

REPORT ON THE 2015/2016 CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY



agriculture & rural development

Department:
agriculture
& rural development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

REPORT ON THE 2015/2016 CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Department through this survey will establish whether the citizenry of the KwaZulu-Natal Province are satisfied with services as rendered by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The department introduced the Agrarian Strategy, which focused on growing the potential of emerging farmers to commercial level. As the new Agrarian Transformation Strategy, Policy and Approach are adopted there is also a need to evaluate the impact caused by the effected changes on the citizenry of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. The study further explored to determine whether the implementation of the recommendations of the 2012 client satisfaction survey were implemented. The findings of the study is of further importance to be utilized in the success of the department in achieving its projected objectives.

B. BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

2. The undertaking of the client satisfaction survey is supported through numerous legislation, policies and frameworks that govern public administration. The discussion of these and their provisions are outlined hereunder.
3. The SA Constitution of 1996, stipulates that, the public service must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the constitution and they are intended to guide the transformation of the public service, from being a rule bound bureaucracy, concerned with administration of rules and guidelines, to a dynamic result driven organization, committed to deliver appropriate services to all the people of South Africa.
4. Chapter 3, Section 41(1c) and Chapter 10, Sections 195 of the SA Constitution, 1996 further institutionalizes the values and principles of the constitution by encouraging public participation in policy-making and providing timely, accessible and accurate information.
5. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WPTPS), 1997, enables departments to make service delivery a priority by developing service delivery strategies that will promote continuous improvement in the quantity, quality and equity of services. Chapter 11 requires departments to identify amongst others, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and structures, designed to measure progress and introduce corrective actions, where appropriate.
6. The DPSA Batho Pele Handbook makes provision for external communication as one of four pillars to support the revitalisation of batho pele. The purpose of external communication is to find out what end-users need and expect in terms of service delivery and, once the services have been defined, to inform them what services are

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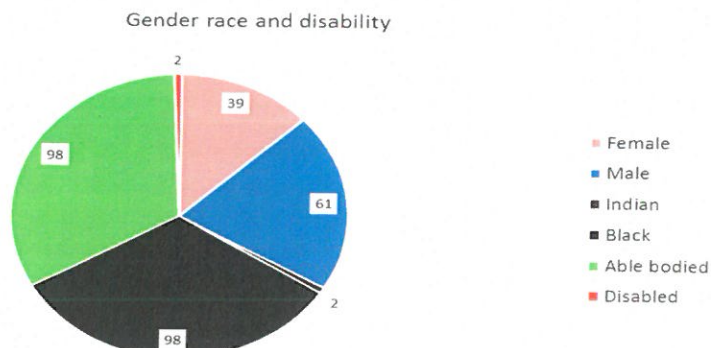
14. A survey questionnaire and face-to-face interviews were utilized. Interviews were conducted on project sites where all members provided answers towards each question and a mutual answer was then recorded.
15. The survey results will draw relationships of the above variables to provide a brief impact assessment.

F. SAMPLING STRATEGY

16. To ensure objectivity of the survey, a random sample of crop and livestock projects in urban, semi-rural and deep rural areas were selected in each Local area that cut across the various classifications i.e. Small-holder, emerging and Commercial farmers of both crop or livestock production and veterinary services. In order to generate findings that were relevant and useable, the survey respondents were drawn from those that are receiving and have received the service from the Department through service points.
17. District Management and their local offices were approached and requested to provide lists of clients serviced and projects. The survey was undertaken in all 11 Districts.
18. A total of 100 farmers were surveyed.

G. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

19. The survey questionnaire was utilised to unpack all Batho Pele principles and questions were formulated in reference to the interpretation of the principle and linked to the scope of survey. A copy is attached for reference as Annexure A.
20. The survey questionnaire was designed in consultation with a Departmental statistician who provided guidance on the design and rating scale to ensure the design of an effective measurement tool.
21. Respondents were given questionnaires to complete with an additional space where necessary to provide detailed explanation and/or additional comments. The questionnaire was coded to enable the capturing on excel spreadsheet which was to be used for translation/ comparison purposes.
22. The questionnaire has section "A" which details the clients particulars, section "B" deals with education level, section "C" comprises of questions around the batho pele principles and the experience, knowledge and understanding that a client has in relation to service delivery. In total the survey questionnaire comprised of 34 questions for clients responses.
23. The demographic and educational profile of respondents interviewed were as follows:



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available to them and what their rights and obligations are in accessing public services.

7. According to Chapter 5 of the DPSA Handbook on Batho Pele, surveys should be conducted at regular intervals to establish levels of customer satisfaction. This, together with performance reviews will be utilized to review service standards and continuously improve service delivery.
8. In 2012, the Department undertook a client satisfaction survey to aid in the transformation towards a citizen-orientated public service. The survey focused on how the principles are understood and internalized by the department's clients.
9. The study found that there was a lack of implementation of the batho pele principles and a lack of common understanding of the batho pele principles amongst participants. Each respondent had their own understanding and interpretation of the batho pele principles. It was on this basis that the following recommendations were made:
 - 9.1 Each District to establish a District Batho Pele Forum;
 - 9.2 Development of Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIP's) and service commitment charters (SCC's);
 - 9.3 The establishment of suggestions, complaints and compliments system throughout departmental offices;
 - 9.4 Permission to undertake future client satisfaction surveys.
10. The Department had undergone numerous transitions with finality to the departmental strategy taking shape in the form of the agrarian strategy.

C. AIM OF THE STUDY

11. The client satisfaction survey was undertaken to ascertain whether the recommendations of the 2012 clients satisfaction survey was implemented to fast-track batho pele to improve service delivery as well as whether the agrarian strategy was yielding positive and desired results.

D. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

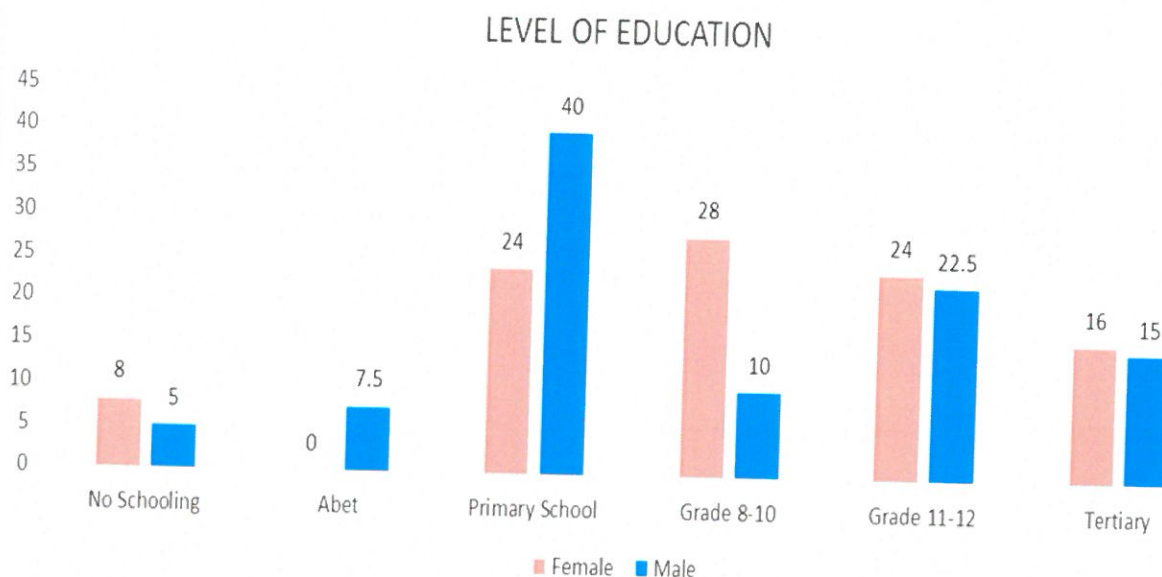
12. The objectives of the survey aimed to:
 - 12.1 Determine the level of client satisfaction with the services they receive.
 - 12.2 Identify shortfalls and gaps in service delivery.
 - 12.3 Provide recommendations to improve service delivery.

