

## 5. *Imbizo* Manual

During 2000, the Cabinet decided that *Imbizo* as a style of interactive governance and communication should be adopted to promote increased dialogue between the government and people without mediation.

*Imbizo* promotes active involvement and participation of the public in the implementation of government programmes. This should happen as the norm of government operation on a continuous basis, but there will be certain periods of intensified public participation across government reflected by Cabinet members, Premiers, Mayors and other senior government officials coming into active contact with different sectors of society. These shall be the *Imbizo* Focus Weeks.

*Imbizo* is therefore aimed at building a partnership between government and the South African public in the process of social change. In the spirit of partnership between the government and the communities, attempts may be made to identify stakeholders and/or

individuals within communities who are actively involved in projects that have a positive impact on community development. For example, representatives of business, church, labour, youth, women and any other sector of society. Provincial outreach programmes where the executive council meets the people from one region to the next are a reflection of *Imbizo*.

The President and Deputy President have set aside 2 – 3 days in their diaries three times a year to give concrete expression to the *Imbizo* programme through visits to provinces. The aim is to give people an opportunity to raise issues about the programmes of government. This would, in the main, ensure that government listens to and notes the issues raised and ensures adequate follow-up with responsible departments and bodies and where possible, responds immediately, if action has already been committed or taken. Where it is not possible to respond immediately the government has to commit itself to get back and respond at a particular time-frame.



The GCS envisages the *Imbizo* Focus Weeks will happen twice a year, once following the President's announcement of the government's Programme of Action in the SoNA and after the Budget Speech and once towards the end of the year.

The central characteristic of these activities and events will be direct interaction with the people to receive feedback on programmes that are already being undertaken and to highlight to the people what government is and will be doing that year to improve the quality of their lives.

Each Focus Week will be given coherence in content and communication through the use of publicity material produced by the GCIS and the National Treasury which respectively communicate the Programme of Action for the year and the Budget that will underpin its implementation. The core message for the year, e.g. *A People's Contract to Build a Better South Africa and a Better World*, will be prominent and visible throughout.

The President and Deputy President's participation raise the profile of this style of governance and set an example to the whole government.

*Imbizo* can be undertaken over a few days or just in one day depending on the content of the programme that has been agreed upon.

Below is a set of guidelines to ensure that any government sphere or department wishing to undertake

*Imbizo* does so honouring the spirit and letter of the general principles.

### 5.1. Strategising for *Imbizo* communication

An *Imbizo* communication programme has to be based on a defined communication strategy. The strategy must clearly outline the objectives of undertaking such an *Imbizo* and must contain all the elements of the communication strategy as outlined in the generic framework for developing a GCS.

### 5.2. Planning

Effective planning is a critical aspect of any successful campaign. This embodies initial conceptualisation of how the whole *Imbizo* will take place, using the communication strategy as a guide. At this stage, the role-players must be identified and the necessary steps and processes specified in a work breakdown structure and Action Plan.

An example of a work breakdown structure and Action Plan for the President's *Imbizo* in the North West are shown on pages 34. Underneath it is an Action Plan showing how the implementation will take place.

These should be used only as guides and a checklist as each specific *Imbizo* should dictate what steps and processes to follow.

### 5.3. Establishing a Task Team

A Task Team should be established

and charged with the overall responsibility of implementing the *Imbizo*. The Task Team should preferably consist of selected government communicators from the department, representatives from protocol and security, a senior person who will be the link with the provincial department of the executive council and others as may be deemed fit.

The significance of having communicators in the Task Team is that of ensuring that the communication objectives of the *Imbizo* are strictly maintained.

Protocol and security have to be taken on board at all times as their understanding of the *Imbizo* is crucial to its success. Neglecting to brief them thoroughly may result in the failure of the *Imbizo*, as they are critical and responsible for the movements of the principal on the ground.

Personnel from the province are also important in the process of implementing *Imbizo*. Preferably, it has to be someone with direct access to the Premier or the entire executive council, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) in the province, depending on the nature of the *Imbizo*.

The Task Team must have a designated Project Leader who will oversee the overall work of the Task Team and also have direct and full access to all those who need to be consulted to sign off things and approve the programme.

#### 5.4. Role clarification

Once the Task Team has been established the roles of the various

role-players should be clarified to ensure a smooth implementation of the *Imbizo*. This must be as detailed as possible and should clearly indicate who will be responsible for which tasks.

#### 5.5. Budget

The budget is another crucial aspect of implementing *Imbizo*. Sometimes the budget commitments will be shared between the national department and the province. When this is the case it must be made clear which aspects of the budgets are the responsibility of the province and which of the national government.

At times this is left hanging and often results in unnecessary debts and unhealthy relations.

#### 5.6. Consultation with the province and local municipality

Most *Izimbizo* are conducted in a particular local area. It is important to observe all necessary protocol before pronouncing publicly the intention to undertake *Imbizo*.

Improper consultation can be a recipe for failure hence all parties must be consulted in advance about the *Imbizo*.

It is advisable that the Task Team should as much as possible be stationed and operate from the province where the *Imbizo* will take place a few weeks before the event. This is critical as reports that are submitted by provincial officials about potential project sites to visit should be confirmed by actually visiting them.

### 5.7. Developing the *Imbizo* programme

The programme is the ultimate reflection of long hours of work putting things together. At a glance, the programme should confirm if what is being undertaken is *Imbizo* or not.

This means that the *Imbizo* programme should cater for the principal's interaction with the people, allocating enough time for people to express their concerns and issues. The projects to be visited should also relate to the developmental and service delivery programme of government.

