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COMPARISON OF THE ORGANIZATION'S WORKING PROCEDURES WITH SIMILAR PRACTICES IN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND SET UP OF A SERVICE INDICATOR SYSTEM TO ASSESS LOCAL AND ZONAL PUBLIC INTEREST SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Dorin-Vasile DEAC-ȘUTEU[1], Aurel-Mihail ȚÎȚU[2*], Marius Ioan TODERICI[3], Florin-Alexandru LUNGU[4,5]

1 *National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Robotics, Splaiul Independenţei no. 313, 6th District, Bucharest, Romania, fam.deac@gmail.com*
2 *Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, 10 Victoriei Street, Sibiu, România,*
3 *National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Robotics, Splaiul Independenţei no. 313, 6th District, Bucharest, Romania, marius@toderici.ro*
4 *National Research and Development Institute for Cryogenics and Isotopic Technologies—ICSI, Uzinei Street No. 4, 240050 Ramnicu Valcea, Romania*
5 *Faculty of Power Engineering, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest, 060042 Bucharest, Romania, florin.lungu@icsi.ro*
* *Correspondence: mihail.titu@ulbsibiu.ro*

Abstract: This article makes an innovative contribution on the integration of common processes in organizations that offer Services of Interest to the communities. The comparison of the working techniques of one organization with those of other organizations that have practices that are comparable might provide valuable insights for the development and innovation of the organization. The paper contains components of intraorganizational benchmarking, which pertains to the identification and determination of the manner in which various divisions or units within the organization collaborate with one another to discover methods that might improve the efficiency of service delivery. Doing interorganizational benchmarking, the primary goal is to align with best practices and identify areas for improvement. This is accomplished by comparing the practices of the company in question with those of other firms that are comparable in the area. In this article, the detailed coupling of working methods with the deployment of a robust service measuring system is discussed. In addition to highlighting the favorable results that were gained based on this study and the probability of putting it into practice, the authors suggest creating a model for the process of combining routine tasks, along with methods for maximizing their efficiency.

Keywords: development, management, public service, process integration, platform

1 INTRODUCTION

Effective communication is a crucial aspect of corporate social responsibility, since it helps meet the expectations of citizens, promotes problem-solving, fosters cooperative relationships, and aligns employees' efforts towards shared objectives. The objective of this paper is to explore the correlation between benchmarking factors in the realm of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the organizational environ-ment (leadership style, organizational structure, workplace culture), and the efficacy of communication within the organization (Ranta, 2004). Additionally, it seeks to analyze the moderating impact of the relationship between organizations that offer Services of Local and Zonal (area) Interest (CEMR, 2009). The authors acquired the data for the study using questionnaires that they presented to respondents from private, legal companies. The study demonstrated that increased engagement in communication, a less rigid organ-izational structure among public service providers, and a more robust community culture positively impact the efficacy of intra-organizational communication. The study concludes that the organization's leadership's attitude towards employee engagement, formalization of the structure, and the health of the culture significantly influence successful communication, in relation to the aforementioned external elements.

An analysis of the community is a process that involves evaluating and defining the requirements, potential obstacles, opportunities, and resources that are involved in the process of beginning programs that are of interest to the community.

Community diagnosis, community needs assessment, education, and community mapping are some of the ways that this process is articulated in the literature. We find those definitions in a variety of formats (Josephson, 2005).

Additionally, the process of community analysis has the potential to offer a one-of-a-kind opportunity for enthusiastic public participation in community outreach initiatives. As a result of the fact that the terms community analysis and community diagnosis are equivalent, the community analysis method comes before the diagnosis approach (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 2015). Clarification of the premises on which community analysis is based and the amount of interest it offers is required in order to properly conduct community analysis (Howlett, and Ramesh, 2020). It is possible to carry it out in a descriptive manner, making use of objective facts, or by interpreting and evaluating demands if they are stated as a consequence of the following:

- a demand expressed by the community;
- the outcome of symmetrical communication between professionals and the inhabitants of the community.

It is therefore possible for professionals to interpret needs; alternatively, we may encounter circumstances in which citizens actively participate in proposing and developing objectives for community development that are to be accomplished through initiatives (Oroveanu, 1994).