E. METHODOLOGY

13. The survey methodology followed a combination of both quantitative and qualitative design approaches. That included obtaining information regarding client's opinions as well as comparison of data against performance for 2015/2016.

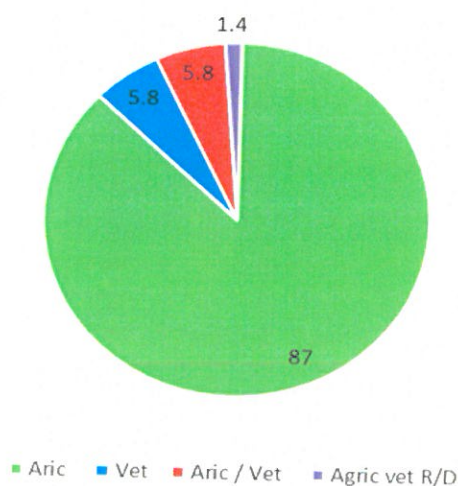
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24. A total of 39% of respondents were female and 61% were male. Only 2% of respondents were disabled. The demographic profile were mainly African and Indian, being 98% and 2% respectively.



25. Only 15% of males and 16% of females had a tertiary qualification. There was a high concentration of participants with a primary school level of education, 40% male and 24% female.

Percentage of services rendered



26. The survey also ascertained which services were mainly accessed and utilised by clients. Agricultural services, particularly crop production services was the service mostly accessed at 87%. 5.8% of respondents accessed veterinary and livestock production services whilst only 1.4% of participants accessed rural development services.
27. Attached as Annexure B are the results of findings of District batho pele performance for all eleven districts.

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28. The findings of the eleven districts was consolidated to provide a consolidated status of how this represents the department. Below is a summary of consolidated findings of the eleven batho pele principles for the department.

