

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CITIZEN-BASED MONITORING (CBM) TOOL

Monitor's Handbook



MY MUNICIPALITY
compact
PARTICIPATE
PLAN
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Monitor's Handbook

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Handbook Introduction

Congratulations! You are now part of an international group of citizens who are motivated, able and have the required knowledge to work together with their local government to improve service delivery.

You should use this handbook as a reminder of what you have learned during your training and to support you in your monitoring activities.

This handbook has been prepared by Integrity Action for the COMPACT initiative; only citizen monitors trained under COMPACT should use it.

Integrity Action gives citizen monitors the right to share, use, distribute, tweak and build upon this handbook as long as we are credited for the original creation.

We encourage you to give us feedback on this handbook and to contact us with new ideas and content. We endeavour to keep this handbook up to date and relevant.

We hope you will find this handbook valuable and we wish you the very best in your endeavours.

For further information, please visit us online at www.integrityaction.org or get in touch at info@integrityaction.org

Integrity Action is proud to be partnering with PARI and SALGA on the COMPACT initiative.

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Data Protection

We are committed to protecting your personal data. When you sign up to be a monitor, we keep your full name, gender, age, disability status, occupation, language, place of residence on our database. We keep this information because it allows us to keep track of who across the world has been trained by us. We do not and will not share your data with anyone else other than for audit purposes. We will delete your records 7 years after the end of the COMPACT initiative.

The Legal basis on which we hold this data is "Legitimate Interest" which means holding this data is in line with your expectations given the nature of this role and wouldn't have an unreasonable impact on you.

If you would like Integrity Action to remove your information, please email: info@integrityaction.org

1. Introducing COMPACT



What is COMPACT?

PARI, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and Integrity Action (IA) are jointly implementing a project titled "Supporting Public Participation and Planning in Local Government: Towards Local Government Service Delivery and Accountability". The project is known as "COMPACT" – where "Com" refers to the Community and "Pact" to all the stakeholders involved with public participation. COMPACT is co-funded by the European Union (EU) for its duration, from February 2022 to January 2026.

COMPACT is designed to achieve a more responsive and accountable local government in South Africa by deepening democracy, enhancing the participation of local communities in the integrated development planning (IDP) processes (with particular emphasis on water and sanitation) and improving planning and oversight of service delivery in municipalities through enhanced community participation.

Within COMPACT selected citizens like you are trained to collaboratively work with local government to monitor service delivery and find solutions to any issue that may be identified.



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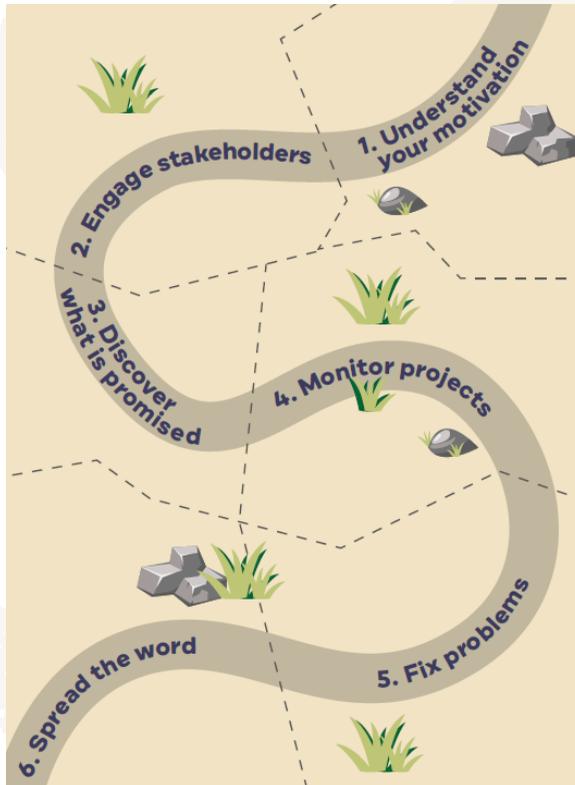
2. Introducing the Monitor Journey



The Monitor Journey

The Citizen-Based Monitoring (CBM) approach is designed to allow citizens to be closely involved in service delivery oversight and to resolve any problems identified, by working constructively with service providers and the local government and holding the responsible people to account. The CBM approach is made of 6 steps as per below. During your training you would have learned about all of them in detail.

Remember that anyone who is committed to the public good can become a monitor, regardless of their expertise, experience, and personal characteristics. People coming from underserved communities are particularly encouraged to become monitors, to increase their voice and leadership in public decision-making processes.



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Safeguarding, safety and security

Your safety and security are extremely important.

Citizen-based monitoring is a constructive, non-confrontational approach which should not put you at risk. When monitoring, be aware of potential risks and use this acronym to help you think about how you might act:

- R**ecognise Take a look around you. Do you feel comfortable? Do you know where to go if there is a problem?
- E**valuate Do you feel safe? Are you alone? Do you need to make sure you are with other people you trust to continue?
- A**void If you do not feel safe, avoid the situation. Do not put yourself in danger or in confrontational situations. Contact someone you trust to explain the situation.
- D**iffuse If you continue as planned and there is a problem, try to de-escalate the situation. Remain calm, keep focused and use constructive engagement techniques.
- E**xit If the problem becomes too much, it is time to leave. Remove yourself from the situation safely and quickly.

If you do not feel safe, please do not continue monitoring. Remember that anyone who comes into contact with activities:

- Has a right to feel safe and secure;
- Has a duty to behave in a way that is non-threatening, non-oppressive, and non-abusive to all people.

To report any cases of abuse that you directly experience, witness or have reported to you contact your reference point or email PARI, SALGA or Integrity Action.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to serious misconduct and will not tolerate that COMPACT's staff, consultants, partners, trainers, monitors or any other associated personnel carry out any form of abuse or exploitation.

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3. Understand your motivation



What pushed you to be a monitor?

