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Survey Objectives

Research objectives

1. Gather evidence for the proposition that social accountability mechanisms depend for their effectiveness on communication structures and processes, and particularly the power of public opinion

2. Demonstrate how these tools could work better if more attention is paid to both the communication environment in which they are applied – the media system, the quality of the public sphere, etc. – and the processes of shaping public opinion and provoking public action

3. Create a set of (1) analytical/diagnostic and (2) implementation tools to support development practitioners in using these tools more effectively
Framework and Survey Methodology

Framework
• This deck presents the findings from the NGO social accountability practitioner survey research. The analysis is structured by key green topics around accountability practices:

  1. Program and polices
  2. Existing practitioner tools
  3. The role of public opinion

Methodology
– Online study among NGO social accountability practitioners
– Surveys were taken in 4 languages: English, French, Spanish and Russian
– Total Interviews conducted: 45
– Survey timeframe: June 30 – August 31, 2007
Survey Sample

Sample Composition

The web-based survey was sent to those social accountability practitioners who participated in the World Bank Institute’s stocktakeings of social accountability practices in Africa, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America (Peru and Ecuador).

Survey Sample

- The survey sample reflects a population of social accountability practitioners across four regions (South Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia) and provides qualitative insight into social accountability programs, tools and role of public opinion.
- Although the survey provides a quantitative context – due to the non-representative sampling and small samples sizes – the results of the survey should be interpreted directionally.
Executive Summary - Overview

- Support of social accountability is strong among NGOs and donors but low among government stakeholders.

- Lack of government support and funding are key drivers behind the lack of effectiveness of existing social accountability tools.

- Receiving support from local community groups and the government are most important to practitioner social accountability work.

- Overall, practitioners are generally up-beat about their past work and are even more enthusiastic about the potential for social accountability programs in the future.
Respondent Profile
Respondents work across multiple Social Accountability function areas.

Q. In what capacity have you worked on social accountability projects and/or policies in your organization? (Select all that apply)

- Policies: 60%
- Implementation: 56%
- Project management: 53%
- Project evaluation: 38%
- Other: 20%
The majority of respondents receive social accountability reports on both a national and local level—local reports have been available longer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of time receiving reports on SA programs</th>
<th>National level</th>
<th>Local level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently receive reports</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than one year</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ years</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. How long have you been receiving reports/data/evaluations from social accountability programs in the country that you work?  
Note SC = social accountability
Respondents are primarily general managers or project managers of SA programs.

Q. Which of the following best describes your position (please select one):
Respondents have worked on social accountability programs primarily in Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia.

Q. In what country have you most recently worked on Social Accountability Programs?
Programs, Polices and Media
Summary: Programs/polices and media/communications

- Social accountability programs enjoy significantly more recognition/support from NGOs and donors than from the government and the private sector.

- Social accountability programs are most affected by usage and accessibility - however practitioners rate both of these dimensions low.

- Practitioners have access to multiple (an average of 9.6) traditional or alternative systems of communications
  - However, few of these communications systems are seen as affective.
Commercial media systems and an open political culture exist in most settings. Social accountability programs enjoy significantly more recognition/support from NGOs and Donors than from the government and private sector.

Q. In your opinion, to what extent does the country you work have the following programs and/or policies in place (5=strongly agree).
Although a majority have commercial media systems – accessibility (especially in rural areas) and use are a concern.

Q. In your opinion, to what extent does the country you work have the following media or communications processes in place (5=strongly agree).
Social accountability programs are most affected by media systems that are used and accessible

Q. In your opinion, to what extent do the following media or communications outlets affect your social accountability work (5=strongly agree).

- A media system that is well used by the population: 31% currently have, 29% agree.
- A media system accessible to ordinary citizens/general population: 65% currently have, 22% agree.
- A media system accessible to ordinary citizens/general population in rural areas: 84% currently have, 20% agree.
- A commercial media system: 84% currently have, 33% agree.
Practitioners have access to multiple (an average of 9.6) traditional or alternative systems of communications

Q. Which of the following traditional or alternative systems of communication exist within the country you work? (Select all that apply)

- Internet: 98%
- Cellular telephones/mobile telephony: 98%
- Commercial broadcast radio/television: 96%
- State-owned TV/radio: 91%
- Billboards and posters: 91%
- Satellite television news (i.e., BBC World, CNN, etc): 89%
- Call-in radio/TV programs: 87%
- Community radio: 82%
- Village assemblies/meetings: 80%
- Theater: 78%
- Town halls: 62%

Respondents use an average of 9.6 (out of a total of 11 options) alternative systems of communication.
However, few of these communications systems are seen as affective – local community systems, in general, are rated the most affective.

