

Eastern Cape CMAP Home Affairs Report

June 2011 – March 2012



Pictures courtesy: Pixie Keteyi – SCAT Eastern Cape

*The Black Sash - in partnership with the Social Change Assistance Trust or SCAT - launched the national Community Monitoring and Advocacy Project or CMAP in 2010 in a bid to help **improve government service delivery**, with a particular focus on poor and vulnerable communities in South Africa.*



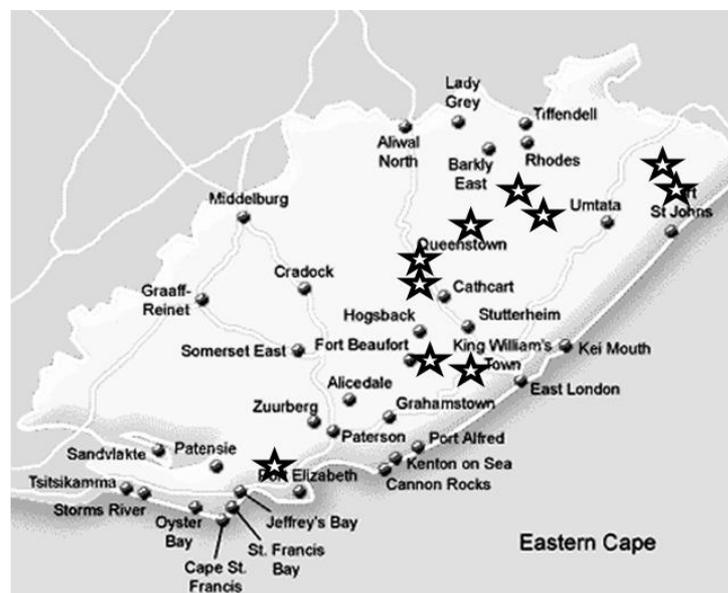
Open Society Foundation of
South Africa

* "This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Black Sash and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union."

Acknowledgements

The Black Sash would hereby wish to thank the following community monitors and their respective organisations who volunteered their time to monitor the Department of Home Affairs in the Eastern Cape.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adelaide Advice Office • Daliwe Advice Office • Engcobo Community Advice Centre • Interchurch Local Development Agency • Tshatsu Advice Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berlin Advice Centre • Elliot Paralegal Advice Office • Flagstaff Community Legal Advice Centre • Lusikisiki Advice Centre • Interchurch Advice Office • Nonesi Advice Office
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Eastern Cape Map of Areas Monitored (stars) June 2011 – March 2012

In addition we also wish to thank the Department of Home Affairs, in the Eastern Cape, for their willingness to have our monitors' access engage with citizens. The Black Sash wishes to thank the following organisation for their financial commitment to the Community Monitoring and Advocacy Project.



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Introduction

The Black Sash, a human rights organisation active for the past 56 years in South Africa, works to alleviate poverty and inequality; and is committed to building a culture of rights-with-responsibilities in South Africa. We focus specifically on the socio-economic rights guaranteed by our Constitution to all living in South Africa. For more information see www.blacksash.org.za

The Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT) is a veteran independent fund-raising and grant-making development agency based in Cape Town. SCAT was established in 1984 to channel resources to rural communities. SCAT works in partnership to support local non-profit community-based-organisations in their human rights work. SCAT's focus is on capacity development, human rights, gender equity, HIV and AIDS awareness and local economic development. For more information see www.SCAT.org.za. SCAT is our implementing partner in the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Western Cape provinces.

Our premise is that quality service is a critical factor that our society should be able to tackle even at a time of economic recession and that we, as civil society, should hold our government responsible for fulfilling its mandate and promise, that includes providing affordable, appropriate, effective services, with dignity as is promised in policy frameworks, legislation, party manifestos and service delivery norms and standards. We argue that active citizens will be able to monitor service delivery as it is experienced by people receiving these services, and by constructively engaging with government at all levels to improve these services.

It is in this context, that the Black Sash's Community Monitoring and Advocacy Project (CMAP) was conceptualised and implemented, in collaboration with other civil society organisations and networks.

The objectives of the project are two-fold:

- To assess and report on the quality of service delivery in specified government departments and municipalities across South Africa as experienced by beneficiaries; and
- To develop a system for civil society organisations and community members to hold government accountable for the principles of Batho Pele (People First) as well as specific norms and standards that govern service delivery and promise excellence.

Working closely with our partners, the Black Sash:

