

City of Johannesburg

Case Study Report: Migrant Help Desk

28 August 2008

Contact Details

PDG

<i>Contact</i>	Nazreen Kola
<i>Postal address</i>	Postnet Suite #259, Private Bag X30500, Houghton, 2041
<i>Physical address</i>	30 Rhodes Avenue, Parktown, Johannesburg
<i>Telephone</i>	(011) 482 9568
<i>Facsimile</i>	(011) 482 9542
<i>Cell phone</i>	083 703 4677
<i>E-mail</i>	nazreen@pdg.co.za

Preface

PDG was commissioned by the Johannesburg Innovation & Knowledge Exchange (JIKE) to carry out three innovation and two retrospective case studies. The purpose of these case studies is to document experience in the City of Johannesburg and share ways of doing things both internally as well as with other municipalities. This case study reflects on and documents the better practice and lessons learned by the City in the implementation of the Migrant Help Desk.

Contents

Preface	i
1 Introduction.....	1
2 The Idea.....	1
3 Establishing the MHD Service Model	2
3.1 Strategic objectives	2
3.2 The role of the MHD.....	4
3.3 Consultative process.....	5
3.4 Informing the City’s employees	5
3.5 Stakeholders and networks	5
3.6 Beneficiaries	6
4 Implementation of the MHD.....	8
(Source: CoJ, 2006: 16).....	1
4.1 Capacity and skills	1
4.2 Funding.....	2
4.3 Governance	2
5 Impact of the MHD	2
6 Lessons Learned.....	2
6.1 Challenges	3
6.2 Highlights	4
6.3 Critical Lessons Learned	5
6.4 Replication of the MHD Service Model	7
7 Taking the Project Forward.....	7
References	9
Interviews	9

1 Introduction

In 2005 during Executive Mayor Amos Masondo's Mayoral Roadshow a need for support and service provision for migrants in the City of Johannesburg (hereinafter referred to as the CoJ) was identified. The Mayor interacted with a number of communities throughout the City and the circumstance of migrants, particularly vulnerable migrants was persistently voiced. The Mayor, acutely aware of this ardent need responded and championed the idea of a Migrant Help Desk.

The Migrant Help Desk (hereinafter referred to as the MHD) was launched on the 17th of April 2007, by Executive Mayor Amos Masondo. On that occasion the City expressed its commitment to adopting a progressive approach to ensuring migrants feel that they are a part of an inclusive City that strives to advance human development by addressing social exclusion through prospects for social inclusion.

This report describes the City's innovative approach to migrants residing in Joburg and is testimony to better practice in the CoJ in implementing policy and strategy aimed towards human development, social upliftment and integration. The report details the initiation of the idea, the implementation and impact of the MHD, and the various lessons that have already been learnt.

2 The Idea

The CoJ has taken the lead among cities in South Africa in establishing the MHD and in its approach to the MHD. The MHD is based on a service model oriented in the CoJ's Migrant Policy and Strategy. The policy views migrants as a complex and vulnerable population that is a growing part of Joburg's reality, and the policy is the next evolution in the City's thinking on how to serve them. It operationalizes the *Help-desk For Migrants* concept document, which was approved by the City Council in February 2007. The concept document reviews implementation challenges and potential solutions, proposes a service model and phased roll-out of a wider migrant policy for the City, and discusses priority issue areas flagged during consultation (CoJ: 2006).

The City's Human Development Strategy approved in December 2004 provides the strategic framework for an intervention aimed at building social cohesion for the migrant communities. The Social Cohesion Implementation Plan (approved as part of the Human Development Implementation Plan (2005/6-2010/11) and the Community Development Department's Sector Plan (2006/7-2010/11) articulated the need to integrate migrants into the City's social fabric (CoJ: 2006). This commitment is concretised through the "Anti- Xenophobia and Common Citizenship Programme", which forms part of the long-term strategic interventions aimed at addressing the social attitudes to xenophobia, the effects of human trafficking and increasing tolerance to migrants (CoJ: 2006). The Common Citizenship Programme was adopted by Council in May 2007 (Interview: Ms Thuli Mlangeni: 2008).

The City's annual Integrated Development Plan (IDP) furthers the City's commitment towards increasing tolerance and the social inclusion of foreign nationals, both cross-border nationals as well as internal migrants coming to the CoJ. The 2008/09 IDP highlights the delivery agenda towards meeting the five year strategic objective of eliminating the xenophobic attacks on migrants to Johannesburg and increasing tolerance of migrants. The agenda includes the following:

- Develop an Annual Programme for Frontline Staff and Middle Management for training in cultural sensitivity and diversity management;
- Develop an Annual Calendar for Campaigns linked to 2010 Anti-Racism Campaign;
- Expands Forum's agenda to include issues affecting migrants viz crime, employment, credit and banking facilities; and
- Increase the number of foreign countries that participate in the Ubuntu Cup and the Joburg Carnival as well as the number of participants in both events.

Organizationally, the MHD is located within the Unit of Human Development: Community Development Department. The initiative is championed by both the Executive Mayor and the MEC for Community Development.

3 Establishing the MHD Service Model

3.1 Strategic objectives

The Help Desk for Migrants is the CoJ's next evolution in operationalizing the City's Migrant Policy and Strategy. The box below illustrates the City's strategic objectives in the short, medium and long term as well as the migrant-specific strategies towards achieving the goal of the Anti-Xenophobia and Common Citizenship Programme.

Migrant Help-desk Service Model

Strategic Objectives

The short to medium-term strategic objective of the MHD is:

- To develop a service frontline that provides information to recently arrived migrants who need to be connected with services provided through the City and its community-level partners.

The long-term objective of the MHD is:

- To expand the service frontline into a program referral and policy-shaping hub for integrating migrants into the social and economic life of the City, in line with the goal of building prospects for social inclusion in the City, as expressed in Johannesburg's Human Development Strategy (2005/6-2010/11). As specified in the 2006 Sector Plan (2006/7-2010/11) under the Anti-Xenophobia and Common Citizenship Programme, migrant-specific strategies working towards this goal are:
 - I. Roll-out sports and arts programmes aimed at mitigating against xenophobia, such as the already successful Ubuntu Cup and the Joburg Carnival run in the inner City.
 - II. Promote intercultural dialogue through the use of various art forms for example.
 - III. With partner organisations, undertake an anti-xenophobia awareness campaign targeted at raising community awareness around status and rights of different categories of migrants (asylum seekers, refugees, foreign residents on study permits, undocumented immigrants etc) to celebrate their cultures [Phase 2 of Policy Deployment].
 - IV. With partner organisations, undertake an internal anti-xenophobia awareness campaign targeting health workers, front-line staff, JMPD officers etc on the status and rights of different categories of migrants and, where possible and appropriate, extend this to target other spheres of government with operations in Johannesburg [Phase 2 of Policy Deployment].
 - V. Establish joint forums with social networks / associations of migrants to systematically identify concerns, address constraints, and develop mutually supportive partnerships (e.g. to combat crime).
 - VI. Approach UNHCR and civil society organisations with a view to establishing a partnership to pilot a South Africa specific urban-based refugee and human trafficking corrective action initiative.
 - VII. World cultures programme supported through libraries.

Box 1: Migrant Helpdesk Service Model: Strategic Objectives

3.2 The role of the MHD

The Migrant-Help Desk

“Making Jozi work for migrants, making migrants work for Jozi” heads the strategy document for a migrant-helpdesk & a long run migrant policy. Its **objectives** are:

- To develop a service frontline that provides migrants with relevant information on available services.
- To develop & conduct anti-xenophobia awareness campaigns with City of Johannesburg staff as well as local communities.
- To establish & maintain partnerships with migrant organizations to identify concerns and address service gaps.
- To liaise and lobby provincial government departments on issues relating to migrants.

Box 2: The Joburg Migrant Helpdesk

The MHD offers a service to the migrant community, including internal migrants from within the South African border area as well as cross border migrants who move for reasons of economic strife, political unrest, conflict and other mitigating factors that force people to become asylum seekers and refugees. Migrants in the City are both documented and undocumented, and the MHD assists in various ways depending on the individual’s status, circumstance and needs.

The service is mainly a referral service where information is given about the relevant offices, institutions or organizations that people can go to for assistance. The MHD links with various organizations and maintains contact with NGOs promoting the work of the migrant community. Some of the organizations within the MHD network includes the Jesuit Refugee Association, Group of Refugees without Voice, Bienvenu Shelter, Lawyers for Human Rights, Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CORMSA), the University of Witwatersrand Forced Migration Studies Programme, Black Sash, ZIPOVA, Christians for Peace in Africa, Refugees Children’s Project, and recently, Islamic Relief, the Somalia Relief Association of South Africa and SANGOCO, the South African Non-Governmental Organization umbrella body which many of the aforementioned organizations are a part of.

These organizations provide support to the MHD and to migrants who approach the desk.

The MHD is responsible for conducting outreach campaigns throughout the City, among City staff, as well as to the broader public. These campaigns are designed to provide information, provide opportunities for dialogue on migrants, issues of xenophobia, respect, tolerance, acceptance and integration. The purpose is to educate and inform communities about migrants and prevent the perpetuation of stereotypes, stigma and misinformed perceptions that fuel uneasiness and circumstances of exclusion.

In terms of targeting City staff, the primary focus group is frontline staff, those who are most likely to interact directly with members of the migrant community. Staff should be informed and sensitized about migrants to enable resourceful responses when approached. They need to be aware of the type of documents and permits carried by migrants or the kind of information migrants should have on-hand in order to access public services. Hence, the MHD networks with various COJ Departments, such as Health Services, the Department of Education, Home Affairs and other relevant departments that likely interact with the migrant community.

3.3 Consultative process

In the inception phase of the MHD a long, well informed consultative process was undertaken to ensure that the establishment of the MHD is based on a well researched and informed framework and conceptual understanding. It was imperative in this to have a sound theoretical understanding of migration issues, rights-based frameworks, methods and approaches, which could be translated into a practical system with tangible outcomes.

