

SUMMARY LEARNINGS (2 GROUPS)

Life in SA

A lot of focus on negatives, respondents spontaneously mention problems, concerns and little talk about hope, positive things happening in the country. This shows that most of the respondents are still in the survival zone – where most of the time is spent on thinking about basic living, immediate community rather than worry about the whole country's or the world's problems. Most of the respondents seem to feel that the past was somewhat better than the present and that things are not getting better but worse.

Things they complain about (young and old)

- Crime, poverty, unemployment, health, AIDS, rape, school fees, hunger, lack of municipality services

When asked why all of this is happening:

- Independence : “we are anew democracy and now we have to fend for ourselves no longer depending on Europe,White people”
- Rich are getting richer and poor getting poor “each man for himself”

General Feelings towards the Government

Most of the respondents feel that the government is spending and giving out money. The problem lies with its foot soldiers, mainly the councillors, mayors who seem to be more interested in looking after their needs. The foot soldiers seem to have lost respect, most importantly TRUST.

Criticism about government is that the President does not live with the people. He is not touchable, always busy travelling the world, spending more time with the outside world than his own constituency.

People feel that the government must spend the same time and energy, they seem to be willing to spend when they want their votes. After the votes the government disappears and only to be seen before next election.

Recommendation: spend more time the people – People's days (month of listening: Imbizo

Young vs. Old

Youth more aware about issues happening in the country and in their community than the older people. Youth are losing hope gradually and are becoming even more sceptical about politics and politicians.

However the people they still trust are senior people –Ministers, President, Premier not Councillors, mayor.

Some of the young respondents still have a lot of respect for authority and are even afraid to confront the president directly.

Recommendation: possible separate communication for the Youth, since they are mostly affected by unemployment, crime, lack of skills, contacts, networks (How effective is the Youth Commission?)

Communication tools used currently to reach the people

- Mayor ,Counsellors > Adults mainly hear from the counsellors especially the volunteers. For everyday volunteer work done they have to register to the councillor.
- Word of Mouth
- Pamphlets
- Radio (under-utilised)
- TV (under-utilised)

Most important is that Communication should be accompanied by ACTION.

COMMUNICATION + ACTION/DOING = LOYALTY/RETENTION “will definitely vote for him next election, we will also be encouraged to help our government”, “government loves us-we are his children”.

The government is going to struggle to get the youth to vote – increase in voter apathy (same as Europe, States- disillusioned youth about politics and politicians)

TALKS No ACTION amounts to distrust, anger , loss of hope.

Imbizo

Definition of Imbizo traces its roots from the rural areas Kings, Chiefs calling meetings to discuss with the people and also ask for advise. Allow the people to vent their frustrations without fear of being punished by the king, chief. This is one time when the people truly connect with their leader and it fosters a strong emotional relationship with the people.

How do people feel about Imbizo ?

They do not think that they have had one yet. There is also a high level of distrust .This reminds me of asong by Phuzukhemisi “njalonje ikhona Imbizo,besibiza emakolweni, enduneni ,but nothing happens ,allthey want is our money” Imbizo conjures about talking and no doing.

However most of the respondents are willing to partake in an Imbizo if conducted properly.

The last Imbizo could not be defined as Imbizo since the president only spent less than 15 minutes. This makes people feel that they are not important ,the president cramps 20 thing to do in one day and they are number 20 ,but when he wants their vote – he is there the whole day.

Recommendation: be single minded . the president should be single-minded and show that he is serious about talking to people and give this enough time and the dignity it deserves

The recipe for a well conducted Imbizo:

- The President must personally announce when he is going to visit the town – using TV and Radio
- Also explain WHY?he is visiting
- Posters, Pamphlets in advance
- Use loudspeakers of high quality to announce –two days before he attends
- Gather information in advance about people's problems, concerns, fears, hopes
- Bring SOLUTIONS
- Talk about the future and not bring people back to the past. Talk with respect and not assume that they are not intelligent
- Commit to two or three problems that he will personally make sure they are resolved
- Venue – big enough
- Equipment –high quality speakers,PA system
- Come back and check personally or send Premier,Minister not councillors,mayor
- Act on corrupt people and tell us about the punishment
- Send his communication officers to do checks every month and hold meetings with the community
- Provide people with water, food to show appreciation. People have woken up early to prepare for the arrival of the president
- Get the community involved (sing and pray for the president)

Recommendation : LISTEN ---- PLAN --- ACT ----JUDGE/FEEDBACK WITH THE PEOPLE..