When it comes to the implementation of projects or programs that are approved by the community, it is necessary to have a clear definition of the areas of intervention and to fulfill specific preconditions in order for the intervention to be recognized at the organizational, institutional, and community levels.

The community needs assessment is carried out in a participatory manner, with the goal of involving as many different parts of the community as possible, especially those portions of the community that have historically been less "heard" (Decision no. 1.226 of 10 October 2007). A needs assessment is asked for by funders on a regular basis, which is another reason why it is important to conduct one. Needs assessments can also be utilized as a means of bringing the challenges that are confronting the community to the attention of the general public.

2 PUBLIC PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

The formation of public policy is a highly complex process that involves a multitude of actors, a multitude of decisions, a multitude of connections to other public policies that have been adopted or are in the process of being adopted, and a variety of out-comes for people who are affected by the actions that are taken (or not taken) (Decision no. 1.226 of 10 October 2007). A method known as the policy cycle has been implemented in order to simplify this process. This method divides the process into multiple parts for the purpose of simplifying it (Mitu, 2017).

Project and program evaluation is a specific stage in project planning and management that is extremely useful. It is also a research technique and a tool for public policy making (National Institute of Statistics, 2022). Those responsible for managing institutions and organizations, as well as coordinating projects and programs that are carried out with public or private funds, successfully use projects and program evaluation. Different evaluation models are utilized by senior public servants, legislators, managers, directors of institutions and organizations, program managers, and project coordinators in order to capture, in a timely manner, the effects of interventions that they are currently undertaking or want to undertake in the future (Păunescu, 2008).

The objective is to identify and mitigate unfavorable consequences on groups of individuals, communities, and society in a timely manner, as well as to promote the positive aspects of programs and projects (Postelnicu, 2017). Furthermore, the implied objective of assessment is to systematically collect information about the project's results, output, and management in order to improve its implementation and generate better judgements in the future (Argyris, Schon, 1992). In a nutshell, several assessment strategies are utilized in order to minimize losses by interventions on small or big social groups and maximize the advantages that these interventions bring about. Throughout the course of its development, evaluation has given rise to a variety of definitions (Drucker, 2004).

There are a few essential terms that emerge from a review of the definitions of evaluation that are provided by several dictionaries (Mullins, 2004). These terms include determination of merit, value, appraisal, valuation, and others. There is a close connection between the meaning of these phrases and the evaluation of projects or programs, although the evaluation is not restricted to these concepts. The definitions of evaluation also include a number of methodological components that are repeated throughout the definitions.

In accordance with Howlett and Ramesh (Howlett, and Ramesh, 2020), the stages could be considered as follows:

- The identification of the problem, which refers to the process by which the problem is brought to the attention of the government
- The formulation of the policy, which is the phase in which many alternatives for a policy that is to be adopted are formulated;
- The process of making decisions, which involves selecting a specific course of action; the process of putting policies into action, which involves putting them into effect;
- Evaluation, which is the phase in which the administration and other stakeholders monitor the results, with the possibility of policy reformulation occurring during this phase.

What is the objective of the evaluation?

Measurement of the effectiveness of a program and the identification of potential solutions to issues are both components of the evaluation process (Mullins, 2004). Evaluation, in particular, can be utilized for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to the following: analyzing the outcomes of a program, contrasting those outcomes with the costs of the program, assisting in the process of resource allocation, assisting in the improvement of program management, and helping to hold authorities accountable to citizens for their actions (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 2015). The results of evaluations can be helpful in enhancing both the implementation of programs and the procedure of reaching decisions (Barometer, 2020).

Through the process of evaluation, the effectiveness of projects and programs can be determined by providing answers to the following questions: what works, for whom, and under what conditions?

Evaluating something also helps with the process of planning future actions, assigning resources (both human and financial), and other similar activities (Mitu, 2017).

2.1 Monitoring and assessment issues

The Romanian public administration's legalistic tradition of excessive use of norma-tive acts, strict compliance with procedures, resource spending, and administrative control has made it difficult to develop a monitoring and evaluation culture based on performance, transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness in public policies (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 2015). Due to uncertainty in the Romanian public administration between law and public policy monitoring, monitoring and evaluation processes are harder to internalize (Mitu, 2017). This misconception is caused by institutions' preference for normative deeds over policies and the policy document method. In recent years, EU and/or internationally support-ed initiatives of various sorts have provided important expertise in implementing clear monitoring and evaluation requirements to ensure openness and efficiency in fund expenditure. Analysis of questionnaire data and public policy papers revealed three key issues.

