CASE STUDY 2: WATER SERVICE DELIVERY

➢ *Presentation 1: Citizens' Voice (Mvula Trust)*

➢ *Presentation 2: Using community feedback (eThekwini municipality water department)*

Presentation 1:
Citizens' Voice (Mvula Trust), community based monitoring of water service delivery

OBJECTIVES OF CITIZENS VOICE

➢ Overall: Improve quality of service delivery, strengthen local government accountability and empower citizens

➢ Short-term objective: educate councilors, citizens, CSOs about water services and how to engage with council

➢ Medium-term objective: facilitate citizens to play a monitoring role

➢ Long-term objective: civil society engages at the strategic level to influence policy

OBJECTIVES OF THE APPROACH

➢ Empower citizens to hold local government and themselves accountable through training citizens about their rights and responsibilities in water services delivery

➢ Create a platform for dialogue between municipalities and its citizens about the level, quality and pace of service delivery

➢ Setting up "User Platforms" as monthly meetings between the municipality and the community for ongoing civil society water services monitoring and problem solving

DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE TOOL WORKS

o Establish partnerships with all three spheres of government and build relationships between officials/politicians and CSOs

o Deepen public accountability by developing the capacity of citizens to regulate/monitor water services

o Forge new institutional mechanisms for follow-up (User platforms monthly meetings with municipality and the regulator; CSO, national, provincial and local government engagement)

o Reform the Water department to be responsive

KEY AREAS OF SUCCESS

➢ Developed partnerships CSOs (Mvula and participants), Local Govt (pilot municipalities), provincial (CoGTA, DWA) and national government (DWA)

➢ Developed 12 context specific training modules in water services business utilizing the partnerships developed (CSOs, LG - pilot municipality, regulator – @ provincial and national, provincial government – CDWs and CSO – non governmental and community based organisations

➢ Trained communities in their rights and responsibilities in water services delivery

➢ Strengthened CDWs' and in some cases politicians' capacities in water business

KEY AREAS OF SUCCESS

➢ Deepens democracy by giving true meaning to public participation in local government

➢ More effective than call centers through dialogue and monitoring

➢ Provides positive and negative feedback

➢ Bridging dialogue between ward councilors and civil society organizations

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

➢ Complex terrain of local government politics, at ward level independent structures are disliked

➢ Complex relationships between WSP/WSA in municipality, ward councilors, CSOs and citizens

➢ Contractual difficulties in terms of accountability – DWA/MT/EMM/dplg? - CoGTA re- CDWs

➢ LG political instability, antagonistic towards CSOs

➢ Participation narrows to ward committees only

➢ Can be costly in resources and time

CSOs have no resources for their role

LESSONS: HOW GOVERNMENT CAN USE INFORMATION COLLECTED THROUGH THIS APPROACH

o Monitoring/Regulation capacity within government is limited

o Required is strong community voice in monitoring and regulation

o Collaborative engagements between municipalities and communities are an answer to service delivery challenges

o Government to create space to legislate community structures (User Platforms) in order to provide necessary clout and recourse

LESSONS: HOW CAN THIS APPROACH BE USED IN OTHER SECTORS?

➤ In water, housing, health delivery, citizens could be given an understanding of their rights and responsibilities at the start of project roll-out

➤ Mvula included sections on energy and environmental sustainability – could be extended

➤ Part of councillor training in rights of citizens to monitor, question and get information

➤ Could be used in catchment management

➤ May form part of CWP?

Presentation 2:
Using community feedback (eThekwini municipality water department)

GENERAL VIEWS ABOUT THE APPROACH USED BY MVULA TRUST

➢ Mvula Trust approach:

- Workshopped the concept with EWS officials – institutional reform
- Built partnerships with stakeholders including civil society organisations
- Citizens Voice training - one year pilot programme in EWS
- Contextualising modules to address local issues
- Translation into Zulu
- Training of EWS staff to roll out the programme
- Monitored programme and provided feedback

➢ Formed basis of entry into the community

➢ Centralisation of training and establishment of one user platform not suitable for EWS due to conflict of political process and civil society

ADAPTATION OF THE MVULA TRUST APPROACH

➤ eThekwini separated into 17 zones of 5 or 6 wards

➤ Training over 2 days

  ➤ Representation from councillors, ward members, civil society, and other interest groups (approx. 105 to 120 people)

  ➤ Reaches a broader audience of community based organisations and civil society organisations

➤ User platforms created in each zone

  ▪ Approximately 25 people per platform

  ▪ Quarterly meetings

  ▪ Two way structured approach with agenda and minutes

  ▪ Prioritised key issues for discussions on both sides (e.g. Illegal connections and water loss; free basic water; diseases; etc.)

  ▪ Engagement with user platform regarding policy reforms

  ▪ Assistance from community on how to address EWS problems

Zones aligned with IDP process
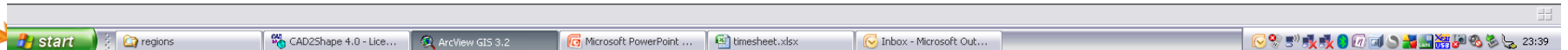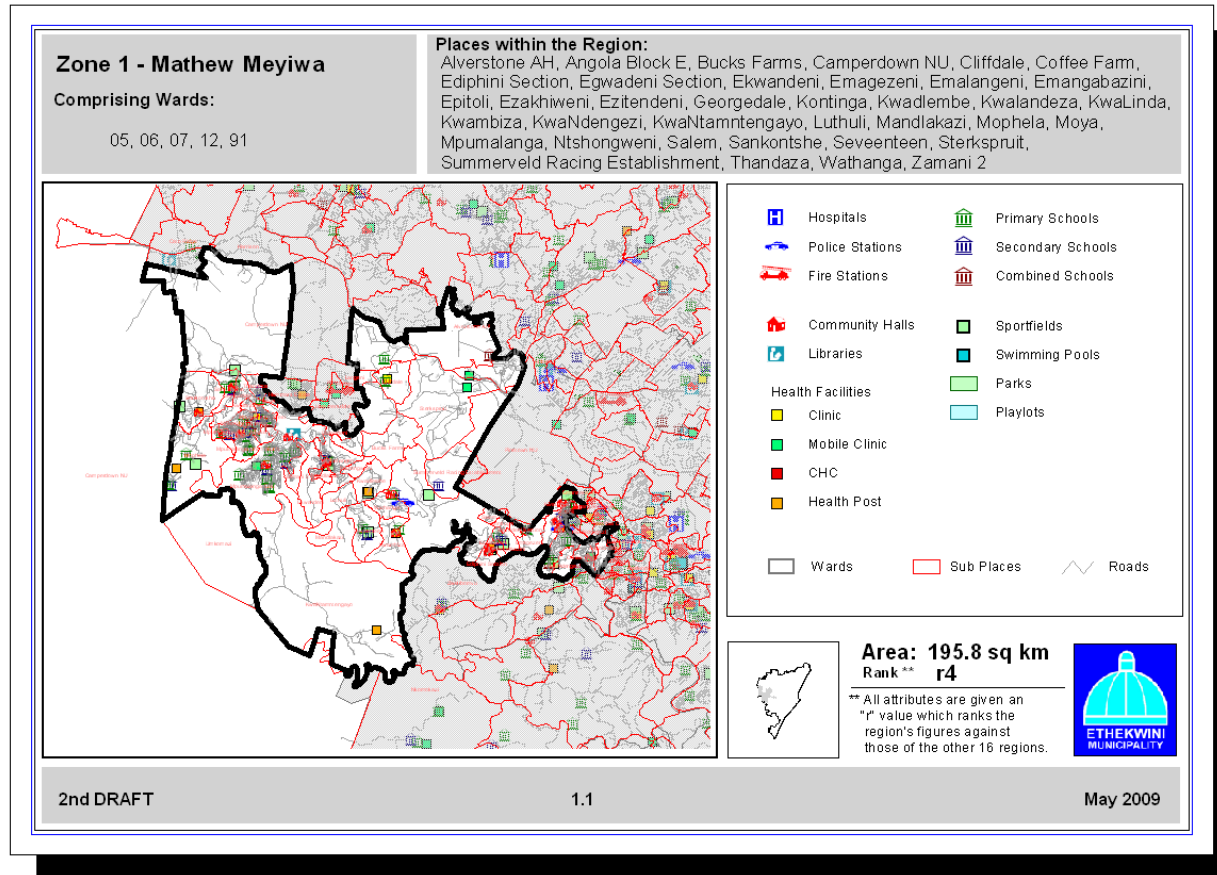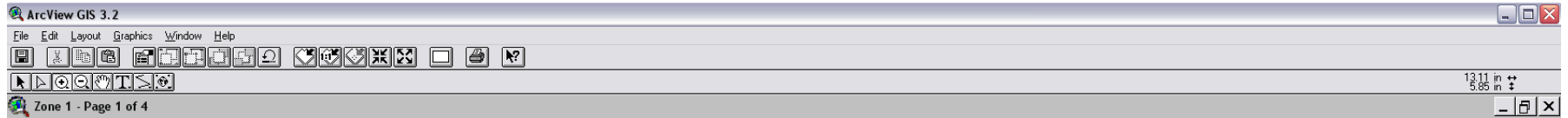
APPROACHES USED TO GATHER CITZENS FEEDBACK

➢ Evaluation forms after Citizens Voice training

➢ User platform meetings (quarterly)

➢ Independent surveys form base line study

➢ Recommendations from surveys fed back to user platforms

➢ Tracking process instituted on a yearly basis to review performance (score card)

➢ Home visits through Customer Service Agent Programme

VALUE OF THE APPROACH FOR A DEPARTMENT

➢ Establishes a two way communication (point of contact)

➢ User platforms assist in tracking performance

➢ Identifies customer needs and problem areas

➢ Engaging the community leads to policy changes

➢ Assists in improving service delivery

➢ Provides feedback on where programmes are successful and where improvements are required

➢ Decisions can be taken based on real needs rather than perceived needs

➢ Results in reduced water losses and sewer blockages leading to reduced operating costs

CHALLENGES OF THE APPROACH FOR A DEPARTMENT

➢ Budgetary constraints

- Transport; venue; catering; stipend

➢ Administration

- need dedicated staff to manage the process
- Contacting all stakeholders well in advance
- Keeping accurate minutes of meetings
- Follow through of action items

➢ Potential for conflict between politicians and civil society

➢ Changes in political structure leads to need for continuous training and restructuring of platform representation

LESSONS: WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES & CBOS TO MONITOR QUALITY OF SERVICE DELIVERY

➤ Separation into zones important:

- By aligning process to IDP the quality of service can be monitored by the issues affecting each zone

- Improved participation in budgetary discussions

➤ User platforms engage on strategic issues but also provides information on daily service delivery problems

➤ Strategic engagement allows input from communities into policy issues

➤ Feedback loop provided information on where improvements are required

LESSONS: CAN THE APPROACH BE EXTENDED TO OTHER AREAS/SECTORS

➤ Essential to have Support of senior officials; City Manager; Senior councillors (e.g. the Mayor)

➤ A relationship with key stakeholders must be established

➤ Training team must be comfortable with the material

➤ Material must be translated into relevant language

➤ Key senior officials to be present at user platform meetings must be identified

➤ Identification of local needs and priorities important

➤ Modify approach to suit local situations

➤ The will to make it work must exist