WORKSHOP REPORT

Regional Learning Workshop on Social Accountability in West Africa

Mensvic Hotel, Accra, Ghana

20 – 23 February 2017
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary........................................................................................................................................... 2  
Introduction..................................................................................................................................................... 4  
1.0 Welcome and Opening Remarks........................................................................................................... 5  
2.0 Scaling-up Social Accountability in West Africa: Opportunities and Challenges .................. 6  
3.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Ghana & Guinea .................. 8  
4.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Senegal............................... 14  
5.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and Nige- ria.......................................................................................................................................................... 17  
6.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Nigeria.................................. 23  
7.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Sierra Leone and Liberia ...... 27  
8.0 Field Visit in Ningo-Prampram and Ho........................................................................................... 32  
9.0 Closing Remarks....................................................................................................................................... 32  
Annex 1: Pictures of field visits..................................................................................................................... 34  
Annex 2: Media Coverage............................................................................................................................. 35  
Annex 3: Agenda.............................................................................................................................................. 36  
Annex 4: List of participants.......................................................................................................................... 38
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In West Africa, there are numerous examples of how citizens and civil society groups hold their government, private sector actors and development partners accountable. However, these initiatives are often not known beyond the borders of the country where they are implemented. In response to this, the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) with the support of Ford Foundation and the Open Society Initiative (OSIWA) organised a regional learning workshop on social accountability that attracted civil society practitioners from 9 West African countries to share experiences and lessons from pioneering social accountability initiatives in their respective countries.

The overall objective of the learning workshop was to provide an opportunity for twenty-nine (29) civil society grant partners of Ford Foundation and OSIWA to learn from each other’s experiences. The learning programme was organised to provide a practical platform for the civil society organisations (CSOs) to better understand the mechanisms that have been utilised in the region, to exact public accountability through the active participation of ordinary citizens and civic groups. The learning exchange consisted of experience-sharing panels and field visits to beneficiary communities.

Participants were given the opportunity to present their various social accountability programmes highlighting on the specific activities, methodologies and challenges. Projects that were presented responded to the following issues: local governance, budget tracking, ICT, stakeholder’s engagement, campaign promises tracking, transparency, inclusive governance and investigative journalism.

Key lessons from the learning workshop and field visits are summarised under the following social accountability mechanisms:

**Participatory Planning Management and Decision Making**

- Citizens’ trust in government grows when they feel they have a say and participate in the planning and management of local governance;

- Citizens active participation ensures that marginalised and underserved groups are involved in the development of their communities;

- Citizen participation in development planning increases their involvement in the development of their districts specially the maintenance of infrastructure and facilities;

**Consultation**

- Government responds to citizens’ demands when advocacy led by those affected by the problem is backed by strong evidence;

- Broad based stakeholders’ engagement contributes to better-conceived and more effective and responsive policies, budgets and plans that are better adapted to their needs;
Transparency and ICT

- Technology, backed by the appropriate offline and online mechanisms, can effectively support citizens in their quest for political and social accountability;
- Demand making processes through various mainstream ICT and media platforms allows effective and efficient information collection, data analysis, knowledge management and information dissemination;
- The innovative utilisation of ICT allows for the amplification of citizens’ voice and diversity in the sector, mobilisation of allies and real time interactive platforms for citizen government engagement;

Participatory Procurement and Financial Management

- A conscious community citizen is more willing to fulfil their tax obligations and will also become an active player in public management at the grassroots level;

Social Monitoring and Audit

- Access to information enables citizens to effectively engage duty bearers and demand what they deserve;
- The contribution of citizens in the decision-making process helps duty bearers to make relevant and citizen oriented decisions;
- Improved civic engagement between duty bearers and citizens lead to an enhanced service delivery;
- Strategic utilisation of social and mainstream media enables citizens to effectively engage in the governance process;
- Building alliances and networking is paramount to social accountability.

