PROGRAMME 4: PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL LIAISON

PURPOSE

Provincial and Local Liaison (PLL) strengthens and streamlines systems and capacity at provincial and local level for government communication and interaction with the public.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

To disseminate government information and communication to the public, through the establishment of one-stop information centres and networks to integrate communication at local government level.

SERVICE-DELIVERY OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS

The Programme has three subprogrammes and nine regional offices.

Local Liaison and Information Management co-ordinates efforts to promote development communication and local content within the government communication system through various mechanisms, including dissemination of government information products, community information campaigns and the promotion of community media. It co-ordinates partnerships to strengthen communication at local government level, and efforts to promote integrated government communication locally. Through monitoring the community liaison efforts of GCIS' district-based communication officers, an understanding of the local communication environment is developed, which assists in developing communication campaigns and programmes.

Significant progress has been made in standardising the communication programmes implemented by the district-based communication officers of GCIS by establishing a sub-project office in the Chief Directorate as a single entry point, supporting the nine regional offices. The degree to which partnerships have been forged with government and non-governmental organisations using MPCCs as points of information and service delivery has improved significantly.

Institutional Development is mainly responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating the establishment and roll-out of MPCCs countrywide. The Directorate is also responsible for monitoring, evaluation and aftercare.

Provincial and Local Liaison Administration co-ordinates the corporate and administrative responsibilities of the Chief Directorate and serves as the single entry point for administration and management tasks between the GCIS Head Office and regional offices. It implements and co-ordinates capacity-development initiatives within the Programme, which supports the decentralised functions of the unit.

Monitoring and evaluation systems have assisted effective management of the budget. Recruitment of staff has been maintained and a high standard set in terms of training in skills required to manage the development communication function locally.

Regional offices play a critical role in implementing the Government Communication Programme at provincial and local level. They are responsible, in partnership with provincial and local government, for establishing an effective government communication system from national to local level. This includes the maintenance of communication co-ordination structures, the implementation of government communication campaigns as well as popularisation of communication platforms including MPCCs, the Batho Pele Gateway Portal and partnerships with Community Development Workers (CDWs).

To achieve its objectives, PLL uses all appropriate forms of communication, including community media, print, electronic, direct communication with communities through unmediated products, community liaison, the Internet and telecentres. District-based communication officers play a developmental role in identifying and responding to community needs, as well as assessing the local communication environment.

Twenty-eight new staff members were appointed countrywide, including one Regional Manager and a Director.

Forty-five staff members, including newcomers, attended five-day training on phase four courses on Development Communication, Finance, the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 and General Administration. Newcomers were first trained on phases one to three and joined the others for the phase four training. Thirty senior communication officers, including management staff, were trained in Project Management.

All communication officers were given extensive training in the Ward Information Management System, Project Management and the PLL Sub-project Office, which was established to enhance content development, database accessibility, environmental analysis and managing the flow of information between GCIS district-based communication officers, regional managers and PLL

management at GCIS Head Office. All information resource secretaries, including those based in Parliament and at Midtown Information Centre, were trained on modules relating to the regional distribution processes. Twenty-five staff members, including regional managers, were trained in the Performance Management System.

Development communication training was conducted with national and provincial departments and all GCIS employees.

District-based communication officers listen to people's needs during their liaison work, visits to wards, izimbizo and community forum meetings. They facilitated 1 010 responsive campaigns at ward level in partnership with local municipalities and relevant government departments. They assist CDWs in encouraging participation by ordinary people in local governance and integrated development planning. Their efforts helped the Umsobomvu Youth Fund to reach more than 14 000 youngsters in rural villages through direct community liaison. GCIS district-based communication officers assisted the Department of Justice in tracing over 450 missing Truth and Reconciliation Commission beneficiaries. Through the network of 600 distribution points, GCIS communication officers assisted Parliament in distributing 200 000 constitutional comic booklets to communities countrywide.

More than 14 value-adding partnerships were developed with national government departments and public-sector agencies (e.g. South African Revenue Service, and the departments of trade and industry, home affairs, environmental affairs and tourism, communications, and justice and constitutional development) wanting to use MPCCs as points of presence and for information and service delivery. A partnership with the Film Resource Unit, to establish community-based audiovisual facilities at MPCCs, allowing for creative use of the multimedia to provide information, was another exciting venture. It allowed MPCCs to be used for the exhibition and distribution of African films, which have educational and cultural value. The Umsobomvu Youth Fund rolled out several youth advisory centres at MPCCs, linking youngsters to career guidance, entrepreneurship and skills development programmes, and the National Youth Service.

Sixty-six MPCCs are operational countrywide as part of the first generation. Communities in urban and rural areas visit the centres regularly to access social and economic services provided by government departments and their agencies. Furthermore, nine General Service Counters were established at MPCCs as access points to the Batho Pele Gateway Internet Portal and plans are underway to extend this to 18 MPCCs in 2005/06.

The second-generation MPCC strategy was adopted by Cabinet, and work is continuing to ensure that each local municipality has an MPCC by 2014. More than 600 services from all spheres of government and MPCC partners have been delivered to the public where they were not provided previously.

Progress has been made in extending the system of government communication to local government level (municipalities). Provincial roll-out workshops, including engagements with several municipalities, the Department of Provincial and Local Government, South African Local Government Association and provincial heads of communication were implemented in four provinces with dates pending for the roll-out of the remaining five.

SERVICE-DELIVERY ACHIEVEMENTS

Sub-programme	Output	Output Performance Measures/Indicators	Performance against Targets	
			Targets	Actual
Management	Strategic leadership and the development of communication partnerships	Regular meetings and support for provincial heads of communication	Quarterly	Quarterly attended
		Establishment of Government Information Centres (GICs)	85 GICs by December 2004	100 GICs are operational. Communicators have established distribution points for disseminating information products on government's programmes and projects at clinics, post offices, shops, schools, libraries, etc.
Liaison	Integrated delivery of government information	Appointment of new communication officials and their training in Development Communication	22 new staff to be appointed and 30 officers to be trained	28 new staff appointed. 55 communication officers trained in Development Communication, Finances, Project Management and Administration. A further 30 were given specialised Project Management training

SERVICE-DELIVERY ACHIEVEMENTS (CONTINUES)

Sub-programme	Output	Output Performance Measures/Indicators	Performance against Targets	
			Targets	**Actual**
	Content strategy guiding the grassroots liaison work of district-based communicators	Development of a content strategy	Content strategy	Content strategy developed, including a manual. Content workshops were held with regional office staff. Ward information profiles were developed and operationalised using the Ward Information Management System. Sub-project office was fully operational to integrate regional and district GCIS offices into the national projects of GCIS
	Support to communication structures at local government level	Development of strategy	Setting up of working committee with key partners – March 2005	A tripartite committee between the South African Local Government Association, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and GCIS met regularly to strengthen communication at municipal levels. Nine provincial working teams have been established. Workshops have been held with core teams in four provinces
	Rural distribution network and channels for government information	Number of Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) established	Roll-out of 65 MPCCs by December 2004	66 MPCCs were operational by March 2005. Partnerships with government departments and parastatals have seen more than 20 information products in excess of 600 distribution points. 1 010 campaigns were held