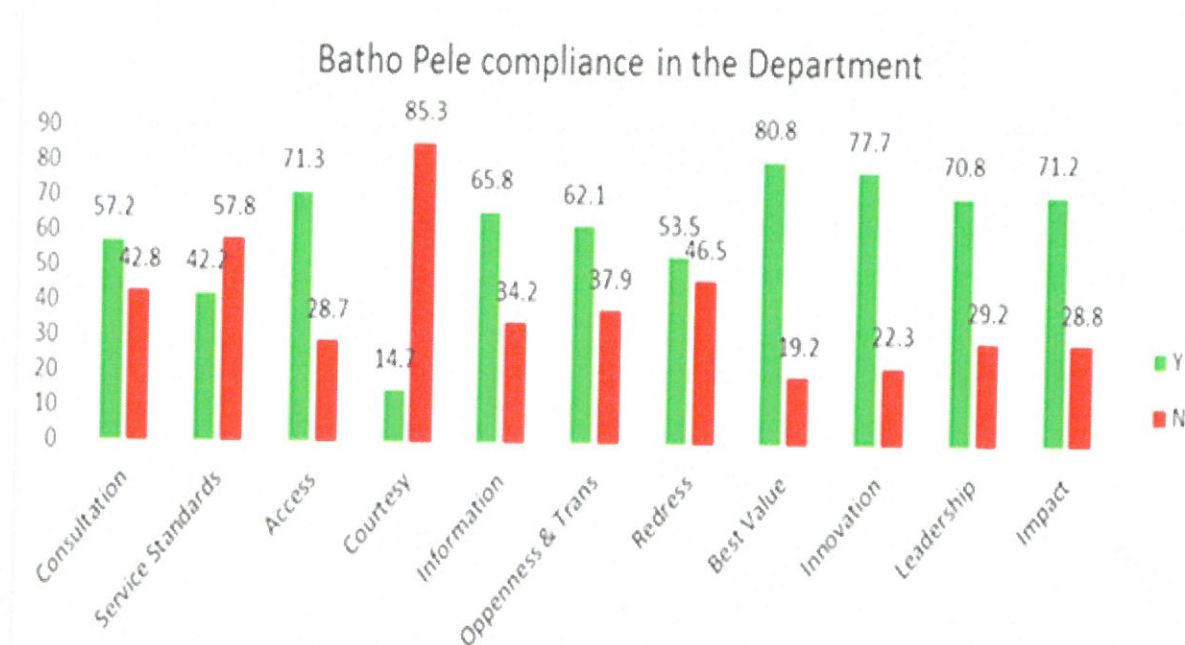


Figure 1: Overall batho pele compliance in the Department

28.1 Consultation

This principle refers to consultation which should be undertaken with citizens regarding the level and quality of the public services they receive and, where possible, should be given a choice about the service that is offered.

Respondents were asked to indicate if the department consulted them on the changes of the strategy and do they feel that the department understands their needs. 57.2% agreed and 42.8% disagreed that they were consulted and were of the opinion that their needs are understood.

Additional comments included that clients were consulted but did not fully understand the strategy and the impact of such on them as individuals. It was indicated that the department does not come down at local level to discuss pertinent issues with its clients.

28.2 Service Standards

Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect. A standard is defined as a predetermined criterion with which the performance must comply and actual performance is compared with standard set during consultation or planning. Service standards is a way through which Department can manage clients expectations within the available resources.

Three questions were asked on this principle, namely:

- Do they know about the Departmental service standards?

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- Are they aware of the level and quality of services they are entitled to receive; and
- Are they happy about the turnaround / response time of the Department when providing services?

Responses indicated that 42.2% of respondents are informed about the service standards and are happy with response times, whilst 57.8% respondents disagreed with knowing the departmental service standards. The clients are of the view that the Department has not prioritised education of service standards which makes it difficult to measure and make service points account for poor delivery of services and delayed turnaround times.

28.3 Access

All citizens should have equal access to service to which they are entitled. The Department has to create better access to facilities and services for its clients to utilize.

The respondents were asked if departmental offices and services are accessible to all its clients, equally available with no biasness and are offices friendly towards physically challenged people. 71.3% agreed that departmental offices are easily reachable. 28.7% disagreed, feeling that they struggle with accessing offices and level of compliance in addressing needs of disabled people is ignored.

28.4 Courtesy

Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration. It is indicated that it does not matter what the situation of the client is, his or her dignity must be respected in the process of providing appropriate services.

The respondents were asked if departmental officials are identifiable, do they provide service in a language they understand, are officials in all levels able to provide answers to the client's questions, are clients treated with respect and consideration and is the staff friendly, efficient and helpful. 14.7% respondents agreed that officials are courteous while 85.3% disagreed.

Furthermore the clients indicated that it is sometimes difficult to identify the officials as some do not wear their uniform or identity cards. Clients identify officials by the fact that when they are visited the officials used departmental branded vehicles. The unavailability of uniform hinders the provision of service ie. practical demonstrations as the clothes staff wear do not allow them to effectively and freely function.

28.5 Information

Citizens should be given full and accurate information about the public service they are entitled to receive. Each Department is expected to produce the service commitment charter that informs the clients of its commitments towards services. The Department must communicate its plans for service delivery in relation to service standards. Information should be cascaded through Annual citizen reports, newsletters and media releases.

Respondents were asked to indicate if they received full and accurate information about the agrarian strategy, have they been told on how to access information in the Department, the services provided and are they informed of any changes taking place in the Department. 65.8 agreed that they are well informed and 34.2 disagreed.

Majority of clients are exposed to departmental information and various means of communication such as radio, television projects, meetings and izimbizo's, which helps to communicate the services offered and programmes of the department.

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Clients expressed that they were not entirely happy with information they received regarding changes in the department and its programmes and or services. It was indicated that staff are not well informed of the changes which makes it difficult to answer and respond to questions/ concerns raised by clients which leaves clients uninformed. Updates/ changes are not communicated accordingly and on time with frontline personnel to adequately transmit these to clients.