Much of the success of this approach is based on the commitment, enthusiasm, and proactivity of its citizen monitors. Although the monitoring journey is not an easy one, it brings you and your community many benefits:

- It increases effectiveness, efficiency and impact of a service
- It increases your community's trust in local authorities and strengthens relationships with key stakeholders in your ward and municipality
- It increases your community's ownership, which means that the service will be likely looked after
- It gives you and your community voice and power. After all, public services are meant to serve the community!
- It empowers you and your community, by giving you the opportunity to develop skills and networks needed to address social exclusion
- It increases the accountability of local government and contractors and opens up more transparent lines of communication

Whether you are a student, a professional, retired, a single parent, a person with a disability, someone coming from an underserved community, you can act as a citizen monitor and contribute to improving public service delivery in your community. It's in your power!

Remember that COMPACT aims at offering a new way for communities to engage with government planning, enhancing public participation and government accountability.

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4. Engage stakeholders

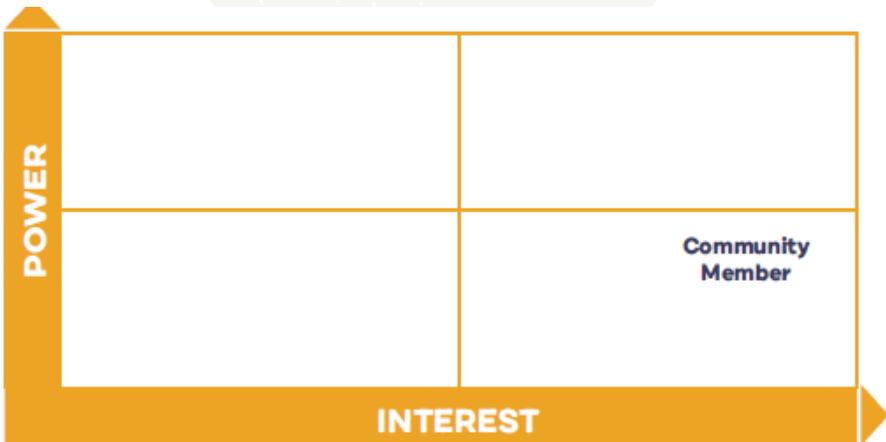


Stakeholders mapping

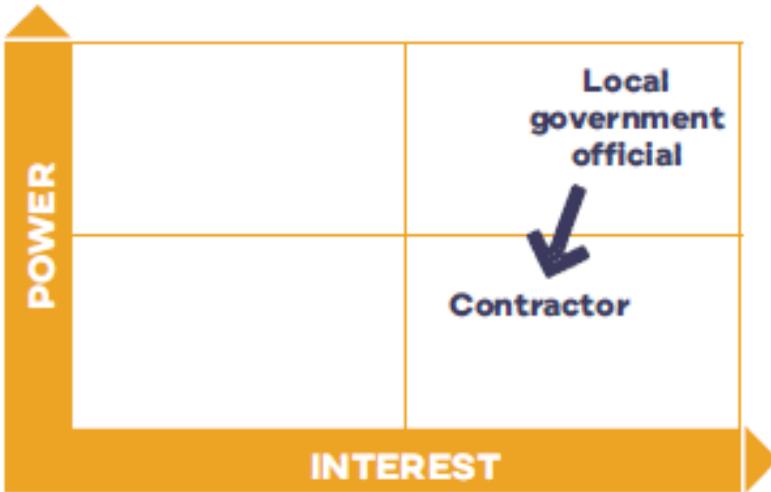
A **stakeholder** is anyone who has an interest in or is affected by the project that will be monitored. This includes service providers and community members.

Stakeholder engagement is a continuous process. Throughout the Monitor Journey, citizen monitors will need to continue to engage stakeholders. This will give time for relationships to be cultivated, and for trust to be built and strengthened. It will also ensure that stakeholders are kept updated and involved in the matters that affect them.

The stakeholder analysis grid below can be used to understand the importance of different stakeholders. This is done by considering the stakeholder's power and interest in the outcome of a project, either positive or negative. For example, if a community member will be affected by the project, but does not have much power to change the project, you would put them here:



For the project you are monitoring, consider which stakeholders hold influence over other stakeholders on the map. Add an arrow between two actors to show which actor influences the other. For example, if your stakeholders include a government official and a contractor, and the government official influences the contractor, then you would draw this arrow:



Mapping stakeholders in this way is useful for understanding how to engage stakeholders. For example, if you are struggling to fix a problem, this will help you think about who else you could talk to who might influence decisions. This may not always be someone who is in an obviously powerful position, but could be someone who has connections or is respected.

Methods of engagement

Consider how you can inform and involve stakeholders in your monitoring activities:

- **To inform:** To provide objective and accurate information to assist stakeholders to understand problems, alternatives, and solutions.
- **To involve:** To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and needs are considered.

Then think about methods you could use to engage stakeholders, for example: leaflets, door to door, TV, radio, newspapers, social media, community meetings, workshops, focus groups, letters.

For each of the stakeholders identified in the **Stakeholders mapping** exercise, consider:

- Do you need to inform them or involve them?
- What method of engagement would be most effective? Consider ways that you might already engage with them, such as existing meetings or channels you can use to share information.
- Are any of the stakeholders more likely to be excluded? Could the methods of engagement be adapted to be more inclusive?

For example:

STAKEHOLDER	INFORM OR INVOLVE?	METHOD
Contractor	Involve	Community meetings
Community member who is not directly affected by the project	Inform	Door to door

This table is just an example, rather than a suggestion that the contractor should always be involved.

You should plan to involve and inform stakeholders throughout your time as monitor.

Now that you have thought about the different methods for informing and involving stakeholders, consider what to inform them about at the start of your monitor journey. For example, remember to:

- Describe your role as a monitor and what activities you will do. Don't forget to mention that as well as monitoring the project, you will work with others to try to fix any problems you find
- Describe the project you are monitoring
- Explain how your role as a monitor will help the stakeholder, for example: You are monitoring to ensure the project meets the needs of the community

If you are speaking to the people responsible for delivering the project, explain that you are playing a supportive role to help them deliver an effective service:

- Explain the ways the stakeholder can find out more, including how you plan to keep them updated about your monitoring and how they can review data gathered through monitoring (for example by giving them the link to the website which will show all the monitoring data)

It is important to ensure that stakeholders, including local government officials and members of the community, **understand the purpose of monitoring. This will help them to support the monitoring process.**

As well as being informed at the start of monitoring, the stakeholders should be updated throughout the monitoring journey.