Independent research was done by the South African Migration Programme (SAMP) on migrants in the CoJ, which was used to inform the MHD. The CoJ established links with SAMP, the WITS Forced Migration Studies Programme, Lawyers for Human Rights and five key NGOs working with migrants in the City: Refugee Children's Project (RCP), Black Sash, Jesuit, Group of Refugees Without Voice, Bienvenu Shelter. These organizations as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and The Hague Process for Refugees and Migrants were consulted pre-establishment. The CoJ held meeting with the Department of Home Affairs and other relevant stakeholders to ensure their support for the MHD.

The Department of Home Affairs was central to the stakeholder consultations, since it is the legal custodian of issues pertaining to migrants.

The City held workshops with stakeholders to inform people about the legal framework and the rights based approach to the issue of migrants. The workshops sought to expose participants, through dialogue, to attitudes, perceptions and stereotypes. The City has been mindful of the need to empower both stakeholders and employees of the City to deal with migrants.

3.4 Informing the City's employees

City employees were informed about the MHD through the City's intranet where information was posted. The City further carried out an internal competition to encourage people to share their views of migrants, xenophobia, respect, tolerance, acceptance, support and integration.

Posters and pamphlets that portrayed and raised awareness to the policies adopted by CoJ and the principles of Batho Pele were developed and displayed around the City and in offices throughout the CoJ.

3.5 Stakeholders and networks

The key stakeholders of the MHD include Peoples Centre within the CoJ, Health Services, the Department of Housing, the Gauteng Province, the Johannesburg Metro Police Department, the Department of Education, the City of Johannesburg, NGOs, and other independent organizations such as Lawyers for Human Rights, the Wits Law Clinic, the Human Rights Commission and others.

The MHD has formed a migrant steering committee that includes many of the aforementioned stakeholders. The steering committee has a large NGO presence and includes, among others, Black Sash, CORMSA, Bienvenu Shelter, Jesuit Refugee Services (an umbrella organization for NGOs working in the area of migrants), Group of Refugees without Voice, ZIPOVA, Christians for Peace in Africa, Refugees Children's Project, Islamic Relief and the Somalia Relief Association of South Africa. The NGOs involved play a monitoring role to ensure that the City is meeting its commitment.

The steering committee meets on a monthly basis and all participants are expected to take collective responsibility towards creating a welcoming and an enabling environment for migrants in the City.

Within the steering committee, working committees have been established to focus on certain issues or areas of relevance and that require particular attention. For example, a working committee was formed on health due to the various health challenges migrants have faced, including challenges in provincial hospitals. The working committee on health explores this issue and liaises with the relevant stakeholders, both governmental and non-governmental and tries to find ways in which migrants can be better served and their difficulties responded to.

Another working group that has been established is one that looks at institutions, such as banks, and their openness to migrants. This group works towards influencing, lobbying and pressurizing these institutions as well as informing them about the types of documents and permits migrants have and what they mean.

The Hague Process

Since the City's endeavour into the MHD, Joburg has joined the Hague Process for migrants and refugees. The Hague Process brings together a number of initiatives and is part of the Big Cities initiative that provides a platform for cities to come together and share their knowledge and experience on how to best deal with certain major issues, and the issue of migrants is one of these. A contingent travelled from the CoJ to the Hague in 2007 to attend a Big Cities Conference. The challenges and issues are not unique and many cities face the same or similar experiences.

The Big Cities initiative and the Hague Process seek to mobilize cities to begin to create an environment that encourages common citizenship. They encourage cities to play a leading role in assisting national governments to develop policy.

3.6 Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of the MHD include all documented and undocumented migrants, that is, both internal and cross-border migrants, the staff of the CoJ and the broader public – communities within the City.

Currently there are migrants from about 25 different countries who are utilizing the services of the MHD. Some of the countries include Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana, Swaziland, and various countries in Asia.

A focus group session was held with four beneficiaries of the MHD. The box below captures some of the session and provides an insight into the work being done by the MHD. The comments made have been included as they were captured during the session. Names of the beneficiaries have been changed and the names used are not the real names of the persons interviewed.

Eric, student, arrived in South Africa in 2005 from Ethiopia

Eric mentioned that the MHD is not well known by other refugees, unlike the Department of Home Affairs. He saw the advertisement for the office when passing by in the inner City and came in. He was happy with the welcome and was told about how the desk operates. His details were taken and he was familiarized through the desk's procedure. He was told that he would be assisted.

Eric suggested that the MHD should make itself more popular. He has passed on the information to others.

Eric was referred to other organizations where he could be assisted. He visits the MHD regularly, and they follow-up on his progress. They are interested to know what is happening with him. Eric commented that the MHD is really practicing according to its name, and that there are many refugees in other parts of the country who are not supported.

Peter, teacher, arrived in South Africa in 2007 from Zimbabwe

Before Peter came to the MHD, he was sleeping in park station. He read about the Help Desk in the City Vision but did not come in initially. He later decided to come to the Help Desk. He was given a warm welcome and it was the first time that he put on a smile since he arrived in SA. He was given two blankets, a mat and soap, which he was grateful for. He was put in contact with a pastor and taken to a shelter where he is living now.

Through the Help Desk Peter is tutoring privately, he is teaching two Kenyan students. The MHD helped him to make flyers and advertise his services. He comes in weekly to check in.