Budget Transparency

- Empowered communities that understand fiscal governance strengths their engagement in the decision making to the benefit of all community members which in turn promotes accountability and transparency at the local level;
- A participatory budget promotes transparency and helps deal with corruption;

A key proposal that emanated from the workshop was the development of a social accountability in West Africa guidebook that will be used as a learning tool to scale up existing initiatives.
INTRODUCTION

Ford Foundation has an extensive history of providing support towards the sustainable development of West Africa. The Foundation has provided a significant amount of funding and technical support to promote democratic values and engage citizens in advocating for their social and economic rights. It has also funded improvements in governance with a focus on openness, and invested in efforts to address the root causes of poverty and inequality. Over the years, the Foundation’s work in West Africa has largely concentrated on improving democratic governance and citizen’s participation, particularly in Nigeria.

The Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) works through a unique combination of grant making, advocacy, partnership building and technical assistance in the region, by enabling itself to be an agenda-setter both within and alongside other organisations working on the ground. Over the years, OSIWA has invested substantially in strengthening natural resource management frameworks; in supporting alternative ICT and arts-based means for anti-corruption enforcement; and in enhancing citizens’ social demands for accountability and effectiveness in public service delivery, especially in the health and education sectors.

In a bid to reinforce the effectiveness of their grant partners that are engaged in promoting social accountability in the region, OSIWA and Ford Foundation partnered with the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), the leading civil society capacity development institution in the region, to coordinate a learning programme to enrich the competencies of their grant partners in West Africa.

Workshop objectives

The overall objective of the learning workshop was to provide an opportunity for twenty-nine (29) civil society grant partners of Ford Foundation and OSIWA, from 9 West African countries, to learn from each other’s experiences. The learning programme was organised to provide a practical platform for the civil society organisations (CSOs) to better understand the mechanisms that have been utilised in the region, to exact public accountability through the active participation of ordinary citizens and civic groups. The learning exchange consisted of experience-sharing panels and field visits to beneficiary communities.

The specific objectives of the learning programme were to:

- Reinforce learning and experience-sharing between OSIWA and Ford Foundation grant partners based in West Africa, and document best practices in citizen engagement in governance processes;
- Enhance the capacities of the participating organisations to contribute to pro-poor budget planning and to monitor public spending;
- Strengthen the capacities of the participating organisations to monitor government development projects and increase the use of citizen-generated information to promote accountability;
- Enhance the participating organisations’ practical experience of social audit processes in West Africa; and
- Form a basis for the development of a case study publication on a range of social accountability principles in the region.
1.0 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. Charles Vandyck, Head of Capacity Development, WACSI

Mr. Vandyck began by welcoming all the participants to the workshop and to Ghana. He explained WACSI’s motivation to host such a platform, which brought together more than 30 participants from 9 West African countries with the aim of sharing and learning lessons on social accountability from the region. Furthermore, he explained that the workshop’s structure would facilitate participation, sharing and learning, while simultaneously promoting in-country and cross-border collaboration.

Additionally, Mr. Vandyck emphasised that it is only through active citizen engagement that West African governments can be held accountable to foster sustainable development. Lastly, Mr. Vandyck took the opportunity to thank Ford Foundation and OSIWA for their continuous support towards an effective, engaged and influential civil society in West Africa.

Ms. Eva Kouka, Ford Foundation

Ms. Kouka welcomed all participants as well as the organising partners, and extended the salutations of the representative of Ford Foundation West Africa, Innocent Chukwuma.

Ms. Kouka continued by sharing Ford Foundation’s focus on challenging inequality in all its forms. She reiterated on the five (5) main drivers of inequality, one of which centres on the unequal access to government including both decision-making and resources. She highlighted on the importance for citizens to value their capacity to influence decision-making processes and for governments to be responsive and accountable to their populations.

Ms. Kouka stated that the event is to facilitate sharing of experiences and to increase the understanding on how social accountability tools can be used to improve service delivery in West Africa. In this light, she shared that participation is key to understanding how we can continue to improve on social accountability tools and initiatives.