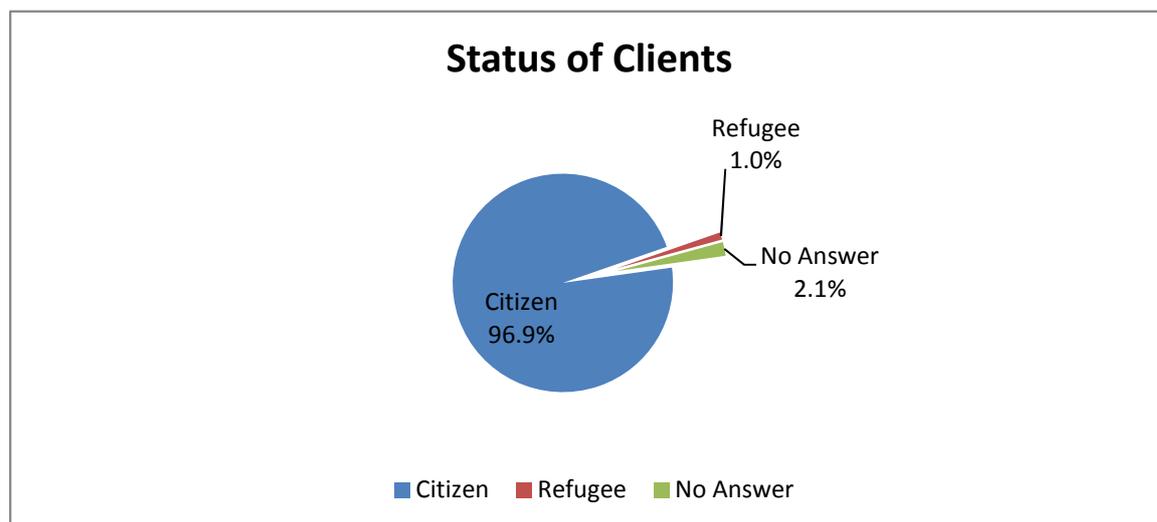
- Ensures widespread, visible, standardised and regular monitoring of service delivery points by Community Monitors that are selected by civil society organisation (CSO)/community based organisation (CBO) networks;
- Co-ordinates the development of the monitoring instruments and the databases; collates and analyses the monitoring information; produces and distributes regular reports to our partners and the public;
- Presents reports to the appropriate government officials in order to affirm good practice and to work together to make improvements where required.

Monitors are selected by civil society networks; community based organisations and faith-based organisations and then trained to monitor selected public services using the monitoring tools. Each of these organisations have a CMAP memorandum of understanding with Black Sash to ensure mutual accountability and to ensure that a normative framework of values and principles underpin this monitoring project. Prior to monitoring, they are also asked to sign a code of conduct. Each monitor identifies the day(s), within a specified timeframe, that they will monitor selected sites in the communities where they live or work. Once the site has been visited and assessed, the completed questionnaires are forwarded to the Black Sash for capturing and analysis. The reports developed as a result of this analysis are forwarded to the relevant government department for response within an agreed period, after which they are made available to the public.

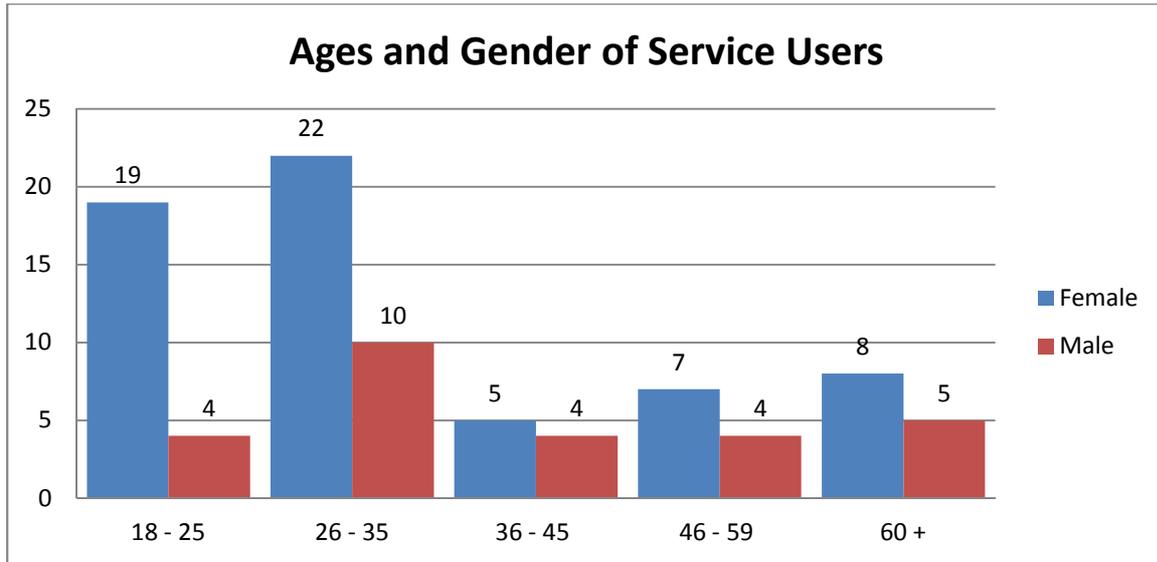
It is important to note that CMAP monitors undertake the monitoring in the areas where they live or work and that the selection of sites to monitor, depends either on where the monitoring organisation is located or where the monitor resides. No scientific formulation is used to select the geographic spread; however, we do encourage organisations that have a diverse presence to participate in the project. However, the monitoring data analysed here is real, and a reflection and perspective of the beneficiaries interviewed at the service site on the particular date of the interview. We also try to ensure the data generated through CMAP does not reflect an urban bias.

Findings

The efficiency and quality of the service provided by the **Department of Home Affairs in the Eastern Cape** has been monitored according to the following standardised entities: **time, venue, processing, personnel and, language and communication**. The monitoring took place during the period of **6 June 2011 to 2 March 2012**. Please note that the percentages provided here are rounded off to the first decimal point.



The findings presented in this report takes into account the experiences and opinions of **104 respondents (8 officials and 96 service users)**. Twelve Home Affairs offices were interviewed. **The districts in which monitoring took place were** the Amathole -, Chris Hani -, OR Tambo District Municipalities and the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (metro) the majority of respondents interviewed at Home Affairs offices in the Eastern Cape were South African Citizens (96.9%), with refugees being 1.0%.



