



THE PRESIDENCY

Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

**Scoping an approach for
community-based monitoring
and accountability**

**Workshop report
29 August 2011**

DPME: Frontline Service Delivery

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Glossary

CAP	Community Action Planning
CASE	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
CMAP	Community Monitoring and Advocacy Programme
CBM	Community-based management/monitoring
CBMA	Community-based monitoring and accountability
CBMES	Community based monitoring and evaluation system
CBMS	Community-based monitoring system
CBO	Community-based organisation
CDW	Community development worker
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CoGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CSAG	Civil Society Action Groups
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CSO	Civil society organisation
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DAG	Development Action Group
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBE NSNP	Department of Basic Education National School Nutrition Programme
DG	Director General
DDG	Deputy Director General
DFID	Department for International Development
DG	Director General
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DWA	Department of Water Affairs
EBPM	Evidence-based policy-making
EWS	eThekweni Water Services
EU	European Union
FSD	Front-line service delivery
GGG	Good Governance Survey
HLT	Human Language Technology
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IDP	Integrated Development Plan/Planning
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
KPA	Key Performance Areas
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIDS	National Income Dynamic Study
NLS	National Language Service
NPC	National Planning Commission
PSPPD	Programme to Support to Pro-Poor Policy Development
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SCAT	Social Change Assistance Trust
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
USSD	Unstructured Supplementary Service Data
WKPI	Ward Key Performance Indicator Matrix
WSA	Water Service Authority
WSP	Water Service Provider

Scoping an approach for community-based monitoring and accountability

Abstract

On 29 August 2011, the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency held a workshop with the aim of engaging with civil society and stakeholders on a structured approach for citizens to monitor front-line service delivery. The workshop presented the results of an initial scoping exercise conducted on current practices by civil society organisations, while workshop discussion formed the basis for an exploration of the feasibility of an appropriate approach for independent community-based monitoring and accountability in South Africa.

Policy implications

Mechanisms for civil society and communities to monitor front-line service delivery in a process that is supported by, but is independent of, government should be established. The process should deepen accountability and promote greater community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of service delivery (Smith, 2011).

Collecting citizens' views (directly from users of government services and directly from the points of service) on an ongoing basis is critical for government to verify if it is meeting the expectations of the citizens, where government is doing well, and where improvements should be targeted.

Collaborative engagements between municipalities and communities can help address service delivery challenges. Such monitoring needs to feed into government's M&E processes to ensure improvements in service delivery.

A key issue in this type of monitoring is political will and co-operation by both politicians and officials. Government departments can be wary of negative criticism by civil society and communities and care needs to be taken to foster a constructive engagement between all parties. Government departments need to give permission to be monitored and be open to engaging with reports to improve delivery.

Crucial to such monitoring is that citizens should be trained about their rights and what they are entitled to so they can hold local government accountable and also understand what their own responsibilities are. Thus, mechanisms to enhance monitoring by communities need to include an educational aspect, so that communities know what to expect in terms of service delivery, preferably against agreed norms and standards.

External service providers can be valuable in monitoring government. However, a feedback loop is essential. Mechanisms must be developed to decide what will be monitored, by whom and how, and, most importantly, how this will be fed into the performance monitoring and evaluation system of the relevant government department to enable the department to act constructively on this information.

Executive summary

1 Background and introduction

The Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency is currently investigating ways in which civil society monitors government's front-line service delivery. This is with a view to proposing an appropriate approach for independent community-based monitoring and accountability (CBMA) which could be piloted in South Africa, but also to facilitate a more constructive working relationship between civil society and government.

The objective of this workshop was to engage with civil society and stakeholders (including government departments and donors) on a structured approach for citizens to monitor front-line service delivery. The workshop presented the results of an initial scoping exercise conducted on current practices by civil society organisations (CSOs), while workshop discussions formed the basis for an exploration of the feasibility of an appropriate approach for independent CBMA in South Africa.

Dr Sean Phillips, Director General (DG) of the DPME, introduced the workshop by placing community-based monitoring in the context of government's performance monitoring and evaluation function. As a relatively young department, the focus initially was on setting up the outcomes approach and starting the process of monitoring performance against the outcomes. This focus is continuing, but more recently augmented with a more hands-on approach to monitoring of frontline service delivery. In the Strategic Plan for the DPME, Minister Chabane explains it thus: *"In addition to the outcomes approach and departmental performance monitoring, we will also monitor frontline service delivery. This will involve hands-on monitoring of service delivery institutions which interact directly with the public, including municipalities, clinics, schools, etc. We seek to involve the public and other interested organisations in this monitoring, the purpose of which will be to gather information on the quality of front-line service delivery, again with the aim of informing improvements."*

2 Civil society monitoring of front-line service delivery

Scoping an approach for community-based monitoring and accountability: Overview of current practices

The research conducted was presented. It sought to investigate ways in which civil society monitors government with a view to proposing an appropriate approach for independent CBMA in South Africa which will feed into government's M&E processes to ensure improvements in service delivery.

A number of local and international examples were explored in the report, two of which were presented in more depth, namely the Citizens' Report Card and the Ward Key Performance Indicator Matrix. The presentation highlighted some key factors that should be considered when developing mechanisms for community-based monitoring of government services, including political will, capacity-building (in government and communities), support to civil society, and various relationship-related issues.

Case study 1: Payment of social grants

Mr Elroy Paulus from Black Sash and Ms Dianne Dunkerley from the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) illustrated the different approaches for gathering citizens' feedback using the payment of social grants as a case study. Elroy focused on the Community Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (CMAP) CBMA tool by demonstrating its use by Black Sash in monitoring the payment of social grants by SASSA. CMAP was designed to improve

service delivery through accountable and standardised monitoring of government's service delivery by identified and trained monitors from community organisations.

CMAP brings real-time information on service delivery to the attention of government and civil society and has been successfully used with the cooperation of SASSA. Through the programme, beneficiaries' awareness of service delivery rights has been raised and SASSA has effected visible improvements to the delivery of services.

A few of the challenges Black Sash has faced in implementing CMAP include lack of cooperation from certain government departments and out of pocket costs (such as travel), which are not catered for in the current budget and hinder some organisations ability to monitor, especially in rural areas.

A key lesson emerging from this case study is that the real-time nature of this approach can assist government departments to improve delivery at particular service points, and improvements can be effected rapidly if regional or local managers are authorised and willing to engage with monitors. CMAP reports can inform departments' strategic plans, budget requests, system streamlining and staff training to improve delivery and be used as evidence for inter-provincial and inter-departmental learning. However, in order for CMAP to succeed, there needs to be a physical presence of a visible monitor who is adequately trained and supported; government departments need to give permission to be monitored and be open to engaging with and using reports to improve delivery; and the project must be managed by independent civil society organisations.

In addition to CMAP, other approaches were presented by SASSA to gather citizens feedback including internal monitoring tools (where SASSA monitors itself) and external monitoring tools, for example stakeholder forums and CMAP. The CMAP approach provides clearly defined indicators from which valuable evaluation feedback can be obtained, such as the physical conditions of the service points, whether there were sufficient numbers of staff, the speed of service (while still maintaining quality) and whether information was effectively communicated to ensure, for example, citizens know what they are entitled to.

While recommendations are not always consistent with resource capability, the monitoring of SASSA by an external service provider is still extremely valuable in that it provides an objective evidence-based assessment that SASSA can use to improve services.

Case study 2: Monitoring water service delivery

Mr Victor Munnik and Ms Lindy Morrison of Mvula Trust and Mr Teddy Gounden from the eThekweni Municipality used the Citizens' Voice tool to showcase how community feedback can be used to monitor service delivery, in this case water.

The objective of the Citizens' Voice tool, which was developed by Mvula Trust, was to create a platform for dialogue between municipalities and citizens about the level, quality and pace of service delivery, as well as to train citizens about their rights and responsibilities to empower them to hold local government and themselves accountable.

Fundamental to the success of Citizens' Voice was the establishing of partnerships with all three spheres of government and building relationships between officials/politicians and CSOs, as well as building capacity in all of these groups and giving citizens a support mechanism for recourse. Although there were issues in implementing this tool, from dealing with the complexity of local government politics to the limited resources CSOs had for their role, valuable lessons emerged from the experience, including that because the monitoring capacity within government is limited, a strong community voice is needed and collaborative engagements between municipalities and communities can provide an answer to service delivery challenges.

Speaking on the eThekweni Municipality's experience of the Citizens' Voice, it was explained that the municipality was divided into different zones and that user platforms were created in each zone to deal with strategic issues and gather feedback. Citizens' Voice was valuable in establishing two-way communication between the municipality and the community; tracking performance; identifying customer needs and problem areas; providing feedback on where programmes were successful and where improvements were required; and overall, assisting in improving service delivery. Furthermore, it enabled the municipality to make decisions based on real needs rather than perceived needs and to reduce operating costs as a result of reduced water losses and sewer blockages.

However, there were also several challenges related to implementing the tool, including budgetary constraints (transport; venue; catering etc); administrative issues; potential for conflict between politicians and civil society; and changes in political structure which led to the need for continuous training and restructuring of platform representation.

Several key lessons emerged from the eThekweni experience, including that strategic engagement allows input from communities into policy issues and a feedback loop is essential to provide information on where improvements are required. But for the process to work, it must be supported by senior officials such as the City Manager and senior councillors (e.g. the Mayor); relationships with key stakeholders must be established; local needs and priorities must be identified; the approach must be modified to suit local situations; and, very importantly, the will to make it work must exist.

3 Using technology for citizen-based monitoring

This session included four presentations on the application of mobile phone technology as a means to gather citizens' feedback and monitor government's front-line service delivery.

Ms Merryl Ford from the Meraka Institute in the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) explained that cell phones are such an important tool firstly, because of their high penetration (about 40% across Africa); and secondly, people use cell phones for much more than just making and receiving calls, for example, to access the internet and buy airtime (using Unstructured Supplementary Service Data, or USSD). She focused on the many ways in which cell phones can be used for monitoring and explained how each of them work, including voice-based systems, sms, USSD, platforms like MXit, web-based surveys, and social media, like Facebook and Twitter. This type of technology is also very useful for analysis and reporting.

Ms Debbie Heustice, Director of the HIV-911 Programme, spoke about the Impilo project aimed at increasing access to health care by providing mobile technology opportunities which have the potential to reach 85% of South Africa because almost everyone can get access to a cell phone if they need one, even if they don't own one themselves. Impilo has three components, namely a referral/help system; a rating/improvement system (clients can give feedback on service received); and an announcement system (information is shared across and within groups, for example, care workers). It gives communities a chance to express how they feel about a service so that they can see themselves as an integral part of the service delivery system.

Ms Tebogo Gumede of the Human Language Technology (HLT), an initiative of the Meraka Institute, also highlighted the use of cell phones for government monitoring by looking at the example of the Project Lwazi which aimed to "develop a multilingual, telephone-based system that will enable callers to access government services in the official language of their choice through a simple speech-oriented interface that is suitable for users with limited or no literacy". The system is currently running in six municipalities. In order to improve the system, the next phase of the project, Lwazi II, will attempt to overcome the challenge of making the other nine indigenous languages more fluent and among others, aims to explore a number of applications, including *Mburisano* (to explore what people are worried about or complaining

about); a job search function for the visually impaired (can load CV via voice); and the Department of Basic Education National School Nutrition Programme (DBE NSNP). The NSNP is aimed at monitoring services delivered by giving learners and school coordinators the opportunity to give feedback. The feedback loop of the system is critical and enables better reporting.

Ms Neo Rakwena from the DBE spoke in more detail on the NSNP, explaining that it is a key government programme aimed at the provision of balanced meals targeting the poorest learners. It is funded by Treasury through the Conditional Grant and must therefore meet the compliance requirements by Treasury, including monitoring and reporting. The applications developed by the Lwazi II project for the NSNP can be used by learners (daily reporting on whether they were fed, feeding time, quality meals – the DBE can verify if learners received meals which is important because this is the department's key responsibility); school coordinators (daily reporting, feeding time, number of learners – also need to verify what learners say); and provincial programme managers (sms reminder service). The project provides the DBE with up-to-date information on the performance of the programme as well as providing the opportunity for early interventions and the opportunity to keep in touch with communities, but to be sustainable, the project must get buy-in from the department.

1 Background

1.1 Background

The performance monitoring and evaluation framework of the South African government emphasises the collection of performance information from a number of sources:

- From coordinating ministers, on a quarterly basis, on the progress against the delivery agreement targets;
- Regular assessments of the management capabilities of the government institutions tasked with delivery; and
- Citizens' views about how they experience the performance of government, with a special emphasis on key selected front-line service delivery areas.

Citizens' views (collecting information on an ongoing basis directly from users of government services and directly from the points of service) are critical for government to verify if it is meeting the expectations of the citizens, where government is doing well, and where improvements should be targeted.

The Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency is currently investigating ways in which civil society monitors government's front-line service delivery. This is with a view to proposing an appropriate approach for independent community-based monitoring and accountability (CBMA) which could be piloted in South Africa, but also to facilitate a more constructive working relationship between civil society and government.

The objective of this workshop was to engage with civil society and stakeholders (including government departments and donors) on a structured approach for citizens to monitor front-line service delivery. The workshop presented the results of an initial scoping exercise conducted on current practices by civil society organisations, while workshop discussion formed the basis for an exploration of the feasibility of an appropriate approach for independent CBMA in South Africa.

1.2 Process

The workshop was broken into three sessions, each examining different aspects of community-based monitoring: civil society monitoring of front-line service delivery; using technology for citizen-based monitoring; and possible tools for citizen-based monitoring. Various case studies from around South Africa were presented and substantive group and panel discussions took place.

1.3 Introduction

Dr Sean Phillips, Director General (DG) of the DPME, introduced the workshop by placing community-based monitoring in the context of government's performance monitoring and evaluation function. He explained that the DPME was created to:

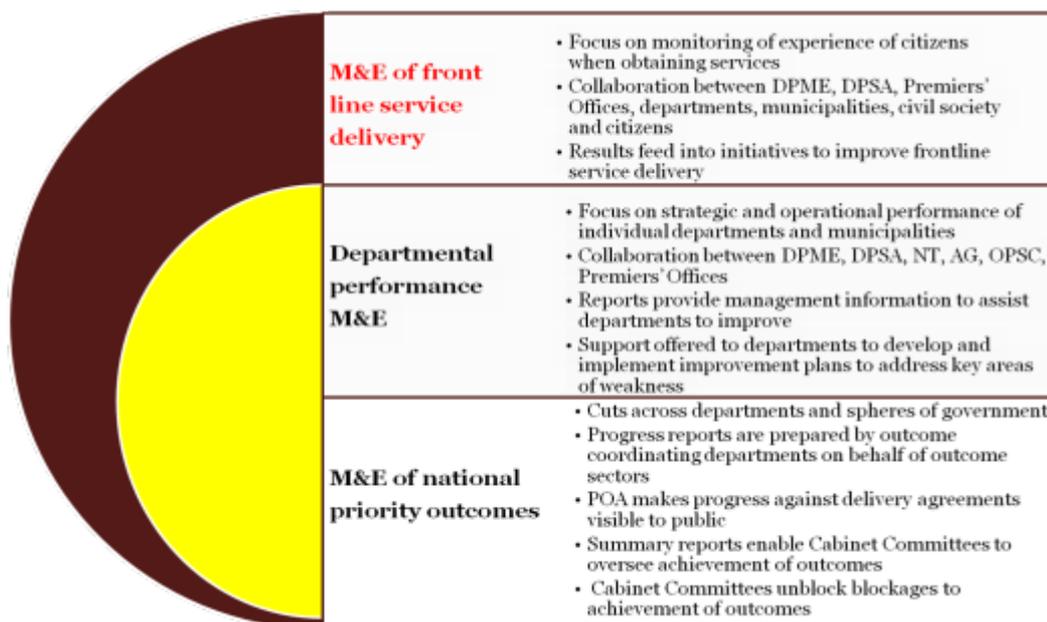
- Facilitate the development of plans for the cross-cutting priorities or outcomes of government and monitor and evaluate these plans;
- Monitor the performance of individual national and provincial government departments and municipalities;
- Monitor front-line service delivery;
- Promote good monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices in government;

- Carry out interventions to address blockages in delivery, in partnership with delivery institutions.

Monitoring front-line service delivery

The monitoring of front-line service delivery focuses on monitoring the experience of citizens when obtaining services and is also one of the sub-outputs in the Outcome 12 Delivery Agreement, that is, more efficient public service. The Executive has committed to focus on front-line service delivery monitoring and has shown this commitment through visits to institutions such as hospitals and clinics, schools, police station, licensing offices and social security grants delivery points by the President and Ministers on an ongoing basis.

The following diagram illustrates the different types of M&E in government, and the role of monitoring of front-line service delivery within that:



The aims of front-line service delivery monitoring are to:

- Verify if government is meeting the expectations of the citizens.
- Assist DPME and Offices of the Premier to collect and analyse data on service delivery at local level and to identify where improvement initiatives should be targeted, and gauge if:
 - service delivery standards are in place and being monitored;
 - basic minimum management systems and practices are in place to enable officials to improve quality of service;
 - basic information is available for users of the service.
- Identify and give recognition to good front line service delivery practice.
- Produce outputs in the form of reports on the quality of front-line service delivery (provided to management of relevant departments and municipalities and political principals).
- Catalyse improvements in management of service delivery.

