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IDIP – An effective process that improves service delivery

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The IDIP (Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme) is a South African National Treasury initiative designed to improve the quality, quantity and delivery time for which infrastructure can be provided by Government Departments, in order to reduce the backlogs created from the past, and in a hope that some of the Millennium Goals can actually be achieved. It is presently being rolled out in 9 South African Provinces, 4 of which are being implemented by ECI Africa. The paper being presented will look at the process followed through the IDIP cycle, which has predominantly focused on Health and Education infrastructure, and can also apply to the Water & Sanitation environment. It is hoped that the audience will understand some of the methodologies, philosophies and ideologies of IDIP in an attempt for similar processes to be adopted within their own Infrastructure delivery structures. The IDIP process is straight forward, easy to implement and enthuses high impacts to infrastructure delivery.

Introduction

Since the beginning of democracy in South Africa, the government has initiated plans to address the backlog of basic services to its people. This was catalyzed by the Millenium Development Goals that gave specific targets for basic levels of service within developing countries. This includes addressing backlogs for water & sanitation facilities, primary health care, housing and other development needs.

In general the speed at which infrastructure was being developed in the 1990's was insufficient to meet the Goals that had been set and therefore there was a need to develop new creative methodologies for implementation and to streamline the processes that were being used by government departments in order to reach their infrastructure objectives.

The Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme (IDIP) is a National Treasury initiative, which is a continuous improvement programme aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of infrastructure in the public sector. It aims to capacitate these departments with appropriate skills and systems to plan and manage the delivery of infrastructure in order to address the current deficiencies.

The programme is aimed at government departments that are responsible for infrastructure delivery. The main focus since its inception has been with the Departments of Education, Public Works and Health, but it is hoped that the methodology will spread to other departments such as the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in an attempt to reduce the backlogs presently being experienced within the water and sanitation sectors.

Since democratic elections in 1994, South Africa embarked on a national rural water and sanitation programme which began with the Government's broad Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Significant funds – including those of the reinvigorated donor community – were allocated to supporting the provision of basic services, including water supply and sanitation provision to the rural communities throughout the country. Policy reform supported the re-focus of government investment, with publication of the 1994 Water and Sanitation Policy (White Paper). Since 2000, District Municipalities have adopted the role of Water Service Authorities to further spearhead water and sanitation intervention locally – the overall impact since 1994 of these interventions are shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Water and sanitation backlog					
National Profile » Water Supply Backlog					
Date	April 1994	Oct 2001	April 2007	April 2008	% Backlog addressed
National population with access below RDP	15,890,249	13,102,570	6,968,757	5,759,871	63%
National Profile » Sanitation Backlog					
Date	April 1994	Oct 2001	April 2007	April 2008	% Backlog addressed
National population with access below RDP	20,424,810	19,480,386	14,329,889	13,381,591	34%

There has been a lot of good work in terms of water and sanitation infrastructure delivery over the past 14 years, but there has still been a great deal of underspending of budgets, mismanagement of funds and ineffective service delivery. The IDIP methodology will assist by instilling a formal and effective delivery process that promotes transparency, accountability and provides a vehicle to speed up the delivery process.
As experts in governance and public sector management within the development environment, ECI Africa is responsible for the implementation of IDIP within 4 South African Provinces.

This paper will look at the process that has been followed for the implementation of IDIP by ECI Africa within the different Government departments for which it has been responsible. This same process can easily be adopted for the delivery of water and sanitation infrastructure, within structures responsible for infrastructure delivery in other countries.

Description of the IDIP process

Assessment and design phase (A&D)
The A&D Phase requires a team of management experts to spend time in the focal Department interviewing a variety of stakeholders that are involved in the infrastructure delivery process - from Government officials to Implementing Agents. Workshops are also held with key individuals to complete activities such as stakeholder/risk analyses and to help develop the final output of the A&D Phase which is a detailed Logframe and Business Case.

A Logframe is a matrix that identifies objectives, indicators and activities that are required to achieve pre described desired outputs. It is a road map that can be implemented to address the inefficiencies and gaps that lay within the departmental infrastructure process therefore providing positive solutions so that infrastructure can be delivered efficiently and cost effectively in the future. The Logframe is developed together with a Business Case which together highlights the methodology for Logframe roll out and clarifies some of the challenges, risks, mitigations and responsibilities of stakeholders to ensure smooth implementation.

Implementation phase
The implementation phase takes approx 3 years to completion. The first year is spent designing a set of tools, methodologies, systems and processes that are linked to the Logframe objectives, whilst the 2nd and 3rd years are spent driving the new delivery cycle (Figure 1), implementing the tools developed and working very closely with the implementing staff to ensure that the outputs are used as designed, addressing any snags that may arise during the period.

Some of the outputs to be developed and implemented will include:

- Process Maps - existing and proposed
- Service Level Agreement SLA between the Department and their Implementing Agents
- Infrastructure Programme Management Plan (IPMP)
- Infrastructure Programme Implementation Plan (IPIP)
- Revised or new policies for procurement, supply chain management, human resource, finance etc.

There are two key plans within the infrastructure delivery cycle that are produced by the two key players in the delivery process – i.e. the Client or Department and the Implementing Agent. The Client is initially responsible for developing an Infrastructure Programme Management Plan (IPMP)

The IPMP is updated on an annual basis and sets out the targets and the priorities in terms of required infrastructure for the next ten years. However there is a specific focus on those projects that are prioritised for the next three years. The IPMP is then given to the Implementing Agent who uses this report as a basis to develop an Infrastructure Programme Implementation Plan (IPIP). The IPIP informs the client as to how the prioritised projects are going to be implemented over the next 3 years, by whom and with what resources and when. It is only once the IPIP has been approved that designs can be completed and the Tender process can begin.

