Citizens' Feedback on RTPS Delivery through Phone-based Beneficiary Interactions

Assam Citizen Centric Service Delivery Project (ACCSDP)

Introduction

Inclusive citizen engagement, the two-way interaction between citizens and government (including public service providers), gives common public a stake in the decision process of the government and is one of the key accelerators to achieving results of citizen centric initiatives. Feedback from citizens and service users could help improve public-service processes as well as present instrumental and institutional benefits[1].

ACCSDP has a dedicated focus on promoting Citizen Engagement; and the activities planned under this sub-component include creation of effective beneficiary feedback mechanisms, as well as establishment of a Call Centre to provide assistance to citizens in accessing services. The project has been designed in a way that it puts citizens at the heart of governance and service delivery through (i) empowerment- incentivising application of service and delivery, (ii)transparency- proactive disclosure of information; (iii) accountability- activating forums/mechanism to track service status, lodge grievance and others, and, iv) participation- inviting citizen's feedback for improving quality. The Project efforts are resonating with SDG 16.6 of developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions[2] with the beneficiary feedback mechanism contributing to the one of the indicators.

The Project has envisaged a mobile-phone and web-based citizen feedback system functioning in tandem with the RTPS Portal to automatically elicit feedback after the service is delivered. The collated beneficiary feedbacks were to be analysed, published and also used to pinpoint specific areas for further improvements. This will also in fact, promote the principles of open government practices.

Since the ambitious ICT mediated citizen feedback mechanism has not yet been initiated, owing to inordinate delay in the development and commissioning of ARTPS Portal, the feedbacks will be gathered though phone-based beneficiary interaction by the Call Centre set up under the Project.

Objective:

The objective of the exercise is to engage citizens and use the citizen feedback assessment as the cornerstone for "continuous improvement" of public service delivery.

Scope:

The Call Centre established under the Project is fully functional; and the RTPS Portal has been operational on trial basis with a select set of services. The Call Centre has a mandate of 200 outbound calls per day. The Call Centre will undertake these phone-based beneficiary interactions, adhering to well-defined communication protocol and a set of structured

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[1] Such as improved allocation of resources for public goods, enhanced trust in State-Society compact et. al.
[2] SDG Indicator 16.6.2: Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of Public services.

questions. Given that the necessary technical infrastructure and human resources are already in place, the mechanism for citizens' feedback on RTPS delivery can be rolled out with RPMU doing the analysis of the call logs, process flow and creating value out of the whole exercise.

Methodology:

As per the application process on the Portal, citizens applying for RTPS services are required to provide their mobile number – thus offering the prospect of reaching out to the citizen applicant and elicit their feedback with regard to the experience during the application submission stage, and again after the service gets delivered.

Listed below an indicative process-flow steps for getting the phone-based citizen feedback mechanism operationalised:

1. Every week, the RPMU will prepare a list of select RTPS applicants for eliciting feedback. This list will be prepared from the cohort of entire RTPS Applications of the previous week, using an appropriate sampling plan. Given that the number of applications on RTPS Portal is fairly small so far, *systematic sampling*[3] will be used for the time being. With the increase in application volumes in coming weeks and months, the PMU will then consider switching over to *stratified random sampling* method, ensuring robust statistical representativeness.

2. The Call Centre Executives (CCE) will place calls to the mobile phone numbers of sampled RTPS applicants to initiate the beneficiary interaction. If the call does not connect, the CCE would attempt to reach the number up to four more times over the following two days (total five attempts) before giving up.

3. When the call connects, the CCE will identify themselves as ACCSDP representative conducting beneficiary interaction on behalf of Government of Assam, to elicit feedback on the respondents' experience relating to applying for the specific RTPS service. Once the respondent agrees to proceed with the conversation, the CCE will validate the basic details, viz. the name of the applicant, the service s/he had applied, date and place of application (PFC/CSC/Self). Only after the validating these details, the CCE will pose queries for the purpose of collecting relevant feedback.

4. It would be important make sure that only stipulated questions are asked so as to retain the conversational focus and the call session gets completed within a maximum3-minute duration. The indicative sets of stipulated queries have been enlisted in the Annex; responses to all these queries will be in Likert Scale[4].