Components of the monitoring front-line service delivery process

The monitoring of front-line service delivery by the Presidency is being implemented jointly with the provinces and comprises of two components:

Sub-programme 1: Monitoring by **officials** in DPME and the Offices of the Premier through visits to service delivery points to assess the state of front-line service delivery.

- This is being implemented with a focus on government's five key priority areas (police stations, schools, hospitals and clinics, licensing and social security grants delivery points).
- The first visits commenced in June 2011.
- Officials in the DPME and the Offices of the Premier are being trained to carry out these assessments and a number of assessment tools to be used by the monitors have been developed, including questionnaires and checklists, which are currently being piloted.
- Although these take the form of surprise visits, officials will also engage with the management of the service delivery departments both before and after the visits with the aim of providing them with useful management information resulting from the visits, which can be used by them to improve service delivery.
- This is not intended to be a comprehensive and statistically representative sample of the state of front-line service delivery (FSD).

Sub-programme 2: Monitoring by engaging with **civil society** to develop a structured approach for citizen-based monitoring of front-line service delivery.

- This is still in its initial conceptual phase and the DPME is starting to develop a plan for citizen-based monitoring. It intends to initiate a partnership with civil society for citizens to monitor selected front-line service delivery against agreed standards.
 - All service delivery departments and municipalities should be setting and communicating service delivery standards for all their services.
 - Citizens also have the responsibility to both hold government accountable and to work with government to ensure good practices are highlighted and poor quality services are identified and communicated to service points.
 - A dialogue is needed between citizens and government regarding improvements so that government can use this information to assess its progress against standards and identify best and worst service points for more targeted improvement initiatives.

2 SESSION I: Civil society monitoring of front-line service delivery

2.1 Scoping an approach for community-based monitoring and accountability: Overview of current practices

Felicity Kitchin from the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) outlined the aims, research process and conceptual issues related to the research conducted about current practices of citizen based monitoring of front-line service delivery. She concluded her presentation by posing some key factors to be considered when developing mechanisms for a community-based monitoring tool.

The key here is to **ensure that this community monitoring feeds into government's M&E processes to ensure improvements in service delivery.**

Research process

The research process included:

- Review of documentation and the meeting of key officials;
- Internet searches for national and international examples;
- Development of generic set of interview questions (tool used, how, where, funding, management, use of results, impacts on service delivery, successes, problems);
- Contacting of all organisations known to be monitoring front-line service delivery to complete the questionnaire as well as for referrals to others.

Conceptual issues

The project aims to establish mechanisms for civil society and communities to monitor front-line service delivery in a process that is supported by, but is independent of, government. The process should deepen accountability and promote greater community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of service delivery (Smith, 2011).

Conceptual issues encountered in the research process were that:

- **Monitoring** is about the assessment and measurement of progress and should inform decisions and planning;
- **Evaluation** focuses on measuring outcomes, results, effects, impacts etc – but if there is no mechanism to effect change there is no point in conducting such an evaluation;
- **Accountability** is about the rights and responsibilities between people and institutions but also includes **answerability** (the right to get a response and the obligation to provide one) and **enforceability** (the capacity to take action and access to mechanisms for redress).

Monitoring should be an ongoing process of engagement between citizens and institutions which should facilitate change, justice and equity and accountability should be vertical (across government) and horizontal (public pressure on government (Smith, 2011). The public should have recourse, that is, access to levers that force punitive measures if government fails to perform (Smith, 2011).

Examples of citizen-based monitoring tools

Several international and South African examples of citizen-based monitoring tools, have been explored in the research and are outlined in the draft research report. These include the following:

International examples:

- Citizens' Report Card (CRC)
- Community Score Card
- Community-based monitoring system (CBMS)
- Social Audit/Social Accounting
- Citizens' Juries
- Public Hearings
- Community radio
- Transparency portals
- Citizens' Charter
- Ombudsman
- Mystery client/guest surveys
- Public expenditure tracking surveys
- Quantitative service delivery surveys
- Phone surveys

- Community based monitoring and evaluation system (CBMES)
- Mobenzi research

South African examples include the following:

- Community Monitoring Programme (CMAP) – Black Sash, monitoring SASSA
- Citizens' Voice - Mvula Trust – water monitoring
- Village Water Committees
- Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Regulation Reference Group – Mvula Trust
- Citizens' Report Card – Idasa, perception survey of local government
- Good Governance Survey (GGS) - Afesis-Corplan
- Ward Key Performance Indicator Matrix (WKPI) – Afesis Corplan, Planact
- Community Action Planning (CAP) – Project Preparation Trust
- Civil Society Action Groups (CSAG) – Afesis-Corplan
- Development Action Group (DAG)
- Community-based management (CBM)
- Meraka Institute, CSIR – technology based tools such as inTouch, Lwazi (school nutrition)
- Dashboard/Southern hemisphere (cell phone based)
- Mobenzi (cell phone based)

Two of these were presented in detail, namely, the Citizens' Report Card and the Ward Key Performance Indicator Matrix. More detailed presentation and discussion related to the Citizens' Voice process of Mvula Trust, and the Community Based Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (CMAP) of Black Sash, are outlined later in this report.

Citizens' Report Card

- The main user of the Citizen Report Card (CRC) methodology in South Africa appears to be Idasa.
- Funded by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the CRC process is a 5-year project in 50 local municipalities across SA (2009 – 2014), and aims to capture opinions on a wide range of municipal services.
- It provides feedback on the quality and adequacy of services by the users which can be used by government, and by civil society to monitor performance and play a watchdog function.
- The CRC is a perception survey, requesting people to rate services against standards, where these are available.
- Experience of implementing the CRC showed that perceptions are influenced by the quality of governance as well as of service delivery. Questions relating to the quality of governance were therefore added to the CRC.
- Information from the CRC has been used to promote dialogue between stakeholders on how to improve governance and service delivery.
- The key success of this process is that it provides solid results based on good quantitative research.

Ward Key Performance Indicator (WKPI) Matrix

- The WKPI Matrix is used by ward committees or similar civil society organs to hold their councils accountable for performance affecting their neighbourhood or ward.
- It provides municipalities with a reliable and structured form of feedback on municipal performance, which is essential for performance review and management. The instrument contains 20 indicators and 9 Key Performance Areas (KPAs) that draw upon all the elements of good governance such as accountability, transparency and interface with the public. Indicators in the matrix also relate to implementation of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and delivery of services such as water,

- electricity, refuse removal and proper sanitation.
- Previous pilots of the instruments have revealed a need for greater support and cooperation from municipalities to ward committees using the WKPI Matrix.
- The instrument is used by Afesis-Corplan and Planact
- In the City of Johannesburg, it has been particularly successful in expanding public participation process and increases engagement with the City around the independent planning process etc.
- A coordinating committee has been set up at area level, across three wards. A declaration has been signed by people concerned, including councillors.
- The instrument ties municipality to specific spending and the community can monitor progress and performance.

Key factors to consider when developing mechanisms for community-based monitoring of government services are:

- Political will and recognition;
- Capacity-building – in both government departments and communities;
- Support to civil society organisations (transport, communications etc, especially for community-based organisations that might have limitations such as lack of transport, computers etc);
- Relationship-related issues such as:
 - The importance of an inclusive approach
 - Partnerships are important
 - Bridges need to be built between government and civil society
 - This can promote greater access to information through mutual trust;
- Visible use of results and visible change is important;
- In many cases using a variety of social accountability methods is important.

The following key considerations for a community-based monitoring tool in South Africa were put forward for the discussion session:

- What government services lend themselves to citizens' monitoring? That is, what are the applicable sectors/types of services?
- What type of tool is appropriate? (labour intensive vs. technology-based and the advantages/disadvantages of each)
- How do you encourage involvement of government departments and of civil society in further development of this approach?
- How will this be funded and the development and implementation of the tool/s once developed managed?
- How will this process feed into government's evaluation process to effect positive change?

2.2 Case study 1: Payment of social grants

2.2.1 CMAP, Community-based monitoring of SASSA

This presentation, by Mr Elroy Paulus of Black Sash, examines the Community Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (CMAP) CBMA tool by demonstrating its use by Black Sash in monitoring the payment of social grants by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA).

Objectives of the approach

CMAP was designed to cultivate a service delivery monitoring and advocacy practice in communities to improve service delivery and thereby the quality of life of all who live in South

Africa. It does this through accountable and standardised monitoring of government's service delivery by identified and trained monitors from community organisations because community monitoring forms the basis for dialogue for affordable, appropriate and dignified service delivery.