Long before deciding what the programme should look like, the province should have been requested to submit ideas about possible projects and programmes, which can be visited by the President, Minister or Premier.

The Task Team should select suggestions that are closest to the objectives of the *Imbizo* as outlined in the communication strategy. For instance, in a rural and poverty-stricken province, issues that should be prioritised by an *Imbizo* programme include:

- o water
- o roads
- o poverty alleviation initiatives
- o health facilities
- o electricity
- o housing
- o education programmes
- o agricultural initiatives
- o economy boosting initiatives.

There may be other political or social

ills that are high on the agenda of the province that may need to be addressed during the *Imbizo*. These may be problems of racism, high level of crime, unemployment, etc.

By making these considerations, the programme will be responding to the needs of the environment as outlined in the communication strategy.

The programme has to be approved before any commitments are made about it either to different stakeholders or to the media.

Once the programme is approved, a second version for the public has to be produced. This will then be handed to interested parties, especially the media. This version will not include details that are necessary for security and protocol purposes only.

### 5.8. Media liaison

Media liaison is critical to popularise *Imbizo* in order to relate to people the commitment government has in forming unity with the people for change.

A media liaison manager must be identified to be in charge of activities that relate to media liaison. Having too many people managing media liaison activities results in confusion about directives and often makes media people furious resulting in negative coverage of the *Imbizo*.

This person and his/her team will then be responsible for the development and implementation of an effective Media Liaison Strategy and Plan. The Strategy and Plan should entail,

among others:

- o briefings to the media
- o interviews
- o which media/journalists are to be targeted
- o opinion pieces
- o statement of key messages about the *Imbizo*
- o contents of the media kit.

It is crucial that the media should be informed in time what the *Imbizo* is about – and this does not, at initial stages, have to be about details in the programme.

During some *Izimbizo*, it may be necessary to organise transport for the media to move from one venue to the next so that at all times they have access to the activities of the principal. Another essential element of media liaison during an *Imbizo* is to provide the facilities necessary for the media to do its work effectively. This may be an Internet Café where the media can file their stories. A briefing room should also be handy for when the need arises to give further briefings to the media.

## 5.9. Publicity

To reinforce the message, publicity material has to be developed, availed and widely distributed. The publicity material must relate to the programmes of government, reflecting on successes and challenges of service delivery.

To achieve maximum impact to *Imbizo* Focus Weeks, common publicity material is used. This is in the form of posters, pamphlets and leaflets. The GCIS is responsible for producing

leaflets and posters for the SoNA and the People's Guide to the Budget, which it makes available for *Izimbizo*. Departments and provinces can produce other material of their own, as long as they will integrate the central message of government.

People are often not well informed of government activities and programmes through the mainstream media, hence the emphasis of publicity material during *Izimbizo*.

## 5.10. Promotional material

Media statements, interviews and publicity material can be complemented by promotional material. These can be T-shirts, caps, backdrops, posters, banners, etc. Again these promotional materials must prominently reflect the core message of the *Imbizo*.

### 5.11. Conducting research for *Imbizo*

Preliminary research: Research must be conducted on the given area where the *Imbizo* is planned to happen. This could either be on a province or on a particular community or village. In terms of quantitative data some of the service delivery indicators that could be used include statistics of:

- o electricity grid connections
- o houses completed or under construction
- o people gaining access to water
- o people gaining access to healthcare
- o number of telephone lines installed
- o matriculation results or educator: learner ratio.

The above statistics must be collected from 1994 – current to show trends of

progress. This can in turn be used on publicity material for the *Imbizo*. In terms of qualitative data, consideration must be given to issues on development in the specified area, languages spoken, natural resources, and communications milieu of the area.

Secondary research: In assisting the project team to make informed decisions on the development of the programme, it is necessary for information to be gathered from various service delivery departments on successes and challenges that face their service delivery programmes in the given area.

- o It is important that information received from departments is verified by independent research, which may involve field visits or contacting people involved in the programmes, etc.
- o In processing the research consideration must be given to both the outputs and impact of service delivery.
- o Research briefings must be written on each service delivery programme, whether it is building a school, construction of a clinic or the operations on a small holding. All research briefings must be in a format that is easily readable and succinct. It should ideally contain sections on background, success, status of the programme and challenges.
- o It is important to keep the briefing notes clear and precise, because they can then be used and further processed by the MLO to be included into the press packs.

### Assessment and follow-up research

This is crucial for an effective *Imbizo*, which will ultimately be measured by its follow-up in terms of action taken:

- o The researcher needs to identify and brief scribes for each event. Scribes must be fluent in both English and the prevalent language spoken at the area where the *Imbizo* takes place.
- o Ideally scribes should come from the communication section, because they are more aware of the communication environment in which they will be documenting issues raised.
- o A user-friendly form needs to be drawn up by the researcher for each scribe to complete when documenting issues raised by the people.
- o All scribe notes need to be collected and collated into a follow-up report of all issues raised. Ideally, this should be in the form of a database, or in a tabular form, which captures all the fields of the scribe form.
- o A fortnight after the *Imbizo* visit, it may be necessary to visit the province to obtain their report back, as well as discuss the development of a consolidated report.
- o The consolidated report, which will also include timeframes of action required by responsible departments and bodies, should be presented to the principal, i.e. President, Deputy President, Premier, Minister, Mayor, Councillor, etc.
- o The report must be communicated to the relevant responsible

departments or bodies via the proper protocol channels, to ensure that action is taken and communicated to the affected province or area.