The central government in Romania has institutional inadequacies, resource shortages, and structural issues in monitoring and assessment (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 2015).

Due to the absence of public consultation and communication, information asymmetry between players makes it difficult to coordinate assessment and monitor-ing efforts with many actors (European Commission, 2019). Knowledge asymmetry between central govern-ment sectors occurs when one institution holds exclusive knowledge and fails to share it with interested parties. Ministries seldom communicate with interested parties in government or society about their public policy or legislative efforts, limiting their ability to negotiate mutually agreeable solutions. The Regulation relating to the processes followed by governmental entities in the formulation, approval, and submission of legislative and public policy document drafts, as well as other documents intended for adoption or approval, and the Strategy for Better Regulation in Central Government 2008–2013 address these issues (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 2015). Information transmission and collection may distort local reality. Pressure about the outcome of monitoring and evaluation, the time pressure of gathering a lot of correct information quick-ly, and the perception of monitoring and evaluation as just another central task can also distort information. Many ministries have departments or directorates that monitor policy using diverse techniques, hence, there is no institutional-level policy monitoring and assessment approach. These functions are located in the PPU (Ministry of Regional Development and Public

Administration, 2015), or specialized departments executing public policy. In this regard, European program monitoring and evaluation must be distinguished from national policy monitoring and assessment. National monitoring and assessment might be modeled after European program evaluations.

Monitoring and evaluating national programs is more complicated and involves more work to monitor performance and gather data (Postelnicu, 2017). Policy results are used to evaluate government action through public policies, but in Romania, due to communication and coordination issues, each institution tends to focus only on its own output and how it contributes to intersectoral policy goals (Matei, 2001). Most interinstitutional public policy monitoring and evaluation strategies are absent. Poor institution-to-institution communication makes data collection and policy monitoring and evaluation programs with numerous players challenging (Donders, 2012).

3 ASSESSMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION'S WORKING PRACTICES

3.1 Primary data for the selected organization

The name of the unit is "DRUMURI ȘI PODURI SIBIU" Company "DRUMURI ȘI PODURI SIBIU", a registered joint-stock company subscribed by the County Council of Sibiu as sole shareholder and established by County Council Decision no. 2 /1998 (https://drumuripodurisibiu.ro/, 2024), through the reorganization of the autonomous Sibiu County Administration of Roads and Bridges. The entire activity of the company was directed to-wards the construction, maintenance, and repair of county roads. The road infrastructure comprises approx. 944 km (Figure 1) of county roads (https://drumuripodurisibiu.ro/, 2024), for which the organization provides current and capital repairs, maintenance, road signalling and traffic safety, etc.

Figure 1. Road Map of Sibiu County

3.2 SWOT analysis of the organization examined

The most commonly used tool for auditing and analyzing the overall strategic position of a company and its business environment is the SWOT analysis (OECD Governance, 2022).

Analyze SWOT visualizes all positive and negative factors affecting the activity of Sibiu Roads and Bridges SA and can be used by the executive management to continuously examine the sector, the business environment, to forecast changing trends and to incorporate them into the decision-making process.

The SWOT analysis is divided into two parts:

- ➢ Internal Review (Strengths and Weaknesses) During this stage, we have taken an x-ray of the company's situation, taking into account its strengths and weaknesses;
- ➢ External Review (Threats and Opportunities).

Considering that both threats and opportunities are part of the business environment in which the organization must thrive, identifying opportunities to overcome and capitalize on will metamorphose into competitive advantages or disadvantages.