Q. In your opinion, to what extent do the following traditional or alternative systems of communication affect your social accountability work? (5=strongly agree)
Social Accountability Tools
Summary: Social Accountability Tools

• In general, participation in social accountability tools is low

• Right to information, public expenditure tracking surveys, and participatory monitoring and budgeting have been in use among practitioners the longest – while social audits, community score cards, and citizen report cards are used less frequently and for shorter periods

• Lack of government support and funding are key drivers behind the lack of effectiveness of existing social accountability tools
Think tanks and NGO’s have the most access to social accountability tools (albeit only a slight majority) while less than half rate government access high and access for the general population is essentially non-existent.

Despite their low access ratings, the government, media and the general population are considered to be the most important stakeholders to receive information on social accountability programs.

Local media are rated as the most helpful communications channels for disseminating the results of social accountability programs.
Q. Based on your knowledge, please indicate the level to which the country you work participates in the following social accountability tools/programs (see below for definitions of each program):

- **Public expenditure tracking surveys**
  - 13% In all ways possible
  - 31% To a large extent
  - 31% To a moderate extent
  - 22% To a minimal extent
  - 2% Not at all

- **Right to information and information disclosure**
  - 11% In all ways possible
  - 40% To a large extent
  - 36% To a moderate extent
  - 13% To a minimal extent
  - 0% Not at all

- **Participatory monitoring**
  - 2% In all ways possible
  - 11% To a large extent
  - 29% To a moderate extent
  - 47% To a minimal extent
  - 9% Not at all

- **Participatory budgeting**
  - 2% In all ways possible
  - 11% To a large extent
  - 36% To a moderate extent
  - 36% To a minimal extent
  - 16% Not at all

- **Social Audits**
  - 7% In all ways possible
  - 24% To a large extent
  - 47% To a moderate extent
  - 22% To a minimal extent
  - 0% Not at all

- **Community score card**
  - 7% In all ways possible
  - 11% To a large extent
  - 40% To a moderate extent
  - 40% To a minimal extent
  - 2% Not at all

- **Citizen report cards**
  - 7% In all ways possible
  - 16% To a large extent
  - 40% To a moderate extent
  - 33% To a minimal extent
  - 4% Not at all

Use of Social accountability tools is low
Right to information, public expenditure tracking surveys, and participatory monitoring/budgeting have been in use among practitioners the longest – while social audits, community score cards, and citizen report cards are used less frequently and for shorter periods.
Overall the effectiveness of social accountability programs are rated low by practitioners.

Q. Please rate the effectiveness of each of the social accountability programs the country you work currently participates in (5=very effective):

_Affect of traditional or alternative systems of communication_

- Social Audits: Very effective (22%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)
- Participatory monitoring: Very effective (22%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)
- Public expenditure tracking surveys: Very effective (22%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)
- Participatory budgeting: Very effective (22%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)
- Right to information and information disclosure: Very effective (22%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)
- Community score card: Very effective (32%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)
- Citizen report cards: Very effective (32%), Neutral (32%), Not at all effective (32%)

_top two box_
A Lack of government and funding support appear to be drivers behind lack of Social Accountability program effectiveness.

Q. In your opinion, why has the country you work not participated in the following social accountability programs?

- Right to information and information disclosure: 68% Lack of support from government, 21% Lack of funding, 5% Lack of NGO support, 6% Past programs were not successful
- Participatory budgeting: 64% Lack of support from government, 18% Lack of funding, 14% Lack of NGO support, 4% Past programs were not successful
- Citizen report cards: 54% Lack of support from government, 29% Lack of funding, 14% Lack of NGO support, 3% Past programs were not successful
- Community score card: 48% Lack of support from government, 30% Lack of funding, 17% Lack of NGO support, 5% Past programs were not successful
- Social Audits: 42% Lack of support from government, 29% Lack of funding, 29% Past programs were not successful
- Participatory monitoring: 36% Lack of support from government, 44% Lack of funding, 8% Lack of NGO support, 12% Past programs were not successful
- Public expenditure tracking surveys: 35% Lack of support from government, 26% Lack of funding, 35% Past programs were not successful

Fusion Analytics LLC
Despite practitioner low rating of effectiveness – a majority can cite a particular social accountability program that helped improve governance.
Think tanks and NGOs have the most access to social accountability tools (albeit only a slight majority) while less than half rate government access high and access for the general population is essentially non-existent.

