



SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

SALGA

Inspiring service delivery

**SALGA
POLICY FRAMEWORK
ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CEMETERIES (July 2019)**

Sihle Ndlovu

BACKGROUND

“Municipal planning often plan all the developmental stages of a human being, but somehow forget that s/he will one day die, and become a municipal liability.”

(Sihle Ndlovu)

BACKGROUND cont...

- Municipal planning, land zoning, and land use management often battle with finding suitable land for burial, Municipal priorities becomes developmental in nature like housing, schools, recreation facilities among others.
- Scarcity of land suitable for cemeteries, inadequate responses to issues of religious and cultural diversity, climate change & biodiversity considerations and limited long term planning.
- Management challenges relate to issues of facility management (vandalism, security, use and approach), administration (record keeping and archiving), resourcing (capacity and capability) i.e. shortage of appropriate skills to manage cemeteries, interface with and regulation of burial industry, economic viability of management approaches used.

BACKGROUND cont..

- Social challenges relate to behavioural issues such as communities' perceptions on alternative interment methods, such as value attached to cemeteries and burial options used as well as diversity of clients or users around issues of culture and religion.
- Governance challenges are around issues of legal frameworks, policy and regulation, compliance, institutional arrangements, public participation, systems as well as communication and information

3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Community Participation

This means affording community to have a voice in the management of cemetery to promote ownership and encourage responsibility.

Customary, cultural and religious practices

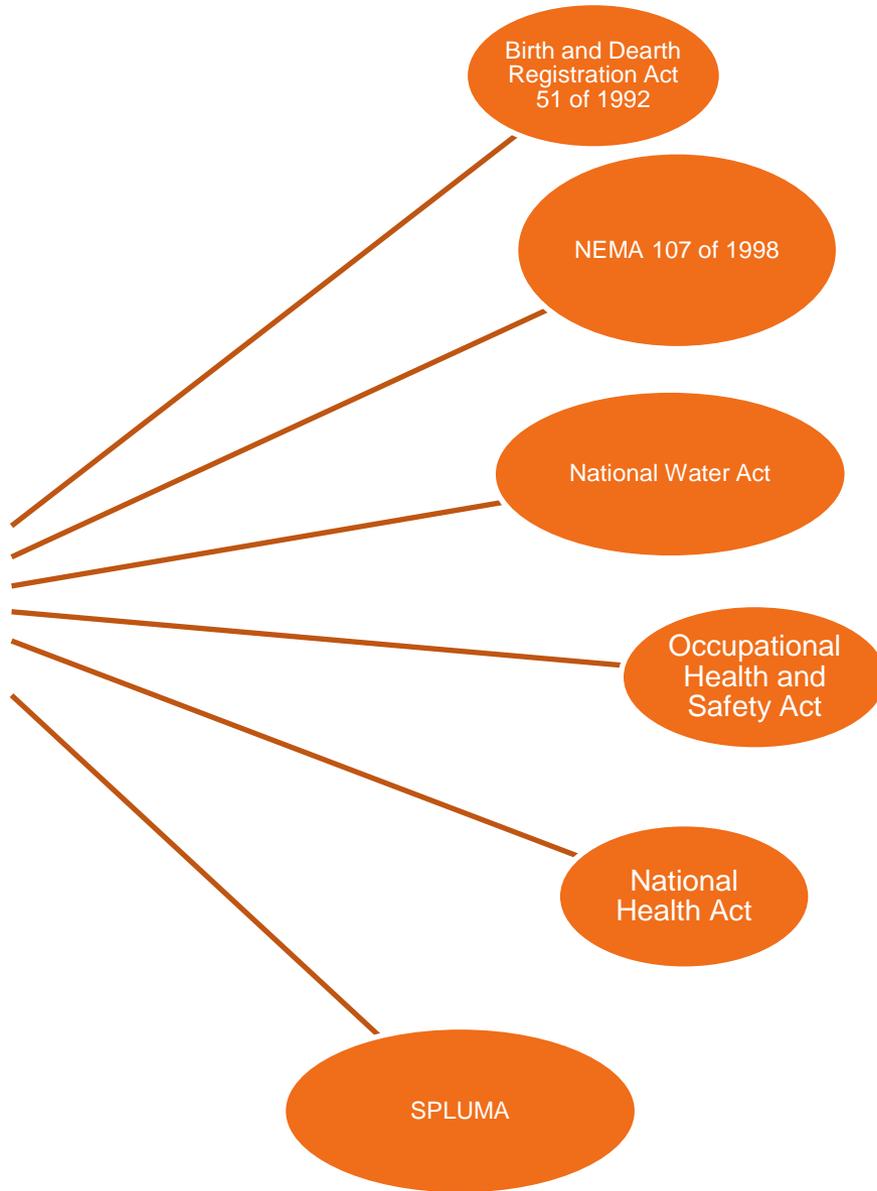
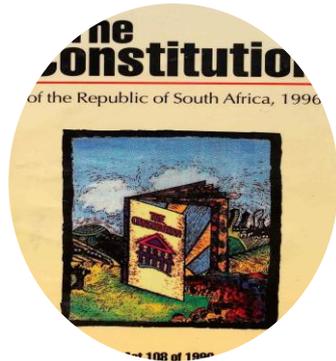
Respect for religious and cultural practises and belief

