

## There is a need to amend tender procedures Interview with Ntomboxolo Cynthia Ngxesha on public procurement as key instrument for realizing the SDGs at the local level

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### Do we need to change tender procedures to achieve local sustainability?

There is a need to amend tender procedures. But first we need constitutional changes that allow us as administrator to do so. According to our

**“We need to procure in a sustainable manner.”**

South African constitution, we must conduct public procurement in a fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost-effective manner. Yet sustainability is missing here. We need to procure in a sustainable manner and ensure that we improve the quality of life of our communities in a sustainable way. Once this is recognized within the constitution, we will be able to amend all other laws, regulations, processes and procedures.

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### What are the goals of the Procura+ Africa Network?

The municipalities that decided to join the Procura + Network have an interest in ensuring that they serve their community in a more responsible manner. The Procura + Network is assisting us through workshops and conferences where we

**“We can learn a lot from each other.”**

can learn a lot from each other. Unfortunately, we have financial challenges. At the moment we are not even able to conduct seminars or conferences where we can meet on a regular basis and share knowledge and skills. Hence, we need support in terms of financial support or any other resources that will be useful to the network. At the same time, the peoples of this network are genuinely

driven by the idea of creating job opportunities and, thus, to improve the quality of life of our communities. At the same time, we need to look after the environment. So, this network is there to assist us and to ensure that we perform in a more responsible manner.

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### Are there new ways of partnering with businesses?

Oh yes, there is a room for that, there is a possible way of doing that. There are many strategies that the government can implement. The first one will be amending tender processes. We need to have an environmental requirement as one of mandatory tender

conditions. Based on that the government would do business with companies that can prove that they have sustainability embedded in their processes. Or they can prove that their business

**“Peoples of this network are driven by the idea of improving the quality of life.”**

model meets all the requirements of sustainability and environmental issues. Secondly, we need to conduct business strictly with companies that show a willingness to assist the government in improving the quality of life. Currently, we mostly do business with companies that are focusing on profit generating rather than on giving back to the community. The other strategy that the government can also do to motivate companies to become more sustainable is to change funding mechanisms, They can adjust or amend their requirements in a way that favour those companies who are innovative and who support the environmental requirements. Finally, governments

can use the instrument of having rebates on taxes for companies which are certified or otherwise have a proven record of successfully running projects. Because governments sometimes enter into a contract with a partner with an intention of establishing a long-term relationship. But then the project fails and in most of these cases the government ends up spending more than what they have agreed on. So, in that case, government needs to be strict and ensure that terms of contract are adhered to by all parties in order to ensure that if we form any partnership of some sort with private business, government is not ending up footing more bill than what they have planned for.

### Ntomboxolo Cynthia Ngxesha

Ntomboxolo Cynthia Ngxesha is Senior Director: Supply Chain Management at the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NBBM), one of the founding members of the Procura+ Africa Network. Cynthia has been working in local government for more than 20 years. In 2006 she became an Assistant Director: Creditors. In 2009 she worked as an Accountant: Customer Care and Revenue Management. In 2010 she worked as Assistant Director: SCM Compliance. In 2017 she was promoted as Senior Director: Supply Chain Management. In 2013, she received an Innovation Award (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality: Bay Stars Employee Excellence Award) for developing a supplier database management tool with built-in control measures.



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