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Joint Working Groups

One method of involving stakeholders is by forming a **Joint Working Group**:

- **What?** A group of stakeholders who meet regularly to discuss problems identified during monitoring, and to work together to solve them.
- **Why?** Monitors cannot solve problems alone. Establishing a group creates a space for engagement between different stakeholders, so they can agree on solutions.
- **Who?** A small selection of project stakeholders. This usually includes local government, service providers or contractors, and community members, such as monitors and other civil society groups.
- **When?** Joint Working Groups should aim to meet regularly, for example once a month, to keep updated on project progress and to discuss how problems are being addressed.

You may want to consider whether this is something that would work in your context. Joint Working Groups look different depending on the context. For example:

For water infrastructure projects

- Representatives from the body responsible for construction, for example government officials or members of the private sector.
- People involved in the implementation of the construction, for example contractors and members of the contractor agency.
- Representatives from the community who will be affected by the project, for example someone who will use the project once it is completed.
- Monitors.

Tips on forming Joint Working Groups:

- Think about whether there are any existing structures you could use, such as **ward committees**, users' committees, traditional or religious gatherings, or school committees – you don't need to create a new structure if existing structures can be used!
- Keep your groups small. The more members of the group, the harder it is to arrange and facilitate meetings, and to reach agreements.
- Invite representatives from different groups, rather than all members. For example, invite a couple of teachers rather than all of them.
- Most monitors establish a Joint Working Group for each monitored service, and this works well. Try to avoid setting up different Joint Working Groups for each problem. If you need to involve someone else when you find a problem, you can invite them to join the existing group.
- Joint Working Groups should represent everyone within the community. They should include people from a range of backgrounds, ages and genders. They should include people who are at risk of exclusion, such as people with disabilities.

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5. Discover what is promised



Access to information in South Africa

Accessing project documents allows you to compare what has been promised with what is delivered. Before visiting the site of the project to be monitored, you need to view as much appropriate information about the project as possible.

For this, the right to **access to information** is extremely helpful: without it, you can still perform monitoring activities, but it is more difficult for you to gather evidence, identify problems and solve them.

In South Africa, section 32(1) of the Constitution says: *“Everyone has the right of access to– (a) any information held by the state; and (b) any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights”*.

The **Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000** (commonly known as **PAIA**) is South Africa’s access to information law and it enables people to access information held by both **public and private bodies**. All organisations in South Africa must comply with it.

PAIA applies to records. Anyone can request a record held by a public or private body. The requester must fill in a form. Most requesters are required to pay a request fee. See Information Regulator: <https://inforegulator.org.za/>

In municipalities, the **Municipal Manager** is responsible for making municipal records available – in other words – ensuring that the community has access to documents about the municipality. In terms of PAIA the Municipal Manager is also responsible for appointing an **Information Officer** whose role is to assist members of the public to access municipal information.

According to legislation, many of the municipality’s most important documents must be made **available automatically**. This includes: the IDP, annual and adjustments budget along with all documents related to them, SDBIP, all by-laws, annual report, public-private

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partnership agreements, quarterly reports tabled in council by the mayor, a register of all bids received for tenders, including the name of the bidder, the amount, and the BBEE status if relevant, notices of council meetings, dates and venues, performance agreements with senior staff and Service Delivery Agreements.

According to PAIA, every municipality must also have a **manual** to assist the public in accessing information.

Making a PAIA request

There are different types of PAIA request forms.

Form 2 - to be completed when submitting an application to a government body or to be used when applying for information from a private entity. **REMEMBER:** when submitting a PAIA request to a private body you must state which rights you are exercising.

Form 4 - to be completed if the government body refuses the request and you want to appeal the decision.

The standard amount for the request fee for a public body is R 100. There are also access fees for printing (R1.50 per page), flash drive (R40), CD (R40) etc.

An Information Officer has to respond to your request for information **within 30 days**. However, the law allows them to request permission for a single extension of 30 days if certain grounds exist.

PAIA lists a number of reasons (grounds) for refusing access to a record. PAIA provides remedies to resolve disputes about access. For a dispute concerning a public body a requester can submit an Internal Appeal to a higher authority within the body. If they are still not satisfied, the requester can take the matter to the court.

You can also appeal against a deemed refusal - in other words, if

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your request has simply been ignored - this is grounds to appeal.

Our experience taught us that the most effective strategies for accessing information are obtaining an official letter from a relevant public body authorising monitors to access information or taking advantage of personal relationships. Both methods require building and cultivating relationships, and therefore need time.

We recommend that you engage responsible bodies, like contractors or public officials, to access project documents. The information that you will need depends on the type of project you monitor.



There may be risks to monitors when requesting information. For example, monitors may encounter people who are not willing to give out information - even through a formal request - and as a consequence become hostile.

It is always important to access information safely and legally. Information can be found both formally and informally depending on culture and environment. It is always helpful to assess the best ways to gather important information.

6. Monitor projects



Assessing a project

In your monitoring visits you will be doing a number of activities. You will:

- use **KoboToolbox** to assess the project
- use **KoboToolbox** to complete community surveys
- take photos and make notes
- talk to stakeholders

In the next pages you will find a reminder of the most important things to remember when completing a monitoring visit.

When assessing a project remember to look out for, among other things:

- The amount of equipment and materials available
- The type and quality of resources being used
- Whether there are enough workers and their working conditions
- The standard of work being completed
- The accessibility of the project
- The impact to the surrounding environment

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Useful info on monitoring public infrastructure projects in South Africa

Info about the Project:

- Identified through Master Planning, IDP, needs analysis etc.
- Source Documents: IDP, Technical and Scoping Reports; Business Plans, Tender Document, and drawings.

