

POLICY BRIEF 7

**Public participation and citizen based  
monitoring in realising Socio-Economic  
Rights**

September 2014 – By Hannah Dawson

**Monitoring the Progressive Realisation of Socio-  
Economic Rights Project**

## **Acronyms**

CBM - Citizen Based Monitoring

CMAP - Community Monitoring Advocacy Programme

DPME - Department for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation

IBP - International Budget Partnership

NDP - National Development Plan

SASSA - South African Social Security Agency

SER - Socio-Economic Rights

SJC - Social Justice Coalition

SPII - Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute

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## 1. Introduction

The Socio-Economic Rights (SER) monitoring tool developed by Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII) provides a programmatic and long term approach to monitoring and evaluating the progressive realisation of SERs in South Africa.<sup>1</sup> The tool combines policy and budget analysis and statistical indicators with the overall aim of guiding policy and the implementation of SERs. The monitoring tool attempts to provide a standardised approach which can be used by various actors and employs different tools as the context and aim requires. The tool, in particular the development of statistical indicators for various SERs, has emphasised quantitative measures that are well suited to mapping trends and patterns over time and but in effect has side-lined citizen based monitoring (CBM) and other mechanisms for public participation. This is a result of a number of factors, firstly, the difficulty of disaggregating data to ward or community level where the breakdown in service delivery is most acute, and secondly, the scarcity and often complete absence of data at a facility level where citizens engage directly with the state. Despite these challenges the SER Monitoring Tool acknowledges both the importance and necessity of citizens, the recipients of government services and goods, to actively participate in the monitoring of government. CBM is particularly relevant when to date most of the monitoring and recourse measures occur at policy or programmatic level and not where they are often most urgently needed - at the local or facility level.

This policy brief will *first*, define CBM and outline both its distinct features and the legal and policy basis for it in the South African context, in order to make the case for its inclusion within the broader SER monitoring framework. The *second* section will consider: what is to be monitored?; How is monitoring done?; and, who should do the monitoring?. In answering these foundational questions, section two will discuss various CBM tools and instruments used in South Africa. *Third*, this paper will raise a number of key questions and challenges for the SER Monitoring Project in terms of how citizen based monitoring can be supported and incorporated into monitoring at other levels – most notably the statistical indicators which the project aims to monitor and track over time.

## 2. Defining Citizen Based Monitoring

Citizen Based Monitoring (CBM) is an ‘approach to monitoring government performance that focuses on the experiences of ordinary citizens in order to strengthen public accountability and drive service delivery improvement’.<sup>2</sup> CBM can be understood as a key component of public participation which is distinct for a number of reasons. First, it places the citizen at the centre of the monitoring process, including deciding what is monitored, how the monitoring takes place and what recourse is required. Second, CBM emphasises the importance of public participation in government planning and budgeting processes as well as ongoing monitoring at the point of service delivery. The aim is to include citizen participation throughout the delivery cycle to drive accountability, improve direct redress and find local solutions. The following section outlines the legal and policy basis for CBM in the South African context.

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<sup>1</sup> Dawson, H., 2014, ‘A Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating the Progressive Realisation of Socio-Economic Rights in South Africa’, Available at: [www.spji.org.za](http://www.spji.org.za).

<sup>2</sup> DPME, 2013, ‘A Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline service delivery’, p. 7

### 3. The legal and policy basis for Citizen Based Monitoring

South Africa's democracy is founded on principles of accountable governance and public participation, most notably in the decentralised structures of government which aim to support and encourage the active participation of citizens. Section 152 (1)(e) of the Constitution requires local government to "encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government".<sup>3</sup>

The *Reconstruction and Development White Paper* (1995) set out a context for participatory governance with its understanding that "development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry...it is about involvement and growing empowerment".<sup>4</sup> The White paper on *Transforming Public Service Delivery* (1997) provided a framework for people-centred transformation of public service delivery and commits government to actively understand and effectively respond to the needs of the people it serves.<sup>5</sup> The *White paper on Local Government* (1998) also clearly signals the intention of active citizen participation in local government and service delivery and makes reference to the role of citizens in monitoring.<sup>6</sup> The principles of public participation are also enshrined in numerous sector specific policies and legislation that require structures and opportunities for citizens to be involved in decision-making and monitoring. This is evident in ward committee structures, clinic committees, community policing forums, school governing bodies, and community liaison officers which in theory give citizens opportunities to shape the institutions closest to them.