Furthermore, Ms Kouka shared that she has learned a tremendous amount through her various trips to Ghana and hopes to continue such learning during the workshop. She confirmed that the main goal in the next few days is to promote learning between participating organisations as well as partners such as Ford Foundation, OSIWA and WACSI.

Lastly, Ms Kouka encouraged all participants to actively engage to ensure a fruitful workshop.

Dr. Ibrahima Aidara, OSIWA

On behalf of OSIWA and others colleagues present at the workshop, Dr. Aidara thanked all the partners for making time to share their experiences and to learn from others. Dr. Aidara further thanked WACSI for organising the event and Ford Foundation for their partnership.

Dr. Aidara proceeded by sharing that democracy in West Africa is under the threat of bad governance, corruption and rising non-inclusive policies. He stated that while statistics show a general increase in wealth, poverty and inequality continue to grow rapidly, which means that West Africa’s democracy is not providing dividends to its citizens.
Dr. Aidara then explained that OSIWA believes in supporting citizen engagement and participation in decision-making to enhance participation in monitoring and implementation processes. As such, OSIWA has promoted and supported partners to effectively engage West African governments for increased social accountability in the region.

Dr. Aidara concluded by sharing that this workshop would be an opportunity for participants and partners to learn from each other, including their successes and failures. Furthermore, he stated that the workshop would present a platform to strengthen West African citizens’ capacity to influence decision-making processes.

2.0 Scaling-up Social Accountability in West Africa: Opportunities and Challenges (Udo Jude Ilo, OSIWA)

Jude Ilo began the presentation portraying the development and political realities of West Africa characterized by poor infrastructure and education system, electricity crises, broken campaign promises among others. He emphasized on the critical issue of resource mismanagement.

He reiterated that West African governments are still unable to provide basic care and essential social services for citizens. Jude Ilo further stated that, the inability of the State to fulfil its side of the bargain shows that governments in the region generally function for themselves, by themselves, without any respect of citizens.

Mr. Ilo also highlighted that West Africans coexist in an environment in which the government is often interested in benefitting itself rather than its citizens. Therefore, incumbent as well as newly elected governments continue to kill the hopes of populations across the region. He stated that in this context, the concept of social accountability is not only important, it is essential.

Following the aforementioned situation, Mr. Ilo argued that civil society has a key role to play in ensuring that state resources are properly used and effectively shared among citizens rather than by a small percentage of the population. He further argued that civil society stands at the nexus of government and the people, and it is uniquely placed to represent and amplify the voice of the voiceless as depicted in the picture below.

![Civil Society at the nexus of Citizens, Private sector and Government](image-url)
Mr. Ilo explained that social accountability falls right within the mandate of civil society by bringing communities together to voice their concerns to drive social sustainable development.

Mr. Ilo added that if social accountability is not scaled up to all West African countries, governments would not serve their citizens. He continued to highlight formal and traditional mechanisms of ensuring accountability in the form of various processes such as village women coming together to discuss better access to health care, parent associations meeting to check on school budgets and discuss the quality of education, communities holding information-sharing meetings to discuss government procedures, among others (see pictures below).

![Fig 2: Traditional mechanisms for accountability](image)

On the other hand, formal mechanisms of ensuring accountability centre on mobilisation, engagement and information-sharing. The latter is especially crucial in this era of information which can be easily shared with a wide audience. Governments, at times, use such tools to present a picture of its actions that does not align with reality on the ground. Therefore, the onus is on citizens and civic groups to organise and ensure citizens’ have access to information, the right information to know what they deserve.

Then, civic engagement follows as a natural step as once citizens are properly informed, they can effectively engage duty bearers to demand what they deserve.

Nonetheless, Mr. Ilo’s presentation highlighted that many challenges arise in the context of driving social accountability forward. Citizens’ apathy towards government actions, for example, presents a major challenge. Mr. Ilo stated that this is only normal in a context where most people have lived their lives knowing that government is completely useless to their lives.

However, citizens should not be deterred. He stated that they must make deliberate efforts to reach out to government officials. For such efforts to yield fruition, each citizen must be properly informed.