Compliance to legislations

Enforce maximum adherence to legislative prescriptions by undertakers, Communities, Sector Departments and Municipalities

Legislative Mandate





MUNICIPAL TRANSFORMATION AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| Issue Related | Related Indicator Questions |
|--------------------------|---|
| Training and development | What special efforts are made to provide training for employees in the field of Cemetery Management? |
| Policy | Is there a policy that guides Municipality to regulate burials that include heroes and paupers, land use and space? |

| Issue Related | Related Indicator Questions |
|--------------------------|---|
| Environmental Management | cemeteries are treated as part of public parks in the city open spaces and in the suburbs and townships – both to counter the global warming process and to provide places where workers community can safely congregate? |
| Health | Are there diseases related to contamination of water wells due disposal of corpses reported and properly managed? Undertakers compliance to Health Environment |
| Mortuary | Are mortuary well regulated and compliance to environmental prescripts and standards? |

| Issue Related | Related Indicator Questions |
|-------------------|--|
| Spatial Planning | Does establishment of a new settlement inclusive of cemetery |
| IDP | Is cemetery mainstreamed as part of IPD processes???? |
| Job opportunities | Is management of cemetery recognized as incorporated into LG growth and development strategic document |

| Issue Related | Related Indicator Questions |
|---------------|---|
| Budget | Is there budget for management of cemetery |
| | Is there budget for capacity building for personnel in the cemetery directorate |

| Issue Related | Related Indicator Questions |
|----------------------|--|
| Public Participation | Is there a Forum where cemetery related issues are discussed? Are communities consulted to discuss cemetery related issues? |
| Policy | Does Municipality has policy/ies on heroes acre/ and paupers burials (Special burials) and exhumation? |
| By laws | Does Municipality has cemetery bylaws? |
| Security | Is there security in cemetery(fencing, security or |

FUNDING OF THE CEMETERY FUNCTION & TARIFFS

The development of cemeteries is funded mainly through the equitable share, the Urban Settlements Development Grant (USDG) – a conditional grant allocated to metropolitan municipalities as per the annual Division of Revenue Act (No 475 of 2017), Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) funding, as well as municipalities' own revenue.

Tariffs should be set to assist municipalities to sustain the provision of cemeteries' services. Municipalities must take into consideration the economic status of communities when setting tariffs. Tariffs must be affordable. Municipalities must make provision for community members on the indigent register.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

LOCATION OF THE SERVICE

The Directorate Community/Social Services, Municipal Planning and Infrastructure Development and Municipal Finance are central to this network. The Community Service is the formal apex implementer of Cemetery, while Municipal Planning and Municipal Finance provides strategic support, for realization of Cemetery Management.

INTERNAL FORUMS

Municipalities must establish internal forums planning unit, social / community development and the office of the speaker (for public participation).

EXTERNAL FORUMS

Municipalities must establish external forum. Municipalities can establish forums with communities, Undertakers Sector Department (Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, CoGTA Treasury, SAPS). Civil Society Organization (FBO's and NGO's) are important partners in the management of cemetery, therefore cemetery forum is to be established to improve and strengthen cemetery management.

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE SECTOR

- Fraudulent deaths / burial order duplication recorded for personal gains.
- Availability of suitable land. The population is growing at a rapid pace, therefore there is huge residential and industrial demand for land to respond to the population growth. There is also a current backlog for housing, electricity, roads, etc., largely within informal settlements. It will take a number of years to address current housing backlog, without taking into account the anticipated population growth.
- Lack of registers.
- Graves with high mounds should be stopped – these will be washed away with heavy rains. Serious potential for soil erosion. Maintenance is also an issue if mound remains as you cannot use ordinary grass mowing machines.
- Poor or no record keeping.
- Monitoring of burials in private cemeteries.
- No reconciliation of records to actual burials.
- No reconciliation of death statistics to burials.
- Lack of a central register for municipalities.
- Urbanisation and population increase