The MHD made copies of his CV to pass around. He found out about asylum and was referred to the Jesuit Refugee Services. Peter was assisted in getting his papers translated so that he could apply for accreditation with SAQA. He now has his asylum documents, which has made the SAQA process easier.

Through the MHD, Peter has been able to get into contact and work with influential people. Things are still an uphill task for him but he is surviving. The MHD helped him to make business cards which mention his skills and he can hand these out to people. Peter felt that the MHD is helping him to fend for himself. They have facilitated a lot, and they are making a maximum effort.

Timothy, arts practitioner, arrived in South Africa in 2007 from Zimbabwe

When Timothy first came to South Africa, he had no destination but thought Joburg has opportunity. He arrived with only a thumb piano. Timothy knew about asylum papers but could not get to Pretoria to get the papers. He learned about the MHD through some people doing arts at the Market Theatre. He was told that this is a place that offers help to refugees. He came down here on the same day. He felt that he was given emotional support; he was losing hope and came to a place that was warm. The MHD helped him to revive his lost hope. Timothy felt that the MHD appreciated his skills and gave him information about contracts and told him to develop a business plan (BP). He was told about self reliant projects, which can be funded through the Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) Office in Commissioner Street and he may be able to get a small loan. He also learned about getting his certificates verified through SAQA from the MHD. He has told others about the MHD, and felt that the MHD has been so helpful.

Micheal, marketing degree, arrived in South Africa in 2004 from Zimbabwe

Micheal met a family member also living in Joburg who told him about the MHD and that he can get assistance from them. He came to the MHD and told them that he wants employment and wants to start a small business. At the Help Desk they took down all his information and referred him to people who could help. Micheal was given an appointment with the JSR and went for an interview with them. He mentioned that his cousin reminded him to go back to the MHD to tell them what has happened and to follow-up with them.

The MHD went through his BP and checked it before he re-submitted it to the JSR. At the time of the session he was recently told that the JSR accepted his BP.

Box 3: Excerpts from interviews with beneficiaries of the MHD service

4 Implementation of the MHD

Currently the MHD is being implemented through the first desk in Region F, the inner City. An office has been established with two full time staff members: Ms Sonto Tshishonga, Senior Secretary, responsible for the intake of migrants; Mr. Dawood Moosa, Social Worker; and Ms Dipuo Masetlha, Assessments at the Region F MHD. Ms Thuli Mlangeni Manager: Human Development Department, and Mr. Wandile Zwane, Director: Human Development Directorate are the key persons closely involved with the MHD working towards its successful implementation.

The implementation of the MHD is largely dependent on communication and raising awareness among the public, the staff of the CoJ, and organizations and departments within Gauteng about the existence of the MHD and the work that it does.

Staff of the MHD have been involved and will continue to conduct awareness workshops with departments such as the Johannesburg Metro Police Department, the CoJ's Peoples Centres and others such that they are informed about the initiative and the approach taken by the City towards integrating migrants. A brochure has been developed and will be widely disseminated throughout the City, including libraries, sports centres, key City facilities and departments, the JMPD, Peoples Centres and stakeholder management areas where there are revenue collection services. The MHD intends to translate the brochure into other languages to further increase its accessibility.

Region F has held Open Days at locations such as Carlton Centre to allow for direct interaction with the public. This form of outreach by the MHD, in conjunction with other City departments creates an opportunity for people to learn about the MHD and what it does. Given the sensitivity around issues of migrants, the open days are beneficial in that they create a space wherein people can ask questions and engage in dialogue about migrants as well as services in the City.

The CoJ website is another area where the MHD has been exposing their work electronically creating another avenue for access to the service it provides.