The *Municipal Systems Act* (2000) and the *Municipal Structures Act* (1998) are legally binding and require local municipalities to not only consult with local communities but enable their participation in budgeting, planning and the monitoring and evaluation of a municipality's performance. Integrated Development Plans (IDP) are the main planning tool for municipalities and contain 5-year municipal development plans which are intended to promote economic and social development within municipalities.<sup>7</sup> The IDP sets the priorities of the municipality in terms of service delivery, budgets and capital investment. Municipal councils must encourage and support community participation in the formation, implementation and monitoring of IDPs which are meant to be based on an assessment of community needs and priority issues.<sup>8</sup> However, despite the right to participation being set out in the Constitution and local government legislation, the top-down implementation and technical nature of these processes effectively excludes communities from participating in them.<sup>9</sup> Participation is also often downgraded to a compliance exercise by local officials rather than an opportunity to empower community members, who know the needs of the community best, to actively participate in decision-making.

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<sup>3</sup> Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Reconstruction and Development White Paper, 1995, p. 8

<sup>5</sup> DPME, 2013, 'A Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline service delivery', p. 5

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> See section 153(a) of the Constitution

<sup>8</sup> Local Government Action, 2011, 'Making local government work: an activist's guide', p. 26

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

The rise in community protests indicates the dysfunction of the local state-citizen interface as well as the growing distance and breakdown in trust between citizens and the government. Protests represent an attempt to shape or gain a voice in local development processes while highlighting that the legislated spaces and opportunities for participation are both not working and ineffective in responding to grievances and guaranteeing community members' voices are heard.

The National Development Plan (NDP) foresees the active involvement of citizens in their own development processes – this it terms 'active citizenship'. The NDP also acknowledges that the outcome of government actions has been to reduce rather than increase the incentive for citizens to be direct participants. As a result, the NDP proposes that the state actively support and incentivise citizen engagement to advance development within communities and hold government to account.<sup>10</sup> The Department for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) has acknowledged that community monitoring of service delivery is a particularly underdeveloped component of public participation.

Despite the legislative and policy frameworks stipulating the involvement of citizens throughout the delivery cycle, the reality on the ground indicates a disconnect between policy intentions, government practice, and the experiences of citizens on the ground. The state's response to protests and opposition by social movements and community based organisations appears to be characterised by increasing condemnation, repression and violence which again erodes the trust between state and citizens.

Beyond the legal and policy basis for public participation - citizen based monitoring should be prioritised because it is an important mechanism for government accountability and can contribute to more effective and efficient service delivery. Community involvement in the planning and budgeting phase is crucial to ensure that plans meet the real needs of communities and priority is given to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, as the Constitution and basic human rights norms require. CBM throughout the delivery cycle can also help improve the quality of service delivery and public expenditure efficiency and therefore reduce opportunities for corruption. CBM can also strengthen the relationship between citizens and government by demonstrating the willingness to take citizens expectations and experiences seriously and as a result respond to their demands.<sup>11</sup>

## **4. What is being monitored?**

As the previous section indicates, the participation of citizens is clearly articulated in policy and legislation. This includes public participation at various stages of the decision-making process from

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<sup>10</sup> National Planning Commission, 2011, National Development Plan, Available at: [www.npconline.co.za/medialib/downloads/home/NPC%20National%20Development%20Plan%20Vision%202030%20-lo-res.pdf](http://www.npconline.co.za/medialib/downloads/home/NPC%20National%20Development%20Plan%20Vision%202030%20-lo-res.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Kathrin Plangemann (The World Bank) presentation entitled "Citizen-based Monitoring Instruments, Cases and Lessons Learnt" at the DPME workshop on CbM on 30 September 2013.

planning, budgeting, implementation and the monitoring of service delivery. Citizens, however, cannot participate or monitor government unless they know their rights and have information about government policies and programs, processes for participation, norms and standards and realistic expectations of delivery. This highlights the need for citizens to not only have access to information on their rights and expectations of quality service but that they understand these, the processes involved, roles and responsibilities, and avenues for accessing recourse. It is therefore premature to focus exclusively on the monitoring of service delivery without ensuring that there is sufficient public participation in planning, budgeting and in the setting of standards, performance targets and indicators at the local level which allow for mutual accountability. This raises important questions such as: Are policies (including norms and standards) simplified so they can be understood and accessed by all citizens? Do citizens know that local government is required by law to involve them in the IDP budget process, which is reviewed every year and focuses on how money is spent on different programmes and projects? Are citizens adequately consulted in local government plans and in the setting of priorities and targets for service delivery goals? Are local budgets 'user-friendly' and made accessible for communities to understand and engage with?