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[3] Systematic sampling is a probability sampling method where members for beneficiary interaction will be chosen from the target cohort at a pre-determined regular interval – for example, by selecting every 25th person on the previous week's list of applicants for RTPS services.

[4] Likert scale is a psychometric scale widely used to collate responses in a questionnaire. Unlike binary questions, which offer only two answer options, Likert scale questions are characterized by a wide range of options to choose from, usually ranging from one extreme (e.g. 'very satisfied') to another (e.g. 'very dissatisfied'). The main advantage is that it offers more degrees of agreement or disagreement; and helps receive appropriate feedback.

As the conversation progresses, the CCE would record the service applicants' feedback on stipulated queries in an online form, against with the respondent name and unique RTPS number for subsequent tracking (and analysis) relating to the service application.

5. The second round of telephonic interaction will be conducted to these sampled respondents, immediately after the delivery of the applied service, to seek overall opinion with regard to service quality experience. These feedback would mostly be on a numerical scale of 1-5 (the highest quality rating being 5). The second round of beneficiary interactions can even be conducted through automated robo-calls with IVRS options for recording the respondents' feedback.

Data Management

- Respondent feedback and audio records should be treated as confidential to safeguard sensitive information, upholding the principle of confidentiality.
- The data collation will be against the pre-set queries along with the indicators posed to the respondents and the basic details namely, gender, service applied and the place of application. The collated data will be in tabular form as in 'Citizen Report Card'.
- Voice logs will be in disposition of the Call centre and shared with RPMU as and when necessary.
- RPMU will have access rights in order to view the real-time data in tabular form.
- There will be provisions to export the collated data in user-friendly formats for offline use.

Data Analysis and dissemination

- RPMU will develop the data-set in terms of Frequencies, highlighted with appropriate graphics. RPMU will create relevant cross tabulations for further analysis of citizen feedback. It will also interpret the findings.
- The key audience who needs to be informed about the 'Citizen Report Card' in a timely manner are:
  - ✓ Citizens
  - ✓ Service provider departments
  - ✓ Civil Society organisations
  - ✓ Media
  - ✓ Donors
- RPMU will publicise the statistics on public facing dashboard which will be the RTPS Portal on a weekly basis.
- Data dissemination will also be done in the ACCSDP social media platforms.
- RPMU will share emerging insights with respective service provider departments, and also use these as critical inputs to advocate for systemic improvements in service delivery.

Annex: Indicative Set of Queries for Beneficiary Feedback on RTPS Delivery

A. First Round of Feedback Gathering after application of RTPS Service

1. How long have you waited at the PFC/CSC counter to have your application submitted by PFC operator? (Rating in the scale of 1-5)

     Less than 10 min:[5]; 10-15 min:[4]; 15-20 min:[3];

     20-25 min:[2];   25-30 min:[1]

2. Was the information on the concerned Service, including the documents needed for applying the requested service, defined properly by the PFC/CSC Operators?

Addl: Was the information on the concerned Service, including the documents needed for applying the requested service, defined properly in the RTPS Portal?

     (Rating in the scale of 1-5)

Information was clear	[5];	Information could have been complete	[4];
Many clarifications were needed	[3];	Not enough information available/provided	[2];
No information was available	[1]		

3. Overall, how would you rate your experience of applying the RTPS service at PFC/CSC/ RTPS Portal?(Rating in the scale of 1-5)

     Excellent:[5];   Very positive:[4];   Somewhat positive:[3];

     Marginally poor:[2];   Very poor:[1]

4. Did the PFC/CSC operator give you a receipt of your payment? [Y/N]
       → If yes, did you pay as per the amount mentioned in the receipt? [Y/N]
   Did the RTPS Portal generate the receipt of your payment? [Y/N]

B. Second Round of Feedback Gathering after the Service gets delivered
5. What is your experience of receiving the RTPS service applied?
   (Rating in the scale of 1-5)

Before time with excellent quality	[5];	On-time with excellent quality	[4];
On-time with reasonable quality	[3];	Delayed receipt with reasonable quality	[2];
Delayed receipt with poor quality	[1]		

6. How satisfied have you been with the overall experience of availing the RTPS Service?

     Very satisfied:[5];   Fairly satisfied:[4];   Somewhat satisfied:[3];

     Marginally dissatisfied:[2];   Very dissatisfied:[1]