RESEARCH OUTCOMES: AN IMMINENT SHORTAGE OF CEMETERIES IN URBAN MUNICIPALITIES



MUNICIPAL RESPONSES TO CEMETERY RELATED CHALLENGES

- City of Cape Town offers Berm burial (only allowing headstones) at a much lower price than Full Monumental private graves (40% of the price). Cremation is also kept at a low premium (R1000 per cremation (2011 price)).
- Buffalo City Municipality encourages, more so, cremation than traditional burial although they also continue lobbying for more budget allocation to erect and maintain cemetery infrastructure which is currently in poor condition
- Mangaung Metro reported that in order to meet the demands of communities, they had to purchase privately owned land for building more cemeteries
- eThekweni and Ekurhuleni have allocated a specific budget for awareness and education around different methods of interment in a bid to encourage communities to opt for methods other than in-ground, traditional burial although success of such an approach has not been measured yet.
- City of Tshwane intends to close cemeteries that are found to be located on unsuitable landscapes while CoJ uses undertakers and their internal marketing department to encourage communities to adopt alternative methods of burial.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MUNICIPAL RESPONSES

- Cemeteries remain one of the sectors faced with challenges that municipalities often grapple to deal with yet not much attention has been paid to it on a national scale. Budget for the sector is evidently constrained and this is worse in non-metro municipalities as the Public infrastructure component (P-component) of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG), a conditional grant allocated annually by National Treasury through the Division of Revenue Act, which was previously allocated for cemeteries and other community facilities is now ring-fenced for sport and recreation facilities only. Illegal, informal burials and cemeteries located on geological unsuitable landscapes are the most problematic as these pose a huge threat on the sustainable development of communities. The developmental mandate of municipalities is hugely compromised mainly because their ability to meet the basic needs of communities such as water and shelter is adversely affected by such burials resulting in water sources becoming contaminated and land is continually in short supply and expensive.
- Although the demand for more land for cemeteries is high, it is important to note that the cultural and religious beliefs attached to cemeteries and burial methods of communities cannot be undermined. A balance needs to be struck and as has been argued in the international experience section above, this balance can only be achieved if the demand for land for burial practices does not exceed supply and also if burial methods used are not a threat to the development of sustainable communities. In countries where the balance has not been struck, the only options available are the adoption of environmentally friendly interment, space intensive methods and in the multiple use of cemetery spaces.

ESTABLISHMENT OF CEMETERIES



PARTNER ROLE-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

SALGA

Consolidate and circulate alternative burial methods and related rationale to land burial to all provinces and municipalities; and

Develop and implement a capacity and an advocacy programme on alternative burial methods.

SALGA in partnership with COGTA

engage municipalities to properly plan for burial – plan in suitable land with minimal impact on the health and quality of life of humans, animals and environment.

enhance the development of norms and standards related to burials

PARTNER ROLE-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

cont..

COGTA

Engage traditional leaders on the support of the availability of land for burial purposes ; and

Engage religious leaders on the support of advocacy for the use of alternative burial methods.

Municipalities

Conduct surveys to establish municipal relevant alternative burial method(s);
and

Advocate for municipal relevant alternative method(s).

Among others, advocacy for alternative methods by municipalities is to target primary school and high school children and media.

Develop common by-laws especially with regard tariffs.

PARTNER ROLE-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

cont..

Provincial Government

- Monitoring and evaluation are essential in achieving strategic objectives. The collection of social economic and demographic information to monitor the extent and nature of change is a priority in managing cemeteries and compliance with policy and legislative requirements.
- Monitoring refers to the measurement of the implementation of programmes. In this regard, it is important to develop both quantitative and qualitative indicators as units of measurement.
- Existing platforms and programmes for continuous monitoring of Local Government programmes should be targeted to leverage cemetery management interventions. These include the IDP reviews and the IDP engagements.
- Evaluation refers to periodic review of principles and assumptions informing the programmes, as well as the aims and objectives. In this regard, it is suggested that the cemetery management be subjected to midterm review and overall review after five years.
- Provide available land for cemeteries.

National Government

Avail land for cemeteries

Annexure A

Generic By Laws on Local Government Cemeteries

Annexure B

International case studies on Cemetery Management

Space contestation in Hong Kong

Environmental and cemetery planning in Italy

Eco-cemetery concept in Europe

Cemetery and religion in the World

South African Case Studies

Ekurhuleni Municipality (costing and pricing)

Maluti-a-phofung Local Municipality (informal cemeteries)

eThekweni Metro (re-use of older cemeteries)

Mangaung Metro (vandalism and theft)

Rising number of paupers in KZN



**Thank
You!!!**

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