Together with other documentation and plans, all research material and notes must be filed and used during the assessment and closure of the project for that particular *Imbizo* event.

### 5.12. During the *Imbizo*

So far we have dealt with plans and processes leading up to the *Imbizo*. During the *Imbizo* there are critical things that the Task Team has to be in charge of.

### 5.13. Recording proceedings

The Task Team has to allocate people who will be in charge of recording and documenting the issues that are raised by people, and the responses that are given by government officials. This is critical for follow up. An *Imbizo* is not complete and successful if government does not follow-up on issues and concerns raised by the people. To achieve this, detailed recording and documenting of proceedings is required. People allocated to perform this task should be fully dedicated and should not be distracted, as they need to capture everything. Audio-visual and radio recording should also be done to reinforce the recording process.

An important part of ensuring that things are well recorded and that people are able to raise their issues

audibly is the need to avail communication facilities for this purpose. Thus, the Task Team must ensure that there is an operational Public Address (PA) system and roving microphones.

Given the mobile nature of these sessions, it would be advisable to outsource the PA system from venue to venue. The GCIS Broadcast Production may be requested to record the events that have a Development Communication element. These requests need to be made within a reasonable timeframe and the GCIS would provide its services depending on the availability of resources at that time. The recorded material should be transcribed and out of that material, a detailed report of the entire *Imbizo* should be the outcome. In the past only the principal's speeches were transcribed and copies of the material circulated to the provincial community radio stations.

### 5.14. Monitoring the programme

The Task Team should allocate members to all the venues where the *Imbizo* will be taking place, to ensure that things are organised. Any problems should be reported immediately to the Project Leader for alternative arrangements, if necessary.

The Project Leader should at all times be with the principal advising on proceedings and managing the time in the programme. Adherence to the time allocated in the programme is crucial as late arrival to the next destination



can cause irritation and even shape the attitudes of people. Thus, it is critical to advise people about the actual and accurate venues to avoid situations where people wait for the principal in particular venues that are not part of the principal's itinerary.

However, the Project Leader should be dynamic and flexible to deal with unforeseen circumstances. Continuous briefing of the Head of Protocol and Security is important to take them on board and consult them where the programme has to take a slight or drastic change.

If the *Imbizo* is happening over a few days, the Task Team should meet at the end of each day's programme to assess the proceedings plan for the next day.

### 5.15. Post-*Imbizo* tasks

The Task Team does not disband immediately after the last item on the programme of the *Imbizo*. There are issues to be dealt with after the *Imbizo*.

### 5.16. Evaluation of the *Imbizo*

The Task Team needs to make an evaluation of the *Imbizo* and critique where necessary for future improvements. The evaluation should be the first step towards writing a report about the *Imbizo*.

### 5.17. *Imbizo* report

The Task Team has to produce a report about the *Imbizo*, which is submitted to management. The report should

contain recommendations about how issues raised will be taken forward.

### 5.18. Follow-up

The Task Team should also set up a process by which issues that were raised during the *Imbizo* will be followed up. This may entail consulting relevant government structures that may not have been at the *Imbizo* but are the competent structures to respond to issues raised. Formal contacts need to be made with those structures through the political head or appropriate official.

Continuous assessment of the follow-up is required to ensure that indeed government is fulfilling its commitments. After a while it is advisable to return to the areas visited during the *Imbizo* to see if there have been changes. In certain instances, there is huge progress that can form the basis for a good media follow-up.

### Conclusion

The generic guidelines and checklists outlined in this document should be adhered to in order to conduct a successful *Imbizo*. It should, however, be borne in mind that *Imbizo* is not a public relations exercise, but a catalyst aimed at getting a sense of the needs of ordinary people in order to improve their quality of life.

### Guidelines for effective scribing during an *Imbizo*

A crucial determinant of the success of an *Imbizo* is effective follow-up on issues and concerns raised during an event, as an *Imbizo* will ultimately be



measured by its follow-up in terms of action taken. Outlined below are some guidelines, which serve as pointers for effective capturing of issues and concerns.

There should be a central person who co-ordinates and briefs scribes. The co-ordinator should also have prior access to the programme to make logistical arrangements for scribes to be present at all the events. There should be at least two scribes allocated per event.

Scribes could take on alternate (event one and three OR two and four) events in the programme to allow for travelling arrangements.

Scribes must be fluent in both English and the prevalent language spoken in the area where the *Imbizo* takes place. Scribes should come from the communication section, because they are more aware of the communication environment in which they will be documenting issues raised. When capturing issues raised it must be done in such a way that follow-up action is borne in mind. Accuracy and capturing the gist of the issue are therefore essential.

The response and action committed to by the relevant political principals (MECs, Premier, President, Deputy President, mayor, councillors) must also be accurately captured. This is crucial in terms of accountability. A user-friendly form needs to be drawn up for each scribe to complete when documenting issues raised by the people.

Hint: Copies should be made of the form and compiled into a booklet with a hardback cover and a plastic front cover. This helps scribes to document in rural areas. An example of the

format of the form is attached as a guide (see Addendum 1 on page 34 and 38).

The co-ordinator needs to collect all scribes' notes and collate them into a follow-up report of all issues raised. Ideally, this should be in the form of a database, such as Access, or in a tabular form, which captures all the fields of the scribe form. An example is attached in Addendum 2. A fortnight after the *Imbizo* visit, it may be necessary to visit the province to obtain their report-back as well as to discuss the development of a consolidated report.