Stakeholders & Project Team:

- Community (they have the need)
- Client (Municipality responsible for delivering services)
- Funding agencies (own funds, MIG, RBIG, DBSA. etc.)
- Government agencies and statutory bodies (DWS, DEADP, etc.)
- Client's agents (engineer/architect, safety agent, environmentalist)
- Contractor
- Sub-Contractors

The Contract:

- Tender Document (including Bill of Quantities or BoQ)
- Conditions of Contract (GCC, NEC, Fidic, etc)
- SANS (1200 for quality of work and material)

Project Monitoring and Quality Control:

Principal Agent (Consulting Engineer)

1. Assists Client with Design, Procurement and Implementation of project and facilitates a smooth handover of the project to the client or relevant authorities.

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2. Administers contract and ensures that contractors adhere to agreed-upon terms and conditions.
3. Assists Client with Cost Management Monitor project expenditures to ensure that costs are within budget.
4. Identifies and reports any potential cost overruns and proposes cost-saving measures.
5. Reviews and processes payment requests and change orders.
6. Holds monthly site and technical meetings.

Resident Engineer (RE) working for Principal Agent:

1. Plays a crucial role in overseeing the implementation of a project. Their responsibilities typically include a wide range of tasks to ensure that the project progresses smoothly and meets the specified requirements.
2. Conducts regular site visits to inspect activities and ensures compliance with design specifications and relevant codes.
3. Implements and enforces quality control measures to ensure that materials and workmanship meet project standards.
4. Performs inspections and tests on materials and completed work to verify compliance with specifications.
5. Maintains accurate and up-to-date project documentation, including drawings, specifications, and construction records.
6. Prepares regular progress reports for stakeholders.
7. Addresses and resolves any issues or challenges that may arise during construction and work with the project team to find practical solutions to unexpected problems.
8. Provides accurate as-built drawings and documentation reflecting any changes made during construction.

Community Liaison Officer (CLO) on larger or community-based projects.

1. Keeps the community informed about the construction, potential disruptions, and any measures in place to minimise inconvenience.

Monitoring Agents (normally from State Departments and Funding Agencies)

1. Ensures funds are utilised correctly.

Safety Agent

1. Ensures that construction activities comply with safety regulations and environmental standards (OHS).
2. Monitors safety protocols on the construction site.

Environmental Control Officer (ECO)

1. Ensures that construction activities adhere to environmental regulations.

Site Manager running the Construction on behalf of the Contractor

2. Supervises construction crews and subcontractors to ensure implementation of the project.
3. Implements and enforces quality control measures to ensure that materials and workmanship meet project standards.
4. Prepares regular progress reports for project managers and other stakeholders.
5. Implements safety protocols on the construction site.
6. Provides training to operators or maintenance staff on the newly installed infrastructure.

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More notes on monitoring water projects

Regular and thorough site inspections are essential to ensure a successful project and include the following verifications:

- The pipeline alignment follows the approved design and drawings thus ensuring that the pipeline is installed in the correct position and orientation.
- The pipeline is installed at the specified depth to protect it from external forces and environmental conditions.
- The trenching and bedding to confirm that it meets design requirements and provides proper support to the pipeline.
- The materials used for the pipeline construction comply with design specifications and relevant standards.
- Any defects or damage in the pipe material.
- Backfill material is appropriate and applied in layers with proper compaction.
- Backfilling does not cause damage to the pipeline.
- Installation and alignment of valves, fittings, and other pipeline accessories.
- Pressure Testing to ensure the integrity of the pipeline under operating conditions.
- Construction documentation, including as-built drawings and material test certificates, to ensure accuracy and completeness.
- Safety measures are in place and followed on site.
- Workers have the required personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Construction activities adhere to environmental regulations.

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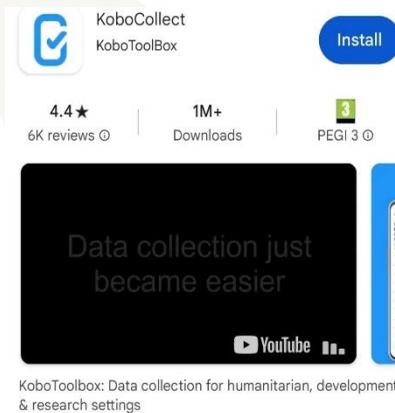
Using *KoboToolbox* to upload monitoring data

You will need a smartphone to use **KoboToolbox** to upload your monitoring data. You can gather data in two different ways: via a link provided during the training or by downloading the **Kobo Collect** app. Unfortunately, this app is only available for Android phones, therefore iPhone users can only use a link, while Android users can use a link or the app, whichever they find easier.

There are a few differences if you access **KoboToolbox** via a link or via the **Kobo Collect** app. They are explained below.

Using KoboCollect

Download **KoboCollect** from the Google Store

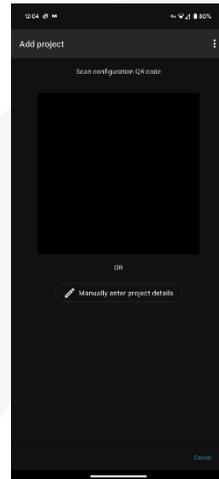


Once the app is downloaded and opened, you will see this screen

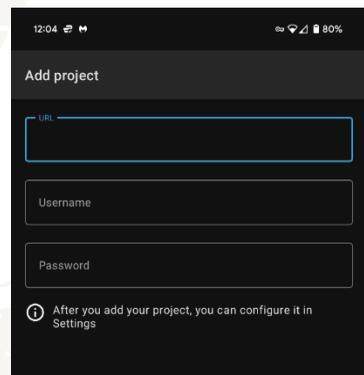


You will be provided with both the QR code and project details to access the project.

This screen is for adding the project via QR code

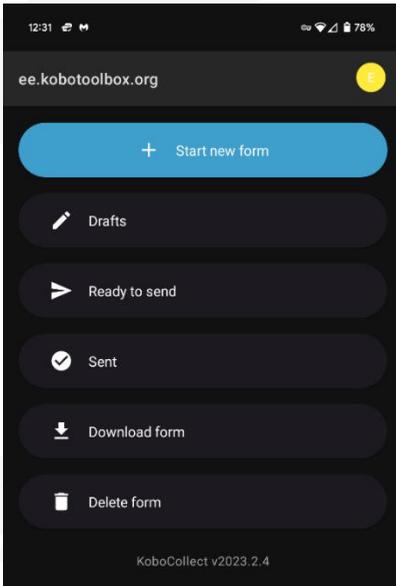


While this screen is for adding the project manually



Once you access the project details, you will have to select the form related to the project that you are monitoring, which will be clearly indicated by the name of the project.