These different dimensions of community participation and monitoring relate to both the *process* and *outcome* indicators which the SER monitoring tool uses in the monitoring of the progressive realisation of socio-economic rights.<sup>12</sup> In the case of CBM, process indicators would monitor, for example, if procurement procedures were followed and if local budgets were publically available and accessible to local citizens. Outcome indicators would measure both the implementation and effectiveness of service delivery, including the delivery of goods and the quality of service provision.

Monitoring of government services occurs at various levels and (as the following sections discusses), different tools are needed for different services. What kinds of tools and methodologies are applied is also dependent on who is responsible for the delivery of government services. For example, local government is responsible for delivering basic services to communities including water, sanitation, refuse removal and electricity. Provincial government and specific departments, on the other hand, are responsible for the delivery of health care, education, safety and security, and housing. Moreover, some services, notably housing delivery and informal settlement upgrading, are increasingly based on models of delivery which involve complex coordination between provincial and local governments. Lines of accountability are also complicated by the widespread out-sourcing of many functions previously carried out by the state – a process which is occurring in all areas of service delivery.

The table below summarises the various different elements of service delivery which can be monitored by communities.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> For more information on structure, process and outcome indicators, See Dawson, H., 2014, 'A Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating the Progressive Realisation of Socio-Economic Rights in South Africa', pp. 11-12.

<sup>13</sup> This table is an adaptation of table from a presentation by Kathrin Plangemann (The World Bank) entitled 'Citizen-based Monitoring: Instruments, Cases and Lessons Learned' at the DPME workshop, 30 September 2013.

<b>Beneficiary Satisfaction</b>	General perceptions; satisfaction with project implementation; satisfaction with project communication and consultation strategy
<b>Beneficiary Targeting</b>	Tailoring employment skills programs; Tailoring health project to local HIV infected population
<b>Procurement / Contractors</b>	Compliance with procurement procedures; Status of contract management
<b>Quality of Service Provision</b>	Quality of services in primary schools and health clinics; quality of services by local governments
<b>Delivery of goods/outputs</b>	School textbook delivery; Construction of schools and classrooms
<b>Social/Environmental impacts</b>	Resettlement compensation, timeliness of payment, effectiveness of procedures
<b>Budget Transparency and Allocation</b>	Municipal budget allocation and spending; National budgets published by the government
<b>Natural Resource Management</b>	Management of fishing grounds; Sustainable resource use by community

## 5. How? CBM Instruments and Tools

There are a significant number of citizen-based monitoring methodologies that have been used internationally and in South Africa.<sup>14</sup> The DPME's 'Framework for Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships for Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery' summarises these very usefully in the table below.<sup>15</sup>

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Citizen journalism</b>	Citizens collect, report, analyse and disseminate news and information. New media technologies such as media sharing websites and social networks have enabled citizen journalists to provide alternative news sources to conventional mainstream media. Citizen journalism can contribute to accountable service delivery.
<b>Citizen report card</b>	Citizen report card methodology uses surveys to enable citizens to assess the quality of public services and to use the information to advocate for improvements.
<b>Community monitoring</b>	Community members are trained to act as monitors of local services. The information is used to engage with government on improving problem areas.

<sup>14</sup> For a summary of various methodologies see, World Bank, 'World Bank Social Accountability Sourcebook: Chapter 3 – Methods and Tools', Available at: [www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability\\_sourcebook/backgroundDocs/printversions.html](http://www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook/backgroundDocs/printversions.html).