Q. In your opinion, to what extent does each of the following stakeholders have access to information on social accountability tools?

(5=strongly agree)

- General population/citizens: 2% strongly agree, 7% agree, 9% total
- Media: 11% strongly agree, 22% agree, 33% total
- Government: 18% strongly agree, 27% agree, 45% total
- NGOs: 24% strongly agree, 27% agree, 51% total
- Think tanks, research institutions/libraries, universities: 27% strongly agree, 31% agree, 58% total
Despite their low access ratings, the government, media and general populations are considered to be the most important stakeholders to receive information on SA programs.

Q. In your opinion, how important is it that each of the following stakeholders receives information on social accountability tools? (5=most important)
Local media are rated as the most helpful communications channels for disseminating the results of SA programs.

Q. Please rate the extent to which each communication medium listed below helps in disseminating information about the results of social accountability tools (5=very helpful).
Access to Information
• Consistent with other measures of access, the general population’s access to official government information (e.g., budget allocations, etc) is low

• National government offices, websites, and the media are the most accessed sources of government information
  – Specific websites and NGOs are rated the most useful sources of information on social accountability programs
  – The internet and colleagues are by far the most frequently used communications channels to access government information

• Multiple stakeholders are accessed to provide feedback on development or progress on social accountability projects

Q. What are the most important programs or policies to ensure that access to information remains open?
Consistent with other measures of access, the general population’s access to official government information (e.g., budget allocations, etc.) is low.
National government offices, websites, and the media are the most accessed sources of government information.

Q. What sources do you access to obtain official government information (such as budget allocations, budget transfers, etc.)? (Select all that apply)
Specific websites and NGOs are rated the most useful sources of information on SA programs.
The media and specific websites are used most often to access information on SA programs.

### Frequency of use of official sources of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Once every few months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The media</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific internet sites</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Government offices/ministries</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local community groups</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social accountability tools</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. How often do you use official information from the following sources?
The internet and colleagues are by far the most frequently used communications channels to access government information.

Q. What communication channels (e.g. publications, internet, etc.) do you access to obtain official government information?
Multiple stakeholders are accessed to provide feedback on development or progress on SA programs

Q. What stakeholders do you access to provide feedback on development or progress on your social accountability projects?

- NGOs: 82%
- Community: 78%
- Local government: 71%
- National Government: 67%
- Other: 22%
Communication processes
Summary: Communication Processes

- Receiving support from local community groups and the government are most important to practitioner social accountability work.

- Despite the importance of receiving support from the local community and the government – the ability of these two key groups to use program results is lacking – also of concern is the high level of resistance among government stakeholders.

- Across stakeholder groups – face-to-face and direct advocacy are viewed as the most effective influence tactics.

Q. What are the most important programs or policies to ensure that access to information remains open?
Receiving support from local community groups and the government are most important to practitioner social accountability work.

Q. Please rate the importance of receiving support from the following stakeholders in order for your social accountability work to be effective?

- Very important (5)
- Important (4)

- Local community groups: 76% Very important, 13% Important, 89% top two box
- Government: 76% Very important, 16% Important, 92% top two box
- NGO: 60% Very important, 22% Important, 82% top two box
- Media (e.g., Journalists): 51% Very important, 29% Important, 80% top two box
Despite the importance of receiving support from the local community and the government – the ability of these two key groups to use program results is lacking. Also of concern is the high level of resistance of government.

Communication Channels

- **Local Community**
  - Resistance to programs: 4%
  - General awareness of programs: 51%
  - Know how to use program results effectively: 20%
  - Know how to obtain support for programs: 4%
  - Don’t know: 20%

- **Government**
  - Resistance to programs: 2%
  - General awareness of programs: 44%
  - Know how to use program results effectively: 42%
  - Know how to obtain support for programs: 2%
  - Don’t know: 7%

- **NGO**
  - Resistance to programs: 18%
  - General awareness of programs: 42%
  - Know how to use program results effectively: 36%
  - Know how to obtain support for programs: 4%

- **Donors**
  - Resistance to programs: 11%
  - General awareness of programs: 33%
  - Know how to use program results effectively: 40%
  - Know how to obtain support for programs: 16%

Q. For each stakeholder group below, please select the option that best characterizes their reaction/relationship to social accountability programs?
In obtaining support among government stakeholders – practitioners found the face to face meetings and direct advocacy most successful.