This is the home screen, where you can start a new form, see your drafts, send, download and delete forms.



Using the link provided:

For iPhones users or Android users who choose to use the link, just click on the link shared with you and the survey will start straightaway.

There are two forms: monitoring checklist & a survey for community members.

Monitoring checklist

With this form, you will go to where the project is being implemented and answer questions about it. The purpose of this section is to identify where there are problems on a project, which you will then work with stakeholders to resolve.

First, you will be asked to select which Ward Committee you are representing, your name and the project that you are monitoring.

After that you will be asked general questions about whether you have been granted permission to monitor by the relevant authority, you have been provided with all information needed to monitor, and whether you feel safe, ready and supported to monitor.

After clicking Next, the checklist will start. Answers are mandatory, however, extra fields like adding a photo or describing the problem in more detail are not (but you are encouraged to use them).

Survey for community members

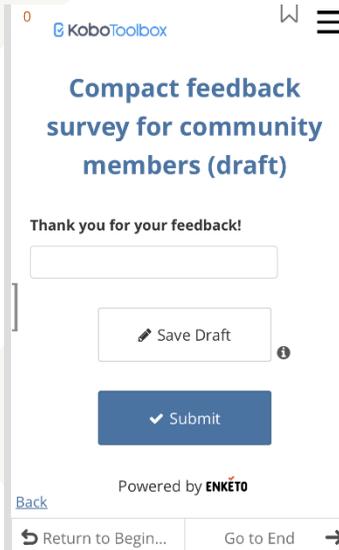
This form is used to interview local community. The purpose is to get feedback on the project from members of the community. You should ask the same questions to the same person. Once you submit the form, you can start again with a new person.

Submitting your data

At the end of the checklist/survey you will be asked to Save a draft or submit/finalize. If you are planning to come back to the checklist/survey, then just **save a draft**. If you are happy with your answers and want to submit the checklist, please press **Submit/Finalize**.

NOTE: If you are using the Kobo Collect app there is an extra step you need to take. If you are only using a link, submitting the form is the last step you need to take.

If you are using the link, after answering all the questions, remember to press the **Submit** button (or the Draft button if you intend to submit the form later).



0 KoboToolbox

Compact feedback survey for community members (draft)

Thank you for your feedback!

Save Draft

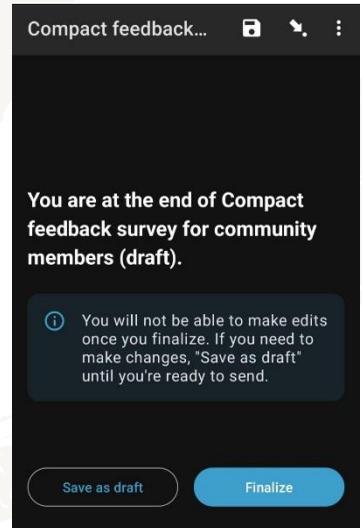
Submit

Powered by ENKETO

[Back](#)

Return to Begin... Go to End

If you are using the app, press the **Finalize** button first



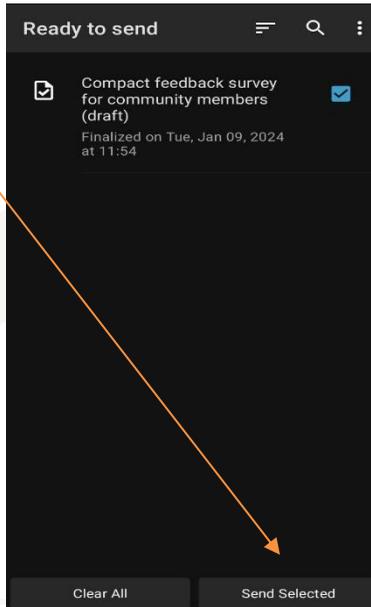
Compact feedback...

You are at the end of Compact feedback survey for community members (draft).

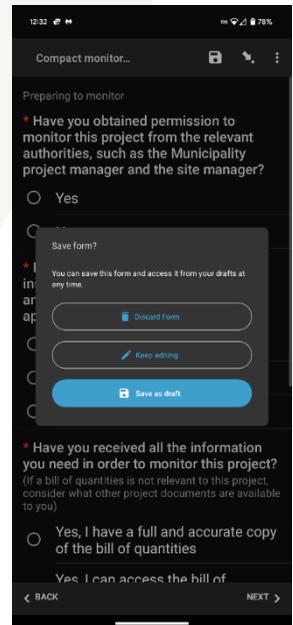
i You will not be able to make edits once you finalize. If you need to make changes, "Save as draft" until you're ready to send.

Save as draft Finalize

Then go to the **'Ready to send'** section in the home screen and submit the answer by clicking on Send Selected.



At any point, you can save your work by tapping 'Save as draft'. This is useful if you need to pause and return to your form later. If you need to start over, use the 'Discard Form' button to clear all data and begin afresh.



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Taking good photographs

Taking photographs is an important way to collect evidence on whether promises are being delivered.

- Do not take photographs of people - this is best practice and ensures that you are acting in line with data protection legislation (for example, the POPI Act in South Africa).
- Make sure your phone is charged.
- Get in close.
- Frame the photo - put the item in the middle.
- Look on the screen to check if the object is fully visible and clear.
- Hold the phone steady and straight.
- Remember that one good photo is better than six blurry photos.

Good Photographs



There is good lighting and the photographer has used their foot for scale so you can see how big this problem is.



This photograph focuses on the materials. The materials are framed in the centre of the photo, and the lighting makes it clear.



It is clear from this photo what the issue is - the water is unclean and not accessible. The photo is framed well.

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Bad Photographs



The angle is unhelpful.
The shadow makes it unclear.



Only half of the picture is shown, where is the rest of the building on the right?
You should not share photographs of people, even if their faces are not clear as they may still be recognisable.