<sup>15</sup> This table appears in the DPME, 2013, 'Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline service delivery', pp. 8-9



<b>Community scorecards</b>	Community scorecard is based on identifying issues through facilitated focus group discussions with community members. This information is then analysed and used by citizens then engage with government service providers to address problems.
<b>Grievance redress mechanisms</b>	Complaints mechanisms, such as hotlines, customer feedback websites etc., aim to resolve problems with service delivery through providing an opportunity for citizens to report problems, channel this information to the responsible authority and track resolution.
<b>Independent budget analysis</b>	A process where civil society stakeholders research, monitor and disseminate information about public expenditure to influence the allocation of public resources and hold government accountable.
<b>Mobile Phone Surveys</b>	Mobile phone technology, linked to on-line platforms, offers a number of opportunities for surveying, reporting and communicating - significantly improving data processing, turnaround time and reach for monitoring government services.
<b>Mystery client/guest surveys</b>	A way to monitor frontline service delivery using an unannounced survey or posing as a client in order to identify both good customer service as well as areas that require improvement.
<b>Ombudsman</b>	An independent oversight and recourse body set up to arbitrate disputes in a particular sector.
<b>Participatory budgeting</b>	A process through which citizens participate directly in budget formulation, decision-making, and monitoring of budget execution.
<b>Public Hearings</b>	Formal meetings at community level that centre around budgets and strategic planning and are a tool for citizen accountability.
<b>Quantitative Service Delivery Surveys</b>	These surveys examine the efficacy of spending and the relationship between those who contract for a service and those who deliver it.
<b>Social audit</b>	A monitoring process through which organizational or project information is collected, analysed and shared publicly, and investigative findings are shared and discussed publicly.
<b>Transparency Portals</b>	These are websites that publish public financial information, thereby increasing transparency by conveying large amounts of information to those with internet access.

**Source:** DPME, 2013, 'Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline service delivery', pp. 8-9

Different tools and methodologies will be more appropriate depending on the government service being monitored, the broader context and resources available. Factors to consider include:

- **What is being monitored** – process (e.g. compliance, access to information) or outcome (e.g. performance improvement)?
- **Point of Delivery** - Is the service delivered at a specific site (i.e. SASSA office, clinic and home affairs) or is the service delivered directly to households and communities (i.e. water, sanitation and electricity)

- **Who is responsible** - Is the local government responsible for the provision of the service (i.e. water, sanitation, refuse removal and electricity) or a specific government department at provincial and national level (i.e. Department of Health, Department of Human Settlements)
- **Individual or Community** - Does the monitoring aim to engage individuals (i.e. surveys, complaints systems) or a group of citizens/community (i.e. social audit, public hearing)
- **Once-off or ongoing** - Does the monitoring need to be once-off event at a particular point in time or be a longer term sustained method?
- **Objective** - Is the objective immediate redress (i.e. medical supplies stocked), improved service more generally (i.e. waiting time) or national policy change?

### **South African examples of CBM**

There are a number of different CBM initiatives in South Africa that illustrate the range of approaches and tools that can be used. These include the Community Monitoring Advocacy Programme (CMAP) initiated by the Black Sash to monitor basic services (see case study 1); the Our Health citizen journalist project that creates a platform for ordinary citizens to share their experiences of public health and creates a distribution network for those stories; the Raising Citizens Voice initiative which creates user platforms to raise, report on and discuss issues relating to water service delivery; and social audits to monitor basic sanitation services used by the Social Justice Coalition (see case study 2). The DPME 'Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline services' provides a succinct summary of a range of initiatives in South Africa which cover the approach used, how the data is used to influence service delivery improvements and the limitations and challenges experienced. This report profiles two case studies which have been initiated by civil society organisations to both monitor and improve service delivery, as well as to educate citizens on their rights and therefore to empower them to demand better services.

## **Case study 1**

### **Community Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (CMAP) – Black Sash**

The Community Monitoring Advocacy Programme (CMAP) was initiated by the Black Sash, a national NGO, together with the Social Change Assistance Trust to ‘cultivate a service delivery monitoring and advocacy practice in communities to improve service delivery’.<sup>1</sup> Working with over 300 community organisations, the project trained community monitors to monitor basic services in their communities. Monitoring questionnaires were developed by the Black Sash for both beneficiaries and officials at South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) pay points and service sites including health care, municipal services and home affairs. Information collected by monitors is returned to Black Sash, captured and analysed. The Black Sash summarised this monitoring data into reports and recommendations and reported back to the community organisations and relevant government departments. These reports were made publically available on the Black Sash’s website.