In terms of gender, the majority of the respondents were young females (67.7%), and the largest age group of these was 26 - 35. The largest age group for males was the 26 - 35 year old age group as well though this group was more than half of the females in the same age cohort.

Time

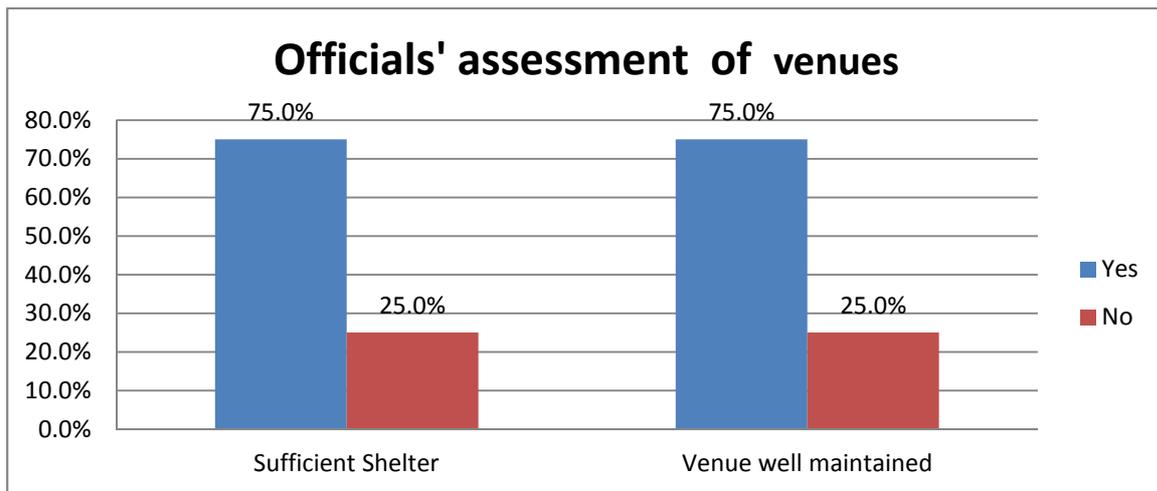
Respondent: Officials	Earliest	Latest
Opening Time	07:00	08:00
Time started attending clients	07:00	11:30
Time stop attending clients	13:00	17:00

All of the officials interviewed said that they started attending to clients within 30 minutes of the opening time of the Home Affairs offices. All of the Home Affairs offices, with the exception of the Alice mobile Home Affairs office, closed at 16:00 or 17:00.

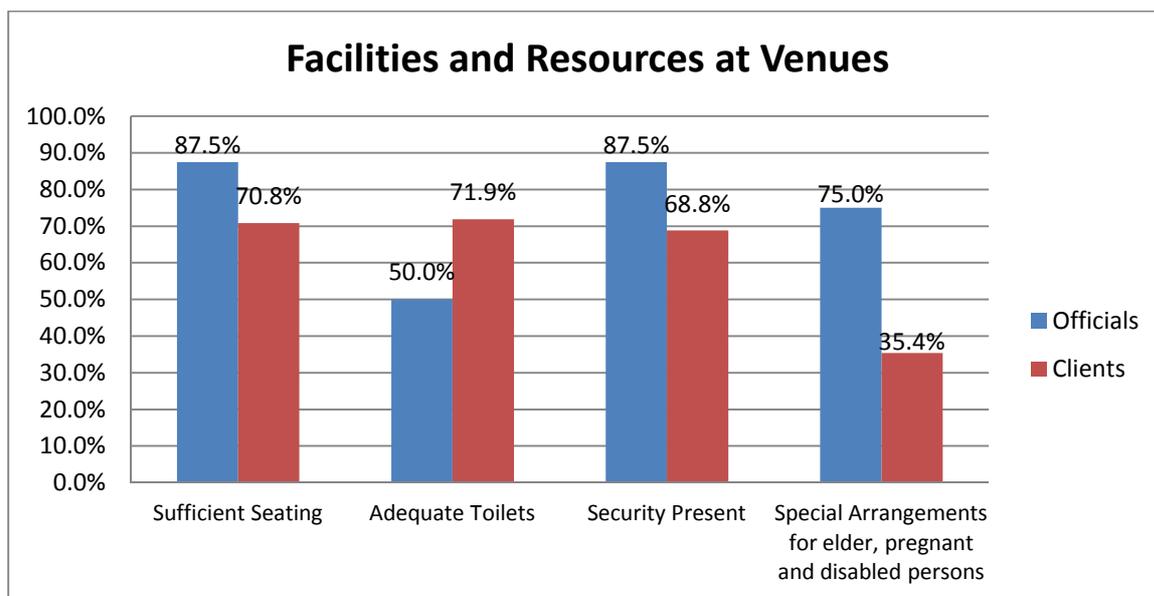
Respondents: Clients	Earliest /Shortest	Latest /Longest
Time Arrived	06:00	15:10
Time waiting to be served	1 min	377 min

The longest time that clients waited was 377 minutes (6 hours, 17 minutes); this was at the Home Affairs offices at the Uitenhage Home Affairs office in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan. Two other respondents at the same Home Affairs offices waited 4 hours to be served.

