

Government turns to the people for advice

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The government is introducing plans to get first hand account of the delivery of services on the ground through the introduction of a tool to tighten up monitoring measures.

Director for Citizen-Based Monitoring in the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Jonathan Timm said yesterday that at the end of the month they would put down some of the final aspects in the two pilot sites in KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State on the monitoring of the delivery of services.

The department will roll out 11 other pilot projects from April until September in other sites across the country.

Timm said they were developing a monitoring system at local level to improve service delivery.

The pilot projects launch comes after Cabinet approved a framework on monitoring frontline service delivery in August last year.

Timm said they had roped in four departments to be part of the pilot project in Msinga in KZN and Maluti-a-Phofung municipality in the Free State.

The departments involved in the project were health, social development, the South African Social Security Agency and the police.

Timm said accountability must be at the coalface of government.

“We want to build the bottom up system. The National Development Plan talks about bottom up accountability,” he said.

“Every three months of the pilot we will review the approach. It will be shaped by the expression of the people on the ground,” he said, adding that by doing this they would be able to develop a system that could pick up problems on the ground.

The presidency came up with the citizen-based monitoring programme after it acknowledged that the best tool of monitoring delivery of services was through the experiences of people on the ground.

Research was done, which found that citizen-based monitoring was the best tool to measure government performance

It was also found that there was a gap in how the government was getting feedback in the delivery of services.

The framework was developed with government departments and civil society groups.

The Cabinet-approved framework said getting the views of citizens was important. “The experiences of citizens – the intended beneficiaries of government services – are a critical component for measuring the government’s performance and the delivery of appropriate and quality services,” said the framework.

“The emphasis of the government’s monitoring is on internal processes and the voice of the citizen is largely absent,”

it said.

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