



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT: PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Update - November 2013

Strengthening Citizen-Government Monitoring Partnerships

This is a progress report on work done in implementing the *Framework for Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships for Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery*. The framework has been developed by the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) to support the institutionalisation of citizen-based monitoring (CBM) in government's M&E systems.

Summary

Since April 2013 the following highlights are recorded:

- Framework approved by Cabinet
- Implementation team assembled
- Facility-focussed citizen-based monitoring model developed
- Strengthening citizen-based monitoring symposium held at Freedom Park
- Pilot sites selected
- Pilot initiated in Msinga and Maluti-A-Phofung

Framework Approved by Cabinet

After a year of consultation and drafting, the Framework for Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships for Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery was approved by Cabinet on 7 August 2013. In addition to the framework Cabinet approved that:

- "Government departments involved in service delivery to the public adjust their M&E frameworks to include mechanisms for incorporating the views and experiences of citizens on service delivery"
- "That an annual progress report is submitted to Cabinet on the piloting of citizen-based monitoring"

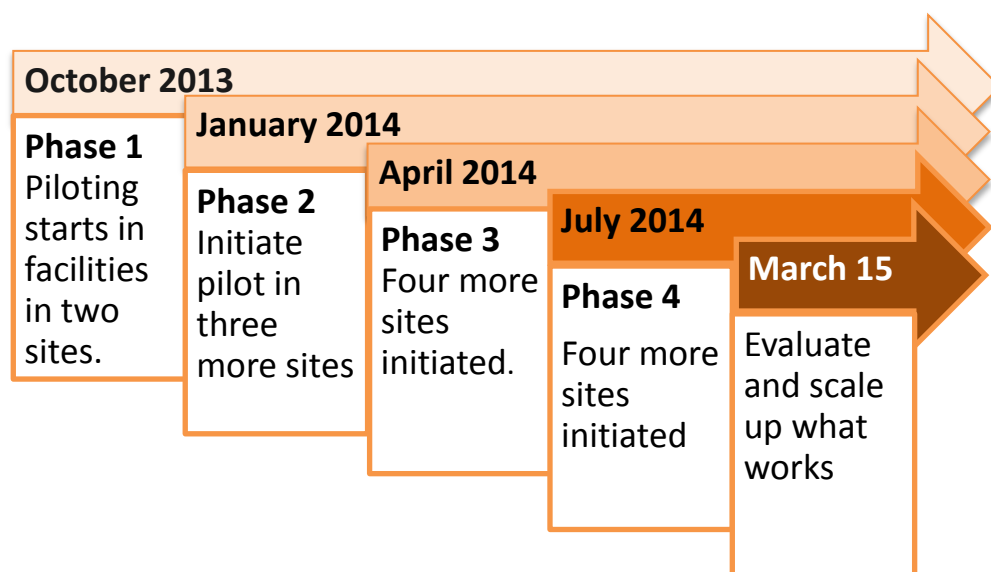
To support this, DPME is developing a support programme, which includes action research, knowledge sharing, strategic support to government and identifying and building capacity for scaling up citizen-based monitoring systems.

Progress on piloting facility-focussed model for citizen-based monitoring

DPME and key service delivery departments (South African Police Services, the South African Social Security Agency, the Departments of Health and Social Development) are piloting a facility-focussed citizen-based monitoring model. This pilot is being initiated in police stations, clinics, SASSA service centres and Social Development offices in 13 sites around South Africa.

The pilot is being rolled out in four phases, with each phase increasing the number of participating sites. Phase 1, which focuses on facilities in Msinga (KZN) and Phuthaditjhaba (Free State), commenced in October. Three new sites will be added when Phase 2 commences in January 2014 (Marikana, North West, Burgersfort, Limpopo and Temba, Gauteng). This "starting small" approach is recommended in the framework, and allows for lessons learned in preceding phases to strengthening the approach in a current phase. (See diagramme on the following page)

Figure 1 Pilot phases



The steps for first cycle at a site

The work process for the first cycle of CBM at any site can be divided into 5 distinct steps, and since the plans refer continually to these stages, it is worthwhile to summarize very briefly what happens in them:

1) *Initiation*

DPME briefs provincial leadership within the Premier's Office as well as departmental heads for each of the 4 facilities. DPME then leads a small team of Seriti¹ staff in meetings at each facility in the chosen site. The CBM programme is introduced in depth to Management of the facility, the process to be followed is outlined, and the people who will be doing the work are introduced. There is effort to overcome any trepidation on the part of the facilities; it is stressed that the intention is to create partnerships between citizens and frontline staff that can lead to strategies for improvements.

2) *Indicator development*

Three sets of dialogues are held at this stage; with facility management, frontline staff and community stakeholders. A first need in the conversation with management is to understand what is currently being measured, what are seen as the monitoring priorities, how evidence is gathered and how this shapes learning. With staff a first conversation would identify the key community actors/users/stakeholders, but also seek an understanding of what is seen by staff as the key areas where improvements can be achieved, as well as strategies to do so. Community 'users' or stakeholder groups are asked to share what they consider to be the priority issues related to the service, and their ideas for improvements or strengthening of good performance.

