



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT: PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Project (Unannounced Visits)

This is an update on the Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring project of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME). Being the first in a series, this report gives background information on the FSDM project, as well as an update on project activities in the past financial year – 2012/13.

Brief Programme Description

The FSDM project is a joint DPME and Offices of the Premier (OoP) initiative that commenced activities in June 2011. The project uses unannounced monitoring visits to assess the quality of service delivery in frontline services facilities, using structured questionnaires to guide interviews with citizens and staff, as well as observations by monitors¹. The questionnaires assess quality of service against eight performance areas. The objectives of these monitoring visits are to demonstrate to sector departments the value of on-site monitoring as a tool to verify the impact of service delivery improvement programmes; to demonstrate the value of obtaining the views of citizens during monitoring; to highlight successes and failures at service facility level and to support departments to use the findings for performance improvements.

Facilities monitored

In 2011, 135 facility visits (baseline² and feedback³ visits combined) were conducted in five provinces, namely: Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Free State and Northern Cape. These visits covered courts (8), drivers licence and testing centres (7), education facilities (18), health facilities (41), Home Affairs facilities (7), police stations (21) and social grant offices (20).

In 2012, 215⁴ visits were conducted in all nine provinces and in the following sectors: courts, drivers licence and testing centres, education facilities, health facilities, Home Affairs offices, municipal customer care centres, police stations and South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) offices and pay points. The table on the following page sets out the number of facilities visited and assessed.

¹ Officials from DPME and OoP undertaking the monitoring in the facilities are referred to as monitors.

² A baseline visit is the first unannounced visit to a facility, which is aimed at discovering the state of service delivery at targeted facilities.

³ The aim of this visit is to provide a report of findings from the baseline visit to the facility management and other relevant stakeholders.

⁴ While the actual number of visits conducted exceeds this number, only those visits with complete reports and photographs are included in the reporting. Visits conducted as pilots and with political principals are also not included in this reporting period.

FSD monitoring visits: number of visits (2012)										
	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NW	NC	WC	TOTALS PER SECTOR
SASSA	3	1	5	1	2	3	3	1	4	23
SAPS	4	2	6	2	2	1	4	3	6	30
Education	0	6	18	0	0	4	3	3	3	37
Health	7	0	19	3	0	4	4	6	8	51
Courts	2	1	3	2	2	0	2	3	4	19
DLTC	2	0	4	1	2	1	1	1	2	14
MCCC	3	4	6	1	2	0	0	4	2	22
Home Affairs	2	2	3	2	2	1	0	3	4	19
TOTAL	23	16	64	12	12	14	17	24	33	215

Of the 135 facilities monitored during 2011, 29 facilities were identified as needing improvements monitoring⁵ and were revisited in 2012. These were facilities that scored red (poor) in three or more of the eight performance areas. The 29 included eight SASSA facilities, one school, three police stations, six health facilities, five courts, one Home Affairs facility and five driver's license and testing centres. These facilities were included in the 2012 monitoring visits in order to support improvements. 52 facilities were selected for improvements monitoring in 2012. With the introduction of the concept of continuous monitoring⁶, the 29 facilities selected for improvements monitoring in 2011 will be monitored together with the 52 identified in 2012. Therefore, the total number of facilities that will be monitored for improvements in the 2013/14 financial year is 81.

High Level Findings

Facilities are assessed against eight assessment areas. These are detailed in Figure 2 on the following page.

The four assessment areas where performance was scored the lowest were (i) Complaints and Compliment Management, (ii) Visibility and Signage and (iii) Cleanliness and Comfort, and (iv) Queue Management and Waiting Times.

Complaint and compliment management. In more than 70% of cases, citizens rated this assessment area as poor and average (red and orange). Poor responsiveness and poor feedback to citizens may have contributed to citizens losing trust in complaint systems.

Cleanliness and comfort. The 50% poor to average rating highlights the continuing challenges with facility management and maintenance. Site-level managers need to be provided with the necessary budgets and delegations of authority to take responsibility for this, as well being held accountable for failures in day-to-day maintenance and cleanliness.