Venue



The majority of officials felt that the shelter provided to clients was sufficient (75.0%) and that the venue was well maintained (75.0%). There is a huge discrepancy between the perceptions of officials vs clients of shelter and maintenance of the building, with the latter only saying it is 25% adequate.

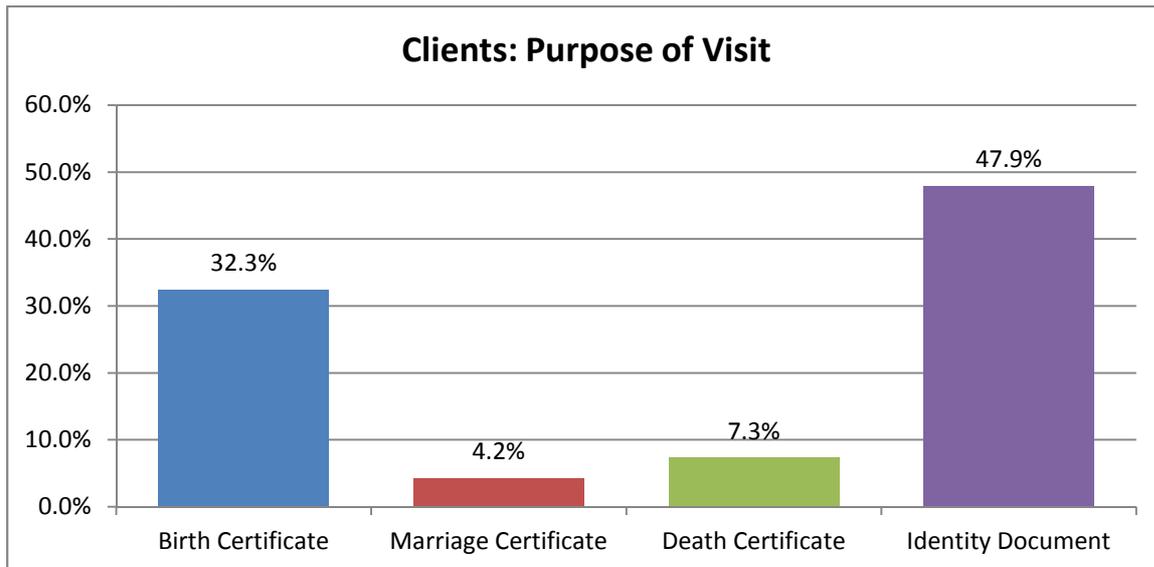


It is interesting to note that the clients rated the toilets at the Home Affairs office better than the officials. Officials were asked whether they thought that the private security company or police were adequate and well resourced, 42.9% of them felt that this was the case. The respondents were also asked what types of special arrangements were in place for the elderly, pregnant and disabled persons. Most of respondents stated that these people were prioritised by the floor walkers and helped first. Others stated that there were chairs, wheelchairs and special toilets. Some more responses included special counters as a special arrangement. The largest gap between officials and clients was around special arrangements. Whilst 75% of the officials interviewed thought that these were adequate, half of the clients said that this was adequate. This is an important perception and expectation that needs to be addressed.

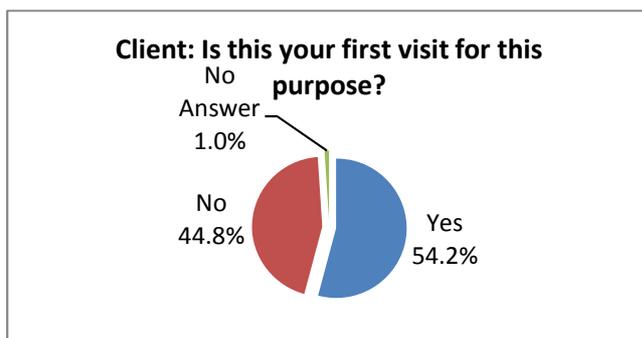
Respondents: Clients	Minimum	Maximum
Distance travelled to venue	0 km	153 km
Cost of travel to venue	R0.00	R80.00

A respondent paid R80.00 for transport to the Alice Mobile Home Affairs office in the Amathole district. Most of the respondents spent R20.00 or less to reach their respective Home Affairs service point.

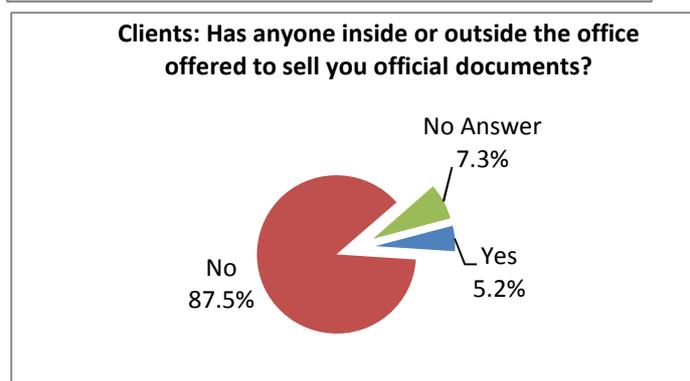
Processing



The majority of respondents were at the Home Affairs offices regarding Identity Documents (47.9%), with birth certificates (32.3%) coming in second.



