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## COUNCILLORS URGED TO CHANGE GEAR TO RE-ENGINEER THEIR COMMUNITIES



The Municipal Capacity Building (MCB) Directorate held a five day a Skills Development Programme for Municipal Councillors (MC) and officials, last week, **reports Mr Vuyani Sibene.**

The programme is accredited by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The training focused on Leadership, Policy Development, Constitution, Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and

Municipal Structures Act.

Giving background information, Mr Andile Sidinile (*left*), Director for MCB said the programme flows from the Auditor General (AG) Reports over years, which flagged lack of compliance by municipalities on regulated areas. “The inability of municipalities to spend on grant allocations, high levels of wasteful and irregular expenditure were highlighted in the AG’s report including bad decision making and record keeping,” said Mr Sidinile.



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He added that local government also plays a role in facilitating service delivery by other spheres of government such as housing, water, electricity, collection of refuse hence the need to establish working relationships between a local Municipality and District municipality. MC should be able to identify the needs and priorities of their communities and process them to their respective departments. “Ward Councillors should generally have good knowledge of the needs of their communities. Councillors must lead development in their areas,” he said.

Mr Sidinile said the session was the first block and the second phase will be held in future. He encouraged MC to tap into the economic niche areas in their municipalities. “This was a strategic session to reengineer the way you do things to effect change in your communities,” said Mr Sidinile.

Also speaking at the session on Public Policy Development, Ms Charity Sihunu, Chief Director for Municipal Governance and Support said Councillors must have a good understanding of the Service Delivery Framework as well as the statutes, policy frameworks and municipal processes applicable to local government.

“The efficiency of Councillors correlates directly with their capacity and for that reason building their capacity is key so that municipalities meet their Constitutional obligations. Councillors must also understand their respective oversight roles to realise good governance,” said Ms Sihunu.



Asked about the lessons learnt, Councillor Fumanekile Phumaphi (*left*) of Amatole District Municipality (ADM) had this to say, “The session gave us insights on the controls of the municipality including understanding the process of formulating the IDP something the municipality does it as a desktop exercise.

Councillor Nokuzola Layiti of Mquma Local Municipality said the training made her understand her role to ensure that compliance with legislation. “The session clearly showed us that we are representatives of our communities.”