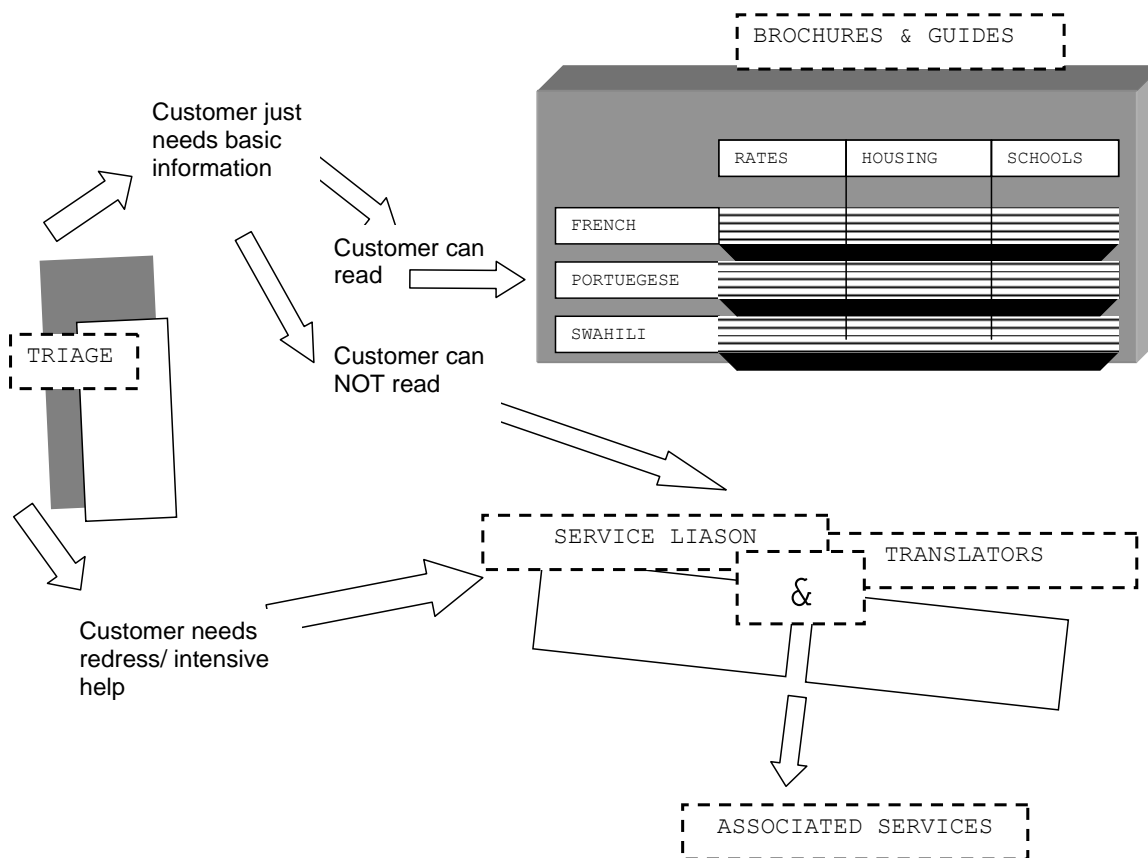
The MHD is still in the early stages of its establishment. The CoJ is aware that internationally, developed countries are much further ahead in how they deal with migrants and have well functioning systems in place to support integration and to formally deal with and respond to the diverse issues that are often part and parcel of this type of work. The CoJ is keen to learn and the Hague Process is important in the exposure and learning that it provides to the City and the staff of the MHD.

The launch site for the first MHD was Region F, the inner City, with roll-out to the other regions intended for 2008. The other regions identified included Region C (launch in May 2008) and Region G (launch in June 2008).

With time the City wants to evolve to other regions and Region A has been flagged given its challenges around informal settlements and migrants. Hence, the 2007/08 financial year will see the establishment of three MHDs.

Figure 1 below demonstrates how the City sees the customer flow for the MHD working.

Figure 1: Proposed Customer Flow Process



(Source: CoJ, 2006: 16)

4.1 Capacity and skills

For the successful and sustained implementation of the project, the MHD needs people. Human capital is a critical to ensure the success of the project. Staff are carefully selected on a particular set of criteria that informs the type of skills required for the MHD. These skills include some of the following:

- Communication and people skills;
- Background in social work, facilitation and counselling, which should include trauma debriefing;
- Interviewing skills;
- Project management in terms of networking, outreach, administration, reporting, monitoring and evaluation;
- Knowledge base around legislation that governs issues of migrants and information on the various networks that exist; and
- Understanding of policy and strategic thinking at a management level since the issue of migrants is in a constant state of change.

The skills set required is mix of soft and technical skills, but significantly biased towards the softer, people-centred skills. These are essential given the human element and interaction involved in the work done by the MHD.

4.2 Funding

The MHD is funded from the Department of Community Development's budget and is a funded mandate that is a part of the department's business plan. Furthermore, the MHD has been fully integrated into the CoJ and adopted by Council.

4.3 Governance

The governance structure of the MHD is somewhat fluid; however, there is a reporting structure that is followed within the Department of Community Development. The MHD has been placed within the Human Development Directorate, under the sub-directorate: Social Cohesion. This structure has been approved by Council and it is within this that reporting, monitoring and evaluation is done. The sub-directorate has all the required posts of deputy director, assistant director, manager, operational manager and secretary on its organogram, but some of these posts are yet to be filled.

5 Impact of the MHD

The impact of the MHD has been positive in opening up the issue of migrants in the City and bringing the reality of migrants residing in the City to the fore, particularly in Council. It has enhanced Council's awareness of the existence of migrants within the City to the extent that Council is more organized in how to respond to migrants and channels resources towards the MHD.

To date, the MHD, as a referral and information service, has assisted migrants with documentation processes, in getting in touch with and speaking to the right people and the right institutions, applying for jobs, having qualifications assessed and recognized according to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) criteria, accessing places of shelter and food services, and in numerous other ways.

The MHD has become a focal point that coordinates responses on migrants and informs Council on how to take decisions in terms of policy and in crafting strategies for the City in the medium to long term. The potential for spin-offs such as the establishment of a transitional shelter for migrants is being considered by Council and is a real possibility. Furthermore, it has placed the CoJ on the international arena and has generated interest in the better practice from other cities abroad as well as from the metros within South Africa.

The anticipated overall impact of the MHD is that xenophobia will be addressed in the City and those perceptions and attitudes towards migrants will change. The overarching goal is to have a Joburg that is tolerant to migrants and if possible free of xenophobic attacks on migrants.