The monitoring of SASSA pay points was much more successful than the other government services where officials prevented monitors from accessing service sites. Supportive relationships were built with SASSA officials at various levels, from site level, up to the CEO’s office who ‘recognised the benefits and challenges that monitoring feedback brings’.<sup>1</sup> Other key areas of success were that the tools used were simple and were administered by members of credible community organisations who were trained and supported. This allowed for real-time information on service delivery to be channelled to the relevant government departments. The CMAP model demonstrated how monitoring information, when co-operation and support is achieved, can assist departments to improve delivery at particular service sites if regional or local managers are authorised and willing to engage with monitors. The training of monitors has also educated citizens on their rights, increased their power to demand better services and provided them with information on recourse measures and procedures.

**Source:** DPME, 2011, ‘Scoping an approach for community-based monitoring and accountability’, workshop report, 29 August 2011, pp. 14-20 and DPME, 2013, ‘Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline service delivery’, pp. 9-10

## **Case study 2**

### **Social Audits – Social Justice Coalition**

The Social Justice Coalition (SJC) is an activist movement that was formed in 2008 with branch structures across Khayelitsha in the Western Cape. The SJC has been monitoring the City of Cape Town's provision of basic services including water, sanitation and refuse removal which are outsourced to private contractors who often do not fulfil their obligation to clean toilets and collect rubbish.. SJC has been monitoring chemical toilets – otherwise known as 'Mshengu' toilets – for a number of years as part of their 'clean and safe sanitation campaign'. Between 22 and 26 April 2013 the SJC and residents of Khayelitsha conducted a social audit on the 'Mshengu' toilets. The audit was undertaken with the assistance of the International Budget Partnership (IBP) and the Society for Social Audit, Accountability and Transparency in India.

A social audit "is a structured way of measuring, understanding and reporting on funds destined to benefit a community. The goal of the social audit is to improve the performance of government – and in so doing enhance accountability and transparency. Social auditing values the voice of the stakeholders, in particular the voices of the beneficiaries, referred to as right holders - whose voices are rarely heard".<sup>1</sup>

The first stage of a social audit is *accessing the information*. The City refused to provide a number documents relating to the Mshengu service delivery agreement and contract which resulted in the SJC submitting an application in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA). The first two days of the social audit focused on stage 2 - *analysing the information*, - which involved creating questionnaires and training 60 participants on analysing the contract documents and in administering questionnaires. The following two days were spent in the *field* with groups of participants undertaking firstly, rigorous *physical verification* of the toilets and capturing information according to a structured checklist and secondly, administering *questionnaires* to residents. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of April a *public hearing* was held and the social audit findings were presented alongside testimonies of residents' experiences using the toilets. Some of the key findings included that there were a significant number of toilets missing and that of those found – 54% were in an unusable state and a further 66% were damaged. None of the toilets were secured to the ground and local labour does not appear to have been used. Representatives of government and private contractors were invited to listen and respond. These hearings 'represented a crucial mechanism of engagement for communities with both government and the service provider'.<sup>1</sup> The public hearing was followed by the compilation of a report, consultations with chapter nine institutions, and further site visits and ongoing monitoring.

Key areas of success include the power of the tool due to its evidence base which has empowered residents to demand their rights, the training of facilitators, and partnerships with other organisations. The impact of a social audit is also determined by the *follow-up* mechanisms to ensure recourse measures are implemented. The SJC's ongoing work and campaign on sanitation in Khayelitsha has facilitated sustained action. The major challenges were around access to information and the lack of monitoring systems at the local level, especially regarding outsourced service providers.

**Source:** Social Justice Coalition, 2013, 'Report of the Khayelitsha 'Mshengu' toilet social audit'.

## 6. Who should do CBM?

The case studies above were both initiated by civil society organisations with a strong presence in local communities. Other CBM initiatives such as the Public Service Commission's public hearings and the South African Police Service victims of crime survey indicate that government, at different levels, can also develop mechanisms for citizen monitoring and feedback on service delivery. This section will highlight some of the trade-offs involved in who does the monitoring; suggest why it is important to have monitoring done both by the state and non-state actors, and point to ways in which they could potentially work together.

The policy and legislative framework which promotes public participation in South Africa has created various **government-led** participatory structures. These include ward committee structures and community liaison officers at local government level but also facility level structures including clinic committees and school governing bodies. Putting aside the effectiveness of these structures, there is clearly more emphasis on public participation in planning and budgeting than in the monitoring of service delivery itself. Citizens however cannot monitor services and plans effectively if they have not participated in the planning and budgeting phase. The DPME CBM pilot aims to “not be a once off event, but an iterative process of linking citizen feedback to service delivery improvement”.<sup>16</sup> The advantages of government led mechanisms are that if the necessary political support and legitimisation is achieved – the government department can be responsive, resulting in improved performance. The disadvantages or possible challenges include a lack of capacity at local level, no independent verification and the danger that it becomes a mere compliance issue with data and recommendations not taken up and therefore no improvement in delivery.

**Civil society** in South Africa has been involved in a large number and variety of initiatives which have sought to educate citizens about their rights, improve public participation in planning and delivery of services and ensure the monitoring of such services. A key challenge highlighted across many of these projects has been the difficulty to sustain such monitoring due to inadequate financial resources, lack of institutionalisation, lack of political commitment, and a lack of capacity amongst citizens to engage and input meaningfully. Another important factor has been the antagonistic relationship between government and civil society which not only closes down the space for civil society to have an important role in monitoring services, but makes it very difficult to attain the commitment required by government officials to use data to improve delivery.

The DPME CBM initiative argues that ‘new creative **partnerships** between government, citizens and civil society’ are required to enable government to provide better public services. The question remaining for the SER Monitoring Tool is how best, and in what form, can community based monitoring feed into and strengthen monitoring at other levels – most notably the development of statistical indicators which monitor the attainment and enjoyment of rights over time.

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<sup>16</sup> Colin Chabane in Forward of DPME, 2013, ‘A Framework for strengthening citizen-government partnerships for monitoring frontline service delivery’, p. ii

## 7. Conclusion

Public participation in decision making is a key principle of a human rights framework and is mandated by the Constitution and various other pieces of legislation in South Africa. The SER monitoring framework which assesses the state's policy effort, budget allocations and expenditure and the enjoyment of rights on the ground through outcome indicators highlights the need to assess public participation in the policy and budget making process. The tool, however, is not currently geared towards citizen-based monitoring at the local government level or at specific service sites.

This paper has shown that the aim of citizen based monitoring is to encourage and support participation through the delivery cycle from planning and budgeting through to monitoring at the point of delivery. The benefits of this include improved accountability, better quality service delivery, public expenditure efficiency and the development of local solutions. The paper demonstrated that despite multiple structures and avenues on paper for citizens to be involved in decision-making and monitoring, many communities are excluded from such processes because they are top-down and technical or viewed as no more than a compliance exercise.

There are various different CBM approaches and tools which have been initiated in South Africa both by civil society organisations and government given its responsibility to allow and promote community participation. The two case studies revealed key challenges including the lack of monitoring at the local level and difficulties in accessing information. They also revealed important lessons, such as the need for co-operation and support from the relevant government department to ensure the data is used to improve service delivery.

The SER monitoring project is committed to ensuring that the monitoring tool meaningfully reflects the concerns, priorities and needs of people on the ground and is able to support and accommodate monitoring information from citizens and communities themselves. It is for this reason that the project has surveyed the existing organisations and their methodologies for community participation and monitoring which the project aims to engage with going forward. After such an exercise, the project has come to appreciate that there is no one methodology or approach which the project could consider incorporating as specific methodologies and tools are more or less appropriate depending on the government service being monitored, who is responsible for the service, the target group for such monitoring and the objective or recommended outcome. It is for this reason that the project has decided to make the following commitments to ensure the incorporation of citizen based monitoring with the statistical indicators which are tracked over time – as and when is valuable and feasible.

1. The SER monitoring project will continue to engage with and learn from other civil society organisations who are involved in citizen based monitoring of particular socio-economic rights and explore ways in which this information could be included in the monitoring tool database. In this vein, SPII will develop a database of organisations involved in CBM of socio-economic rights and produce a further policy brief outlining more specifically how this work can be incorporated into the monitoring tool.

2. The project in its work on specific socio-economic rights will monitor (where possible) the degree of public participation of the relevant civil society organisations and communities specifically affected by the policy or budget under review.
3. The project looks forward to further involvement in the DPME Community Based Monitoring Programme which provides a platform for learning, networking and knowledge exchange on CBM approaches and activities. This initiative holds the potential to institutionalise CBM at various levels and ensure political commitment but needs to be closely monitored to ensure such monitoring remains independent.
4. The project will support, promote and monitor, through partnerships with other civil society organisations and chapter 9 institutions, government against its obligation to not only facilitate but promote meaningful community participation in decision making. This requires citizens to be educated about their rights, processes involved, roles and responsibilities, and avenues for accessing recourse.

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