Another challenge he presented is the repressive nature of certain states which simply do not allow room for effective citizen engagement. Across the region, states’ use of force to stop dissenting voices are common. Governments continue to find creative ways to make organising impossible for citizens. A vivid example of such repression is the blackout of internet services experienced by many nations in times of elections or national uprisings.
Another key challenge is the access to and availability of resources to drive social accountability initiatives forward. Mr. Ilo explained that such initiatives are not economical and they require long-term commitment, investment and funds. Furthermore, the fact that not all groups are formal can make the support of their initiatives a difficult process. Although social accountability is not about money, resources play a key role and continue to be a challenge.

Lastly, Mr. Ilo stated social accountability processes, mechanisms and initiatives require time and patience. He explained that leveraging support from donor communities for long-term investments continues to be a challenge, as funders usually seek quick impact results.

To conclude, Mr. Ilo presented opportunities and next steps for increased social accountability. First, long term commitment is crucial as a means of saving lives and protecting communities.

Secondly, Mr. Ilo urged the participants to build on existing structures and leverage traditional models of social accountability. Building on structures such as community and religious groups as well as other interest groups such as business communities that can help sustain the momentum. Additionally, investing in civic education on a long-term basis and strengthening access to information through practical grassroots means of information sharing such as music, art and folklore, can prove to be efficient social accountability methods.

Mr. Ilo concluded the presentation by encouraging participants to focus on the interests of the communities in which they work and to build networks across religious divides, states and communities.

### 3.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Ghana & Guinea

**Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) – Ghana**

In the quest to promote transparency and accountability in local governance, GACC conducted research on the subject matter, which revealed on the one hand, a poor capacity to engage and distrust between assembly members and civil society at the local level; on the other hand, a drive for transparency and participation concentrated at the national level.

In this context, GACC set up a citizen initiative network known as the Local Accountability Networks (LANets) to promote transparency and accountability by increasing citizens’ participation in local level governance to improve service delivery and development.

LANets are formed out of functioning local level citizen groups within a district, depending on the district, LANets consists of representatives from:

- Local CSOs and CBOs;
- Women’s groups;
- Persons with Disability (PWD) groups;
- Religious groups (both Christians and Muslims);
- Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU);
- Youth Groups;
- Opinion/Traditional leaders;
- Dressmakers’ Associations;
- Artisans’ Associations;
- Market Women’s Associations; and
- The Media.
LANets’ members have been trained on Ghana’s local government system, social accountability, evidence gathering and communication of results. One of the main tools of the network is the LANets’ Action plan, which comprises of selected development and service delivery projects being undertaken by the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). The action plan also has a tracking template to gather baseline data and monitor development projects.

A key result that has emanated from this initiative is the improved trust and openness for partnership building among duty bearers and citizens. In addition, there is increased citizens’ demand for improved service delivery in the selected districts.

**Penplusbytes – Ghana**

Penplusbytes initiated a two-year social accountability project christened ‘*Tech Driven Social Accountability*’ in a bid to address the lack of digital tools that facilitate citizen-driven accountability and participatory monitoring of public services delivery, as well as the deficiency of quick and ready to access information on social interventions, project expenditure and programmes. The project aims to empower citizens to demand accountability from elected officials in public service delivery using new digital tools. As highlighted in the picture below, the project aims to equip citizens with usable information through online¹, offline² and mobile-based platforms for active engagement in policy implementation and accountability demand.³ In summary, the platform helps incite citizens’ feedback and active engagement with duty-bearers to demand for better service delivery and to advocate for alternative, more suitable policies.

![Fig 3: Tech-Driven Social Accountability for Results Framework](image_url)

---

1 [www.platformafrica.net](http://www.platformafrica.net)
2 Community Monitoring Group
3 [www.platformafrica.net](http://www.platformafrica.net)
A key achievement of the project is the establishment of a robust online platform (www.platformafrica.net) and an offline infrastructure (Community Monitoring Group). In addition, the project has built a strong working relationship between citizens and duty bearers, especially at the local level. The project has also directly connected over 1000 citizens to local governance systems.