6 Lessons Learned

The MHD is still very much in an establishment phase and there is significant progress to be made. There are, however, some lessons that have been learned from the implementation of the MHD so far. These have been categorized into challenges, highlights and critical lessons learned.

6.1 Challenges

Developing trust

Given that the MHD is a government institution that renders services to migrants, there have been elements of mistrust expressed from within the migrant community. People felt that if they approach the MHD and are undocumented, their information gathered by the MHD will be passed on to authorities, such as the JMPD, and they may be arrested and deported. The MHD may also influence Home Affairs such that a person does not get a Section 22 permit. These factors have limited people from coming in to the MHD. The MHD is a government institution that has been tasked with facilitating service delivery towards meeting the City's common citizenship commitment, and therefore, needs to find ways to encourage migrants and to build trust with the migrant community as well as dissipate underlying fears.

Resources

Human capital is a challenge for the MHD and will be a challenge as more help desks are rolled out in other regions of the City. Staff are crucial in the implementation of the MHD and through experiences had with the Region F Help Desk, the City has learnt that a lot of team work is needed to overcome challenges and to get the MHD off the ground.

In addition, recruiting appropriately trained and skilled staff has also been a challenge and the City needs to look into facilitating capacity enhancement and special skills training for existing MHD staff.

Competing demands

In the initiation of the MHD and in the process of consultation the issue of competing demands was raised by members of the working group and has subsequently been raised by members of the public. What is meant by competing demands is that resources are allocated to the MHD and to migrants, which are perceived as being taken away or less focused on the local residents on Joburg. Members of the public have asked questions such as why are migrants the recipients of support? This has placed a certain amount of pressure on the MHD to honestly respond to the anger and frustration expressed by communities. The CoJ has to find a way to balance and equate service delivery and support to the poor as well as to migrants, and to work with perceptions and attitudes towards migrants.

Challenge around limited resources for locals and those coming into the communities.

Sustainability

The issue of sustainability is a challenge and the MHD has to ensure that its initiatives led in communities have continuity in terms of engagement and outreach and they cannot be a "once-off."

Responding to undocumented migrants

A major challenge facing the City is how to respond to undocumented migrants? How to assist the thousands of people who are already resident in the City to become legal residents of the City? The City is acutely aware of the magnitude of this challenge and needs to develop a plan to respond to this challenge. The City has plans to begin conversations with other cities that have a similar situation and to work towards an integrated, cross-border approach to deal with undocumented migrants.

6.2 Highlights

Advancing human development in the CoJ by addressing social exclusion through prospects for social inclusion

The MHD has localized a point of contact and access for the migrant community to the CoJ. This is a progressive approach taken by the City towards ensuring that migrants in the City feel that they are a part of an inclusive City that treats all residents equally and attempts to create opportunities for their integration into the fabric of the City.

Many of the migrants in the City are highly skilled and have the potential to contribute to the economy. Through the Help Desk migrants are assisted with relevant information on available services and a network of organizations that offer support.

Establishment of the MHD

Councillor Nandi Mayathula-Khoza, MMC: Community Development, highlighted that prior to the MHD, there were no services offered to migrants. The City had a policy on its Human Development Strategy that spoke to migration, social cohesion, and urbanization, but the only formal point of contact for migrants was the Home Affairs Office.

She further noted that the City has been courageous in establishing the MHD despite elements of resistance from some employees, politicians and members of the wider public. It has taken a stance against all odds and kept to its commitment of advancing human development in the City.

Joburg as a City delved into an unknown terrain on an issue that does not typically fall within the City's area of operation. It is often said that the issue of migrants belongs to a department either at the national or provincial level, but Joburg has taken this on as a City. It is understood as a choice made to create a service that allows Joburg to learn from its own experiences and about what it means for a City to take on this particular responsibility and establish a service to respond to the challenge of migrants, particularly undocumented migrants. Joburg in its learning is keen to enrich its own experiences with what others have grappled with in other parts of the world.

Councillor Nandi Mayathula-Khoza was the Speaker in Council from 2000 to 2006. During this time she convened a workshop as the Speaker of Council on the issues of racism, urbanization, sexism and other related challenges. She held a dialogue in 2002 and as a follow-up to the workshop, which included the Executive Mayor, the Mayoral Committee and members of the public.

This prompted Executive Mayor Masondo to meet with migrants in the Inner City and it was there that the need for a formal migrant service was realized.

Councillor Nandi has since become a member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) and in her Capacity as MMC responded to the Human Development Strategy and the objectives of the Strategy. She worked towards establishing the concept for the Migrant helpdesk.

Box 4: Excerpt from interview with Councillor Nandi Mayathula-Khoza, MMC: Community Development

A positive change in personal attitudes

Staff members of the MHD who were interviewed for the case study expressed how their interaction with members of the migrant community and their exposure to issues of migration opened and changed their way of thinking and questioned their own xenophobic stereotypes and perceptions. Staff found they were empathetic to people's realities and struggles and felt compelled to help wherever they could.

Raising awareness and lobbying government on issues relating to migrants

The MHD, through its direct interaction with the myriad of issues that migrants face in Johannesburg as well as in other parts of the country, it is optimally positioned to raise awareness, inform as well as lobby government on these challenges and to suggest areas of reform and improvement.