The respondents who were not there for their first visit were asked how many times that they had returned. The minimum was two times. For one respondent the maximum was twenty times. The respondent who had to return 20 times was there enquiring about her grandson's unabridged birth certificate. This was at the

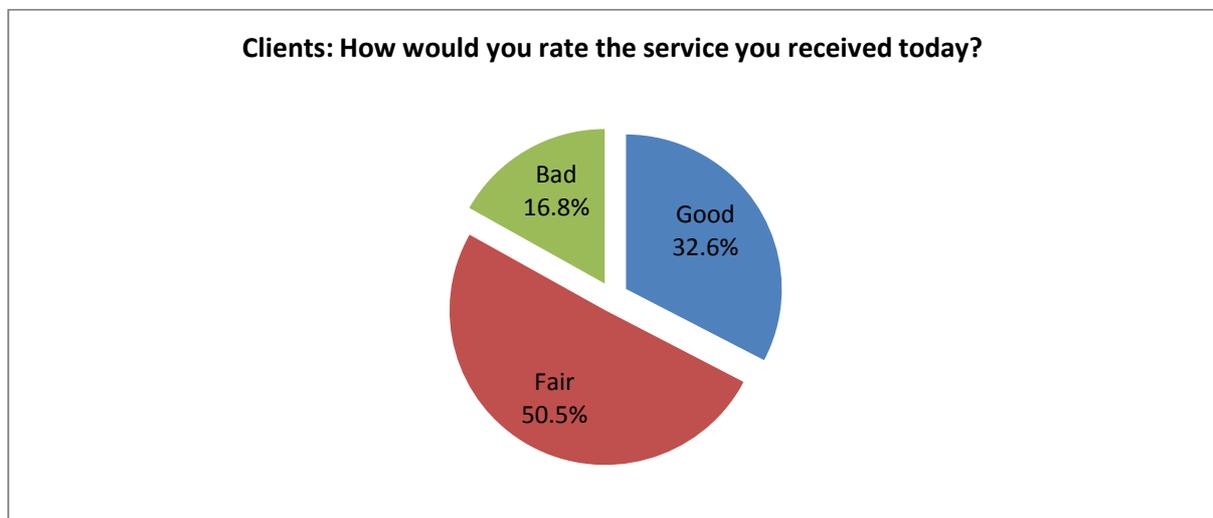


Uitenhage Home Affairs office in Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. Of the respondents that had to return, when asked why they had to return, quite a few people were there to check up on the processing of their documents, some of who were waiting for years. Some were there to rectify mistakes, such as incorrect ID numbers and ID documents

with two barcodes, whilst others were there to apply for or check on the status of birth certificate applications. Importantly, most of the people who came more than once, were from monitored sites across the Eastern Cape, which may point to an endemic, rather than localised challenge that needs to be addressed.

Respondents: Clients	Yes	No	Blank
Were you asked to pay for the service today?	33.3%	61.5%	5.2%
Were you given a receipt for your payment?	30.2%	36.5%	33.3%

The respondent who had to pay for the service were asked how much they had to pay. The minimum that a client had to pay was R15.00, the maximum was R400.00. The respondent who had to pay R400.00 was at a Home Affairs Office in the Chris Hani district. This respondent was a refugee seeking a permit. A receipt was issued and the cost aligns with the cost of travel documents.



Just over half of the respondents (50.5%) rated the service they received at the Home Affairs Offices in the Eastern Cape as fair. Only 32.6% of the respondents rated the service as good, with 16.5% rated found the service to be bad.