The consolidated report of issues raised will form part of the comprehensive report prepared by the province hosting the *Imbizo*. Issues raised will affect various provincial departments and local government, and may even have implications for national departments. The report must thus be communicated from the relevant Office of the Premier to the relevant responsible departments or bodies via the proper protocol channels. This to ensure that action is taken and communicated to the affected province or area.

The HoC in the province needs to ensure that feedback from provincial departments, national departments and all other responsible entities is communicated to the affected communities. Together with other documentation and plans, all research material and notes must be filed and used during the assessment and closure of the project for that particular *Imbizo* event.

## Addendum 1

### PRESIDENTIAL *IMBIZO* IN NORTH WEST

Name and contact details of scribe:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: (tick appropriate box) ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Sunday

Issue raised:

\_\_\_\_\_

Raised by whom:

Action already taken:

\_\_\_\_\_

Action needed or committed:

\_\_\_\_\_

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Provincial responsibility:</b>         |                          |
| (tick the appropriate box)                |                          |
| Office of the Premier                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Portfolios for North West                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agriculture, Conservation and Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Development, Local Government and Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Economic Development and Tourism          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Education                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Finance                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roads and Public Works                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Safety and Liaison                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Service, Arts, Culture and Sport   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Transport and Roads                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>National responsibility:</b>           |                          |
| (tick the appropriate box)                |                          |
| National departments                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Arts and Culture                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agriculture and Land Affairs              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communications                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Correctional Services                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Defence                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Education                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| Environmental Affairs and Tourism      | <input type="text"/> |
| Foreign Affairs                        | <input type="text"/> |
| Government Communications (GCIS)       | <input type="text"/> |
| Health                                 | <input type="text"/> |
| Home Affairs                           | <input type="text"/> |
| Housing                                | <input type="text"/> |
| Justice and Constitutional Development | <input type="text"/> |
| Labour                                 | <input type="text"/> |
| Minerals and Energy                    | <input type="text"/> |
| National Intelligence Agency           | <input type="text"/> |
| National Treasury                      | <input type="text"/> |
| Provincial and Local Government        | <input type="text"/> |
| Public Enterprises                     | <input type="text"/> |
| Public Service and Administration      | <input type="text"/> |
| Public Works                           | <input type="text"/> |
| Safety and Security                    | <input type="text"/> |
| Science and Technology                 | <input type="text"/> |
| Social Development                     | <input type="text"/> |
| Sport and Recreation South Africa      | <input type="text"/> |
| The Presidency                         | <input type="text"/> |
| Trade and Industry                     | <input type="text"/> |
| Transport                              | <input type="text"/> |
| Water Affairs and Forestry             | <input type="text"/> |
| Other responsible organisations:       | <input type="text"/> |

**Addendum 2**

**Province or Dept/Place/Date: Free State/ Sediba/Thaba Nchu – Open Day for MPCC – / 09 October 2004**

| Issue raised | Cluster | Responsible authority | Action taken or to be taken | Status |
|--------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
|              |         |                       |                             |        |
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|              |         |                       |                             |        |

**Note:**

Province: refers to the province where the *Imbizo* took place OR the department which organised the *Imbizo*.

Place: refers to the actual location where the interactive governance took place (events from the programme).

Date: the date when issues were captured by scribes on the ground.

An example of the form to be filled in by scribes during an *Imbizo*

**IMBIZO TO THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE BY DEPUTY PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Name and contact details of scribe:            |   |
| Date: Friday 06 July 2001                      |   |
| Event (tick appropriate box)                   |   |
| Relebogile Clinic <input type="checkbox"/>     | Traditional leaders meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Lebotlwane MPCC <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Issue raised:                                  |   |
| Raised by whom:                                |   |
| Action already taken:                          |   |
| Action needed or committed:                    |   |
| Agriculture, Conservation and Environment MEC  | <input type="text"/>  |
| Agriculture and Land Affairs                   | <input type="text"/>  |
| Arts and Culture                               | <input type="text"/>  |
| Communication                                  | <input type="text"/>  |
| Correctional Service                           | <input type="text"/>  |
| Defence  | <input type="text"/>  |
| Development, Local Government and Housing MEC  | <input type="text"/>  |
| Education                                      | <input type="text"/>  |
| Environmental Affairs and Tourism              | <input type="text"/>  |
| Education                                      | <input type="text"/>  |
| Environmental Affairs and Tourism              | <input type="text"/>  |
| Economic Development, Planning and Tourism MEC | <input type="text"/>  |
| Education MEC                                  | <input type="text"/>  |
| Foreign Affairs                                | <input type="text"/>  |
| Finance MEC                                    | <input type="text"/>  |
| Health   | <input type="text"/>  |
| Housing  | <input type="text"/>  |

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Home Affairs   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health MEC   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Justice and Constitutional Development                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Labour   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Office of the Premier                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Provincial Safety and Liaison MEC                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Provincial responsibility: (tick the appropriate box)      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Portfolios for North West                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Service, Arts, culture and Sport MEC                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Service, Arts, Culture and Sport MEC                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Transport, Public Works and Roads MEC                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Traditional Affairs and Corporate Affairs MEC              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Minerals and Energy  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>National responsibility: (tick the appropriate box)</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>National Departments</b>                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National Treasury  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National Intelligence Agency                               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Provincial and Local Government                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public Enterprises   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public Service and Administration                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Science and Technology                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Safety and Security  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Development   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sport and Recreation South Africa                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Presidency   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trade and Industry   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Transport  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Water Affairs and Forestry                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |



## 6. Development Communication

### 6.1. What is Development Communication?

'Development Communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential.' – (Nora Quebral; *Quoted in Development Communication – rhetoric and reality* by Pete Habermann and Guy de Fontgalland.)

