

Using the Geographical Information Systems Story Maps in the Planning and Implementation of the Integrated Development Plan at the City of Umhlathuze, South Africa

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Abstract : In South Africa local governments which are charged with the provision of services and amenities, frequently, face challenges of public protests against what the public perceives to be poor services. Public protests are common, even though the Integrated Development Plan, a central public participation document, which informs local government planning and resources management, ought to be a reflection of the voices of the beneficiary communities. The Integrated Development Plan concept -which evolved from the international discourse on governance, planning, and urban management of the 1990s, and, which bears similarities to the UK's approaches to urban management and planning- is a significant concept in the planning practice in South Africa. Against this backdrop of the spread of public protests and the supposedly public participation in IDP formulation, this study investigated the extent to which residents of the city of uMhlathuze municipality, South Africa, could use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Story Maps to enhance public participation in the provision of services and amenities. To this effect, this study collected and analysed data obtained through interactive web maps or hard copy maps; this map data was accompanied by research participants' attributes data. Research participants identified positive or negative service delivery areas. Positive places were the places which the residents represented as good infrastructural, and amenities areas and weak places were marked as poor amenities. Participants then located each of their identified strong or weak places as points on the GIS Story Maps or on hard copy maps of the city. The information which participants provided was subsequently analysed to produce maps of patterns of service provision. In this way, the study succeeded to identify places that needed attention regarding delivery of services and amenities. Thus, this study advanced service provision through GIS Story Maps.

Keywords : GIS, IPD, South Africa, story maps

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