Table 1. Detailed SWOT analysis (Postelnicu, 2017)

STRENGHT DOTS	**Proposals for CONSOLIDATION***
S1: It is the only company in the field of road management in Sibiu County	Efficiency of the organizational structure, territorial distribution
S2: Decision of the main client/owner	Possibility to access Community funding
S3: Well-trained specialist staff	Adapting the pay scale to market conditions, strengthening professional and career opportunities
S4: Owning the only bitumen emulsion plant in the county	Upgrading to increase efficiency and improve product quality
WEAK	**Proposals for ELIMINATION***
W1: Functioning according to an atypical organization chart not adapted to current conditions	Adapting the organization chart to current conditions, by cost centre
W2: Difficulties in the implementation of the Annual Procurement Plan	Synchronise the Annual Procurement Plan with the annual production planning
W3: Large impact on output price of fluctuations in hydrocarbon and electricity purchase prices	Adoption of the Framework Agreement contracting model, quantitative flexibility and stock optimisation
W4: Raw material production capacity limited by only one asphalt plant	Diversification of raw material supply sources, reorientation towards specialised technologies
OPPORTUNITIES	**FRUCTIFICATION Measures***
O1: Strategy of the main client/owner to support from their own funds or to access European funds	Adapting the organization chart to current conditions, by cost centre
O2: Development of important national road infrastructure projects	The possibility of accessing European funding, involving the company in the provision of services through modern technologies
O3: Possibility to increase revenues	Adopting a flexible model in providing services for third parties, on its own behalf or through partnerships with other companies in the field
O4: There is an opportunity to increase production capacity by introducing modern technologies	Asphalt station for medium and long-term needs; Environmentally friendly litter kits covering the entire program established in collaboration with Sibiu CJ;
THREATS	**COUNTER Measures***
T1: Increase the number of categories of work that can be carried out by competitors	Increasing the level of specialisation for entering into partnership with other companies in the field
Q2: Period of currently low investment appetite in public road infrastructure by authorities	Assimilation, affiliation and consolidation of relations with other utility operators for the implementation of the Integrated Service of Local and Regional Interest
T3: Use of obsolete technologies that do not allow compensation for major changes in the prices of the main raw materials	Approval of a multiannual modernization program in line with the provisions of the framework agreement concluded with the C.J.
Q4: Seasonal activity, higher staff turnover than other sectors	Multiskilling of staff to mitigate the negative effects of the local labour shortage

Table 1 presents the personal interpretation of the SWOT of the organization under analysis, i.e. the strategic analysis of the elements that can contribute to strengthening its position in the local and regional services market.

3.3 Strategies based on SWOT analysis

Based on the SWOT, a strategy (Table 2) was developed to improve strengths, overcome or correct weaknesses, control or neutralize threats and exploit opportunities.

Table 2. SWOT analysis interpreted strategically, (Postelnicu, 2017)

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS, SWOT	strenght	WEAK POINTS, W
OPPORTUNITIES, A	Offensive Tactics	Adaptive methods
THREATS, T	Defensive Tactics	Survival techniques

The purpose of the SWOT analysis is to provide management with a realistic assessment of the company by identifying and classifying the organization's many important factors, into four categories.

The SWOT analysis interviewed directors and heads of departments, and the in-depth completion of the lists mentioned above was the final outcome of these discussions; the report will be used to pass on the findings to senior management. It was identified that the organization's internal information is not very well structured, and this can cause delays in decision making and lead to a poor long-term strategy.

In the presentation for the organization's management, it will be argued that SWOT analysis should not be presented as the development of four lists of inventories whose content is independent of the strategy the organization is prepared to implement to achieve an objective.

3.4 Processes common to local interest service organisations

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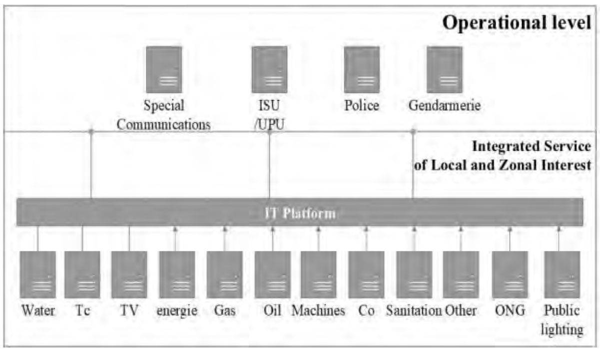

Figure 2. Section of Integrated Service of Local and Zonal (area) Interest, authors' own work

The phrase "Integrated Service of Local and Zonal (area) Interest", "SIILZ", refers to services provided by competent providers who have shown their intellectual and material capabilities through paperwork and procurement documents. These services are delivered in the public interest (Donders, 2012). The SIILZ can be constructed at the level shown in Figure 2, which organizes five procedures according to the service's legal regulations:

- Process A - a process for disaster readiness;
- Process B - a process for managing pertinent information;
- Process C - a process for carrying out unanticipated emergency works;
- Process D - a process for managing activities mandated by certain rules; and
- Process E - a process for environmental monitoring.