In addition to lobbying and raising awareness within government, the MHD knows that it is critically placed to interface with communities and the broader public in the CoJ. The MHD has already begun workshops with communities and key stakeholders and will be conducting energetic communication and outreach campaigns. The brochure developed by the MHD, which has been made available for wide distribution, is an important source of information about the office.

6.3 Critical Lessons Learned

Multiculturalism in Joburg

Joburg is a multicultural metropolis, home to people from all over the world. Through the Executive Mayor's Road Show the City learned about the needs of these communities and the lack of a service within the City's organization to respond adequately to their needs.

The City has come to understand how crucial it is for these communities to have the opportunity reside in a safe environment wherein they can openly practice their way of life and to coexist peacefully with other communities residing in the City.

Linking locals and foreign nationals

In the interview with the MHD staff, it was noted that the MHD has been useful to South Africans, particularly for those who have employed foreign nationals. Local employees, in particular, were excited to learn about the procedures and the resources available for migrants and that the MHD refers people to useful places. This reiterated the importance and the benefit of having a service like the MHD in the City.

There is no single solution

The MHD staff have learned that there is no blueprint solution for challenges brought forward to the MHD by both internal and cross border migrants. Each situation is unique and requires a unique response. In this, staff are acutely aware of the need to be sensitive and open to people's differences, their circumstances, and to expect an array of diverse challenges.

Maintaining resources and references: a bank of knowledge and information

In order to effectively respond to the challenges and queries brought to the MHD it is essential for the MHD and its staff to be innovative and resourceful. The staff also erudite the value in having a well managed, up-to-date bank of knowledge with information on available resources and references that allows an ease of access as and when information or contacts are needed.

It is also essential for the MHD to maintain relationships with stakeholders to be in a position to best support migrants who approach the Help Desk. The relationships with stakeholders and the maintenance of a network are of paramount importance to the MHD.

A small start

The MHD learned that the start in an initiative like this is small, but exciting, and it will grow and lead into improved developments in the future. In other words, the type and level of support that the MHD will be able to provide in the future will grow; programmes will be improved; awareness will increase; and the impact of the service will become more visible throughout the City.

Leadership

The issue of migrants is both emotional and political and requires proper, committed leadership; leadership that provides guidance and affords it priority at a political level. Mr. Wandile Zwane mentioned that migration is a universal that existed in the past and will continue to be a reality. Of importance is the manner in which the City embraces it and the level and type of response that is given to migrants.

Consultation

Consultation with and the involvement of various stakeholders, community members, the intended recipients of the MHD initiative and other key partners in the process is critical. Ms Thuli Mlangeni commented that this took quite a bit of time, especially the engagement with migrant communities to genuinely understand peoples' concerns such that they find expression in what ultimately became the MHD service.

She further suggested that it is essential that sufficient time is allocated for this in the inception phase of a programme of this nature.

Documenting the contributions of migrants

The MHD staff interviewed felt that the City should find a way of documenting the present contributions made by migrants to the CoJ as well as those that were made in the past. The aim of this would be to create a documented account or record of the migrant experience in Joburg. In addition to this, a dialogue should be facilitated and should be driven by the leaders within communities who encourage the spirit of multiculturalism that is approached with respect, tolerance, kindness and humanity.

The interviewees all suggested that community leaders need to create a safe space in which issues of migrants and the reality of migrants in the City can be openly discussed such that misconceptions and stereotypes can be addressed.

Plans

Plans provide direction in how to go about implementing policy and strategy and the milestones identified within plans are constructive in measuring progress. They also identify the key role players needed for the successful implementation of an initiative like the MHD. The plan for the MHD, which is a part of the Common Citizenship Programme, identified in the City's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), is particularly interesting in that it is driven by one department but requires the interaction and commitment of numerous departments, such as health, education, the JMPD and others.

Mr Wandile Zwane as well as Ms Thuli Mlangeni both highlighted that a critical lesson was that well thought out plans were a necessity for the successful implementation of

the MHD. There was intersectoral collaboration and coordination that was needed and this was made explicit from the start with plans developed to facilitate processes of consultation and working together. Through the engagement the method for implementation of the MHD service model was made clear with the roles and responsibilities of the various role players identified and agreed upon. Hence, the MHD plan created a paradigm that forced Departments and the responsible people within Departments to interact intersectorally and collaboratively.

Managing expectations

The City and the MHD need to know how to continuously manage the expectations that are raised by the service provided by the MHD. Staff commented that this often is a challenge. The staff are, at times, asked to provide shelter and resources, however, their responsibility is to function as a referral service and to make information available. The MHD assists people in getting in contact with those organizations that provide shelter, food and may assist with some monetary resources. The staff, as a result, must take care to maintain, uphold and work within the mandate of the MHD.

Sharing lessons learned

With the launch of the MHD and the responses received, the CoJ is often asked, "how did you do this?" The City has welcomed the interest expressed by other municipalities and have been keen to share their approach, experiences, challenges, lessons and areas of achievement with municipalities and others.

The City, however, maintains that Joburg has not yet reached a level of perfection and is open to new learnings and teachings. The City has learned that it is responsible for ensuring that the human development agenda is constantly shaped by the voices and realities of communities and is dedicated to finding ways and means to enable this.

6.4 Replication of the MHD Service Model

The MHD has already been shared with other cities locally and internationally, which has evidenced the possibility of replication elsewhere. In order to replicate the CoJ's model, Councillor Nandi Mayathula-Khoza highlighted that it is imperative for the interested locality to understand and analyze its own context and specific issues with regard to migrants such that the approach taken is responsive to the particular context.

7 Taking the Project Forward

The MHD is an initiative that is unique to the CoJ, and to date there is no similar model in any other city in South Africa. The CoJ is committed to furthering its better practice, and through the MHD, aims to successfully operationalize a service that meets the long-term strategic interventions of the City to address social attitudes to xenophobia and increasing tolerance to migrants.

In taking the project forward, the Executive Mayor Mr. Amos Masondo and Councillor Nandi Mayathula-Khoza are committed to championing the MHD through a progressive and proactive approach towards migrants and social development in the City.

The City intends expanding the MHD program and referral service into other Regions of the City and plans have been developed to facilitate their roll-out. Together with this, the City's vision is to create a policy-shaping hub for integrating migrants into the social and economic life of the city, in line with the goal of building prospects for social

inclusion. The migrant-specific strategies working towards this goal include (these are expressed in Johannesburg's Human Development Strategy (2005/6-2010/11) and specified in the 2006 Sector Plan (2006/7-2010/11) under the Anti-Xenophobia and Common Citizenship Programme):

- Roll-out sports and arts programmes aimed at mitigating against xenophobia, such as the already successful Ubuntu Cup and the Joburg Carnival run in the inner city.
- Promote intercultural dialogue through the use of various art forms for example.
- With partner organisations, undertake an anti-xenophobia awareness campaign targeted at raising community awareness around status and rights of different categories of migrants (asylum seekers, refugees, foreign residents on study permits, undocumented immigrants etc) to celebrate their cultures [Phase 2 of Policy Deployment].
- With partner organisations, undertake an internal anti-xenophobia awareness campaign targeting health workers, front-line staff, JMPD officers etc on the status and rights of different categories of migrants and, where possible and appropriate, extend this to target other spheres of government with operations in Johannesburg [Phase 2 of Policy Deployment].
- Establish joint forums with social networks / associations of migrants to systematically identify concerns, address constraints, and develop mutually supportive partnerships (e.g. to combat crime).
- Approach UNHCR and civil society organisations with a view to establishing a partnership to pilot a South Africa specific urban-based refugee and human trafficking corrective action initiative.
- World cultures programme supported through libraries.
- Promote human rights through workshops and information campaigns

(Source: CoJ, 2006: 8)

During the time spent at the MHD with the staff of the MHD, a beneficiary of the service, an asylum seeker, dropped in to thank the staff for assisting him with getting a job as an airplane technician with Airlink. This brief interlude spoke so clearly to the encouraging and beneficial work being done by the MHD and its staff. Often there are spontaneous drop-ins where people stop by to express their gratitude for the work being done by the MHD.

The MHD has created a positive, safe place for migrants in Johannesburg and the initiative is growing from strength to strength with zealous effort and commitment to achieve change in. The goal is to achieve a world class African City that is inclusive to all.

In August, the CoJ will be hosting the Hague Process. The focus of the session will be on housing and health. It is a two-day event where cities will come together to share issues of common citizenship, particularly in the two thematic areas. The opportunity for Joburg to host this event speaks to the City's role as a leading centre within South Africa and reflects the City's growth and evolution in the Common Citizenship Programme and the MHD initiative.

References

City of Johannesburg (2008) *2008/9 Integrated Development Plan, Volume 1 (Revision)*. Johannesburg: City of Johannesburg

City of Johannesburg (2006) *CoJ Migrant Policy and Strategy*. Johannesburg: City of Johannesburg

Interviews

Interviews were done with the following persons as a part of the primary research component of the Migrant Helpdesk Case Study:

- a) Councillor Nandi Mayathula-Khoza, MMC: Community Development, City of Johannesburg, 21 July 2008
- b) Mr. Wandile Zwane, Director: Human Development Directorate: Community Development Department, City of Johannesburg, 7 May 2008
- c) Ms Thuli Mlangeni, Manager: Human Development Department, City of Johannesburg, 22 April 2008
- d) Ms Sonto Tshishonga, Senior Secretary Intake of Migrants: Region D Migrant Helpdesk, City of Johannesburg, 22 April 2008
- e) Ms Trisha Rajendra, Official: Region C Migrant Helpdesk, City of Johannesburg, 22 April 2008
- f) Eric, student, arrived in South Africa in 2005 from Ethiopia, 8 April 2008
- g) Peter, teacher, arrived in South Africa in 2007 from Zimbabwe, 8 April 2008
- h) Timothy, arts practitioner, arrived in South Africa in 2007 from Zimbabwe, 8 April 2008
- i) Micheal, marketing degree, arrived in South Africa in 2004 from Zimbabwe, 8 April 2008