Description of how the tool works

- 270 community organisations in nine provinces were identified, recruited and trained by Black Sash and the Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT) and have signed a code of conduct. To date, Black Sash has 222 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) on file. SCAT is responsible for elements of the support to community organisations.
- Monitoring questionnaires were developed by Black Sash (with valuable feedback from the Human Sciences Research Council, HSRC) to monitor SASSA application and payment sites.
- Black Sash obtained permission from SASSA to access the sites and monitors go regularly to the sites and interview beneficiaries and officials using the questionnaires.
- Four different questionnaires have been developed, for both beneficiaries and officials, at both paypoints and service sites.
- Information from monitoring is returned to Black Sash and captured and analysed.
- Black Sash then writes reports which summarise the monitoring data and makes recommendations. It reports back to community organisations and the relevant government departments for comment and the reports are made public on Black Sash and partner websites and used in future engagement.
- Black Sash and partners support community organisations through provincial monitor feedback, training and support workshops and field visits.
- HIV911 (see section 3.2 for more) and Black Sash are finalising an agreement to incorporate their cell phone rating service into the CMAP project.

Key areas of success

- Success has been facilitated by cooperation from SASSA who recognised the benefits and challenges that monitoring feedback brings.
- This is a simple system based on basic tools and is administered by members of community organisations which brings real-time information on service delivery to the attention of government and civil society.
- Local monitors, known to the public, encourage open and honest accounts of service delivery experiences.
- Beneficiaries' awareness of service delivery rights has been sharpened through engagement with, and even through the presence of, visible monitors.
- Community organisations have enhanced the ability to question and act to improve the quality of public service delivery.
- Community monitoring facilitates dialogue with government about the achievement of dignified and effective service delivery.
- SASSA has effected visible improvements to the delivery of SASSA services based on Black Sash's recommendations, especially in the Western Cape.

Challenges in implementation

- Some government departments have not given monitors permission to access service delivery sites
- Black Sash has experienced particular difficulties in getting a commitment from the Department of Home Affairs after engaging the department for more than a year.
- Even where permission has been brokered at national or provincial level, local officials can sometimes hinder access.

- Out of pocket costs (such as travel) hinder some organisations from monitoring, especially in rural areas. This is not catered for in the current budget.
- The project depends on management and capacity-building by Black Sash and SCAT. Funding has been raised for this primarily from the European Union (EU) for national roll out from August 2010 to July 2012.

Lessons: How government can use information collected through this approach

- Real-time CMAP monitoring reports can:
 - Assist departments to improve delivery at particular service points, and improvements can be effected rapidly if regional or local managers are authorised and willing to engage with monitors;
 - Inform departments' strategic plans, budget requests, system streamlining and staff training to improve delivery;
 - Be used as evidence for inter-provincial and inter-departmental learning
 - Also be used alongside the findings of departmental surveys and academic research projects.
- It is important to remember that big surveys and research projects, when done well, take time. They often provide much more data and can provide complicated analysis, but they also run the risk of being dated. This is a problem given the speed of migration and highlights the importance of operation, monitoring and performance.

Lessons: How can this approach be used in other sectors?

- The CMAP model is being implemented across sectors and is applicable at any government service site or in any community where beneficiaries of government basic services live.
- Instruments and monitoring techniques will differ but it can be used to monitor:
 - Services delivered at sites run by officials (SASSA, Home Affairs, clinics etc);
 - Services delivered directly to households and communities (water, electricity etc).

Key criteria for CMAP success

- The physical presence of a visible monitor drawn from a credible community organisation, and subject to a code of conduct;
- Monitors trained and supported;
- Government departments give permission to be monitored and are open to engaging with and using reports to improve delivery;
- Project managed by independent and credible civil society organisations.

2.2.2 Using community feedback

Ms Dianne Dunkerley from the Grants Administration department of SASSA, spoke about the various approaches used by SASSA to gather citizens' feedback.

Background to SASSA

SASSA is a Schedule 3A Public Entity established in April 2006 to transform social security in South Africa. SASSA's:

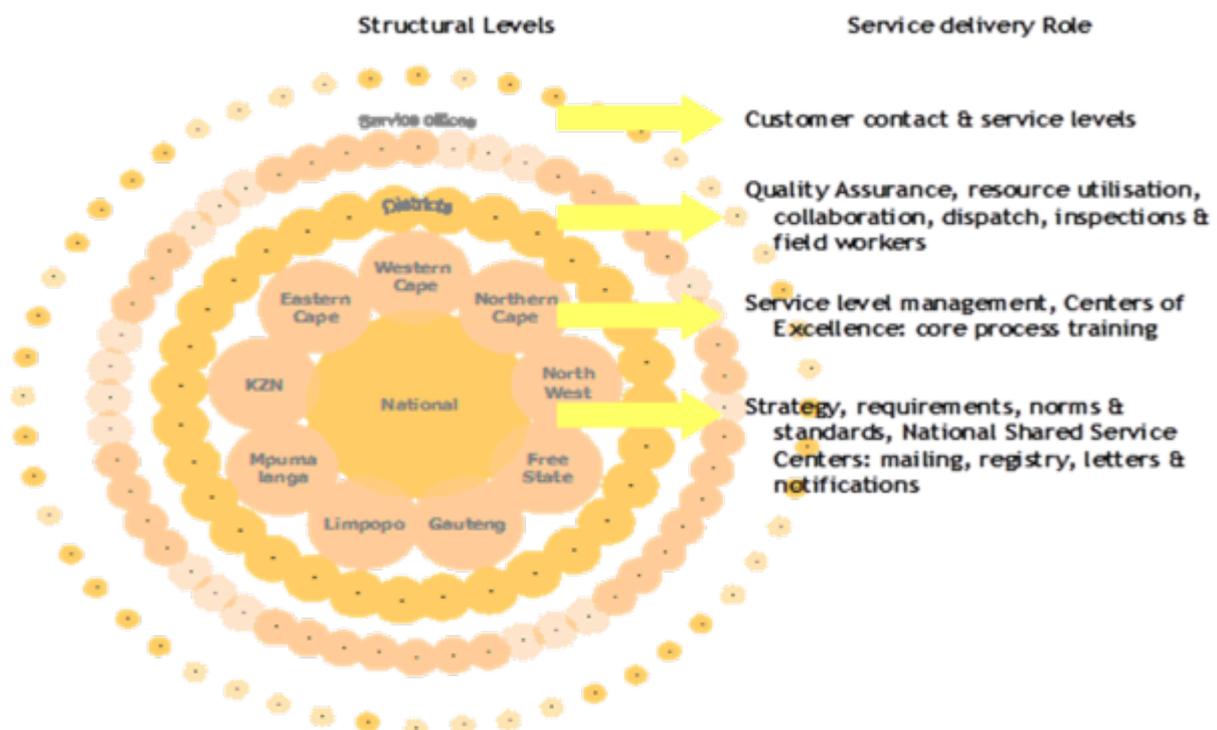
- Mandate is to ensure the provision of comprehensive social security services against vulnerability and poverty within the constitutional and legislative framework.

- Vision is a comprehensive social security service that assists people to be self-sufficient and supporting those in need.
- Mission is to manage quality social security services, effectively and efficiently to eligible and potential beneficiaries effectively and efficiently.

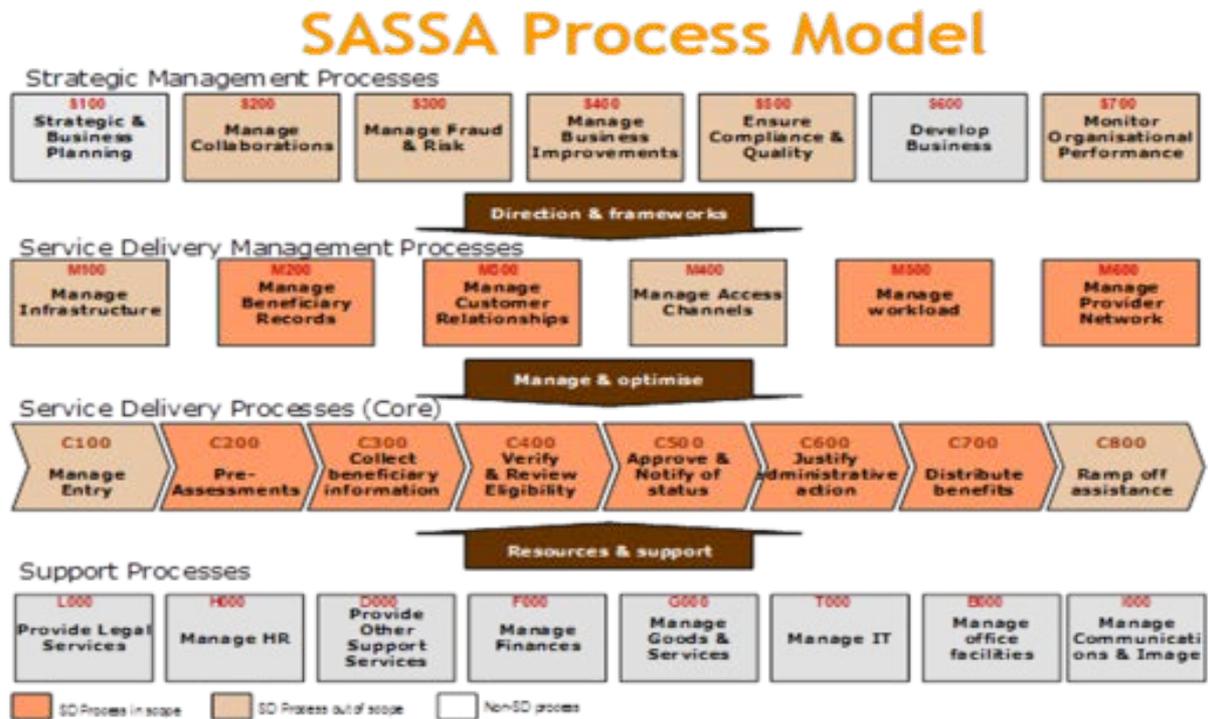
The summary of SASSA's grants is captured in the table below.