These initial consultations seek to uncover areas of convergence; a domain of practice where facilities and citizens both believe there is value in tracking performance. At this point it is possible to look for the best ways to measure performance and the tools to gather data. (A 'sweet spot' would be where

¹ The Seriti Institute has been appointed to provide implementation support during the pilot.

priority indicators for government departments are also priority indicators for citizens.) Central to the design of effective CBM is a search for indicators/metrics and data collection methods that are time and cost effective, and where this transparency and opportunity for citizen measurement.

3) *Monitoring*

The kernel of the CBM is the tracking of performance using agreed methods and metrics, over a period of time. We may make a few general observations about this monitoring process. There will be every effort to create a simple and limited list of questions; the local language will be used at all stages; for each metric, there will be four easily understood options for citizen response; design will take into consideration different experiences/perceptions according to age, gender, economic status and location. The pilot will inevitably find locally specific indicators in some cases, but it is also anticipated that generic indicators will emerge across a number of sites, which enable benchmarking of facilities.

With regard to data collection methods, a workshopping process will seek to uncover the most appropriate methods, tools and people to involve for each facility and area of performance. Some indicators lend themselves to cellphone verification; in some cases CWP participants may conduct surveys; data may be collected from those in waiting rooms or queues at facilities; and a range of other tools and techniques will emerge from discussions.

4) *Analysis*

The reports and collated data from the monitoring stages need to be discussed by citizens and frontline staff so as to understand what the evidence is telling us. This may at a first level point to improvement in performance or relative failure, but may also provide suggestions about constraints placed on facilities or unanticipated problems arising from user interaction with facilities. Reports will be discussed in existing forums in the community (management forums, facility/community structures like CPFs and Clinic Committees), Focus groups in queues and at service points and paypoints, and community radio; the intention will be to engage as many actors as possible in a discussion about performance, and crucially what actions can be taken to show improvements.

5) *Actions for Improvement*

The final stage in an action-learning cycle is for facilities to commit to achievable and visible actions based on the identified problem areas. In the first cycle there will be every effort to look for “low hanging fruit”; steps that can easily be taken which dramatically improve performance and/or citizens and frontline staff perceptions of the value of learning collaboration through CBM. A collective experience of success is obviously helpful in building momentum for a second monitoring cycle where targets are set, indicators and measurement methods chosen that draw on citizen participation in monitoring. Indeed as confidence is built it is possible to envisage progressively more difficult areas of performance being tackled, and even for performance improvements to rely on occasion on changes in citizen organization in support of facilities.

Communication & Dialogue

Although there is especial attention to community-wide communication at certain stages of the CBM process, dialogue and communication actually occur at every single stage. The greater the extent of shared understanding of possibilities and constraints, the more feasible it is to build partnerships. The programme will accordingly use whatever opportunities exist to communicate its purpose, progress and lessons. Notice boards in public places, community radio discussions, regular reflection in existing forums; these will all be used as vehicles to spread word of the programme. In every case it

will be emphasised that CBM is an iterative process, and that over time this has the potential to significantly strengthen service delivery, for the benefit of all in the community.

Baseline

The first monitoring cycle will also be used by the team to establish a baseline which sets out conditions in each facility at the start of the programme, the performance norms in place, and the perceptions and attitudes of citizens. This baseline will enable an evaluation of progress over the lifespan of the pilot.

Sector steering committee workshops

In June and July 2013 the first of a series of workshops were held with representatives from the participating sectors. The overall purpose of this round of meetings was to bring senior officials and civil society representatives together to shape the pilot for each of the sectors. These sector platforms will be convened at key points in the piloting process.

- 13 June – Department of Health (DOH)
- 20 June – South African Police Service (SAPS)
- 16 July – Department of Social Development (DSD) and South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)

Technical working group

A technical working group made up of nominated representatives from the participating departments and agency was convened in September. This body brings together officials from the national and provincial sphere to provide guidance to the pilot and will be key in the mainstreaming of workable approaches that emerge from the pilot.

Strengthening Citizen-Based Monitoring Symposium

About 100 delegates from a range of civil society organisations, government departments and international agencies gathered at Freedom Park on 30 September to discuss issues relating to strengthening citizen-based monitoring. Speakers from DPME, Social Justice Coalition, the Good Governance Learning Network, Bench Marks Foundation and The World Bank provided inputs and delegates were enabled to shape the agenda through an Open Space Technology approach. The full report and presentation can be downloaded from <http://www.thepresidency-dpme.gov.za/dpmewebsite/Page.aspx?Id=147>

Plans up to March 14

- Initiate pilot in Phase 2 sites
- Produce baseline reports on Phase 1 and Phase 2 sites
- Review session of Phase 1 experiences
- Design approach for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring outsourced service provider contracts

CONTACT:

Jonathan Timm
Director: Citizen-based monitoring
Tel: 012 312 0327
jonathan@po-dpme.gov.za

Bernadette Leon
Head: Presidential Frontline Service Delivery
Monitoring
Tel: 012 312 0323
Bernadette@po-dpme.gov.za