This is an error - you cannot see anything in the photograph.



This is a screenshot of a video.
This does not show anything.

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Interviewing community members

Interviewing the community is an important aspect of monitoring. It is one of the methods that citizen monitors can use to assess whether a project has delivered what has been promised.

Please ensure that the community member you are speaking to understands the purpose of the survey. Remember not to share information gathered through the interview with anyone else. This is important for building trust with members of the community. The data will be shown anonymously on the website. Please let community members know that their responses will be kept anonymous.

Remember the following principles on how to conduct good community surveys.

SELECTING WHO TO SURVEY:

- You need to collect a good number of surveys. This will help to represent as many people from the community as possible.
- **Local participants** - Surveyed people must come from the community where the project is located, or that is affected by the project.
- **Diverse participants** - Surveyed community members also need to come from a diverse group of people in terms of age, gender, socio-economic status, abilities, etc.

BEFORE THE SURVEY:

- Monitors should be **sensitive to cultural norms**, especially around gender. For example, it may not be appropriate to have a male monitor speaking privately with a woman.
- Make sure to only interview people above 18 years old.
- **Appropriate setting** - Interviews should take place in a setting where the interviewee feels comfortable to speak freely.
- You should think about their own safety and feelings of security. They should work in pairs as appropriate, and not place themselves in settings where they feel unsafe.

AT THE START OF THE SURVEY, MONITORS SHOULD:

- **Introduce yourself** in a courteous way.
- **Explain why** they are surveying people and what they will do with the information. Explain that it will show anonymously online.
- **Explain how long** the survey will take (5-10 minutes).

DURING THE SURVEY:

- If additional information is shared that will be relevant for discussion with stakeholders, you should make a note of this separately. The app only collects basic data.
- If the interviewee chooses to provide a comment at the end (using the free-text '**anything else to add?**' question), you should attempt to capture this in as much detail as is possible and appropriate.

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Tips for monitoring

- Always monitor in pairs or groups and in daylight.
- Bring your device to use your survey and make sure it's charged.
- Bring ID and a third-party letter confirming who you are and the purpose of your visit.
- Always be open – never hide what you are doing. Before you set off, think how you will explain yourself to anyone who asks.
- Take your time. Don't feel you need to rush. Make sure you get all the information you need.
- On site, stay away from anything that looks unstable or dangerous. Ask for health and safety protection if available.
- When photographing documents, make sure there's lots of light and don't cast shadows.
- Be polite and civil. Never become aggressive, even if you are denied access.
- If you encounter people reluctant to let you monitor, try to understand their concerns and respond to them calmly.
- If you are denied access and cannot complete your monitoring visit, contact responsible people and re-state the purpose of your visit.
- Make sure you have an emergency contact number that you can call.

Risk Assessment

Remember how to put together a risk assessment for your monitoring visits.

RISK ASSESSMENT			
RISK	PROBABILITY (Low, medium or high)	IMPACT ON YOU (Low, medium or high)	MITIGATION MEASURES
EXAMPLE			
<i>E.g. Aggressive Contractor who will not allow access</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Practice constructive engagement techniques and go in a group of 3 people.</i>

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7. Problems get fixed



Problems get fixed

Identifying problems is a useful activity. However, this alone is not enough. To ensure that citizens receive what they have been promised, you also need to engage with stakeholders to get problems fixed.

In the **Engage stakeholders** module, you identified the key stakeholders and planned what methods you can use to engage them in the monitoring process.

The **Fix problems** module looks at the skills that you can use to work with stakeholders, including community members, to solve the problems that have been identified.

This can be done through **CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT**: engaging directly with stakeholders to work together to solve problems.

Remember the engagement plans from the **Methods of engagement** exercise in the **Engage stakeholders** step?

STAKEHOLDER	INFORM OR INVOLVE?	METHOD

What methods for involving stakeholders can be used to fix problems? For example:

- Letters to government officials
- Phone calls
- Closed meetings with implementing agencies, project donors, local government (a closed meeting is one where only invited participants can attend)
- Joint Working Group meetings
- Open Community meetings (an open meeting is one where anyone is welcome to attend)

Ensure that all discussions are constructive, which means that both sides are working together to solve the problem. This may take time and continued effort.

Non-Verbal Active Listening

For the constructive engagement phase you will need to use active listening skills:

1. Because everyone deserves a chance to be listened to.
2. Because it puts the other in a more favourable position to help.

Non-verbal active listening (depending on your context, this could include nodding, eye contact, etc.) as well bad listening (watching your phone, getting distracted) have an impact on how the conversation is going.

You may deal with people who have very different perspectives. Taking the time to understand a person's views and showing you are listening can help achieve a positive outcome. Active listening can be used to help understand another person's views. Demonstrating that you have listened can help you during constructive engagement.

Five types of communication

TECHNIQUE	GOAL	EXAMPLE
Clarifying	To get additional facts	Is this what you mean?
Restating	To show you are listening and understand	As I understand it, you are saying...
Neutral	To convey you are interested	I see your point.
Reflective	To show you understand how the speaker feels	You seem to feel that...
Summarising	To bring the conversation to an end	The main points you have mentioned are...

The above techniques show the other person you have listened, that you can highlight and summarise their ideas and allows you to move the conversation on.

Tips for constructive engagement

Having difficult conversations can be nerve wracking. Here are some tips:

1. Calm your nerves

- Take some deep breaths to calm yourself.
- Turn negative emotions into positive ones, e.g. tell yourself: I am not nervous, I am excited!
- If this does not help, come to terms with your situation: I am nervous and there is nothing I can do about it, I have to accept it!

2. Appearance

- Dress in an appropriate but comfortable way.
- Before the meeting, use a 'power pose' in private, for example standing with your hands on your hips (when you are in your power pose for 3 or more minutes it can make you more confident and less anxious).
- Research shows that information we obtain on a person is mostly through body language. This means that it is not what you say but how you say that.

3. Communication

- Speak so that everyone can hear but do not shout.
- Use non-verbal active listening techniques and avoid signs of inattention.
- Use language which is simple (but not simplistic) and avoid jargon.
- Smile and ask questions to show interest.