This project highlighted a key lesson that technology, backed by the appropriate offline mechanism, can effectively support citizens in their quest for political and social accountability.

**IMANI Centre for Policy and Education (IMANI Africa) – Ghana**

IMANI Africa deployed several advocacy and research tools known as IMANIFesto. The IMANIFesto initiative is created to analyse campaign promises as well as ascertain their rate of execution. The tools assess campaign promises using a coding system comprised of quantitative indicators.

The overall objective of IMANIFesto is to advance sound policy response to socio-economic problems through manifesto analysis and tracking. The specific objectives are to:

- Produce data and evidence that help parties to make informed campaign promises;
- Empower citizens with information that inform their political choices;
- Promote issues-based elections to strengthen the democratisation process; and
- Keep the political system (and government) accountable to the citizens.

The main tool of the initiative is the scientific methodological framework, which uses government official documents and parties’ official statements (manifestos & press releases) as yardsticks or reference documents upon which campaign promises are assessed.

The approaches include holding data validation workshops with stakeholders, and consultative meetings with political parties. After that, an open forum is organised to publicize research findings and advance advocacy efforts.

IMANIFesto Initiative has broadened citizens’ participation in the electoral process to influence the process of manifesto formulation. Most importantly, the initiative has expanded political discussions on social policy issues such as gender, children and social protection, health, agriculture, water and sanitation, among others. Beyond citizens, IMANIFesto has also helped political parties to make informed promises that are trackable, feasible and sound.

**Voice Ghana – Ghana**

Voice Ghana is an NGO managed for and by Persons With Disability (PWDs). Voice Ghana seeks to improve through capacity development and partnerships the lives of people with disabilities at the grassroots level to enable them to take charge of their lives and to achieve their true potential. In line with its agenda, Voice Ghana initiated in 2014 a project on inclusive governance.

The overall objective of the project was to ensure active civic engagement and inclusive participation of people with disabilities in local governance and political activities at the grassroots level in Ghana.

Voice Ghana organised several community meetings (as captured in the pictures below) to build PWDs’ skills in advocacy for their rights and participation in their District Assemblies’ public hearing processes. The meetings were also designed to equip PWDs with the skills to be able to demand their fair share in pro-poor packages.
These efforts have led to an increase in PWDs’ knowledge of district assembly and local governance systems. Furthermore, there has been an increase in PWDs’ participation in public hearing sessions and town hall meetings, to generate community development agendas.

One of the major outcomes of the project is the collation of development priorities from PWDs designed to inform their respective district assemblies Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) and budgets. To further strengthen the collaboration, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was established between PWDs group and district assembly to effectively incorporate the highlighted development priorities of PWDs.

As an unintended result, 36 PWDs from Volta, Central and Western Regions of Ghana were encouraged and supported to contest in the 2015 District Assembly (DA) level elections. Fourteen (14) of them, comprising of 11 males and 3 females won the elections as Unit Committee Members in their respective localities.

**Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana) – Ghana**

Founded in 1998, the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit research and advocacy institute dedicated to the promotion of democracy, good governance and economic openness throughout Ghana and the African continent.

CDD-Ghana’s social accountability programs are informed by deficits in:
- Governmental transparency and accountability;
- Citizens’ constructive engagement with duty bearers;
- Inclusiveness in decision-making process;
- Equitable distribution of resource and developmental programs;
- Effectiveness and responsiveness in public administration; and
- Delivery of pro-poor social services at all levels of governance.

CDD presented a 4-year initiative implemented in 20 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) across the country. The Project sought to strengthen voice and space for engagement, feedback and dialogue within the budget process of local authorities by building on existing structures.
The overall objective of the project is to work with policy makers and key stakeholders at local and national levels to promote fiscal transparency, participation and accountability in local governments in Ghana.

The tools and approaches include budget forum platforms for local level dialogue between citizens and duty bearers at local government levels, through town hall meetings. Additionally, feedback and evidence materials from the project were used to inform policy reforms via the project steering committee.