Grant type	Number of recipients in payment as at 12 August 2011	Number of children in payment as at 12 August 2011	Allocated budget	%age of total allocation for grants	Expenditure as at 30 June 2011
Old Age	2 679 232		36 571 000 000	37%	9 037 920 794
War Veterans	880		12 000 000	0,01%	3 288 762
Disability	1 200 770		17 813 000 000	18%	4 336 583 884
Foster Child	370 134	546 352	5 536 000 000	6%	1 197 997 294
Care Dependency	110 653	112 817	1 727 000 000	2%	425 375 644
Child Support Grant	5 738 887	10 512 850	35 564 000 000	36%	8 113 390 065
Grant in Aid	61 516		178 000 000	0,18%	46 877 681
Social Relief of Distress			160 000 000	0,16%	21 586 409
Total	10 162 072	11 172 019	97 560 000 000		23 183 020 533

SASSA has a wide service delivery footprint and a presence in most communities throughout South Africa, with 902 service points in local offices and more than 12 000 pay points. The diagram below illustrates this footprint.



SASSA's delivery process model is illustrated in the following diagram. It reveals SASSA's focus on local level where it interfaces with communities.



Approaches used to gather citizens feedback

Internal monitoring tools (where SASSA monitors itself):

- Customer exit service delivery evaluation questionnaire (when customers leave the office they can explain their experience);
- Pay point Monitoring Tool;
- Suggestion box;
- Community dialogues;
- Stakeholder dialogues – the challenge with this is that it is almost a one-way communication.

External monitoring programme:

- Service delivery feedback through stakeholder forums established at each local office;
- Stakeholder dialogues with regional executive management (but perhaps need to engage more to use information to make a difference in service delivery);
- Focused monitoring by Black Sash and SCAT using CMAP (objective feedback is very useful);
- Customer surveys by public service commission.

Evaluation feedback – approach used by CMAP

- Participatory Monitoring Model (focus group involvement prior to beneficiary engagement. This structure is very useful);
- Training of community monitors;

- Systematic approach with clearly defined indicators (see below);
- Results and outcomes-based monitoring;
- Holistic approach to the monitoring focusing on service delivery and efficacy with resource management;
- Vested interest in promotion of human rights culture;
- Emphasis is placed on entrenching high standards of accountability;
- Trained monitors to administer the CMAP tool;
- Continuous enhancement of the CMAP tool to ensure relevance;
- Timeous reporting and continuous feedback on findings; and
- Robust and honest reporting advocating the best interest of the customer.

Some of the indicators used are captured in the graph below and include aspects such as providing amenities conducive to people discussing confidential issues, sufficient numbers of staff, speed of service (while still maintaining quality) and effective communication (for example, do citizens know what they levels of service they are entitled to/know their rights?):

TIME	VENUE	SECURITY	GRANT PROCESSING	COMMUNICATION
Operating hours	Physical conditions	Quality of services provided to ensure citizens and staff operate in a safe and secure environment	Number of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informed clients • language access
No. of clients	Availability of chairs		number of clients served	
Waiting time	Accessibility		speed of service	
Assess whether an accessible and responsive service is provided	Amenities conducive to ensure services rendered in dignified manner		General conduct of staff with customers	

Assessment of value of monitoring by external service provider

- Objective evidence-based assessment that SASSA can use to improve services;
- Informs decision-making and considerations for appropriate strategic considerations;
- Enabling tool to strengthen integrated management approach;
- Heightens levels of accountability;
- Instils greater levels of public confidence;
- Institutionalisation of the key tenet of a democracy by ensuring that the citizen's voice is heard and acceptable;
- Redress mechanisms activated (responsive services).

Challenges of the approach

- Recommendations are not always consistent with resource capability (agree with recommendations e.g. need more staff but don't always have resources);
- Monitoring should be followed up by impact assessments;
- Funding capability of the external stakeholder to sustain programme implementation.

Lessons: Working with communities and community-based organisations (CBOs) to monitor quality of service delivery

- Public confidence in sharing information with communities and CBOs, especially if work is conducted with required integrity;

- Outside looking in experience (constructive critique to instil confidence in staff so they don't just see it as a criticism of their work);
- Informs planning from perspective of the citizen's experience and perceptions about quality of services
- Monitoring service delivery performance of public service by service providers like CBOs should be endorsed.

Lessons: Can the approach be extended to other sectors?

The lessons learned from the CMAP initiative can be extended to other sectors, especially service delivery sectors such as the Departments of Health, Home Affairs and Labour. For instance, SASSA's service delivery charter was monitored and measured, which can be extended to the other service delivery sectors.

2.3 Case study 2: Monitoring water service delivery

2.3.1 Citizens' Voice

Mr Victor Munnik and Ms Lindy Morrison of Mvula Trust explained that Mvula Trust has a history of encouraging community participation, for example, through tools like the Citizens' Voice tool, which is used to monitor water service delivery.

Objectives of Citizens' Voice

- Overall: improve quality of service delivery, strengthen local government accountability and empower citizens.
- Short-term objective: educate councillors, 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

- Train citizens about their rights and responsibilities to empower them to hold local government and themselves accountable by setting up user platforms as monthly meetings between the municipality and the community for ongoing civil society water services monitoring and problem solving;
- Create a platform for dialogue between municipalities and its citizens about the level, quality and pace of service delivery.

Description of how the tool works

The Citizens' Voice is not a training programme, although training is one step in the process. Other steps are:

- Establishing partnerships with all three spheres of government and building relationships between officials/politicians and CSOs (it is very important that this is done in the beginning i.e. getting buy-in);
- Deepening public accountability by developing the capacity of citizens to regulate/monitor water services;
- Forging new institutional mechanisms for follow-up through user platforms monthly meetings with municipality and the regulator; and CSO, national, provincial and local government engagement (there cannot be participation without a process of feedback with trust, dialogue and ownership);
- Reform the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) to be responsive.

Key areas of success

- Developed partnerships between CSOs (Mvula and participants), local government (pilot municipalities), provincial (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs – CoGTA, DWA) and national government (DWA);
- Developed 12 context specific training modules in water services business utilising the partnerships developed. This included working with community development workers (CDWs), CSOs, NGOs, and CBOs, and the regulator provincial and national government
- Trained communities in their rights and responsibilities in water services delivery;
- Strengthened CDWs', and in some cases politicians', capacities in water business;
- Deepened democracy by giving true meaning to public participation in local government;
- More effective than call centres (especially since generally only the more affluent sector of society can access them) through ongoing dialogue and monitoring;
- Provided positive and negative feedback;
- Bridged the gap between ward councillors and civil society organisations;
- Gave people a support mechanism for recourse

Challenges in implementation

- Complex terrain of local government politics: At ward level, independent structures are disliked;
- Complex relationships between WSP/WSA in municipality, ward councillors, CSOs and citizens;
- Contractual difficulties in terms of accountability (e.g. between DWA, eThekweni metro municipality, and departments such as CoGTA regarding CDWs);
- Local government political instability, and the fact that municipalities are often antagonistic towards CSOs;
- Participation narrows to ward committees only. It needs to be broad enough to include representation of everyone;
- Can be costly in resources and time;
- CSOs have extremely limited resources for their role. There needs to be a high degree of partnership development, commitment and trust, for people to work together to solve these challenges.

Lessons: How government can use information collected through this approach

- Monitoring/regulation capacity within government is limited;
- A strong community voice in monitoring and regulation is needed;
- Collaborative engagements between municipalities and communities provide an answer to service delivery challenges;
- Government needs to create space to legislate community structures (e.g. 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, etc 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 which could be extended;
- Part of councillor training should include the rights of citizens to monitor, question and get information.
- Could be used in catchment management as water resources become more important (i.e. helping people monitor themselves)

- May form part of Community Works Programme (CWP) e.g. payments for environmental services provision.

Community monitoring is not regarded as a job, rather as a principle. But it is a service and should be rewarded. The possibility of it leading to a career path and something youth can get involved in should be considered.

2.3.2 Using community feedback in water delivery

Mr Teddy Gounden from the eThekweni Municipality presented on how the municipality uses the Mvula Trust monitoring approach, that is, the Citizens' Voice tool.

Background to the adoption of the Citizens' Voice

The concept was first work-shopped with eThekweni Water Services (EWS) officials to get their buy-in, whereafter partnerships were built with stakeholders, including CSOs.

This was followed by Citizens' Voice training, which took the form of a one year pilot programme in EWS. Contextualising modules to address local issues were included and all the material was translated into Zulu. EWS staff were trained to roll out the programme and Mvula monitored the programme and provided feedback.

This formed the basis of entry into the community to start rolling out the programme, however, centralisation of training and the establishment of one user platform was not suitable for EWS due to a conflict between the political process and civil society.

Adaptation of the Citizens' Voice

- eThekweni was separated into 17 zones of 5 or 6 wards (aligned with the IDP process) and training took place over two days with representation from councillors, ward members, civil society, and other interest groups (approx. 105 to 120 people). The process went well and reached a broad audience of community-based organisations and civil society organisations.
- User platforms were created in each zone to deal with strategic issues. There were approximately 25 people per platform and meetings were held quarterly in a two-way structured approach with agenda and minutes. Key issues for discussions on both sides (e.g. illegal connections and water loss; free basic water; diseases; etc.) were prioritised and there was engagement with the user platforms regarding policy reforms as well as assistance from the community on how to address EWS problems.

Approaches used to gather citizens' feedback

- Evaluation forms after Citizens' Voice training;
- User platform meetings (quarterly);
- Independent surveys form a baseline study;
- Recommendations from surveys are fed back to user platforms;
- Tracking process is instituted on a yearly basis to review performance (score card);
- Home visits are conducted through the Customer Service Agent Programme (to visit those that don't have the means to come through to the office).

Value of the approach

- 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

- Budgetary constraints (transport; venue; catering; stipend – it is important to note that the municipality refrained from providing a stipend and rather provided the venue, transport and catering because they did not want to compromise independence and have a situation where monitors say what they thought was expected of them).
- Administration
 - Need dedicated staff to manage the process;
 - Contacting all stakeholders well in advance;
 - Keeping accurate minutes of meetings;
 - Follow through of action items (don't want people to lose confidence in the process).
- Potential for conflict between politicians and civil society.
- Changes in political structure led to need for continuous training and restructuring of platform representation (this is not an overnight process).

Lessons: working with communities and CBOs to monitor quality of service delivery

- Separation into zones is important:
 - By aligning the process to the 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 provide information on daily service delivery problems. These do arise at these meetings and were addressed via this process.
- 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 sectors?

- The approach can be used in other sectors but it is essential to have support of senior officials such as the City Manager and senior councillors (e.g. the Mayor) etc;
- A relationship with key stakeholders must be established (e.g. local church);
- Training team must be comfortable with the material (policies etc);
- Material must be translated into relevant language;
- Key senior officials need to be identified and be present at user platform meetings;
- Identification of local needs and priorities is important;
- The approach must be modified to suit local situations;
- The will to make it work must exist (from a municipality – must dedicate budget, resources, time of senior officials).

2.4 Discussion

Following the case study presentations, a group discussion took place with the following questions and answers from participants and presenters:

- In terms of communicating difficulties, is there some form of recourse mechanism? Are there any mechanisms to ensure recommendations are taken up?

- The biggest risk is that we will do the monitoring but things won't improve. The system of government is such that there is no easy mechanism that can be put in place. In South Africa, the executive decision-making process is dispersed; but we can and will escalate issues and create pressure at higher levels although this does not guarantee things will change.
- How does the work of DPME relate to the work of different department and ministries? In terms of service standards, the focus is the same as that of the service centres and customer care centres (municipalities and national departments) i.e. the clients are the same. How do we make sure there is no duplication and competition?
 - Existing monitoring and evaluation by departments will continue. DPME will be in a position to assess the monitoring process, and to highlight areas requiring urgent intervention.
- There are no uniform tools that will inform what the country's strategy is around monitoring. Can we have a template to avoid duplication of efforts?
 - Has to be sector specific to get meaningful data that can be effectively assessed to make changes.
 - There is a need for even more efficient tools but CMAP has emphasised that the presence of a community monitor on site has positive impacts.
 - Monitoring tools should be standardised in terms of the objectives and results they want to elicit.
 - The multi-dimensional nature of poverty in South Africa means there can't be one panacea or one monitoring tool.
 - The instrument needs to be sensitive to the particular context in which it operates and adjust accordingly.
 - Approaches can complement each other. There is a high level of complementarity between approaches. Some projects are stronger on rights, others are stronger on mechanisms.
 - It is important to have several mechanisms for comparison and improvement purposes, in a triangulation process.
- Regarding volunteerism vs. stipends, the issue of stipends is viewed by some as critical to ensure capacity and enthusiasms. However, there was some dissension amongst participants regarding voluntarism vs. stipends.
 - The volunteer element is important as volunteers cannot be fired. However, some people serve long term as monitors, which needs to be regularised and institutionalised for it to work on a long term basis.
 - This is partly a function of not having the money.
 - It raises the issue of independence – the voice might be different from what we hear in government surveys. The space of independence needs to be protected and supported by government.
 - This issue needs to be addressed at national level in developing a citizen based monitoring process.
 - This process guarantees autonomy. When people become part of long-term government structures, they are no longer volunteers; they are now part of a system and need to be institutionalised for it to work.
- The challenge is to find the best use of resources. How to get and resource a viable civil society is a national question. Delivery of services is a right, not a choice. Investment of national government in the process is critical.
- The Citizens' Voice demonstrates how different spheres of government should work together. It also educates people about the opportunities they have and what roles they can play. It encourages local government to respond to communities' needs. What is important about the eThekweni example is that it took ownership, linked it to its IDP, and became efficient, so it becomes a model that can be looked at from a

sustainability point of view. It can demonstrate hard savings in terms of budget, related to these efficiencies. In eThekweni user platforms urged the municipality to deal with illegal connections. Amnesty for this was therefore offered by the municipality, in consultation with the municipality, and user uptake had been overwhelming.

- It is important to recognise that the relationship between civil society and government can be conflictual and constructive at the same time, as was the case with Black Sash and CMAP. It is important to consider the element of independence; that space needs to be protected.

How can government support civil society to be able to hold an independent view of government and of political parties? This links to financial support. It would be nice for government to support this process, but the issue is how to do that and retain independence.

- CMAP can be like the canary in the mine, can pick up red flags and pass them on to regional monitors.
- Is there a link between the monitoring and planning processes? There are lots of gaps in community participation/consultation in the planning process. How do people monitor plans they have not been involved in?
- What makes civil society “credible”? How do we measure this? This can be done through the use of MOUs, using organisations which are home-based etc (Elroy Paulus, Black Sash). Ensuring “credible” civil society can be done at the CBO level using CBOs with a high level of legitimacy to voice community concerns, compared to NGOs which might be better resourced. One of the problems is that ward committees, which are politically sanctioned, can, through political immaturity, see other political forms as competition.
- There must be a place for civil society engagement outside of government.
- It is hoped that people writing policies will consider the government-civil society interaction.
- There is a difference between invented and invited space: invited is where someone in authority invites you to participate; invented is where you develop yourself.
- What about recourse i.e. when issues get raised we, as government, don't want to address?
- An example is people wanting flush toilets in areas where these can't be provided.
 - Through the user platform, eThekweni Municipality has had debates with the community and in discussion could raise challenges around providing flush toilets, but the community is still not happy. To get this kind of issue resolved we must have the support of DWA.

3 SESSION II: Using technology for citizen-based monitoring

This session examined what kinds of technology are available to monitor front-line service delivery and how they can be used by civil society. Originally intended as a panel discussion, it instead took the form of presentations on the application of mobile phone technology as a monitoring tool in different scenarios and cases, followed by discussion.

3.1 Using technology for citizen-based monitoring

The presentation by Ms Meryll Ford from the Meraka Institute in the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) focused on mobile phones which, she pointed out, are known as “the computer of Africa” because of their high penetration (about 40%) and the fact that they remove the digital divide, leaving only a ‘digital difference’ (compared to the developed world).

South Africa is already doing well in terms of mobile penetration and in fact, it is one of the fastest moving in the world. People use cell phones for much more than just making and receiving calls, for example, to access the internet (most youth have only ever experienced the internet via their cell phones). Even on the most basic phones, people can use an Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) menu to, for example, buy airtime. The key with this type of device then is to figure out how to plug into something people are already using in innovative ways. With smart phones becoming more accessible (e.g. not just an iPhone at R8000 but a Vodaphone for about R700 from Clicks), there is even more scope for this type of technology.