Public interest service provider representatives and members of the general public were surveyed and educated about the EU White Charter on Services of General Interest as part of the research (CEMR, 2009). A cornerstone of the European social model, services of general interest must be guaranteed to all EU residents and companies in an easily accessible and of high quality, as emphasized in the White Paper. In order to keep Europe's social and territorial cohesiveness and economic competitiveness strong, the White Paper stresses the importance of making sure all people have access to services of common interest (CEMR, 2009).

Figure 3. Organisations that answered the questionnaire survey, authors' own work

Depending on the project's specifics, nature, and factors, this study found and suggested ways to use the research instrument. These approaches are listed below:

- people who are legally able to enter the country, and
- organizations that offer services to the broader public, as shown in Figure 3.

We switched to an online survey format since few people in executive or managerial roles or working in economic departments are accessible to fill out paper surveys when asked. Since responders were required to have positions in the economic or executive/management departments, this was of utmost importance for entities (docs.google.com). In situations when this was the only option to reach the respondents, we sent them an email with the survey and a link so they could fill it out whenever it was convenient for them, Figure 4. Here, we're talking about questionnaires that the people in the sample are asked to fill out on their own and then record their responses. The people that were sent the survey, however, did not return any answers. All participants were given the option to complete the questionnaire in this manner, and their replies would be kept anonymous at all times.

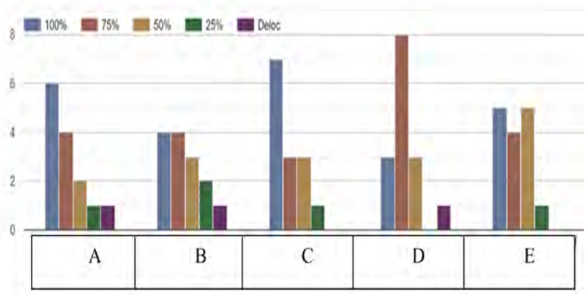

Figure 4. Processes analysed (mentioned in the EU White Paper) that are applied or already implemented in the organisations surveyed and approximate proportion of implementation, authors' own work

Since for all the processes listed above information is the main input, the way in which it is obtained, verified, certified and evaluated has a bearing on the decisions generated, the organisations providing public services of local and regional interest answered the question of clarification on the weight in the activity, shown in the Figure 5, and the Figure 6 shows the effects generated by different sources of information.

Optimizing processes should not add unnecessary work for staff (Argyris, Schon, 1992).

The majority of respondents believe that the most appropriate for the organisation is the creation of a department for filtering and validating information relevant to the organisation. It is recommended that this department should be under the direct co-ordination of management at the highest level of the organisation, as shown in Figure 6.

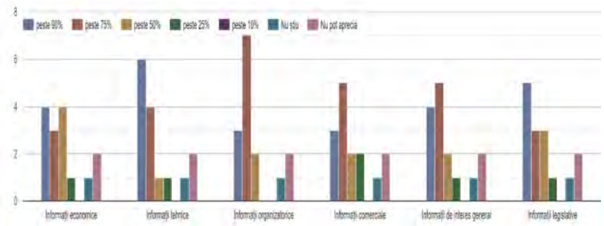

Figure 5. Effects of information received by public service operators, authors' own work

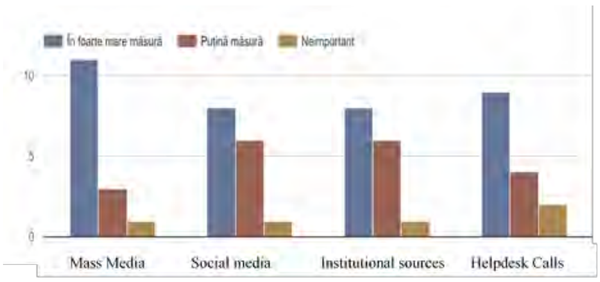

Figure 6. Information that can influence the image, quality of services, decisions and implicit outcomes, authors' own work

The first step to optimizing this procedure is to establish a baseline for how the organization currently evaluates its processes, as shown in Figure 8.