Government has adopted an approach to dialogue with its citizens, which is described as Development Communication.

- Development Communication is a method of providing communities with information in a manner that enables them to use that information to improve their socio-economic well being.
- The Development Communication approach is aimed at making public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable.
- Information must be applied as part of community development efforts and must address information needs identified by communities, including various structures and groups within the communities.
- Most importantly, the information should take into consideration the

diversity of culture, language and different literacy levels.

- The intended outcome is to make a difference in the quality of life of individuals and communities.

For more information about Development Communication, visit the website: [www.gcis.gov.za/mpcc](http://www.gcis.gov.za/mpcc) or contact the GCIS Directorate: LLIM on (012) 314 2133.

### 6.2. The Development Communication approach

- **It is responsive**

This means that communication between government and the community must be responsive to the needs of the community within the context of government's mandated programme to improve lives of all South Africans.

- **It relies on feedback**

It is a two-way communication process that involves consultation with the recipients of information and provides them with answers to their queries. This process similarly gives government an opportunity to listen to the ideas and experiences of communities, especially about programmes and services aimed at improving their lives.

- **It must be creative and innovative**

The message must clearly show how information can better the lives of recipients. The message must promote hope and trust among its recipients, as well as encourage

them to be interested in its content and to become a part thereof.

- **It is about continuity and sustainability**

It is not about government dumping communication material on communities and not making sure that they understand its content. Follow-up workshops can be arranged to emphasise the importance and necessity of the information. The community must therefore use it continually and in a sustained way to enrich their lives. It must be available continuously when there is a need.

- **It relies on community participation**

It is about planning with communities and identifying their information needs. It is also about working with communities in disseminating information, and inviting government officials to explain how programmes work and how they can be accessed.

**Example:**

You are arranging a workshop on human rights issues. You invite someone (a commissioner) from the Human Rights Commission to explain basic human rights and how the community can exercise those rights, while local groups with an interest in these issues play a role in mobilising the community and special-interest groups to participate.

- **It promotes bringing government closer to the**

**people so that they do not have to travel long distances to access government services**

**Example:**

Through the *Imbizo* community-outreach programme, government interacts with the people and listens to their concerns about government programmes, services, etc.

- **It is about the use of relevant language**

Concepts must be developed in the language of the community served, and the community must participate in the development of that material.

**Example:**

Arrange a pre-testing exercise at an MPCC, where the community gets to see the material before it is produced. This gives them the opportunity to comment on the language used and its relevance, as well as the accessibility of content.

### 6.3. Principles of Development Communication

To ensure that the use of Development Communication becomes successful, especially in the context of GCPs, it is imperative to outline some of the fundamental aspects of this approach. This can also specifically be done in the context of how Development Communication principles have been institutionalised through

MPCCs and district-based Government Information Centres (GICs). Principles are also important to consider when developing government's communication campaigns through the GCF, such as the following:

- NETWORKING activities are regularly undertaken with stakeholders to identify community information needs and problems experienced in accessing government programmes.
- The formation of PARTNERSHIPS through liaison and networking with key local institutions, structures of civil society and role-players in the community is significant in sharing resources and fostering joint problem-solving efforts.
- PROFILING the communities to enable the development communicator to understand the situation at grassroots level, especially being a single-entry point to identify where potential solutions can be found.
- INFORMATION DISSEMINATION to empower people with the knowledge they need as well as informing them about government programmes and policies, through a wide range of innovative and community specific communication methods.
- MEDIA LIAISON to form good relationships with journalists and

disseminate some information through them.

## 6.4. Methods of Development Communication

### (a) Audio-visual

- o Communicators should obtain the necessary training on video recording so that they can record important community events, play them at MPCC waiting rooms, community halls, and also communicate important issues to local, provincial and national government.
- o A video on youth issues and activities, and their problems, fears, excitements, suggestions, concrete recommendations, etc. could be part of a campaign leading to a public meeting or even a youth day event. The video should not only dwell on problems but also on community and government solutions.
- o The use of audio-visual technology and other related media are valuable tools to share important and useful information on government services that can better the lives of ordinary people.

**There are four phases, which have the potential to impact on the Development Communication environment:**

- (i) marketing and product penetration to create excitement through publicity, brochures, door-to-door visits, posters, interviews, film festivals, vibrant discussions and focused groups,
- (ii) segmentation of stakeholder groups and focus on micromarketing using films, film-making and videos, depending on the needs of the target group,
- (iii) product development using culturally-specific footage from archives and ultimate broadcast for film festivals
- (iv) diversification with local content additions.



#### **(b) Discussion circles**

- o Discussion groups are structured along the lines of quality circles where representatives from different communities, stakeholders or ward groups discuss important issues pertaining to information needs and queries about service delivery.
- o It is an open discussion based on small group dynamics where specific issues on delivery, products, questions and programmes are brainstormed.

#### **(c) Radio**

- o This entails live broadcasts of outdoor programmes or studio panels discussing relevant topics.

- o Community members can use the telecentres at MPCCs to access the programmes. Studio guests can specialise in issues such as domestic violence, child protection, women and child abuse, crime prevention, etc. GCIS communication officers must arrange for the panelists and the programme. They must also advise the telecentre manager to seek government or community sponsors for the costs of the phone-in programme.
  - o Local government should feature prominently as partners in this venture as they are closest to the callers and can respond most effectively.
  - o Government communicators can play a major role in creating this enabling platform for their counterparts, especially as a small budgetary contribution from a few participants makes this medium a viable option.
- (d) Community participation**
- o Panel discussions at MPCCs, at each ward or a group of wards.
  - o The senior communication officer, district municipality or provincial communicator should arrange with the school principal, regional educational inspector and expert from a non-governmental organisation (NGO) to talk to the communities about impending changes to the education system.
  - o At such an event a representative of the Department of Home Affairs could also speak to prospective applicants about what is needed to apply for an Identity Document, while a representative from the Department of Labour could outline how learnerships work, etc.
- (e) Television**
- o Television may be used for national developmental programmes to educate and entertain the community, e.g. Edufocus is a national programme done by the SABC together with the Department of Education to educate young people about life skills, health issues, etc.
  - o These programmes can be used successfully in other local platforms and government communicators can work effectively together to create networks to enhance the distribution channels of these products.

**(f) Drama**

- o Folk-drama may be used to tell stories or events in a dramatic way. It is an objective way of addressing sensitive issues that communities may not talk about openly. In this way, the characters do the talking.
- o Stop-start drama is simple and real. It presents problems and tries out different solutions.

**(g) Other**

- o Participatory observation – attending projects to observe in your locality. By having effective local government communication structures in place, this form of on-the-job learning will be more easily facilitated.
- o Exchanges include staff members visiting projects in other provinces or across various departments. This is aimed at building a learning network, where one staff member can visit another province for learning purposes.

**6.5. Use of resource material**

Various forms of resource material can be used to promote Development Communication. These resource material can be used for awareness

purposes and to mobilise the community to attend workshops, roadshows, dramas, *Izimbizo*, etc.

- **Key message leaflet**

This entails a simple language A5 leaflet with key messages that are both clear and simple. It can be typed and photocopied for distribution.

- **Loudhailing**

A loudspeaker can be used to mobilise a particular community to attend an event at a stadium or community hall. It is used preferably in deep rural areas to mobilise communities.

- **Word of mouth**

This entails the 'each-person-teach-another' principle, whereby information is spread through friends, families, neighbours, etc. It is also preferred in deep rural areas where everyone knows everybody.

- **Posters**

A well-designed and printed poster can be put on community halls and public places such as schools, clinics, post offices, local business, etc. to disseminate a particular message. The culture of having community notice boards at MPCCs should be developed.

- **Promotional material**

Products like T-shirts, caps, key-holders, etc. can be used in big projects such as the SoNA, *Izimbizo*, etc.

- **Flyer**

This entails a small and simplified version of the key concepts and messages that is quick to read and understand.

- **Z-card**

This is a pocket booklet consisting of key messages. It is easy to handle but also contains a little more information.

- **Electronic and print media**

This entails community radio stations/print media which are localised and use the language and dialect of the community, e.g. Voice of Phalaborwa. Should mass commercial media be used, this should only be in a way that enhances citizen access or which is appropriate in the relevant community, that is, where such commercial media are appropriate and accepted in that community.

To access the services of the GCIS' regional distribution of resource material, see Annexure A on page 51.

## 6.6. MPCCs: Vehicles for integrated service delivery

- The most useful innovation in this process of communication for development has been government's programme of rolling out MPCCs, primarily in rural areas.
- MPCCs are designed as places

of a more permanent or semi-permanent point of contact between communities and government, and from which a number of programmes and projects can be run. No less than six government services are offered at MPCCs. A further development has been the GCIS' commitment to the location of a GIC in each of the district municipalities.

- GCIS communication officers have a significant role to play in expediting the notion of Development Communication. This is largely as they interact directly with communities on a regular basis, monitoring and evaluating the impact of the work done through MPCCs and how this has improved the quality of lives of communities.
- Information dissemination is conducted at MPCCs through public meetings, exhibitions, workshops, training sessions, open information days, drama groups, awareness programmes and media briefings to ensure that communities understand the content of information resource material and are able to relate it to their daily lives. National *Imbizo* events, provincial executive council outreach events, outreach programmes of district and local municipality Mayors; the provision of big screen broadcasts of the SoNA by the President as well as the Opening of Provincial



Legislatures by the Premiers, are also among events held at MPCCs, allowing ordinary citizens direct access to events which have historically been restricted, largely due to media ownership patterns.

### 6.7. Local Liaison and Information Management

- All Development Communication programmes and projects should be aligned to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The IDP is an essential management tool for local government, whereby communities are encouraged to participate in local-level decision-making and planning for service delivery – in an integrated manner. Municipalities, and in particular the wards, are key entry points for the Development Communication practitioner.
- The Ward Information Management System (WIMS) is an online resource in the form of a database for district-based communication officers. It provides access to community profiles (including literacy levels, languages, local organisations and stakeholders) at ward level. While this is currently only an internal GCIS operational system, government communicators are encouraged to request profiles of areas where campaigns are to be implemented.
- Community media (ways in

which communities share information) plays a significant role in Development Communication and information sharing at a local level. Channels of community media include local newspapers and radio, community meetings (*Indaba/Makgotla* and word of mouth).

### 6.8. Why do we need to practise Development Communication?

- The lack of co-ordinating communication structures at local government level has had an impact on the quality of communication efforts within the local government and on the effective and efficient communication of government service-delivery initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life of the citizenry.
- In South Africa, MPCCs have been identified as vehicles through which all government communicators can reach communities. However, the Development Communication approach is wider than the MPCC initiative and drives the service and information delivery approach used by a number of government departments.
- Development Communication promotes government's ability to speak with one voice – not

in a sense of uniformity, but that the central policy intentions and visions are uniformly interpreted and explained to stakeholders.