28.6 Openness and Transparency

Citizen should be told how the Department is run, how much it costs and who is in charge. This is critical in service delivery to build trust and confidence between clients and department. Regular engagement through meetings, izimbizo, workshops, stakeholder forums and awareness campaigns contribute to more transparency

Respondents were asked if they are aware of departmental processes, are they informed about performance progress made on projects and do they know how much services costs. 62.1 % indicated that they are informed while 37.9 % indicated that they are not informed.

Some respondents feel that biasness is evident where invitation to certain engagements is closed for certain organizations. No reports are provided to clients in terms of how department has performed whether local, at district or Head Office.

28.7 Redress

If the promise standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and speedy and effective remedy: and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

This principle required the establishment of the complaints handling system which will inform the provision of supporting tools to enable effectiveness of the systems i.e. complaints registers, boxes, complaints committees etc.

Respondents were asked if they are aware of complaints process, do they know how to lodge a complaint, in their view do they feel that there is an interest in resolving their complaints and are complaints dealt with promptly. 53.5 % agreed they are satisfied and 46.5% disagreed, they are not happy with redress mechanism.

28.8 Value for money

The public service should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money. This includes eliminating wastage, fraud and corruption, as well as finding ways to improve service at reasonable cost within the allocated resources be physical, financial or human.

This principle had a series of questions which looked at a specific discipline and evaluated each accordingly. They were unpacked as follows; do clients feel that the services are rendered in a most cost effective manner, worth of service fee paid by client, whether the resources provided by the department meets the standards and is the department showing commitment in improving the manner it serves clients. 80.8% agreed while 19.2% disagreed with the principle.

There seemed to be great satisfaction in terms how as the department rendered cost effective service, however the standard and quality of material given to clients has improved greatly.

28.9 Encouraging innovation and rewarding excellence

Departments should ensure that the environment is conducive to the delivery of service is created to enhance the capacity of their personnel to deliver good service.

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Managers to put in place mechanisms that recognize and reward performance, facilitate the sharing of best practices, and encourage creativity. Public servants may be offered an opportunity to make suggestions about ideas on how to increase work efficiency and productivity.

Respondents were asked to indicate if the department introduces new ways of doing business which will influence fulfillment of their goals, are platforms available to support innovative ideas to allow competing and are clients willing to participate in service excellence awards process. 77.7% agreed and 22.3% disagreed.

An integrated approach between specialist fields within the department is required to enhance agricultural productivity. Research, scientific findings and engineering are the major support towards stimulating agricultural potential.

28.10 Leadership and strategic direction

All leaders in the value chain have to provide direction, create alignment, engage staff, create effective partnership, and demonstrate ethical and sound values: and develop customer focused, effective, user friendly and aligned strategic plans.

Respondents were asked if they are supported to become more independent in running their business. 70.8% agreed whilst 29.2% disagreed.

Clients felt that only leadership and direction support is provided to those whose projects are funded by the department. Those that farm on their own are just receiving normal support (extension). They embrace the changes introduced by the Department even though few members benefit.

28.11 Service Delivery impact

Department should measure and report regularly on the impact of service delivery based on all Batho Pele principles by conducting customer satisfaction surveys, monitor suggestions scheme, complaints and compliments.

Respondents were asked if the changes in the strategy affected them positively and have the service provided by the department improved their productivity, lifestyle, financial status. 71.2% agreed while 28.8 disagreed.

The lifestyle of Provincial communities has improved due to agricultural support. Being part of different programmes has elevated poverty in most areas of the province hence majority of clients are satisfied with the contribution made by Department of Agriculture on their lives. However, more needs to be done as the approval process of projects is limited by budget constraints which might have a negative impact in future. Partnership with DRD&LR has significantly assisted the department to reach to more clients in terms of funding.

H. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS

H.1 RACE AND GENDER

29. According to 2011 census statistics, the largest population group comprised of Africans at 86.81% followed by Indians at 7.37%. It is therefore concluded that the majority of respondents were representative of the demographics that represent the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

H.2 EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

30. The majority of the population surveyed had a primary school level qualification. A total of 52.5% of males and 32% of females surveyed had a primary school level of education and below. Studies undertaken have proven that there are positive

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relationships between educational levels and agricultural productivity. Das, A & Sahoo D: 2009. According to Appelton and Balihuta the low levels of education lead to the utilization of more "traditional" farming methods. The effect of this results in low returns i.e. 1% on traditional methods versus 10% on "modern" methods. The correlation that can be drawn from the high levels of primary school level of education essentially points towards mainly traditional farming methods. This effectively means that the majority of farmers have limited capacity to expand their agricultural activities to a level which will substantially impact on economic growth.

H.3 2012 CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

31. During the 2015/2016 client survey, it was established that partial progress has been made on recommendations of the 2012 survey. The discussion and interpretation hereunder also draws correlation of the findings on each batho pele principle to provide an overall summary of the service experience of departmental clients.

Develop Service Delivery Improvement Plans

32. The department has undertaken the development of service standards through the development of service delivery improvement plans. This partially addresses the recommendations of the 2012 client satisfaction survey. This is indicated by the response rates whereby 42.2% of participants indicated that they are familiar with the service standards and happy with turn-around times of services. A total of 57.8% of participants indicated that they are not aware of the departmental service standards and are not happy with service turn-around times. The findings that more than 50% of respondents were not aware of service standards and were unhappy with turn-around times leaves room for improvement in the departments consultation processes with its clients.

Establish a Suggestions, Compliments and Complaints System

33. It was also recommended in the 2012 client satisfaction survey that a complaints, suggestions and complaints management system be established. To determine whether such has been effected, it was pertinent to establish whether there was knowledge of departmental processes and procedures. 62.1% of participants surveyed indicated a positive response. However, there was a slight variation in respect of the complaints management system. 52.8% indicated that they were aware and satisfied with the complaints management system. This result is indicative that clients are not entirely happy with services.

It was further established that the complaints management system is informal. This resulted in inconsistent methods been utilized from District to District. The negative result of such displays itself in that it does not enable the department to establish root causes within its service delivery cycle and put in place effective interventions to address key considerations affecting it's service client base.

Establish District Batho Pele Forums

34. The reference made to the establishment of District Batho Pele Forums in the 2012 client survey report is critical in this regard towards improving client satisfaction levels. The District Batho Pele Forum will aid the district to institutionalize the principles of batho pele by ensuring that initiatives at creating a world class service and experience are implemented.

H.4 AGRARIAN STRATEGY

35. Through verbal comments made by clients, it was indicated that small holder farmers were not receiving adequate support from the department to grow their

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business. In terms of the agrarian strategy, smallholder farmers only qualified for advisory support and not infrastructure and financial support.

36. The added burden the drought placed on crop and high price of feed for livestock limited the capacity of small-holder farmers to generate small profits or income. Few agricultural advisors sourced support through the rural development programme and others partnered with other provincial departments.
37. It was found that support to small holder farmers was not quite explicit in the agrarian strategy to establish consistency in the support and providing guidance to agricultural advisors in this regard. The support to such farmers consumed lots of time with low yields.
38. In so far as communal estates were concerned, it was indicated that the department provided extensive support. There was however additional need for support in terms of tractors to harvest on large areas of land as well as storage facilities for harvested crop and lack of transport and market linkages to grow co-operatives.
39. Farmers in urban areas were hardest hit as they did not qualify for support due to the limited availability of land in urban areas. Land in urban areas is leased for farming and this exempts these farmers from qualifying for support. Available land is prioritized for development, squeezing farming out of urban areas.

