



This Pocket Guide is based on the Nabz Iran online course "Service Delivery Monitoring: How to Hold Government Accountable," which can be found at www.nabz-iran.com.

The government is responsible for providing basic services to citizens, like education, healthcare and roads. How do we make sure that these services are really meeting our needs? Citizens can inform the government about what policies they would like to see enacted, monitor decision making and implementation on an ongoing basis, and report back to the government if implementation of policies and service delivery are not responding to needs and priorities.

The Nabz Iran "Service Delivery Monitoring Pocket Guide" can serve as an easy reference tool to help guide you and your community while engaging in a citizen monitoring process. The guide is organized in four sections to provide a summary of the basic ideas and concepts related to monitoring the processes of decision makers, guidance on how to build support from your community and collect data, and different strategies for monitoring the delivery of local services (such as education, healthcare, or sanitation) in an ongoing basis. More information and the online course are available at www.nabz-iran.com.



To make a strong case to government officials that service delivery improvements are needed, you should demonstrate broad community support for your effort and gather evidence to back your claims that the current levels of service are below acceptable standards.

- Citizens can monitor many types of public services, including: education, utilities, arts & cultural activities, community information, open spaces, sports & recreation, etc.

The best way to find out what your community wants is to ask them. These are some tools you can use to conduct basic research and gather evidence to support your claims that the current level of services are below acceptable standards. It is important to remember that no matter which information gathering tool you use for your monitoring project, always remember to protect a person's **privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality.**

- **Surveys**
Conduct surveys through in-person interviews, online polls, mail, or filled out in person.
- **Interviews**
Conduct one-on-one interviews if you want more specific, detailed information based on people's experiences and personal stories.
- **Discussion Groups**
Hold discussion groups to obtain opinions and knowledge about a topic from a group setting as well as stories, testimonies, and experiences.
- **Media Review**
Systematically review news articles or clips from different media sources on key topics to obtain background information and data about how a specific issue is being presented.
- **Policy Research**
Enhance information collected from citizens by analyzing and understanding the legal, political, and financial aspects of your issue.
- **Building Relationships with Government Officials**
Schedule meetings with officials that have responsibility for the issue you are working on; in addition to information, developing a relationship with these officials may make them less likely to be an obstacle.

Citizen Report Cards, Step by Step

Report cards enhance accountability through public information campaigns and engagement with government officials, as they can reveal areas where government agencies are not achieving desired standards. By systematically gathering and disseminating public feedback through surveys, report cards give an incentive for government service providers to be more responsive to users' needs, and can track trends in service quality over time. Remember the following tips to create an effective Citizen Report Card that will increase government accountability:

- At the beginning of an interview, make clear to the respondent that only aggregated information from all respondents will be shared; not individually identifying information.
- Survey findings should share a complete picture, both good and bad, of how an agency provides services.
- Create an effective questionnaire for community members that includes:
 1. A clear introduction explaining the purpose of the interview and what you hope to achieve from the questionnaire.
 2. A qualifier question that decides if the respondent meets the basic conditions to complete the questionnaire, especially if you are interested in interviewing a specific population. A further condition is usually whether the person has used the service(s) of interest in the past 12 months.
 3. A demographics section that gathers basic information about the respondent.
 4. A body that captures key feedback related to the report card objectives, and focuses on areas of service delivery as experienced by users: ease of access, usage, reliability, quality, staff behavior, corruption and satisfaction.
- Using the findings from the data, outline generalizations and recommendations in a constructively critical report.
- It may be helpful to share findings with the service provider concerned so they can have an opportunity to respond to some of the criticisms and share genuine grievances (like staffing or budgetary constraints).

Community Scorecards, Step by Step

Community scorecards can empower the public to voice their opinions and demand improved service delivery. This provides more direct interaction between service providers and community members. The following tips will help you guide your neighbors in a participatory process of documenting specific gaps in service delivery and making suggestions for improvement:

- **Preparation**
Determine who to include in your monitoring project. Be sure to include previously surveyed and diverse community members. Arrange a venue, time, and necessary supplies for events.
- **Community Meetings**
Arrange community gatherings to: 1) identify what resources are supposed to be allocated (inputs); and 2) assess the performance of the service provider.
- **Facilitate Service Provider Input**
Allow service providers to conduct a self-evaluation of their own performance using the scorecard process.
- **Engagement between Citizens & Service Providers**
Bring the groups together for the crucial interface meeting to allow community members and providers to work together to identify improvements.

