Changing lives of ordinary people through human and social sciences
Community Scorecard Project: Community and City Official engagement for improved water and electricity services

HSRC Seminar series
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Lessons learned and recommendations of the study

This project has built on past and current work that the HSRC is doing with the Cities Support Programme (CSP) of National Treasury.

In this regard, the project team has been reviewing the methodology and lessons applied during the Community Scorecard project in Ward 67 in 2015.
Lessons Learned

During the entire Community Scorecard process it was clear that ineffective communication emerged as the primary cause of residents being disgruntled.

Community members acknowledged that illegal connections were a contributing factor to their service delivery problems. As the project progressed the community leaders showed an eagerness to work with their communities to find solutions to this.
Lessons Learned

Residents also have a responsibility with regard to service delivery, as they are better positioned and better informed to monitor the activities of fellow residents. Making training available to residents through education and awareness-raising programmes will improve the delivery of services.

- City officials were asked by residents to relook at how they recruit community members to participate in public participation processes. They felt that weak engagement strategies resulted in poor communication and misunderstanding between the community and the city.

- At the beginning of the project there appeared to be animosity between residents and officials. The Community Scorecard process revealed the importance of having a third party to play a facilitation and mediation role in community engagement.

- A stumbling block to improved citizen engagement appears to be the shortage of leaders who are committed to the cause and are passionate about their community’s development and able to share their knowledge with other residents in their respective areas.
Key Recommendations

- There is a need to emphasise the importance of the process of relationship-building (among various actors) in water and electricity service delivery.

- There is a need for water- and electricity-usage education. Residents need to have readily available access to information about the water and electricity service delivery process and regulations, as well as knowledge of the fault reporting system and grievance process.

- Ensuring that people understand the purpose of the service delivery telephone hotline and SMS system at community centres, and how to log faults correctly, is essential.
Key Recommendations

• City workers and contractors should carry suitable (and recognised) identification as distrust around letting strangers onto private premises is very high.

• Area committees could take more ownership of community activities (such as informal businesses) in their area and work with the city to regulate illegal activities through community structures.

• An absence of communication between communities and city officials has previously led to a great deal of misunderstanding and animosity. This relationship should be maintained through utilisation of existing community structures (maintaining good relations through existing structures).
Key Recommendations

• Certain skills sets are needed to engage in effective citizen engagement processes, and there is a need to **promote capacity building** in this area for both communities and officials.

• **Community engagement needs to be adopted as a permanent and functional feature in service delivery.**

• Community representatives suggest putting together an **implementation team** made up of elected members from the area structures, which would be mandated with being the primary means of communication with residents for any upgrade work that needs to take place in Nyanga.
The following outputs will be available on the HSRC website as soon as DPSA give us the go ahead:

- Project Report
- Policy Brief
- Video’s
- Other publicly available outputs
THANK YOU
and
Especially the community participants and the City of Cape Town and the officials that participated in the study.

Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery