PRESENTATION

COMPILATION OF PROVINCIAL CITIZENS’ REPORT

BATHO PELE LEARNING NETWORK CONFERENCE

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KIMBERLY.
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Introduction

- Development of the Citizens’ report is done as part of implementation of the Batho Pele Strategy and Program.
- The process is informed by the Batho Pele principles of Openness, Transparency, Consultation and Information.
- This presentation will outline conceptualization and implementation of the Limpopo Provincial Citizens’ report as approved by the Limpopo Provincial Government.
The Batho Pele program in Limpopo was first launched in December 1999 by the Minister of Public Service Administration. During the launch MECs committed themselves on the programme through signing of Statements of Public Service Commitments. The signing of this statements is a legal requirement made compulsory by the white paper on transforming public service delivery and public service regulations, 1999 as amended 2002. Since then, statements are signed annually in public and are displayed in all departmental offices. Following the launch the Batho Pele program matured annually to an extend of implementing the citizenship report requirement by White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery. The first citizens’ report was compiled and presented on 30 March 2001. Presentation of this report is coupled with the annual provincial Batho Pele Day celebrations. The report is then distributed in the province at major evens like EXCO outreach programs, Provincial Road Shows and at various provincial government offices.
Purpose of the Citizens Report.

- Citizens’ reports provide the public with the key information which they are entitled to know.
- It is one of the methods of accounting to the citizens annually on how taxes were utilized.
- It gives citizens an opportunity to evaluate the performance of government with regards programs, projects, finances, human resources, etc.
- It presents to the citizens achievements of the past financial year’s planned programs/projects and challenges that could have impacted on successful service delivery.
It indicates the interventions that may be employed to address the challenges.

Also indicate the plans for the coming financial year with regards Service Delivery Improvement during the delivery of service.
The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides the basis for the development of the citizen's report. Section 196 of the constitution provides guidelines for engaging in public service transformation programme by amongst others making the following stipulations:

- People’s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making.
- Public Administration must be accountable.
- Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely accessible and accurate information.
Openness and transparency is the hallmark of a democratic government and fundamental to the public service transformation.

The key aspect is that the public should know more about the way provincial departments are run, how well they perform, resources they consume and who is in charge.

- Departmental heads need to ensure that the formulation, implementation and monitoring of service delivery plans is carried out in close consultation with unions, staff and especially with service users.

- In order to promote democratic accountability and transparency, it will be necessary to ensure that all members of the public have access to information irrespective of their levels of literacy.
COMPILING THE PROVINCIAL CITIZENS REPORT IN LIMPOPO.

PROCESS:
- All departments play a role in the compilation of the Provincial Citizens’ reports.

- The structure is as it is outlined in the White Paper on Transforming the Public Service Delivery.

- Departmental reports are compiled and submitted to the Office of the Premier for editing.

- The reports then go to the Head of Department and to the MEC for approval.
The Office of the Premier consults the following documents to compile the Provincial Citizens’ report:

- State of the Nation Address (by State President)
- State of the Province Address (by the Premier)
- MEC budget speeches for the current year.
- Departmental Citizens’ reports including the Office of the Premier’s Citizens’ Report
- Departmental Management plans & SDIPs.

Departments print their reports and submit it for distribution on Batho Pele Day and other provincial and national days.
- Departmental Citizens’ reports including the Office of the Premier’s Citizens’ Report

- Departmental Management plans & SDIPs, Departmental Annual Reports.

- Provincial Growth & Development Strategy report

- Anti- Corruption unit

- Reports from toll free complaints desks – all departments.
The structure of citizens’ report was derived from the White Paper on Transforming the Public Service – 18 September 1997, pp. 21 – 24.

All departmental citizens’ report follow similar approach of compilation.

The content include the information on page 20 of the White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 15 November 1997.

A few amendments were made to adapt the structure to our situation.
All reports are read through and summarized.

- Comparisons are made between the reports and the speeches indicated above.
- Where contrasting information is found the department is consulted for the correct information.
- The report is edited and checked for quality assurance at different levels of the department.
- It gets submitted to the Director General for recommendation- also after proof reading.
- It is submitted to the Premier and the EXCO – Lekgotla for approval.
The report gets handed over to the Department of Art, Sports & Culture for translation into four other provincial languages, viz. Sepedi, XiTsonga, TshiVenda and Afrikaans.

All reports are printed and distributed to the public.

The first distribution is made by the Premier and the Executive Council on Batho Pele Day.

The rest of the distribution is made at all other points where contact is made with the public.
**Time span:** The report is expected in June when the province celebrates its Batho Pele Day. The State of the Nation address comes in February and the State of the Province address in March, followed by MEC budget speeches after that. The financial year ends in April.

All this information must be recorded in the Citizens reports of departments before being included in the Provincial Citizens reports. This poses an amount of pressure on all Batho Pele coordinators and the Heads of Departments to produce a decent document within that period. Some facts may be excluded or misrepresented. That must be guarded against.
Matching of administrative reports with political speeches may be challenging at times. The MEC may announce something that the HOD has not included in the strategic plan of the department and this may appear like a contrast of reports. Such factors must be guarded against to ensure an accurate report to the citizens.

Printing of reports by all departments simultaneously may be challenging in a town where printing companies are not enough and do not have the capacity to carry the load demanded by government. Sometimes reports are produced very late or on the eve of the day.
Distribution of the report to all stakeholders is not always certain. While the departments distribute a designed number of reports to all events and meetings they attend, it is not certain that the number of copies printed are enough to reach all citizens even with the translated copies.

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Impact Analysis: Service Delivery

- Public Servants are reached much easier through this report and are able to measure their achievements and challenges. For those that are far from the provincial offices, this is an opportunity to learn more about their departments activities in other areas of the province.

- There is a lot of mobility around becoming the best in the province even if the competitors never met.
Impact Analysis: Service Delivery.

- The citizens’ report is the pride of the province. It is therefore shared with other people in networking arenas across the world.

- Students from institution of higher learning also utilize this document as a reference when studying about public administration, transformation or Batho Pele modules.
The report is also useful when monitoring and evaluating service performance of the department. One can compare plans and achievements of a particular branch or department.

The report can serve to impose commitment. So that officers do not report on paper what is not correct.
Political principals participate in the editing and analysis of the report. They are able to identify the weaknesses and the needs of their departments, provide support and make informed decisions. Service Delivery benefits in this case.

Political principals are also able to use the report to consult with stakeholders both within and without the country for several purposes.
LESSONS LEARNED.

- Moving from departmental to cluster reporting.
- Report focusing on main strategic objectives of various departments.
- Ownership of the report through involvement of coordinators has proved to public servants that consultants are not necessarily better than us performers. We have what it takes!
- Full utilization of public servants
CONCLUSION

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following people:

- DPSA for recognizing our efforts.
- The Executive Council of Limpopo for providing support to our activities and using this report. This is encouraging.
- SGM & GM in the Office of the Premier for all the support and quality assurance provided - it was time well spent.
- Batho Pele coordinators for the support and cooperation
- Departmental Heads and Senior Managers for cooperating – this would not be possible without you.
- Lastly the Learning Net-workers for Listening.