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
  - The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
  - New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary


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ISSUED BY FMCL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE on the 25<sup>th</sup> of AUGUST 2022

**FREC CHAIRPERSON:** Prof A Kadvamatimba  
 (Title, Initial, Surname)

  
 (Signature)

**FMCL EXEC. DEAN:** Prof M Kanyane  
 (Title, Initial, Surname)

  
 (Signature)



University of Venda  
PRIVATE BAG 35009, THOHoyANDOLU, 0950  
LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA  
TELEPHONE (01-51) 962 8706/7  
"A quality driven financially sustainable, Comprehensive University"

## APPENDIX 2: DATA COLLECTION REQUEST LETTERS


The Headman/woman  
Budeli Village  
Thohoyandou  
0950

P.O. BOX 2497  
Thohoyandou  
0950

Research Participation

Dear Headman/woman

1. The above matter refers
2. I hereby request your participation on the research that I am conducting of LED at Thulamela Local Municipality since your area of governance falls under Thulamela Local Municipality
3. My research topic is: "ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY".

Yours Faithfully  
  
Kone T.S

## APPENDIX 3: LETTER FROM SUPERVISOR

OR TAMBO INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE AND POLICY STUDIES

To: The Municipality Manager:  
Thohoyandou Civic Centre Old Agriven Building  
Private Bag X5066, Thohoyandou, 0950  
Tel. 0159627589  
E-mail: [wcb@thulamela.gov.za](mailto:wcb@thulamela.gov.za)



University of Venda  
Private Bag X5050  
Thohoyandou  
0950

15 September 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FOR MASTER OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (MPM) STUDIES OF MS THABELO SANDRA KONE: STUDENT NUMBER: 14001493**

The above matter refers.

I, Prof Nghamula Nkuna, Head of the OR Tambo Institute of Governance and Policy Studies: University of Venda, confirm that Ms. Kone T.S Student Number 14001493 is a registered student for Master of Public Management (MPM) with the Institute. The student is researching on: **“Documenting the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality”**. For Ms Kone to complete her project, I hereby request you to assist her with the information that she might need for use in her project. The information shouldn't be classified or confidential to the compromise of the municipality. The study is for pure academic purposes and the findings will be shared with the municipality for possible policy intervention.

For enquiries and clarification on this matter, please contact the writer hereof on cell number 081 800 1756 or email: [nghamula.nkuna@univen.ac.za](mailto:nghamula.nkuna@univen.ac.za)

The Institute bank on your assistance in this regard.



**Prof Nghamula Nkuna (PhD)**

**OR Tambo Institute of Governance and Policy Studies**

## APPENDIX 4: LETTER TO MUNICIPAL MANAGER

Thulamela Municipal Manager  
Thulamela  
0950

P.O B0x 2497  
Thohoyandou  
0950

14 September 2021

Dear Madam/Sir

**RE: REQUEST FOR LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY TO COLLECT DATA FOR MASTERS OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (MPM) STUDIES OF Ms THABELO SANDRA KONE T.S STUDENT NUMBER :(14001493)**

I am conducting a study on "Documenting the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on local economic development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality". In order for me to commence with data collected I will kindly request a letter from you as the municipality authorizing me to start with my activities.

I will need to interview Municipal officials from the Thulamela Local Municipality and for me to be given permission for performing the exercise.

Yours Sincerely



Thabelo Sandra Kone

Cell: 081 388 5777

Date: 14 September 2021

## APPENDIX 5: LETTER FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FROM THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

12



Private Bag X5066  
Thohoyandou  
0952  
Limpopo Province  
Tel: 015 962 7500  
Fax: 015 962 4020

Ref : 4/3/4/1  
Enquiries : Mabasa N.H  
Tel : 015 962 7514  
Fax : 015 962 4020

To : Ms. Kone T.S  
From : THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY  
Date : 07 October 2021

Subject : PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

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1. The above matter refers.
2. Kindly note that permission to conduct research has been granted.
3. Contact Human Resources Section for more information.
4. Hoping that this will meet your favourable considerations.



MUNICIPAL MANAGER: MALULEKE H.E



## APPENDIX 6: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

By completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided.

#### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

2. To which age group do you belong?

Younger than 30 years	1
30 to 39 years	2
40 to 49 years	3
50 years and older	4

3. Are you currently employed?

Employed	1
Not employed	2
Retired	3
Retrenched/ resigned	4

4. What is your highest academic qualification?

Lower than grade 12	1
Grade 12	2
Diploma/ Higher certificate	3
Undergraduate degree	4
Postgraduate degree	5

## SECTION B

This section is meant to assess the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality

1. In your opinion or from your observation, can you say that Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality have been fully functional ever since the outbreak of the pandemic functional in terms of creating jobs and alleviating poverty?

Fully effective	1
Partially effective	2
Noneffective	3

2. How many people in your community went through training and skills development programs in Thulamela Local Municipality from 2019 to the present date?

Many people	1.
Few people	2

No one	3
Have no idea	4

3. As a member of the community are you informed about Local Economic Development programs or the developments taking place in Thulamela Local Municipality?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes, have you been informed about Local Economic Development plans and the developments in the past 24 months?

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4. Do you know of any member of your community who is part of the decision-making in the planning and development of Thulamela Local Municipality's Local Economic Development programs?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes, how many members in your community or village did you know to be on the team?

Many people	1
Very few people	2
No one	3
No idea	4

## APPENDIX 7: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MUNICIPAL STAFF AND RESPONSIBLE POLITICAL OFFICE BEARERS

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

By completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided.

#### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

2. To which age group do you belong?

Younger than 30 years	1
30 to 39 years	2
40 to 49 years	3
50 years and older	4

3. What is your highest academic qualification?

Lower than grade 12	1
Grade 12	2
Diploma/ Higher certificate	3
Undergraduate degree	4
Postgraduate degree	5

4. How many years have you been staying or residing in Thulamela Local Municipality?

Less than 1 year or never	1
1 to 10 years	2
11 to 20 years	3
21 to 30 years	4
31 years and above	5

**SECTION B: Evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality**

1. In your opinion or from your observation, do you think there are economic activities presently taking place in Thulamela Local Municipality since the Coronavirus outbreak?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes, name those economic activities

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2. As per the Thulamela municipality's IDP, do you think the municipality has rendered its intended economic objectives to the local community?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes, in which way?

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If not, what were the constraints?

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2. In your opinion, do you think Local Economic Development initiatives have achieved the goals that they were planned for in Thulamela Local Municipality?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes, please explain

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3. Which of the following stakeholders were involved in the planning and development of Local Economic Development programs? Indicate your answer with a cross.

Local community	1
Community-Based Organisations	2
Non-Governmental Organisations	3
Business	4
Traditional leaders	5

Others (Please specify)

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3. In your opinion, do you think that Thulamela Local Municipality on its own has the capacity and competent personnel to run the Local Economic Development plans efficiently in times of pandemics?

Yes	1
No	2

3. Have any studies or surveys concerning the needs of the local community in times of the Coronavirus pandemic been done to address the immediate concerns?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes, how were the studies/surveys conducted?

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Which economic activities have been envisaged in the planning and development of Thulamela Local Municipality in the past 24 months?

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## APPENDIX 8: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRADITIONAL LEADERS

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

In completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided. The questions are given below:

1. In your opinion or from your observation, can you say that Thulamela Local Municipality's Local Economic Development initiatives have been functional in terms of creating jobs and alleviating poverty?

Fully functional	1
Partially functional	2
Non-functional	3

2. What role do you, as a traditional leader, play in the planning, implementation, and development of community projects?

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3. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Local Economic Development LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality?

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What is the relationship between Local Economic Development LED programs and economic growth in Thulamela Municipality?

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In what way have Local Economic Development LED programs in Thulamela Local Municipality been aligned in addressing the issues exposed by the COVID-19 outbreak?

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What do you think should be done to improve Local Economic Development LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality?

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## APPENDIX 9: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRADITIONAL LEADERS: THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

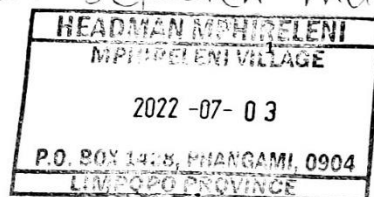
In completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided. The questions are given below:

1. In your opinion or from your observation, can you say that Thulamela Local Municipality's Local Economic Development initiatives have been functional in terms of creating jobs and alleviating poverty?