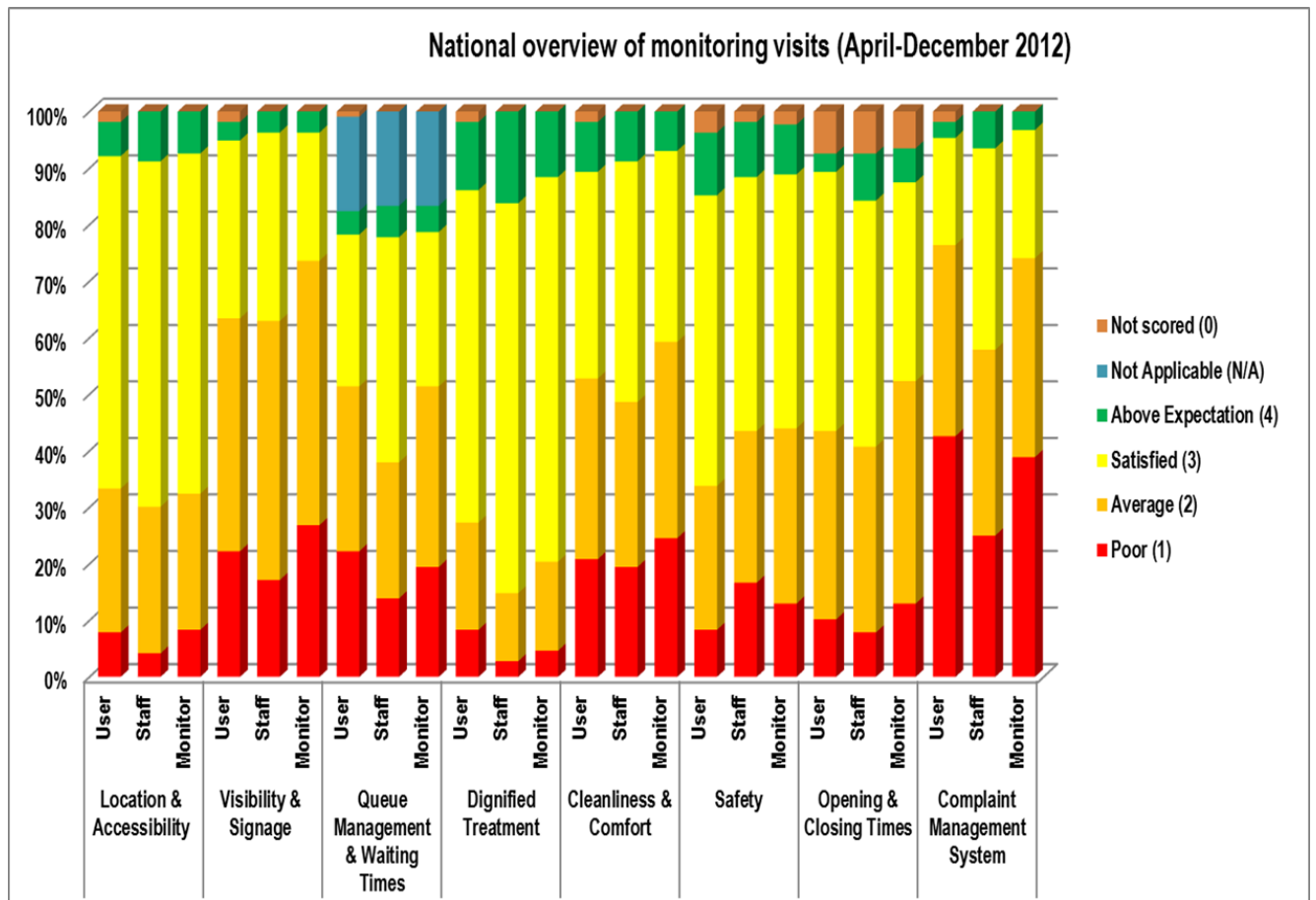
⁵ The criterion used to identify these facilities was if the scorecard of a particular facility shows scores of two reds (1 - poor) or one amber (2 - average) and one red in three or more performance areas, the facility should be selected for improvements monitoring.

⁶ This entails on-going improvements monitoring rather than a once-off monitoring, so that facilities that have improved are not left to regress, but are monitored and are supported where necessary.

Queue management and waiting times: An average rating of 50% by citizens indicates that there is a need for improvements in this area. In police and health facilities, queue management and waiting times were rated by citizens as an area of high priority for improvement.

Visibility and signage: The monitoring visits recorded a rating of poor to average for this assessment area, from over 60% of respondents. More can be done by facility managers to ensure that signage in a facility directs people to where they need to be, and facility managers need to be clear that this is their responsibility.

Figure 2: An overview of national findings



Improvements Monitoring

In the 29 facilities targeted for improvements monitoring in 2012, it was found that agreed improvement actions were implemented in some of the facilities, but the general trend was poor implementation of improvement plans. It appears that the culture of acting on findings from monitoring activities is not sufficiently entrenched in many national and provincial departments. However, the positive impacts of service delivery improvement programmes in SASSA, Home Affairs and Health facilities could be observed, with standardised work processes, measurement of service delivery indicators, standardised look and layout of offices and the active involvement of management in driving and monitoring improvements being evident.

There is growing evidence that in order for facility level managers to be effective, they need a responsive head office team that acts quickly on the monitoring findings from facilities. Dysfunctional frontline offices need to be viewed as a strategic issue and senior managers need to constantly monitor and assess if the improvement programmes are bearing results. A positive development in this area is an announcement by the Minister for Police declaring 2013 the year of frontline service delivery and indicating that he and his senior management team would have a more visible presence at the police station level.

There was little improvement at the drivers' license testing centres that were revisited. This can be partly attributed to a lack of clarity in the multiple agency roles of national, provincial and local government in the management of these centres. The Department of Transport has commenced a process of regulating quality of service standards for these centres. These regulations need speedy completion and the national department should then monitor adherence to the standards.

Plans for 2013/14

For the 2013/14 financial year, officials from DPME and OoPs are continuing to visit service facilities in the following sectors: education, health, home affairs, justice, local government (MCCC), police, social services (SASSA), transport (DLTC). The visits are already underway (since the beginning of April 2013) and are envisaged to be undertaken until December 2013.

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