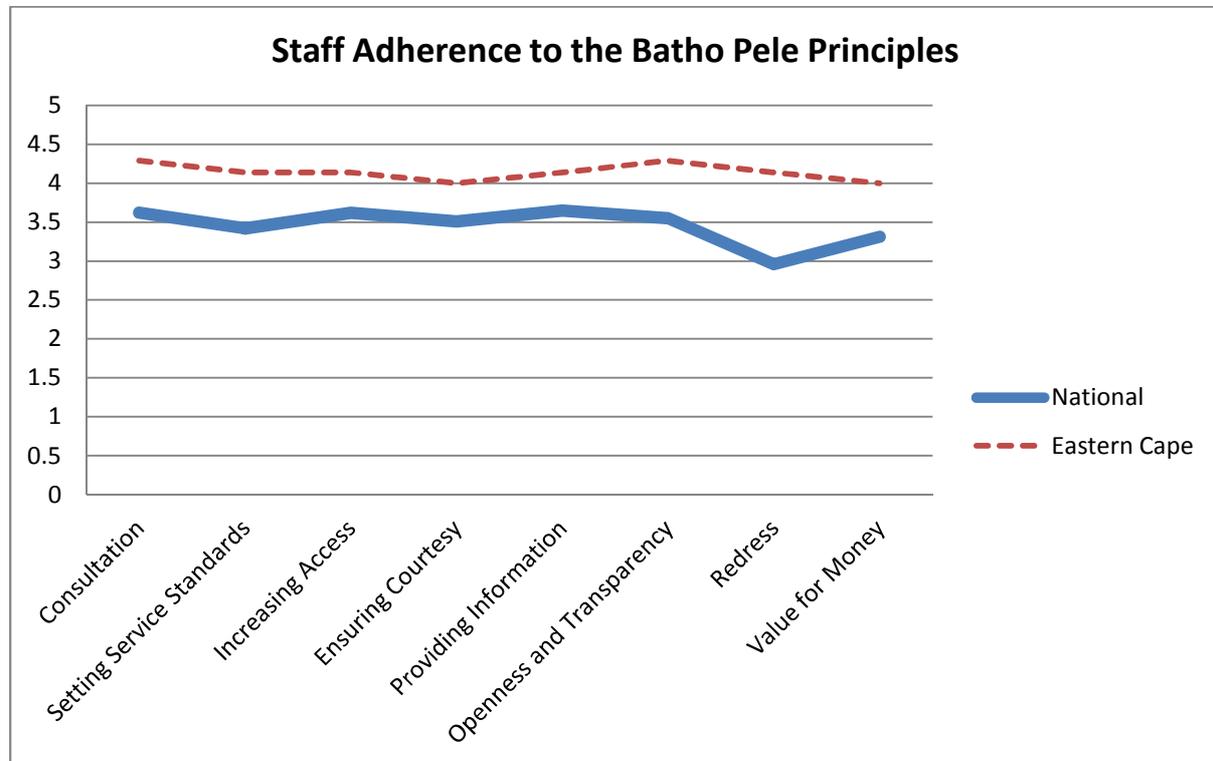
Personnel

Respondents: Officials	Minimum	Maximum
Number of staff members	3	20
Number of people served	9	320

The office which had 20 staff members was the Ngcobo Regional Office. The most number of people served at the time of monitoring was 320, at the Ngcobo Regional Office and 14 staff members worked at the office.

Respondents: Officials	Yes	No	No Answer
Is there a help desk or queue walker to assist clients?	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%
Signs with customer care norms visibly displayed?	62.5%	37.5%	-
Officials Identifiable? (Uniforms or name tags, etc.)	75.0%	25.0%	-

Referring to the above table, more officials said yes than no at the sites that were monitored. However the data indicates that much more needs to be done in terms of having a help desk or queue walker to assist clients and having signs with customer care norms visibly displayed. Most of the officials (75.0%) of the officials were identifiable.



The officials were asked to rate their adherence to the Principles of Batho Pele (“People First”). The national assessment shows that most of the officials felt that their strongest area was providing information, with their weak point being redress. In comparison to this, the officials in the Eastern Cape generally rated themselves better than the national average. The officials in the Eastern Cape rated themselves the highest in the area of openness and transparency at 4.29 out of a scale of 5, and in the area of consultation at 4.29 out of a scale of 5. They considered their weakest area to be that of value for money, at 4 out of a scale of 5, and in the area of ensuring courtesy, with a rating of 4 out of a scale of 5. This is compared to the clients’ perceptions where 50% found the services fair, 16.8% bad and only 33% found the services good.

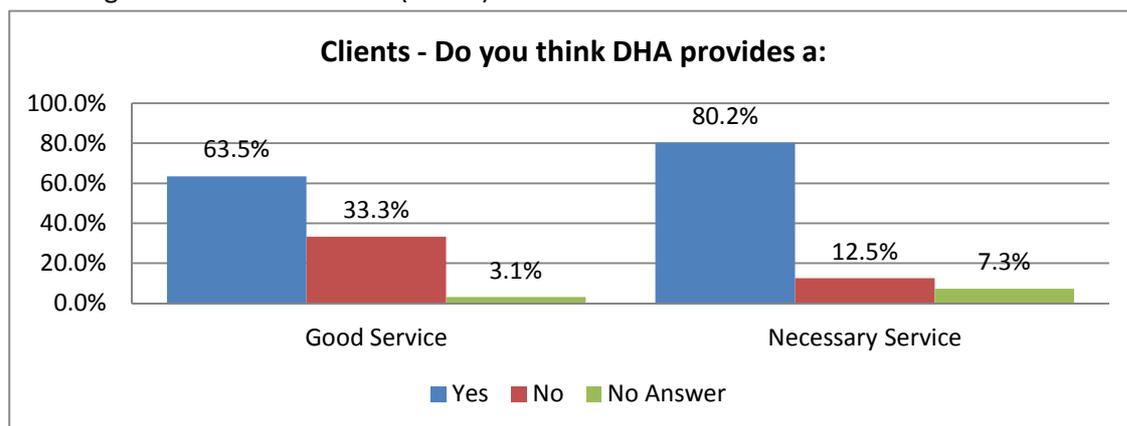
Language and Communication

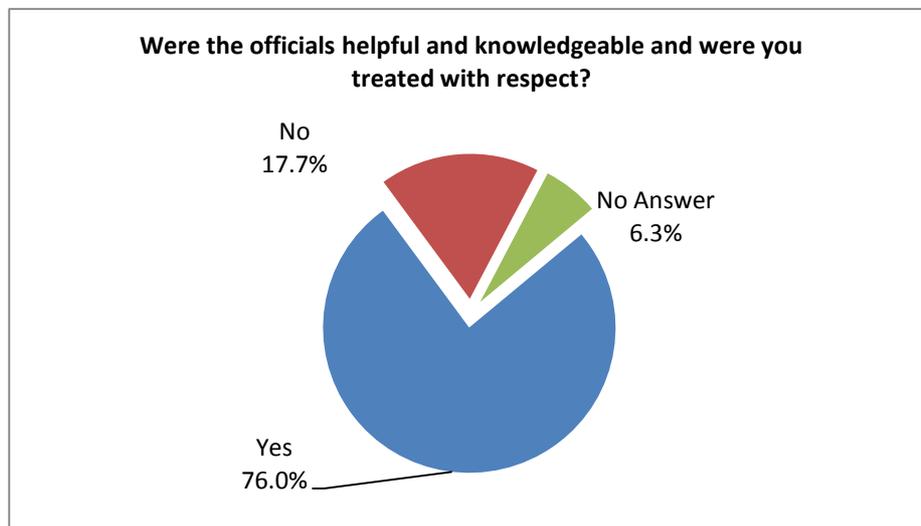
Respondents: Officials	Yes	No	No Answer
Are information materials available?	75.0%	25.0%	-
Are these information materials sufficient?	37.5%	50.0%	12.5%
Are translators present to assist foreign nationals with the application process?	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%
Are officials able to communicate to clients in the largest spoken languages in the province?	75.0%	12.5%	12.5%