Fully functional	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Partially functional	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non functional	3	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What role do you, as a traditional leader, play in the planning, implementation and the development of community projects?

My task is to make sure that the needs of the community are taken care of by acting as conduit between municipality and the people



3. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Local Economic Development LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality?

Small businesses were indefinitely forced to shut down and LED plans for the village were no longer taken care of. People had to stay at home and their businesses were shut down.

What is the relationship between Local Economic Development LED programs and economic growth in Thulamela Municipality?

The more the programs there are for economic development, means that these programs will be the engine for driving economic growth.

In what way have Local Economic Development LED programs in Thulamela Local Municipality been aligned in addressing the issues exposed by the COVID-19 outbreak?

The municipality conducted surveys in each household in the village and are able to be assisted. But most of the economic activities were not taking place during the time.

What do you think should be done to improve Local Economic Development LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality?

The municipality has to work hard in hand with the people that they serve so that their programs are aligned to the community's needs and wants.

HEADMAN MPHIRELENI MPHIRELENI VILLAGE
2022-07-03
P.O. BOX 143, PHANGAMI, 0904 LIMPOPO PROVINCE

## APPENDIX 10: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS: THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MUNICIPALITY STAFF

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

By completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided.

#### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your gender?

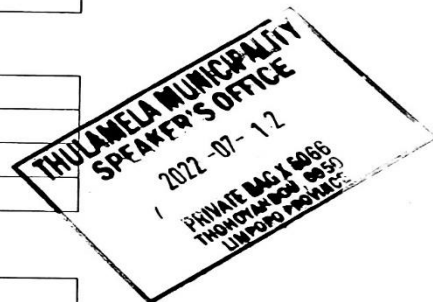
Male	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Female	2	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. To which age group do you belong?

Younger than 30 years	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 to 39 years	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 to 49 years	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
50 years and older	4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3. What is your highest academic qualification?

Lower than grade 12	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grade 12	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diploma/ Higher certificate	3	<input type="checkbox"/>



Undergraduate degree	4
Post graduate degree	5

4. How many years have you been staying or residing in Thulamela Local Municipality?

Less than 1 year or never	1
1 to 10 years	2
11 to 20 years	3
21 to 30 years	4
31 years and above	5

**SECTION B: Evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality**

1. In your opinion or from your observation, do you think there are economic activities presently taking place in Thulamela Local Municipality since the Coronavirus outbreak?

Yes	1	X
No	2	

If yes, name those economic activities

Road works  
Fishing  
EPWP expansion  
Services provision

2. As per the Thulamela municipality's IDP, do you think the municipality has rendered its intended economic objectives to the local community?

Yes	1	X
No	2	

If yes, in which way?

Through community consultations

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
If no, what were the constraints?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. In your opinion, do you think Local Economic Development initiatives have achieved the goals that they were planned for in Thulamela Local Municipality?

Yes	1	X
No	2	

If yes, please explain

The completion of R524 and the Panda Maria Road are examples of how these goals have been achieved

4. Which of the following stakeholders were involved in the planning and development of Local Economic Development programs? Indicate your answer with a cross.

Local community	1	X
Community Based Organisations	2	X
Non-Governmental Organisations	3	
Business	4	X
Traditional leaders	5	X

Others (Please specify)

Religious entities

5. In your opinion, do you think that Thulamela Local Municipality on its own has the capacity and competent personnel to run the Local Economic Development plans efficiently in times of pandemics?

Yes	1	X
No	2	

6. Have any studies or surveys concerning the needs of the local community in times of Coronavirus pandemic been done in order to address the immediate concerns?

Yes	1	X
No	2	

If yes, how were the studies/surveys conducted?

Pilot testing was done and on the survey

Which economic activities have been envisaged in the planning and development of Thulamela Local Municipality in the past 24 months?

R5,24 construction  
Fishing  
Forestry  
Construction

## APPENDIX 11: QUESTIONNAIRE: SANCO MEMBERS: THOHOYANDOU BLOCK

F

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SANCO MEMBERS: THOHOYANDOU BLOCK F

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

By completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided.

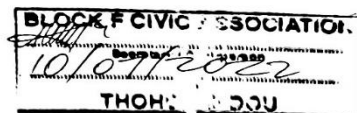
#### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2 X

2. To which age group do you belong?

Younger than 30 years	1 X
30 to 39 years	2
40 to 49 years	3
50 years and older	4



3. Are you currently employed?

Employed	1
Not employed	2 X
Retired	3

Retrenched/ resigned	4
----------------------	---

4. What is your highest academic qualification?

Lower than grade 12	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 12	2	
Diploma/ Higher certificate	3	
Undergraduate degree	4	
Post graduate degree	5	

### SECTION B

This section is meant to assess the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.

1. In your opinion or from your observation, can you say that Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality have been fully functional ever since the outbreak of the pandemic functional in terms of creating jobs and alleviating poverty?

Fully effective	1	
Partially effective	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Non effective	3	

2. How many people in your community went through training and skills development programmes in Thulamela Local Municipality since 2019 to the present date?

Many people	1.	
Few people	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No one	3	
Have no idea	4	

3. As a member of the community are you informed about Local Economic Development programs or the developments taking place in Thulamela Local Municipality?

Yes	1	X
No	2	

If yes, have you been informed about Local Economic Development plans and the developments in the past 24 months?

YES, DURING THIS YEAR'S INEJZO

4. Do you know of any members of your community who is part of the decision making in the planning and development of Thulamela Local Municipality's Local Economic Development programs?

Yes	1	/
No	2	

If yes, how many members in your community or villages did you know to be in the team?

Many people	1
Very few people	2
No one	3
No idea	4

## APPENDIX 12: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BUDELI MPHIRELENI TRADITIONAL LEADERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

### EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LED INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BUDELI VILLAGE (MPHIRELENI)

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Local Economic Development LED initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality. By responding to this questionnaire, you are assured that your identity will remain anonymous. None of the questions is aimed at identifying you as a person and in addition, all information supplied by you will be treated as confidential at all times. The information provided by you will be reported in summary format only. Your participation in this regard is of utmost importance to this study. Please answer the questions honestly.

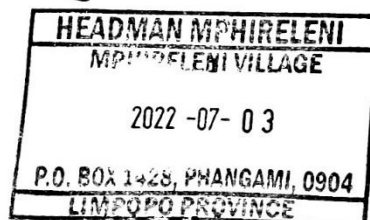
In completing this questionnaire, some of the questions will require you to put a cross(X) in the appropriate box to indicate the answer of your choice. Some questions will require you to answer in full sentences in the space provided. The questions are given below:

1. In your opinion or from your observation, can you say that Thulamela Local Municipality's Local Economic Development initiatives have been functional in terms of creating jobs and alleviating poverty?

Fully functional	1
Partially functional	2 X
Non functional	3

2. What role do you, as a traditional leader, play in the planning, implementation and the development of community projects?

*I ensure these young boys stay away from the streets by helping them learn fishing and selling*



3. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Local Economic Development LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality?

Most small businesses closed down during COVID-19, most people sell from their spaza shops based at home and they were forced to close during lockdown.  
What is the relationship between Local Economic Development LED programs and economic growth in Thulamela Municipality?

To develop community members by initiating and funding projects

In what way have Local Economic Development LED programs in Thulamela Local Municipality been aligned in addressing the issues exposed by the COVID-19 outbreak?

People lost their jobs, businesses closed down and performances went down in most schools

What do you think should be done to improve Local Economic Development LED initiatives at Thulamela Local Municipality?

Traditional leaders should submit names of those with SMME's at Thulamela Municipality in order for them to be funded

## APPENDIX 13: APPENDIX: ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITOR'S REMARKS



### CERTIFICATE OF ENGLISH EDITING

*It is hereby certified that the document indicated hereunder has been edited for grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, phrasing, and overall style by our specialist editors.*

***Title: Assessing the Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Local Economic Development (LED) Initiatives in Thulamela Local Municipality.***

***Author: Ms Thabelo Sandra Kone (student no 14001493)***

*We guarantee the quality of English language in this document, provided changes have been accepted and further changes to the document are checked by our editors. Neither the research content nor the author's intentions were changed in any way during the editing process.*

Khuliso Nemadzivhanani (MA English Literature and Philosophy- McMaster University, Canada).

Signature: 

Capacity: Director

Date : 10/03/2023

Registration number: 2016/147382/07

## APPENDIX 14: TURNITIN REPORT

### ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED) INITIATIVES IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

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## GRADEMARK REPORT

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FINAL GRADE

**/10**

GENERAL COMMENTS

**Instructor**

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