There are many ways cell phones can be used for monitoring front-line service delivery:

- On a basic phone:
 - **Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Systems:** these are voice-based systems and can be extremely powerful (can have every language);
 - **Keyword sms:** text based and allows for responses to questions (e.g. “how was our service?”) to be answered via sms (e.g. “1” for unacceptable, “2” for poor etc) – this is an important option because everyone knows how to send an sms but it is crucial to get a response as well. Another key factor is that this option i.e. sending an sms can be cheap or even free;
 - **USSD:** this is also extremely powerful but under-used as a feedback system;
 - **MXit surveys:** powerful platforms that can run on all phones and reach all people, especially the youth.
- On a feature phone:
 - **Web surveys;**
 - **Photo records** (the photo is sent via sms).
- On a smart phone:
 - Countless possibilities through various applications that can be downloaded such as **surveys and social media** – social media is also an important tool for citizen-based monitoring because it allows for informal, unsolicited information to be gathered as well – not just formal triangulation of information. For example, Twitter can reveal trending topics, while Facebook is good for opinions.

This type of technology is also very useful for analysis and reporting. Some examples include:

- Mapping crowd sourced data, such as Uskikedi which was developed in Kenya (also used in disaster management)
- Infographics

- Graphs using tools like Wordle
- Topix mapping

3.2 Impilo: “Health in my hands”

Ms Debbie Heustice, Director of the HIV-911 Programme spoke about the Impilo project aimed at increasing access to health care. She pointed out that the higher the level of poverty, the lower the ability to access health services and vice versa. Some of this is perceived and some is structural but by providing mobile technology opportunities, Impilo hopes to enhance people’s ability to access those services.

Impilo is a health-enabling mobile phone product which hopes to move beyond monitoring to community engagement and empowerment.

Impilo has three components working together to inform, enable and empower:

- Referral/help system (draws on database);
- Rating/improvement system (can be used once client has been to service point to give feedback);
- Announcement system (a way of helping people communicate more).

Impilo was piloted in Umkhanyakude District together with AMREF, CellLife and Always Active technology (AAT) and marketed nationally as part of the Department of Health World AIDS Day 2010 Campaign (which showed the potential for the system to be used nationally to monitor). It is now poised for incorporation into the CMAP project with Black Sash.

Referral/help system:

- Users call *120*448# and follow the menu prompts;
- They choose menu option 1 to find a service provider and select a service type from the menu;
- Quick and easy to use USSD technology;
- Location is derived from nearest cell phone tower;
- Menus in multiple languages;
- Returns SMS results within a few seconds, 24 hours a day;
- Cheap (20 – 60 cents per session);
- Has potential to reach 85% of South Africa (almost everyone can get access to a cell phone if they need one – even if they don’t have one themselves).

Improve / rating service:

Below is the poster used for the improvement service. The project chose to use a unique number for each services point to monitor service rather than a long list of names users would have to scroll through.



- Call *120*448# and follow the menus – insert organisation’s unique ID;
 - Quick and easy to use:
 - USSD interface is easy to use, familiar, cheap, accessible
 - Works on all South African handsets and on all networks
 - Same process used to load airtime - familiar technology
 - Available 24/7/365;
- Menus in multiple languages;
- Cheap for client to use: 20 – 60 cents per session (networks charge differently therefore discrepancy in prices – are leaning on networks to make these services uniform or even free;
- Flexible menus; multiple uses.

When used by the client:

- Choose menu option 2 to give feedback on services received
- Insert unique ID for org (on poster in facility)
- Answer 6 – 8 questions on services received (optimal)
- Questions currently used are:
 - How long did you wait to be helped?
 - How many times has the care worker helped you in the last month?
 - Did you get the help you wanted?
 - Did you trust the person who helped you with your problem?
 - Did the person who helped you treat you with compassion?
 - Are there any noticeable improvements since your last visit?
 - Can we contact you about your responses? (but remember it may not be the user’s phone)

When used by the service point:

- Reporting tool is “Mobile Cow” (developed by AAT);
- Access to the reporting tool can be defined per user;
- Reports:
 - Are easy to read, graphic, colour
 - Can be automated by time period
 - Can be emailed / faxed / mailed directly to service provider
 - Can add excel reports with detail such as dates, times, usage by cell phone number;

- Client scores are not given individually to the service provider – they are aggregated and presented in coloured pie charts for each question (see example below);
- Client confidentiality is assured (no cell phone numbers are given out) – this is critical for usage.



Announcement service:

- Works by sharing information across and within groups;
- Coordinator text messages using a one-to-many bulk sms facility;
- Coordinating organisation needs budget for bulk SMS;
- Ideal for care workers – keep connected; morale building;
- User sends an sms to 32018 and inserts a group code in the text box followed by the message;
- Various groups have already been set up:
 - Ingwavuma Board
 - Ingwavuma Gardens
- For example:
 - To: 32018
 - 142929 (group code)
- Message: *Hello All, please meet on the 3rd of Sept at Office at 9am for planning meeting. Good luck with project reports!*

Impilo gives communities a chance to express how they feel about a service and gives clients a voice (and the opportunity to have their say) so that they can see themselves as an integral part of the service delivery system.

3.3 A telephone-based information service for government

Ms Tebogo Gumede of the Human Language Technology (HLT) Competency Area looked at the use of telephone-based information services for government monitoring, especially in remote areas through the ease of accessibility of mobile phones as demonstrated in the example of the Project Lwazi.

HLT, an initiative of the Meraka Institute, studies how speech technologies can benefit people and encompasses text and speech technologies with the goal of better interaction between humans and computers through natural languages.

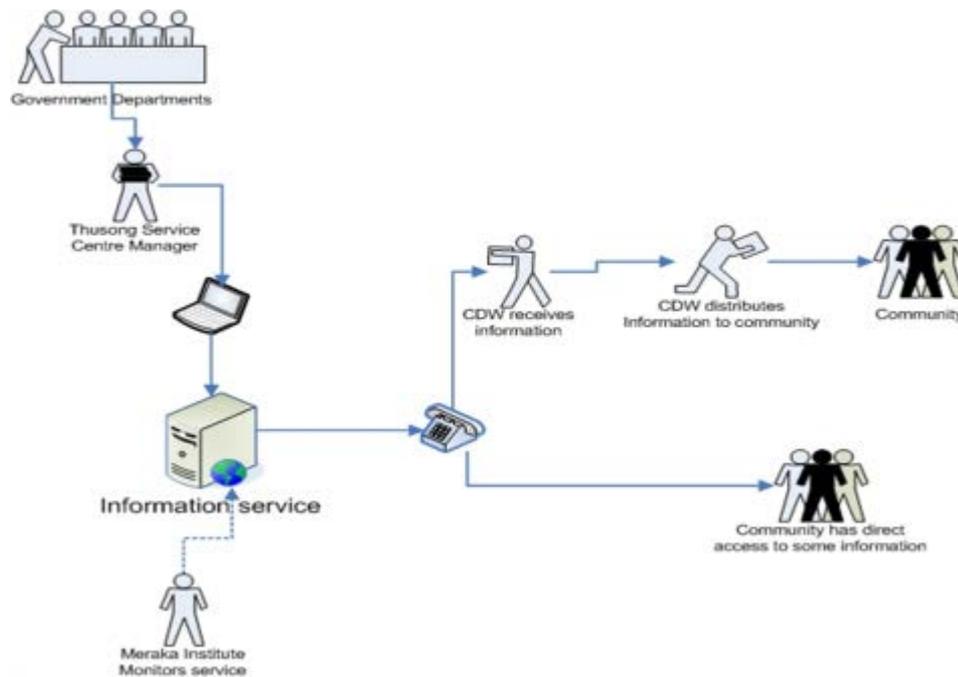
Project Lwazi

The project was funded by the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), through the National Language Service (NLS). The first phase, Lwazi I ran from 2006 – 2009 with the target outcome “to develop a multilingual, telephone-based system that will enable callers to access

government services in the official language of their choice through a simple speech-oriented interface that is suitable for users with limited or no literacy.”

The system is currently running in six municipalities: Tshidilamolomo (Ratlou), Sterkpruit (Senqu), Vredendal (Matzikama), Attredgeville (Tshwane), Casteel (Bushbuckridge) and Madombo (Venda).