4. Strategise

- Be clear on what you want to achieve and the message you want to get across.
- Back up your message with evidence (monitoring data, photos, etc.).
- De-escalate violent situations. Say: I understand why you are angry. Use inclusive words like 'us' and 'we'.
- Look for a win-win outcome: see the meeting as a partnership not a contest.
- Make a list of short term and longer term wins for both parties. What are you trying to obtain from this meeting?

5. Help your fellow monitors

- Encourage shy people in your group to take part in the discussion; can they be the spokesperson?
- Research indicates that women are interrupted twice as frequently as men. If you are a woman, keep your pauses short. If you are a man, help stop or prevent the interruptions and be mindful not to do so yourself.
- Women may feel intimidated in a room full of men. Try to have more women in the meeting.
- People from minority groups may also feel intimidated. Be supportive and give them space to speak.



There may be risks associated with engaging with stakeholders. For example, a contractor may feel threatened by your visit. Prioritise your safety and follow the READE steps.

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Understanding opponents

An **opponent** is an individual who can actively harm or hinder an intended action, situation or event. If not engaged properly and in a timely way, any stakeholder involved in the project that you are monitoring can turn into an opponent.

To help you deal with opponents, think about:

1. **the context of the situation:** the environment the opponent lives and works in, their pressure points, stress factors, etc.
2. **the behaviour of the opponent:** the visible interactions, and actions that the opponent shows.
3. **their attitudes:** the invisible ideas and convictions that this person may hold which cause the visible behaviour.

If you do not consider these 3 factors together, you may not resolve the issue that causes someone to be an opponent. When you understand the opponent's attitudes, behaviour, context, key needs and key fears, you can have a better understanding of why an opponent may act in a certain way. This may help you to understand how to respond to an opponent.

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The monitoring approach in practice*

Monitor visits site and speaks with community

Monitor uploads findings on KOBO app**

Monitor provides notes on problem identified to the Ward Committee and Ward Councillor

Ward Councillor follows the municipality protocols/structures to try to solve problems

Ward Councillor reports back to Ward Committee and Monitor on the status of the problem

Monitor visits site some time later - they speak with the community and upload findings onto KOBO

***This is an IDEAL scenario and may be subject to changes depending on different circumstances**

****If Monitor wants to communicate with contractor, they use CLO as an intermediary**

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8. Spread the Word



Update the community

By now you may have carried out several monitoring visits and probably identified problems. Hopefully you had some successes in fixing some.

Achieving fixes directly translates into improvements in the lives of community members. You should feel very proud about this!

Even if you are not able to fix problems straightaway, it is important that you know that this approach is about the process: communities in which you operate will have appreciated your efforts, power holders now know about citizen-based monitoring and may act in a more accountable way, while you have gained confidence and skills that will help you in your personal and professional life.

Regardless of whether you were able to achieve fixes or not, it is important to communicate the results of your monitoring activities (successful or not successful) back to the community.

Remember the engagement plans from the **Methods of engagement** exercise in the **Engage stakeholders** module?

STAKEHOLDER	INFORM/INVOLVE	METHOD

Identify which of these methods are opportunities to communicate results back to the community. Are any other ways to communicate results? Add this to your list. You could share:

- An explanation of what the project is
- An explanation of what the problem is and how you identified it
- The steps you have taken to try to fix the problem
- How the situation is now
- If the problem is not fixed – what the next steps will be to try to fix the problem.

Viewing and sharing monitoring data

The data gathered by you and your fellow citizen monitors through KoboToolkit will be analysed, aggregated, and visualised on a public-facing website. The link to this website has been shared with you during the training.

The information displayed on the website include:

- Information about the project (timeline, budget etc)
- Status of the project schedule (on track, delayed, stalled)
- The number of outstanding problems identified that have not yet been addressed
- The percentage of identified problems that have been addressed
- The percentage of community members who are satisfied with the project

This information can be filtered per project and municipality, so you can have both a comprehensive view on how monitoring activities are going in general as well as a more specific analysis of the project that you are monitoring. Anyone viewing the website can see this information. The monitoring data displayed on the website can also be shared directly with stakeholders through emails and/or WhatsApp.

You can use the monitoring data, and in particular any problems identified during monitoring in your constructive engagement activities with public officials or community members.

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9. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What benefits will I get from being a citizen monitor?

In addition to gaining the opportunity to collaborate with your Local Municipality, you will gain new skills around the use of a tech tool, communication, negotiation and problem-solving. Most importantly, you will get the chance to contributing to improve the delivery of services in your community!

2. I have a disability - can I still be a citizen monitor?

Yes - all who are interested are encouraged to seek the opportunity to be a citizen monitor. Efforts will be made by the COMPACT Team to maximise accessibility for citizen monitors with disabilities.

3. I have care responsibilities that limit the amount of free time I have. Is citizen monitoring right for me?

Individuals of all circumstances should have the opportunity to be citizen monitors. If you are worried of your limited time availability, speak to a COMPACT Team member to discuss solutions.

4. What rights do I have as a citizen to access official information regarding a project I wish to monitor?

Under the Promotion of Access to Information Act (2000), individuals in South Africa have the right to request access to all documentation and records held by any government department, its officials or any other public body. Please read the 'Discover What is Promised' section to learn more about it.

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5. What tools/resources (e.g. stationery) will I need to have when visiting a monitoring site?

Monitors should have pen and paper and a mobile phone with both a camera and the Kobo app/link ready. This will enable them to take photos of the project site, and to complete surveys via the app/link. Where possible, monitors should also bring along a form of identification and any official documentation they have regarding the monitoring of the project. Monitors are expected to work in groups, in order to split responsibilities, hold each other accountable and support one another.

6. I have been refused access to a site I am monitoring. What should my next steps be?

Citizen monitors may face obstacles accessing project sites, as those with control of the project site may need some persuasion to allow access. If monitors are refused access, they are encouraged to agree a new date they can visit, with any information or official documentation that is requested of them, in order to increase the chance of success for a second visit. If this does not work, please contact a member of the COMPACT Team.

7. What PPE is required, and which procedures should be followed when entering a construction site?

This will differ depending on the project, however we encourage citizen monitors to follow instructions from the site manager.