**Government support tactics and strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tactic</th>
<th>Very effective (5)</th>
<th>Effective (4)</th>
<th>Did not use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct advocacy with community groups</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third party intervention/spokesperson/champion</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy through the media</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face meetings</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. In situations where support from important stakeholders was not forthcoming what tactics or strategies did you employ for each stakeholder group?
In obtaining support among NGO stakeholders – practitioners found the face-to-face meetings, advocacy through the media, and direct advocacy most successful.

**NGO support tactics and strategies**

- **Direct advocacy with community groups**
  - Very effective (5): 32%
  - Effective (4): 30%
  - Did not use: 18%

- **Third party intervention/spokesperson/champion**
  - Very effective (5): 14%
  - Effective (4): 25%
  - Did not use: 32%

- **Advocacy through the media**
  - Very effective (5): 34%
  - Effective (4): 32%
  - Did not use: 18%

- **Face to face meetings**
  - Very effective (5): 44%
  - Effective (4): 21%
  - Did not use: 12%

Q. In situations where support from important stakeholders was not forthcoming what tactics or strategies did you employ for each stakeholder group?
In obtaining support among local community stakeholders – practitioners found the face-to-face meetings and direct advocacy most successful.

### Local community support tactics and strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Did not use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct advocacy with community groups</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third party intervention/spokesperson/champion</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy through the media</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face meetings</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. In situations where support from important stakeholders was not forthcoming what tactics or strategies did you employ for each stakeholder group?
In obtaining support of donors – practitioners found the face-to-face meetings by far the most successful

Q. In situations where support from important stakeholders was not forthcoming what tactics or strategies did you employ for each stakeholder group?
Practitioners spend most of their time with stakeholders on program awareness, use of results, and obtaining program support – not surprisingly among government stakeholders practitioners spend more of their time addressing program resistance.

Q. For each stakeholder group below, please select the ways in which you have tried to influence their response/relationship to social accountability programs? (Select all that apply)

- Resistance to programs
- General awareness of programs
- How to use program results effectively
- How to obtain support for programs
- Don’t know
- NA
Public Opinion & Future of Social Accountability Programs
Summary: Public Opinion

• Practitioners universally agree that public opinion is key to effective social accountability mechanisms and achieving program goals

• A majority of practitioners have experienced a media program and/or intervention that has improved social accountability in their country

• Overall, practitioners are generally up-beat about their past work and are even more enthusiastic about the potential for social accountability programs in the future
Practitioners universally agree that public opinion is key to effective social accountability mechanisms and achieving program goals.

Q. In your opinion, how important is the role of public opinion in the effectiveness of social accountability mechanisms?/In your opinion, how important are the media in achieving the goals of your social accountability work?
A majority of practitioners have experienced a media program and/or intervention that has improved social accountability in their country...

Q. Can you recall an example of a media program and/or intervention over your professional career that you consider to have improved social accountability in the country you work?
Media program and/or intervention highlights

Respondent verbatims

- The use of community radio to sensitize local communities and local governments and to call for people’s participation in participatory budget forums
- Programs like 3rd Degree and Carte Blanche tend to carry [occasionally] scandalous exposes on inadequacies in public sector delivery. There does appear to be some level of impact in terms of putting fire under the respective departments
- Anti-corruption TV footages have helped create considerable awareness
- The production of a quarterly community newsletter by a group of NGOs that evaluates local government budgets and their implementation in the whole country. It has really enlightened local people and made them ask very important questions about the local government
- Publication of financial flows to local governments on a monthly basis in national newspapers

Q. Can you recall an example of a media program and/or intervention over your professional career that you consider to have improved social accountability in your country? If yes, please describe the media program and/or intervention.
Increased citizen involvement with the government and effective and efficient use of budgets were ranked most important to practitioners in improving social accountability programs in the future.

Q. Please rank the top 2 program components in order of importance (1=most important) to improving social accountability programs in the future.
Practitioners are generally up-beat about their past work and are even more enthusiastic about the potential for social accountability programs in the future.

Q. In the past 2 years would you say that social accountability programs in the country you work have gotten/In the next 2 years do you believe that social accountability programs in the country you work will get…

- Better: 68%
- Significantly better: 44%
- In the past 2 years: 84%
- In the next 2 years: 64%