Consequently, we will have something to measure the success of the management team's efforts to increase productivity in the organization against (Drucker, 2004):

- adhere to the notion of streamlining administrative procedures;
- determine the hierarchy of importance in regard to the organization's existing operations;
- build connections with other services;
- give citizens a chance for interaction.

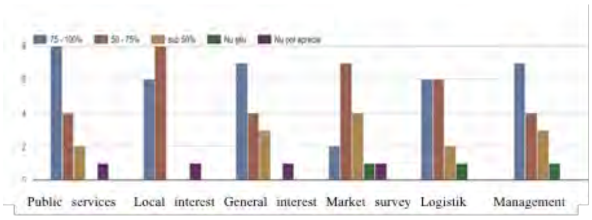

Figure 7. The categories of information received will be available/needed in the organisation's Integrated Information System and in what proportion, authors' own work

The majority of respondents believe that regardless of how information is dissemi-nated, it should be verified from several sources,as shown in Figure 6 and Figure 7. For these reasons SIILZ will be designed with requirements to validate messages from at least one administrative source.

The EU regulates budgeting and accounting, but not prices. The wholesale prices of energy, labor, machinery, raw materials, etc., are added together to get the production costs (Mullins, 2004).

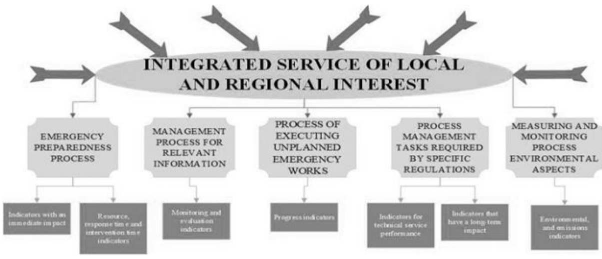

Figure 8. Classification of indicators according to SIILZ component processes, authors' own work

It is usual practice to catalog and name the several factors that influence the price of the service before undertaking a cost analysis. It is common practice to provide definitions in a document that lists project resources. Prior to the adoption of public economic management, certain prerequisites must be met (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 2015).

The process improves public services by:

- facilitating the calculation of the costs associated with meeting the minimal quality criteria;
- enabling the process of negotiating standards for both quality and affordability;
- facilitating the attainment of high-quality benchmarks;
- implementing systems to ensure adherence to regulatory requirements; and
- assessing achievement via promoting open and cooperative interaction among service providers.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Measurable benchmarks used to assess an organization's probability of accomplishing its objectives and participating in the enterprise are qualitative and quantitative indicators, commonly called integrated service indicators. Although these indicators' formulas appear precise at first glance, proper interpretation is required to reveal all facets of the full value chain linked to any part of the general interest sector, particularly at the regional and local levels. These metrics are useful for tracking community development and spotting inefficient operating procedures (Barometer, 2020). The qualitative and quantitative indicators adhere to exclusive requirements:

- measurable for precise success definition;
- achievable for realistic expectations;
- time-bound for reasonable progress assessment.

The indicators have been categorized into sets, which may be utilized to monitor performance in every area of a company with minor modifications.

In order to remain competitive and comply with regulatory requirements, operators must effectively handle their receivables, expenditures, human resources, operations, supplier relationships, cash flow, and other related aspects. Hence, qualitative and quantitative indicators serve to elucidate phenomena, drive changes, and exert operational control over organizational units (Barometer, 2020).

Furthermore, the proposed indicators encompass not only control but also qualitative and quantitative characteristics:

- development and guidance for strategy formulation and implementation across departments;
- motivation for achieving objectives and stakeholder participation.

These static indicators allow the tracking of critical health characteristics throughout time, either a business or a partnership, removing elements that might alter the objectivity of the outcome interpretation. They can also assist discover predictions that will affect the task and be needed to design an effective approach.

Public service quality and cost are not governed by European or international standards. Statutes or additional laws usually outline public service obligations (Matei, 2001).

The accountable government must adhere to the law, and the standard of excellence is minimal.

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