In the cases where officials felt that the information materials were not sufficient, they were asked in what way this could be improved. Some suggestions included having materials written in isiXhosa, to have information in the office in at least two official languages, and providing flyers with services and prices. The officials also said that the information materials were not sufficient because many of the clients were farm workers, and are illiterate. It should be noted that the majority of officials (50.0%) said that there were NOT translators present to assist foreign nationals with the application process. However, 75.0% of the officials felt that they were able to communicate with the clients in the largest spoken languages in the province. Officials also stated that there were information materials in English, but not enough in Afrikaans, Zulu and Sotho.

Respondents: Clients	Yes	No	No Answer
Did you know which documents you needed to bring for today's visit?	86.5%	10.4%	3.1%
If you have to pay for a product today, did you know how much?	38.5%	43.8%	17.7%
Did you know that some documents (i.e. affidavit) expire after a set time?	57.3%	37.4%	5.2%
Are you aware of the new passport and ID photos specifications?	37.5%	44.8%	17.7%
Are you aware that a number of the application forms are available online for you to print and complete?	28.1%	59.4%	12.5%
If you are coming for an application/ amendment, are you aware how long it'll take for you to get your product?	34.4%	55.2%	10.4%
Are you aware that you can track your applications, marital status and permits online or through the DHA toll free line?	24.0%	69.8%	6.3%

The majority of the clients received information regarding Home Affairs from media sources and the Department of Home Affairs. Other sources of information were advice offices, community based organisations, the municipality notice boards, and at schools. Of the respondents monitored in the Eastern Cape very few of them know much they had to pay for the services (38.5%), about the new passport and ID photos specifications (37.5%), that certain application forms are online (28.1%), how long it would take to receive their product (34.4%) and that they could track their applications online or through the DHA toll free line (24.0%).





The majority of respondents stated that they thought the service was good (63.5%) and necessary (80.2%). Most of the respondents also thought that the officials were helpful and knowledgeable and treated them with respect (76.0%), although almost a fifth said they were not treated with respect.

Observations

Besides interviewing beneficiaries and monitoring service sites, the monitors recorded their own observations. Respondents were also asked to provide comments. Some of these are listed below.

Monitor's observations

One of the issues that most monitors highlight in the Eastern Cape is **a need for a permanent office**. The service provided by mobile offices are not often enough and the cost and distance to travel to permanent offices is too expensive and far:

- “A permanent office is needed for the smooth running of the services.”
- “A permanent office is needed. It is hard for people to get documents like a death certificate and this is delaying burials.”
- “[A] permanent service office [is needed], not mobile offices. [This is] because mobile offices come after one to two months to render service or [in our case,] you have to go to the nearest town, Fort Beaufort, about 40 kilometres away.”
- “It is very costly and time consuming to go to Queenstown for these services. A permanent office would be welcomed.”
- “More staff [are] needed. People were forced to come back for unnecessary things. At lunch time most of the staff goes to lunch. The security was okay. The DHA needs to go to those small villages where people live to serve them.”

Monitors also observed that the **facilities were not adequate** and that there was a **lack of information materials**. **Adequate training of staff** and employing **more staff** will improve the services provided at Home Affairs offices:

- “[We]have water but [there is a] lack of staff. [There are] no pamphlets for information. They [should practice the] principles of ‘people first’.”

- “Every time they make a birth certificate the computer goes off but they have done nothing about that. That is why people stand in line for hours because the system will have to be restarted again up until it accepts the application. When I asked the personnel [why this is so], she complained that it's been like that for a long time.”
- “I noticed that people stand and sit for long hours waiting for services. The problem is that some of the staff members are too slow and other staff members seemed to not have enough information about how DHA operate. I heard one agent asking instructions while helping the client so the client had to wait for her to be given the instruction [by another DHA official]. Many people paid and went home as they could not stand for more than an hour for the service.”
- “They should provide also for disabled people.”
- Other challenges are infrastructure related, such as “[There is] only one toilet (many people use one toilet) in [the] men's toilet, in [the] female's toilet [there are] only two.”
- It is not clean.

Despite a lack of adequate facilities and other problems, there were **praises for the services provided** at certain Home Affairs offices:

- “They always smile. All have name tags. “At least Home Affairs officials gave all the information she needed and they tried to do a follow up about this case and rectify the problem. After we as Nonesi office intervened, they promised to process a client's son's ID.”
- “At least they tried to treat her better today except for the issue of payment. It makes no difference to the deprived persons; it is difficult for them to benefit from their rights because of the changes that have been made towards getting ID.”
- “My observation is that Home Affairs has a lot of improvement during the office hours because most of their clients are happy because of the service that they receive from the department.”

Monitors stated that the **waiting period for documentation is longer than the stipulated period**:

- “At least they must stick to three month to get your product.”

