



# CRACKING THE CODE:

IDENTIFYING THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF SERVICE DELIVERY PROBLEMS

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## Begin with the end users:

Use evidence from service recipients to pinpoint service delivery problems.



In one municipality, informal settlement residents told us that:

- Some areas receive no refuse collection service.
- In other areas, refuse is not collected regularly.
- The municipality only collects refuse placed in bags that they issue, but they often issue no bags or too few bags.

## Work backwards:

Ask how different parts of the system should work to ensure adequate service delivery.



In this case, the problem could be solved if the municipality:

- Provides 2 bags per week.
- Collects refuse once a week.
- Collects from dwellings where access roads permit. Collects from designated collection points where they don't.

## Don't get distracted:

Some sub-systems are more important than others.



- Regular collection is important.
- Designating collection points is also important.
- But neither of these matter if the municipality does not issue residents with the type of bags it is willing to collect.

## Public Financial Management is not the first cause:

But it *will* come up later.



The bag problem can have multiple causes:

- No benchmarks for the number of bags that should be issued.
- Deeper still is the complete absence of any policy for solid waste management in informal settlements.
- Once a policy and benchmarks are in place, the City will *still* need to pay for bags.
- Take care that the costing is not kicked upstairs (to, for example, the finance department). Sometimes funding is available from trade-offs between existing budget allocations.
- Patiently following the crumbs in this way will help you identify what needs to be bought, what it will cost and in which budget line item it should be included.

## Unpack the Solution:

Who needs to do what and when?



In our example:

- Waste removal inspectors and residents should do a needs assessment to determine how many bags are needed.
- Based on the needs assessment, the municipality should set and include targets for bag distribution in their policy and performance documents.
- The municipality should cost these targets and include them in the right part of the budget.