



SASSA 'S RESPONSE ON REPORT BY BLACK SASH

INTRODUCTION:

The Black Sash's Community Monitoring and Advocacy Project (CMAP) was implemented in collaboration with other civil society organisations and networks. The objectives of the project are twofold:

- To assess and report on the quality of service delivery in specified government departments and municipalities across South Africa as experienced by beneficiaries.
- 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.

During the period 12 January 2011 to 24 November 2011 the second phase of monitoring by the Black Sash KZN Provincial Offices took place. This involved the monitoring of SASSA services at service and pay points as part of their Community Monitoring Advocacy Project (CMAP). The implementation came after months of planning and consultation. Monitoring in this Province focused on the quality of services experienced by service beneficiaries according to standardized entities, namely time, venue, security, transport, personnel, processing of grants, language and communication at 16 SASSA pay points and 18 service points in KZN. 26 Community Monitors selected from community based organisations, advice offices and networks visited a total of 34 SASSA service



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delivery points The Black Sash KZN presented its findings in a report together with observations made by the monitors and recommendations made by service beneficiaries.

The report was circulated to all Districts and units of the Regional office for inputs/comments.

The following is Agency's response.

SASSA'S RESPONSE:

The Agency welcomed the monitoring as it is very mindful of increasing access to social assistance to the most vulnerable groups and at the same time not lose sight of quality and high standard of service delivery .It subscribes to the principles of Batho Pele and would like to think that its staff are applying the principles in the day to day operations and that any short comings identified by Black Sash will be redressed within the given resources of the Agency.

The Agency herewith presents the issues as identified with proposed turn around strategies, without being defensive .In addition SASSA notes the recommendations made by Black Sash.

SPECIFIC ISSUES	AFFECTED SERVICE POINT/PAYPOINT	CONCERN	TURNAROUND STRATEGY
1. TIME	Howick Post Office	Four respondents at the Howick Post office experienced delays of five hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local office has confirmed that this post office was not monitored by the paypoint official as he was visiting other sites.



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the the new payment contractor (CPS), all beneficiaries at Post Office sites would be relocated to nearby halls which will be closely monitored.
2. VENUE	Umqatsheni Paypoint Umzimkhulu Local Office Service Point	Lack of shelter and fencing Lack of Toilets for clients, shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This paypoint has always been on the priority list for upgrading and was finally upgraded by the Underberg Municipality in February this year and is now fully compliant The office has since re-located with these issues being resolved.
3. SATELLITE SERVICES/MOBILIE OFFICES	General	More service points should be opened in different locations or mobiles used to bring services to the people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Region's ICROP plan is currently targeting impoverished communities which are furthest away from the local offices. Each office has also been engaged to identify satellite points within their locality eg; Port Shepstone has in the last month identified 3 satellite points (alternating every week)
4. SECURITY	General	Lack of safety at paypoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to the new SLA with CPS.
5. PERSONNEL/ BATHO	General	Lack of training on Socpen/First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Region has a training plan



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PELE		Aid	<p>in place for this financial year .All new staff (413) have been inducted and trained on new legislative changes Socpen training is on-going on a monthly basis with approximately 10-12 officials trained per month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region is ensuring that all staff are competent on Socpen. • Some staff have been on First Aid courses but an analysis would be done to establish if all pay point monitors have been on this course.
6. PROCESSING OF GRANTS	General	Only 51.2% of service point users issued with receipts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region is fast tracking the implementation of the four step module (currently at 60-70 % in preparation for the enhanced system going live). • The enhanced system will ensure that every client is issued with a receipt/ checklist of missing documents on screening. • Resource analysis at satellite points (laptops, 3G cards, printers) has already been communicated to the Head



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			Office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will allow for four step implementation at service points.
7. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION	General	Beneficiaries not well informed about SASSA services, grant criteria, access by Refugees/Toll Free number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved stakeholder engagement at local and district levels with presentations by SASSA at ICROP events, Sukuma Sakhe, stakeholder forums. Communication pamphlets to be made available to clients. Sign language courses have been held. An analysis would be done to establish if all pay point monitors have been on this course.
8. PAYPOINT INFRASTRUCTURE	General	Lack of water/shelter and infrastructure at pay points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An analysis of all pay points that lack water/shelter and infrastructure has been done and a plan to upgrade is in place.

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE MANAGER
MRS PEARL BHENGU

DATE: ---30 June 2012-----



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