Client's recommendations for improved services

Clients also recommended that **permanent offices** be established:

- “A permanent Home Affairs office is clearly needed here.” (Mobile Office, Amathole)

Some clients noticed an **improved service** at Home Affairs:

- “At last there is improvement now.” (Lusikisiki Home Affairs, OR Tambo)
- “At least this time around they tried something better because they called me and gave me the reference number and they told me that I must bring this number to them after two weeks to check the process of my son's ID. This has been through the efforts of Nonesi Legal Advice who assisted by accompanying me to the Department of Home Affairs and talked direct to Mr. Palo, the head of the department.” (Queenstown, Chris Hani)
- “Service is good and the officials have respect for the clients.” (Lusikisiki Home Affairs, OR Tambo)

Many unemployed clients **complained about the price** of the Home Affairs services:

- “At least they told me all the documents which I must bring but my problem is [that] I am not working and I do not have money to pay for a new ID which is R140 now and not R20 that was affordable.” (Queenstown, Chris Hani)

Some clients raised the issues of the **length of time** it takes for the documents to be completed and the length of time spent in queues:

- “Some document took a long time to be available, so it made it difficult to apply for a grant.” (Lusikisiki Home Affairs, OR Tambo)
- “DHA is good but our very concern about how long IDs take.” (Lusikisiki Home Affairs, OR Tambo)
- “Long hours waiting in the queue because this is a mobile office.” (Queenstown, Chris Hani)

Clients noted **flaws in the system**. Some asked why they had to pay to rectify mistake made by the Home Affairs office:

- “Home Affairs needs a water-tight program, not one that is as easily manipulated as the present”. An example is the “issuing of one ID number for more than one person. Computer program has flaws.” (Uitenhage, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan)
- “I and my sister have birth certificate (computerised) but the computer rejects our numbers. The IT program had flaws for years but no progress.”
- “Need to employ IT specialist to redesign program.” (Uitenhage, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan)

“I wish that they can upgrade their system as many of us are struggling to be assisted. However, the problem was not caused by us, it was them who gave in the numbers that identified them as a female though I am a male and also it must not mean I must pay for the other ID. They must just change the numbers.” (Uitenhage, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan)

Official’s recommendations for improved services

Officials suggested **more training** and encouragement to improve services. Also, better institutional organisation and management:

- We need “Staff meetings to encourage customer care, team work.” (Ngcobo Department of H/Affairs)
- “There should be training for officials for translating and also sign language.”
- There should be “announcements of [the next] date of visit [of mobile services]; a ‘schedule of duties and planned visits for the year. Also the ‘time of arrival at the service point and departure’. A permanent office service needed.” (Alice Mobile)
- We need “increased staff capacity so that a designated queue manager and help desk official would be available.” (Lady Frere LOM)
- There is a need for the “motivation on officials to maintain the standard and always keep their focus on clients.” (Ngcobo Department of H/Affairs)

Some officials felt that they needed **more security** at the premises:

- There is a “lack of security, there are no safety to protect us and customers.”

Recommendations from the Black Sash

General

It is important to establish why the majority of citizens/applications at the Home Affairs sites monitored were mainly young females, with about half in the same cohort being males. It could be due to a range of reasons, including that access to social security is seen/foisted upon young females, that males are not residing in these areas and may be seeking work in urban areas of the Eastern Cape, or moved to larger cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban.

Time

There are significant differences in the perceptions of officials and clients at some of the offices. We encourage senior management to ensure compliance with minimum waiting times, and staff facilities adequately to comply with turnaround times planned for.

Venue

It is important for Home Affairs in the Eastern Cape to establish the reasons for the discrepancy between the perceptions of officials vs clients of shelter and maintenance of the building.

Processing

Like with many other provinces, we are concerned that a very low percentage of persons at the Home Affairs offices that were monitored, were refugees, and/or asylum seekers. Does the Department of Home Affairs sufficiently target these groups and raise awareness of services provided, available for them?

We also see that there are particularly long queues in especially the Uitenhage offices. We need clarity from these CMAP monitors whether these queues were outside or inside the building/s, and what the reasons were for it being so long. Perhaps CMAP monitors that monitored there can advise us, give further insight?

The majority of officials felt that the shelter provided to clients was sufficient (75.0%) and that the venue was well maintained (75.0%). There is a huge discrepancy between the perceptions of officials vs clients of shelter and maintenance of the building, with the latter only saying it is 25% adequate. It is important to establish the reasons for this discrepancy.

The biggest discrepancy however was around where clients thought these special arrangements were, and were not in place. Raw data from the captured reports reveal that only Elliot and Alice officials feel that there were no special arrangements in place. This is opposed to the 62 of 92 beneficiaries who said that these were NOT in place.

Of the Home Affairs facilities monitored, the majority of respondents were at “the Home Affairs offices regarding Identity Documents (47.9%), with birth certificates (32.3%) coming in second.” Of the 92 questionnaires returned by CMAP EC monitors after interviewing citizens, 44 said they came more than once. Of this sub-group approximately 20 persons were applying for new applications or replacements – whilst approximately 5-6 persons were there to either change their ID number, lay a complaint, correct a wrong ID number, replace a lost ID and correct their name and no which were wrongly recorded.

There are therefore a significant number of unnecessary administrative errors that puts an unfair burden on the applicant in coming to the service point without success.

Language and Communication

We recommend that translation services and sign language skills be available at Home Affairs Offices, as well as information materials are produced, shared and explained in several languages, as stated in the report above.