

# SOUTH AFRICA: THE MINISTRY OF ACCOUNTABILITY

**In South Africa, the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) keeps track of the effects of government policy.**

## **Accountability is an everyday occurrence.**

Accountability is essential, but what happens to the results? If the outcome is negative, people are quick at wagging their finger. If the signal turns green, we just continue. We can also do things differently. The department of DPME in South Africa is entirely dedicated to evaluating policies and especially to learning about the results. The department was founded in 2010 to improve government performance through proper measurement and evaluation.

*"Let us focus on the good examples, the newspapers will inform us where it went wrong."*

## **Take and give knowledge**

Ismael Akhalwaya, program manager Institutional Performance Management at DPME and Carlo Bakker, director of the Independent Monitoring Performance Expertise Center (IMPEC) paid a visit to the Netherlands this spring. Their aim went further than the conversations they had about evaluation and monitoring methods. They visited different departments in search of more knowledge about how the Dutch and other Western European governments account for their policies.

But South Africa also has something to offer; we can learn from the steps they are taking in the field of communication and education.



*Dutch expertise during their visit to the ministry of Accountability (Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation) in South Africa*

## **Self-examination**

With the help of Dutch knowledge and technology the DPME has developed a method to monitor the quality of management at all different levels within government.

The method is more than a measurement, but this is where it starts. Akhalwaya: "We want to bring the government's provision of services to a higher level and align it better with the needs of society. This starts with having insight in your own performance."

The power of this quality measurement lies within the self-analysis managers use to evaluate themselves. This way they see where the problems lie and are able to tackle them better."



*Ismael Akhalwaya,  
Program manager  
Institutional Performance  
Management at DPME*

### **In the spotlight**

Carlo Bakker: "These self-assessments hold a mirror up to the managers' faces. With it they create awareness. We then put the best performances in the spotlight. Our approach is: let us focus on the good examples, as newspapers will inform us where it went wrong. By communicating the good examples, more and more people are encouraged to improve their own performance. An educational tool has been developed for those who need some assistance.

Step by step it explains the road to successful service provision. The main result of the method's; 'evaluation – communication - education' is that management's awareness is changing. Citizens play a more central part."



*Carlo Bakker  
Director  
IMPEC*

### **Celebrating milestones**

The South Africans have no problems openly sharing their results with each other. "Every step forward is celebrated. All the steps together have resulted in a nice list of good examples, which has proven to actually contribute to improvement. We hope this inspires other countries to show and share their own good examples. In return we can learn from them as well.

"We share the good examples through master classes, videos and illustrations"

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