- The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), Local Government Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000, and the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 place an enormous communication challenge to the transformation of local government structures, and in particular government's commitment to transparency, accountability, openness, participatory democracy and direct communication with the citizenry in improving their lives for the better.

To develop a communication campaign with the GCIS regional officer, see Annexure B on page 54.

## 6.9. Monitoring and evaluation system

Monitoring and evaluation are critical factors in the process of assessing whether the communication efforts of government are having the desired impact. In addition to monitoring and evaluation, formal research methods such as qualitative and quantitative applications can also be used effectively.

## Why do we need a monitoring and evaluation system?

- To ensure appropriate distribution of information at the local level and promoting the culture of responsive government.
- To motivate project teams through effective feedback and measurement of outcomes. We cannot improve or develop what we cannot evaluate.
- To ensure credibility and accessibility of government information at local level.
- To identify shortcomings in project implementation and recommend improvements.
- To assist in developing a Provincial and Local Liaison Learning Network towards a learning organisation.

## Approach to monitoring and evaluation

- Participatory approaches, joint planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Each project should design an evaluation tool appropriate to that particular event.
- Partnership-based – not just the GCIS as it does not always implement projects on its own.

## Methodology

While individual projects may have their own unique evaluation instrument, the following methods can be considered:

- focus groups

- information champions – a local stakeholder/community figure who assists in assessing the impact of the project
- face-to-face interviews
- telephone interviews
- panel questions
- participatory observations
- *Imbizo* discussions
- media analysis
- surveys
- monitoring demand for services.

## 6.10. From theory to practice: Case Studies

### (a) Face-to-face communication through *Imbizo*

- *Imbizo* is essentially a heightened period of unmediated communication between the people and government. The people raise their concerns or issues directly with government officials and get responses to their queries. *Imbizo* is part of government's commitment to get closer to the people and promote accountability and transparency. It is a campaign taken up by all spheres of government. *Imbizo* affords government an opportunity to have an insight into people's concerns over the delivery of services and the betterment of their lives. The campaign promotes partnership between the

Government and the people. It thus promotes participatory democracy and encourages ordinary citizens to be active participants in the transformation of the South African society and be part of the process of building a better life for all.

In other words, *Imbizo* encourages citizens to participate actively in improving their lives and the well-being of their society. *Izimbizo* fulfil the strategic objective of achieving effective government communication that will empower citizens to become agents of change and fulfilling the South African dream of a better life for all.

### Example:

*The Presidential Imbizo in October 2002 assured the people of Bekkersdal on the West Rand and the nearby areas that government was concerned and wanted to hear about people's needs in order to address them. FAQ about water, electricity, sanitation, housing, jobs, etc. were referred to the relevant departments. The national Imbizo project team co-ordinates all the national Izimbizo around the country, compiles a detailed report after the national Imbizo Focus Week together with the Presidential Imbizo and circulates it to relevant departments for their attention and response. Tracker*

research is also conducted to ensure that people are aware of Imbizo, and that they understand its necessity. The results of the research confirm people's needs and concerns in terms of fast-tracking service delivery and solving some of the priority issues.

### (b) Workshops

- Workshops are valuable ways of disseminating information to the community but also soliciting their views and feedback. Presentations can be done and questions answered. Group discussions can also be arranged to elaborate on issues and to clarify where necessary. Issue specialists can be brought into the community in a non-threatening way.

#### **Example:**

*A two-day workshop was held in Makhuvha in Limpopo in October 2002 by the GCIS and the Department of Trade and Industry as a pilot project to make people aware of economic opportunities available to them at MPCCs, and how they can use these opportunities to better their lives. The workshop was also intended to illustrate how these opportunities together with training and education will be brought closer to them at the MPCC, and how access will be enhanced. This means that the local community*

*itself needs to be creative and use local resources available to them to start their small businesses. A group session was held on the last day of the workshop during which the community compiled business plans for small enterprises, which were related to the local infrastructure/resources. Examples ranged from the brewing of marula beer, fruit growing, woodwork and art made from local timber. A funeral parlour was also proposed.*

### (c) Roadshows

- Roadshows are also part of unmediated communication, because of their mobile nature, reaching a large number of villages within a short space of time. This is where officials meet with communities, combining information dissemination with entertainment. This encourages mass attendance, especially among the youth. Mobile vehicles can significantly enhance the success of roadshows by extending the reach of government. It will make this type of communication even more visible because its technical nature, the use of sound systems, an attractive performance stage, big screens, etc. all contribute in enhancing the allure of the event. They lend themselves well to outdoor activities of a mass character and are important in addressing facility shortages in some areas.

**Example:**

*Mobile trucks used by the South African Police Service (SAPS) in Limpopo are a further example of good unmediated communication. Mobile police units render services to rural communities who do not have police stations nearby. A detailed Case Study has been developed and is available upon request. The use of mobile facilities has significantly changed the relationship between the SAPS and communities in the areas visited as it has shown that obstacles to service delivery can creatively be overcome. It has also indicated the real concern of government regarding problems these communities experience.*

## **ANNEXURE A: Accessing the services of the GCIS' regional distribution network – principles and procedures**

### **Background**

Through the over 3 000 distribution points established by the GCIS across the country, a strategic opportunity has emerged for government departments that are looking for support and assistance in extending the reach of their distribution strategies.