As soon as information is entered as text, it is made available to CDWs. This service is available and being used but not as much as would be liked (only one or two using it on a daily basis). The following illustration demonstrates how the system works:



Lwazi II

In order to improve the system, HLT needs to overcome the challenge of making the other nine indigenous languages more fluent; and to do this, it needs to collect more data. Lwazi II (which will run from 2010 – 2012) will attempt to do this with target outcomes including:

- Improving the impact of speech technology in South Africa;
- Exploring a number of applications:
 - Mburisano (to explore what people are worried about or complaining about)
 - Job search for visually impaired (can load CV via voice)
 - Department of Basic Education National School Nutrition Programme (DBE NSNP)

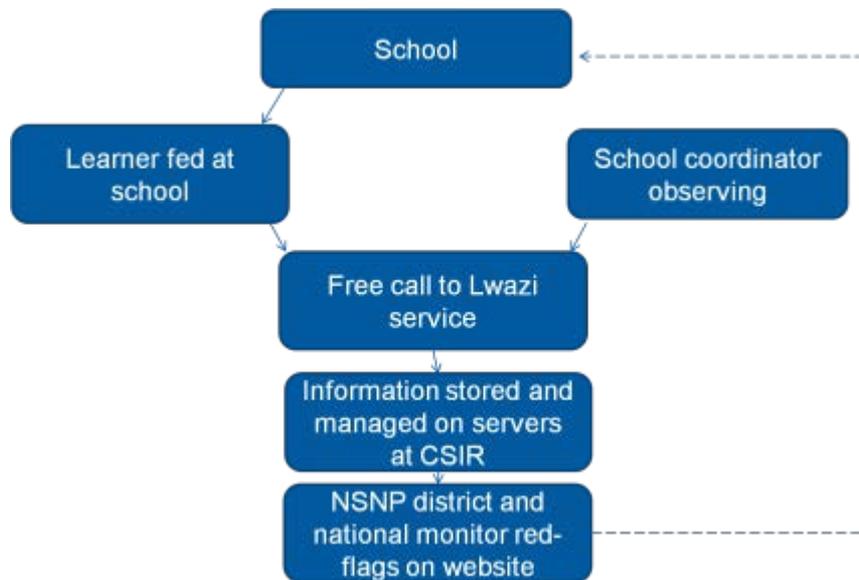
The DBE NSNP is aimed at monitoring services delivered:

- Making it easy to report to district and/or national office;
- Making it easy to pick red flags;
- No paper work can be “lost in the post” because it is all saved and monitored technologically.

How the system works

The diagram below demonstrates how the system works from school level. Learners give feedback on food, what they want, what they didn't like etc) and the school coordinator gives

feedback on resources they are lacking etc. It is a free call but the caller must have at least R3 to leave a missed call. Notice the feedback loop back to the school.



The system aims to cover all eleven South African languages but sustainability will depend on the collaboration of different stakeholders (in this case government and researchers).

3.4 Department of Basic Education National School Nutrition Programme

Ms Neo Rakwena from the DBE spoke in more detail on the DBE NSNP. It is a key government programme aimed at the provision of balanced meals and targets the poorest learners (quintile 1 – 3 schools). Over 8 million learners benefit to date.

The NSNP is funded by Treasury through the Conditional Grant (R4 billion in 2011/12) and must therefore meet the compliance requirements by Treasury (e.g. quarterly reporting on performance). Monitoring and reporting is also a key responsibility. The partnership with the Meraka Institute was initiated in June 2010 and a series of meetings were held to develop applications for:

- Learners (daily reporting on whether fed, feeding time, quality meals – verify if they received meals which is important because this is the department's key responsibility);
- School coordinators (daily reporting, feeding time, number of learners – also need to verify what learners say)
- Provincial programme managers (sms reminder service, report quarterly)

Lwazi II

The Lwazi II project was initiated in two schools in July 2011 and is the first time there has been direct contact and feedback with learners as key beneficiaries. The project provides:

- Up-to-date performance of programme;
- Early interventions;
- Reminder sms service (follows recipient directly);
- Work-in-progress to analyse calls/reports.

This project can form a catalyst and put the department in touch with communities who can tell it whether it is doing well or not but to be sustainable, the project must get buy-in from the department.

3.5 Discussion

Following the panel presentations, a group discussion took place with the following questions and answers from participants and presenters:

- Regarding notification in 11 languages, from SASSA's experience there are also a number of dialects which impedes people's ability to read or interpret communications.
 - This is definitely a challenge. As researchers we are still at a piloting phase and will have to learn lessons like this from other's experience.
 - It is important to note the difference between translating and interpreting.
- What about the 12th language i.e. sign-language?
 - There is a project working on that.
 - The deaf can access the technology quite successfully from the text-based point of view.
 - Many of the systems Meraka Institute uses do address the deaf and blind.
- Were studies done to determine accessibility of mobile phones in rural communities?
 - There are a number of studies that have been done on cell phone usage and the penetration and the results are that penetration is high, showing that 85% of the population has access to a cell phone, not necessarily all of these people own one. We do have to guard against using technology that is too complex to use on basic cell phones but cell phones are a good medium to use because usage of them is high.
- It would be interesting to know what types of phones are being used e.g. are there smart phones being used?
 - The operators have that information but the reports are expensive to buy.
- When you use new technology, doesn't that require self-selection? I.e. rely on clients being proactive and contacting you? How do you prevent getting a biased response? Also, people tend not to respond when they are satisfied, only when they are not satisfied. How do you deal with this?
 - You need to have multiple channels for asking the same question and this can help in addressing this.
- How can technology help with the dialogue that needs to help with citizens and service providers and those whom we want to hold accountable?
 - There are various techniques e.g. using sms to let people know what is going on or email which people are increasingly accessing on their phones.
- How do you provide feedback? Are issues that are being collected being reported and acted on?
- Sometimes technology opens dialogue with people that would rather deal with that medium rather than talking to someone face-to-face e.g. the youth. Thus responses using technology may well be more accurate than others, particularly around sensitive topics.
- How can technology keep up with dialogue?

- There are various techniques (sms, email, Twitter); need strategy on how to develop technologies.
- SASSA is getting increased requests for narrative reports and statistics for districts and specific pay points. We must be very realistic about the kind of reports, frequency etc we can provide, otherwise this will raise false expectations.
- An audit of complaints systems is needed.
 - Presidency needs mechanisms to educate government officials about what tools are out there they can use to monitor and evaluate.
 - An evaluation framework is being developed by the DPME. This is likely to require all evaluations of government departments to be registered and lodged, and, as far as possible, made publicly available.

4 SESSION III: Possible tool/s for citizen-based monitoring

4.1 Group discussion

Due to time constraints, the group discussion to debate possible tools for citizen-based monitoring could not take place as planned. Participants were therefore asked to go home and consider the following questions using the template provided (see below):

- What government services lend themselves to citizens' monitoring? So for each service, for example, water:
 - What aspects are being monitored e.g. access, quality, price?
 - Which sphere of government would need to have a monitoring relationship with civil society in each case i.e. local, provincial or national?
 - What would be the appropriate tool/s to do this monitoring?
- How can we ensure that citizen monitoring feeds into government's evaluation framework to effect positive change? How will this information be used effectively?
 - Management (civil society, government, donors)
 - Funding (civil society, government, donors)

MONITORING OF SERVICES BY CIVIL SOCIETY TEMPLATE

Service	What aspect of this would be monitored	Sphere of govt			What type of tool would be appropriate	Comments/Notes
		Local	Prov	Nat		
<i>Example</i>						
Water	Access					
	Quality					
	Price					

Annexes

Annex 1: Programme

Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop: Scoping an approach for community-based monitoring and accountability 09:00-16:30, 29 August 2011 CSIR Convention Centre, Pretoria	
PROGRAMME	
08:30 – 09:00	Registration and coffee
09:00 – 09:15	Introduction and opening remarks (DG Dr Sean Phillips)
09:15 – 11:10 SESSION I: Civil society monitoring of front-line service delivery	
09:15 – 09:30	Overview of current practices: community-based monitoring and accountability (DPME)
09:30 – 10:00	Case study 1: Payment of social grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMAP, Community Based Monitoring of SASSA (Mr Elroy Paulus, Black Sash) • Using community feedback (Ms Virginia Petersen, CEO SASSA)
10:00 – 10:30	Case study 2: Monitoring water delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens' Voice (Mr Victor Munnik and Ms Lindy Morrison, Mvula Trust) • Engaging the community in water delivery (Mr Teddy Gounden, eThekweni municipality)
10:30 – 11:10	Discussion: Question and answers
11:10 – 11:30	Tea
11:30 – 13:00 SESSION II: Using technology for citizen-based monitoring	

11:30 – 12:15	<p>Chair: DPME</p> <p>Panel discussion: What kinds of technology are available to monitor front-line service delivery and how could they be used by civil society?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meryll Ford, CSIR Meraka Institute • Debbie Heustice, Director: HIV-911 Programme, UKZN, Durban • Neo Rakwena, Dept Basic Education • Tebogo Gumede, Senior project manager, Human Language technology, CSIR
12:15 – 13:00	Discussion: Question and answers
13:00 – 13:45	Lunch
13:45 – 16:30	SESSION III: Possible tool/s for citizen-based monitoring
13:45 – 15:15	<p>Group discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One or more tools? Applicable sectors/types of services 2. Type of tool – labour intensive vs technology based (advantages/disadvantages of each) 3. How to encourage involvement of government depts & of civil society in further development of this approach 4. Funding and managing the development and implementation of the tool/s once developed
15:15 – 16:00	Feedback and discussion
16:00 – 16:30	Way forward and thanks (DPME)

Annex 2: List of participants

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