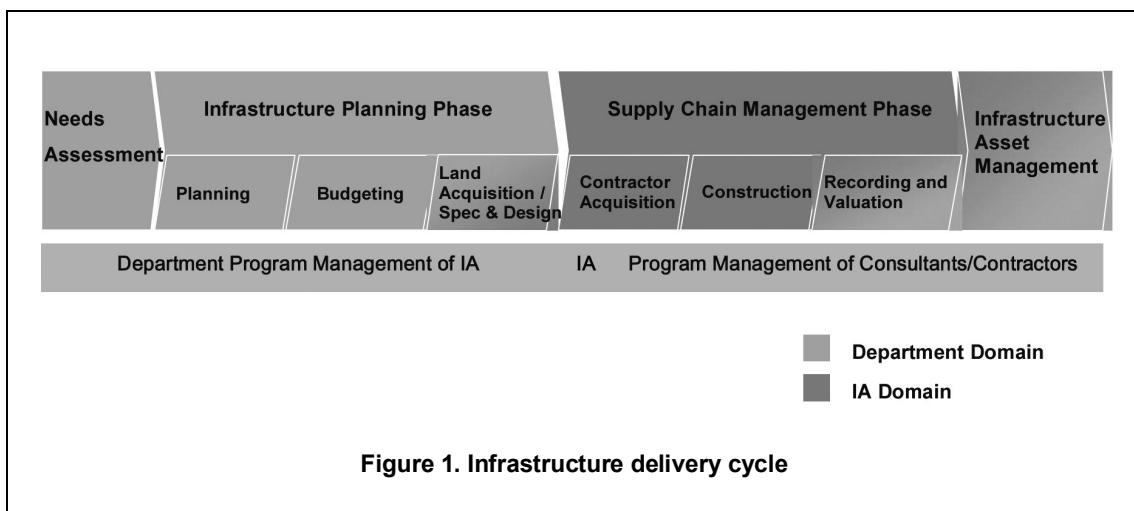The typical infrastructure delivery cycle is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Infrastructure delivery cycle

All policies, systems and processes are reviewed and updated in line with the new system design so that the tools, the people and the methodologies all talk to one another, and work effectively in having infrastructure delivered in a co-ordinated fashion. Besides the 'nuts and bolts' of the processes, IDIP also considers the ethos of the environment in which infrastructure is being delivered. It does this through an intense 'change management process', looking at leadership styles, performance management, best practice systems and methodologies and capacity building to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to deliver.

Developing the tools to implement IDIP is one major issue on its own, however it is critical to the success of the programme that the new process and systems are monitored, tweaked and managed over a further 2 year period. People are naturally resistant to change, even though it may be for the better of development and so there has to be a 'handover' or 'hand-holding ' period to ensure that this change does actually happen smoothly. Once the cycle has run twice, over a 2 year period, then the new processes should be embedded into the staffs' way of working and from that time on the amount of support can reduce, however monitoring and evaluation will continue into the future.

Discussion

So far IDIP has been successfully implemented within 9 South African Provinces within Departments of Education, Public Works and Health. Although it is not easy to quantify, there have been significant improvements in the way Provinces have been spending their annual budgets and lining up with the budget cycle. The accountability of money being spent is far more visible and the quality of infrastructure being constructed has improved as a result of more effective monitoring and supervision of works. The performance so far has reinforced the need to follow a similar methodology through other Departments such

as the Department of Water Affairs, besides other service delivery structures such as Municipalities, as Water Service Authorities, so that the backlog of water and sanitation facilities can be addressed in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

In terms of infrastructure finance, there is a general misconception within the industry that the total budget should only be allocated to project implementation. However true this may be as far as the bulk of the money is concerned, it is also imperative to make sure that money is allocated to planned multiyear commitments such as Operation & Maintenance, organisational support, updating of plans. Therefore in terms of our total infrastructure budget we need to be committing it to a number of different aspects, not only in the implementation of projects. IDIP has been developed to ensure that all these elements that make up effective infrastructure delivery, now and in the future, are considered, planned for and managed accordingly.

Service delivery is high on the President's agenda, and it is reliant on effective infrastructure delivery. Effective programme management is key to unblocking the challenges relating to infrastructure delivery. Programme management can be improved through the application of the methodologies and tools discussed in this paper - service delivery agreements; following the revised infrastructure delivery cycle; applying best practice project and programme budgeting methods; and understanding the differing programme management functions.

One of the biggest challenges to IDIP's success is the issue of corruption. Corruption is a virus that enjoys living in chaotic environments. Indeed it nourishes on disorganization, poor systems/processes, and unethical staff members. Unfortunately what IDIP is trying to achieve is contrary to the environment in which corruption wants to survive. As such, there is resistance to the process from those people that indulge in such activities. On the positive side, IDIP can be used to assist in flushing out some of the viruses that exist, however there must be parallel systems in place, outside of IDIP, to deal with the virus once it has been identified.

Conclusion

The IDIP methodology is a systemized approach to alleviating problems or bottle necks that exist within infrastructure delivery. It is a methodology that can be applied to most public/private sector, civil society organizations that are involved in infrastructure delivery and on both macro and micro scales. The principles of IDIP can be applied to most organisations involved in the delivery of water and sanitation infrastructure, whichever country they reside.

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