The GCIS has nine regional offices which each has an Information Resource Centre (IRC), staffed by an information secretary, where material can be sent for distribution. The GCIS also has two additional IRCS, one at head office

in Pretoria and one at the Parliamentary Office in Cape Town. Please contact the Pretoria office on (012) 314 2134 or Cape Town office on (021) 461 0070.

1. The GCIS has decentralised its liaison functions in provinces to the level of district municipalities. There is at least one communication officer in each of the 65 district municipalities and even two in vast or populous districts. Each district officer or MPCC has also established a mini-IRC as a distribution point.
2. The GCIS has entered into partnerships with various community structures, clinics, crèches, NGOs, local governments, businesses, etc. where distribution points have been established and are serviced on a monthly to bi-monthly basis by district-based communication officers. Many of these networks are shared with communicators from provincial and local governments, and there is therefore a growing network of these points nationwide.

### **How can I make use of the GCIS' distribution network?**

To properly manage distribution support, the following key principles have been put in place:

1. The process outlined below is tailored specifically for a

- partnership with the GCIS regional offices and district offices. The total development of a distribution strategy for a campaign, which includes marketing and media buying, is handled by the Directorate: MAD. Usually such a strategy would have formed part of an overall communication strategy development process, which would in such cases be directed to the GCIS Project Desk.
2. If material has to be distributed through regional and district networks of the GCIS, the client department needs to have a manageable size of resource material (few thousands and not millions as such large volumes require procurement processes. A rule of thumb is about 10 000 per province as print runs of 90 000 to 100 000 are manageable. The GCIS regional offices and partners do not have the capacity to handle bulk distribution.
  3. The client department needs to approach the Directorate: LLIM with the request and indicate the Development Communication content of the material and the programme it is intended to support (that is, in cases where it is simply a matter of distributing information resource material and not the development of comprehensive campaigns as outlined in 1 above).
  4. A language profile for each province/region will be provided to guide the client on the quantities and languages to send to each specific province/region.
  5. The database of all disability groups/organisations around the country assists clients to reach disability groups as well and to cater for their needs and assess the quantities of, for example, Braille material, which can be managed.
  6. Contact details of organisations which cater for these special needs are also available on request, so that clients can outsource their services to these organisations if the need arises.
  7. Only once a clear agreement has been reached between the client department and the Directorate: LLIM, is a detailed brief sent to each GCIS regional manager with the details of the quantities to expect, delivery dates and who the primary target groups are.
  8. Once this brief has been agreed to, the client will post material at their own cost to regional offices, based on an address list provided by the Directorate: LLIM.
  9. Material must reach GCIS regional offices during the very first or last week of a month. During the first week of a month, all district-based communication officers meet at the regional offices for their

monthly staff meeting. The Information Secretaries in the IRC will divide your material into district-based distribution groups. Upon leaving for their regions, our communication officers will take the material with them and start the distribution process using the following principles:

- a. We do not handle short-notice distribution – that is where the material is dated and has to be distributed within a limited timeline. We only handle educational and information products which have a longer shelf-life and where your need is to extend the reach and access of your products, especially to rural communities.

- b. We will provide the client with a distribution profile indicating where the material was distributed and to which primary groups.

10. Any resource material sent directly to the GCIS regional offices, without the written approval of the Directorate: LLIM, will not be distributed.

**For more information contact the Directorate: LLIM on (012) 314 2133 or 314 2199**



## How to develop a communication campaign with the GCIS regional offices

### Do you want to run a campaign at MPCCs?

Through the GCIS regional offices a strong presence has been developed at local community level, especially at the 65 operational MPCCs nationwide (as at June 2004). Most important in this regard is the ability to target specific interest groups who form part of the WIMS, which the GCIS has developed for each district and locality.

For example, the Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) wished to engage with local level economic stakeholders be they small businesses, community-based economic service-providers, Local Economic Development officers of municipalities and the various organised structures of business. GCIS communication officers based in MPCCs at Matsamo in Mpumalanga and Namahadi in the Free State were able to arrange stakeholder meetings where the dti presented their products. Such Development Communication workshops were successfully held in both MPCCs in October 2002.

MPCCs provide access to and awareness about government information and services. The purpose of such access is to improve people's lives by providing useful information. Operational MPCCs are intended as a base for programmes and information

campaigns, *izimbizo*, roadshows, distribution campaigns and community meetings, to mention but few. Once an MPCC is launched, the vision is for government departments to add value to these Centres through intensifying their campaigns and services.

### Some of the advantages in using an MPCC include:

- It is a strategic access point, which is well known in the community.
- It is a place where communities gather and where the questions they ask about government programmes can be documented and reported to relevant service-providers – a place to generate FAQs and appropriate answers.
- Given that the GCIS has established a local database at every MPCC, the relevant and affected role-players in each community are known and consultation and participation processes are so much easier and more inclusive.
- MPCCs offer places for continuity and aftercare, and are instrumental in letting communities know that government is there to serve.
- MPCCs have become strategic hubs of wide networks reaching to the most remote part of districts. They are as such 'gateways' to wider networks, contact points and communities than simply those around the MPCC.

Among the roles envisaged by the GCIS in the establishment of the Directorate: LLIM in 2002, was the enhancement of the services offered by MPCCs to communities through

strategic value additions and partnerships. This has already been successfully tested with a wide range of government departments. Please feel free to contact us in this regard.

The GCIS has established the Project Desk as an entry point for the design of crosscutting communication campaigns.

For more information in this regard, please contact (012) 314 2293.

If you simply wish to add value to an MPCC or are interested in a specific line-function campaign at an MPCC, please contact (012) 314 2133.

Have you considered the strategic value which MPCCs can add to your campaigns?