8. What potential health risks or hazards can I expect to encounter in a construction site?

This will differ depending on the project, however we strongly encourage citizen monitors to ask the site manager more information about it.

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9. How should I deal with hostility during a monitoring visit?

Citizen monitors may encounter hostility as people may be unsure about the motivations of monitors and uncomfortable to being held to account. Monitors have received guidance on de-escalation techniques to diffuse tension and ease engagement with individuals who may not initially be on-side with their objectives. Monitors should practice de-escalation, and if a visit remains hostile and will not produce productive results, should remove themselves and seek to agree a date for a return visit.

10. What steps can I take to obtain official documents about a project I am monitoring?

We recommend that the first step monitors take in seeking to access information is to informally ask the relevant officials - they may be willing to provide this directly. This will save time and avoid impacting the relationship with the official. Subsequent steps could include: seeking to understand the motivations of the individual refusing to provide the information and to mitigate these; raising the request with an alternative official (perhaps one with authority over the reticent official); and as a final resort making a formal request in line with the Promotion of Access to Information Act (see above FAQ on this).

11. What should I do if I feel unsafe during monitoring?

The safety and security of monitors is of paramount importance. We urge any monitors who feel that a hostile environment has become unsafe for them to remove themselves as quickly as possible. Your responsibilities as a citizen monitor do not require you to put yourself at an unacceptable level of risk.

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12. How do I report a concern about a project I am monitoring?

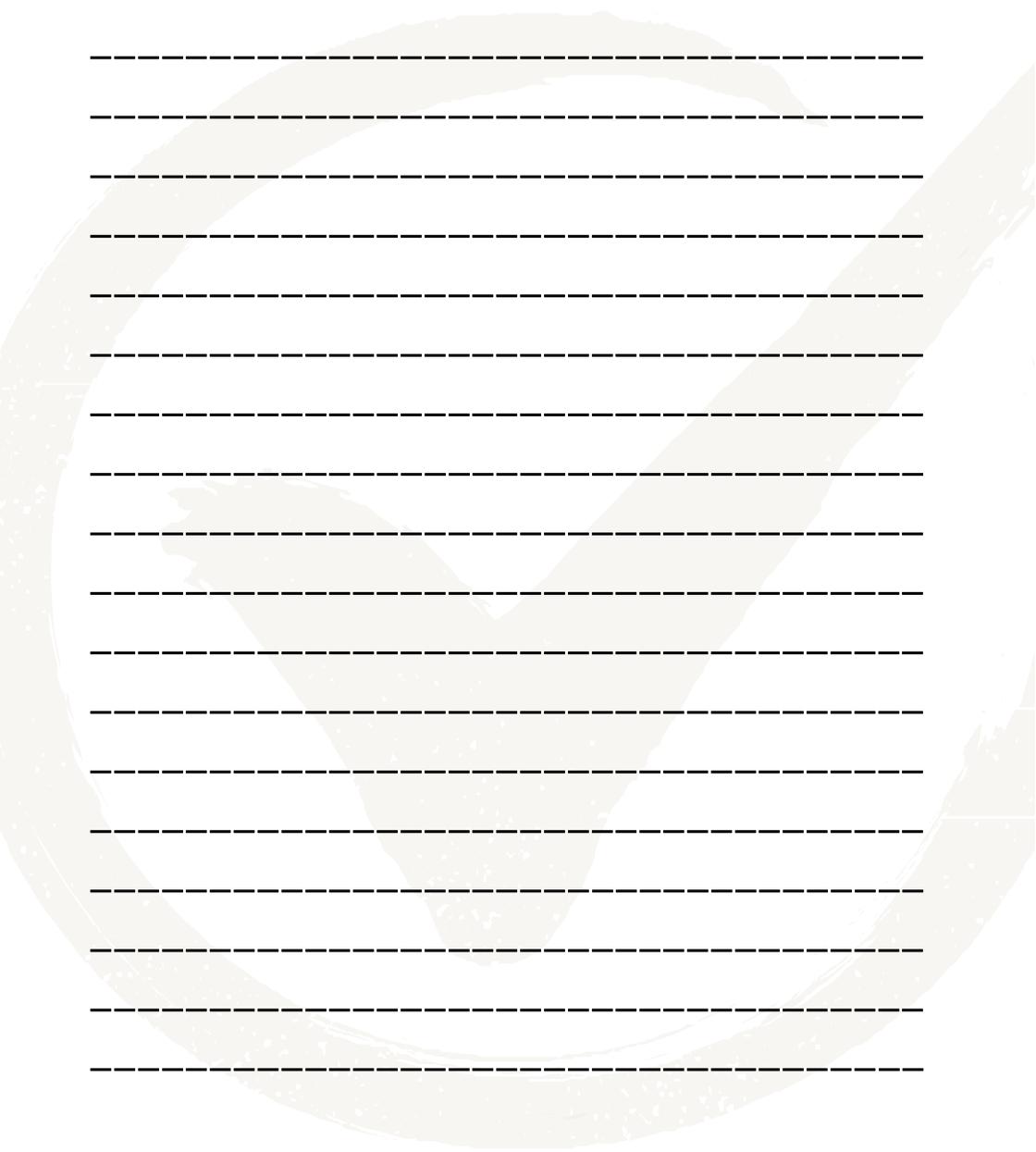
If you have ongoing concerns about your safety or have witnessed or experienced harm because of your role as citizen monitor, please contact a member of the COMPACT Team. They will act on your concerns and provide further guidance. Please see page 9 for further information. Please note that we have a zero-tolerance approach to serious misconduct and will not tolerate that COMPACT's staff, consultants, partners, trainers, monitors or any other associated personnel carry out any form of abuse or exploitation.

13. Who should I inform about the progress of a project I am monitoring?

It is good practice for monitors to keep all stakeholders whom they engage with in the course of their monitoring informed about the progress of their efforts, and in particular community members, Ward Committee, Ward Councilor and other officials of their Local Municipality. This enables stakeholders - including project users in the local community - to see the outcomes that their initial engagement has contributed towards.

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Notes



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Notes

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