H.5 GENERAL MATTERS

40. It must be noted that the low ratings on the principle of courtesy is as a result of delayed National processes in the procurement of uniforms and/or identity cards for agricultural advisors.
41. It was established that services are rendered in a manner that offer value for money as services are largely free of charge. There was particular dissatisfaction regarding the slow rate of turn-around times e.g. request for services, no feed-back on queries.
42. Respondents were of the opinion that the department provides learning platforms that adds value to their agricultural initiatives. This is supported by the impressive response on the impact, with 71.2% indicating that services have had a positive influence on their agricultural production, food security or health.
43. The findings in respect of access to services and the information that has been issued to clients reveals that the department has performed well in this respect as 71.3% and 65.8% of respondents are of the opinion that services are easy to access and they are familiar with how to access services.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

44. Based on the findings of the above, the following recommendations are proposed:

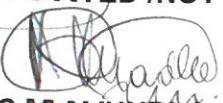
- 44.1 Establish a District Batho Pele Forum. The purpose of the District Batho Pele Forum will serve to institutionalize the principles of batho pele. It will further ensure consistency in the establishment and implementation of support mechanisms such as the development of a District Service Delivery Improvement Plan, which is undertaken in consultation with clients, will serve as enablers to improved service delivery.

As required in developing a client-orientated focused service and implementing the principles of batho pele, the involvement of clients in

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planning and development of service standards will ensure the provision of services aligned to the needs to the KwaZulu-Natal citizenry.

- 44.2 The inclusion of citizens in planning processes will create a sense of mutual ownership and a greater sense of responsibility and improved initiative and creativity. To improve stakeholder engagement, it is recommended that stakeholder engagement forums be informed by a framework outlining what matters require stakeholder engagement, the responsible departmental units and the identified representative clients with timelines. In the absence of such, it is found that there is a lack of consistent stakeholder engagement across Districts.
- 44.3 Establish and implement a compliments, suggestions and complaints management system. The value of complaints management enables the department to easily identify whether services rendered are impacting positively on the lives of the citizenry and based on trends be able to identify service delivery challenges. The establishment of such systems further provide a platform for the citizens to voice their concerns and provide suggestions. The effective management of such can improve satisfaction levels and aid clients to make informed choices and requests.
- 44.4 The Department needs to consider greater investment into training of farmers and strengthen youth development within agriculture to improve agricultural productivity to enable future growth and sustainability of agriculture towards job creation, food security and economic growth.
- 44.5 IDP Planning processes with local municipalities needs to be strengthened to incorporate agricultural activities at local municipal level.
- 44.6 The results for each District be presented to the respective MANCO's for noting and action, which will be monitored through the Departmental Batho Pele Forum on a quarterly basis. In addition, the next client satisfaction survey will also determine progress in the implementation of the batho pele principles.

<p>SUPPORTED / NOT SUPPORTED</p> <p> MS.G.MAVUNDLA CHIEF DIRECTOR: BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES DATE: 08/09/17</p>	<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p><i>The inclusion of the citizens / client satisfaction survey results in the Dept Planning will enhance mutual trust and public confidence in the Dept process.</i></p>
<p>RECOMMENDED / NOT RECOMMENDED</p> <p> MS.G.J. MAJOLA DDG: CORPORATE SERVICES DATE: _____</p>	<p>COMMENTS:</p>

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As required in developing a client-orientated focused service and implementing the principles of batho pele, the involvement of clients in planning and development of service standards will ensure the provision of services aligned to the needs to the KwaZulu-Natal citizenry.

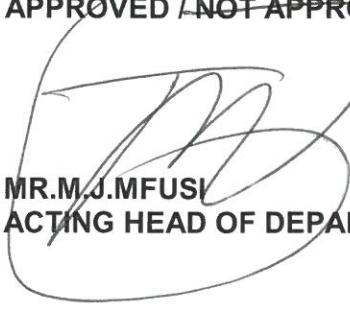
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<p>APPROVED / NOT APPROVED</p>  <p>MR. M. J. MFUSI ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT</p> <p>DATE: <u>2017/10/04</u></p>	<p>COMMENTS:</p>
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