The main results emanated from this project include an improved civic and democratic space for dialogue and engagement, particularly between service providers and citizens. Additionally, the project has led to an enhanced service delivery through feedback from citizens into policy planning and programming of government.

SEND Ghana – Ghana

SEND’s response following Ghana’s eligibility for the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and the defining niche for Civil Society Activism in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) led to the development of (1) participatory monitoring and evaluation network and (2) participatory monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor the utilisation of debt relief.

The framework’s phases include policy literature (reduced into term easily understood by non-technical citizens), research (social accountability tools), policy advocacy, and responsiveness.

Communication is mainstreamed through all these levels as the organisation works with media and community radios broadcasting in different languages.

The participatory monitoring and evaluation network resulted in the grassroots mobilisation of non-state and development of a District Citizens Monitoring Committees (DCMCs) in 70 districts across 8 regions in Ghana.

The participatory monitoring and evaluation framework strategies include:

- Formation of Citizens groups
- Partnership building (MoUs)
- Mainstreaming media
- Building capacities on budget Monitoring/advocacy and key cross cutting sector at both national and district levels.

Based on its experience in social accountability, SEND believes that government responsiveness to citizens’ demands is positive if evidence is strong and backed by broad-based citizen groups, with the involvement of those affected by the problem. Another lesson learned is that demand-making process through various mainstream ICT and media platforms has a multiplier effect. It allows the multiplication of CSOs’ capacity for:

- Effective and efficient information collection, data analysis, knowledge management and information dissemination;
- Amplification of citizens’ voice and diversity in the sector;
- Mobilisation of allies; and
- Real time interactive platform for citizen government engagement.
Lastly, this project revealed that building allies and networks along the way is paramount to social accountability activities.

**ABLOGUI – Guinea**

ABLOGUI is the Association of Guinea Bloggers and Web Activists. The association came into existence in August 2011 and is comprised of more than 60 members based in Guinea and in the diaspora.

During its six (6) years of existence, ABLOGUI has initiated many online campaigns including:
- #GuineeVote: Platform for election observation
- #DroitALIdentité: Citizen campaign to request for better service delivery (National ID Card)
- #MontronsNosRoutes: Campaign to raise awareness of the bad state of roads in the country
- #Lahidi: Platform to analyse and track electoral promises as well as ascertain their rate of execution.

ABLOGUI was actively involved through their platform for election observation in the 2015 Presidential elections in Guinea which ended with the victory of the incumbent, Alpha Conde. Following the elections, ABLOGUI shifted its engagement from election observation to promise tracking under the auspices of the Lahidi project.

Lahidi is an online platform, which makes available in a digestible format, all the promises made by President Alpha Conde during the presidential election as well as their rate of execution. The overall objective of the project is to keep government accountable to the citizens. The project’s first evaluation revealed that the president had only fulfilled a few percentage promises. For example, tourism sector, 22% of promises had been fulfilled.
The project has successfully increased citizens’ and the media’s participation in the national development process. Taking into cognisance the success of the Lahidi project, ABLOGUI is currently envisaging to update the platform with additional promises (not only campaign promises) made by the President that remain of high interest to the population.

**Plateforme nationale des Citoyens Unis pour le Développement (PCUD) – Guinea**

The Plateforme nationale des Citoyens Unis pour le Développement (PCUD) represents a significant number of civil society organisations in Guinea working both at the national and local levels. The main project presented focused on the process of setting up a watchdog committee (network) in Guinea to improve public service delivery through citizen participation. More specifically, the project aimed to strengthen citizens’ capacity to influence decision-making processes and to effectively contribute to pro-poor budget planning and the monitoring of public spending.

The project’s main asset is its use of ICT to ensure social accountability. An email server was as well as a Facebook page was set up facilitating information sharing among the network members. Information including reports, data collection and reports of corruption acts from community members were also shared via SMS and were responded to by service providers. As such, information received was timely and could be responded to within days. Other more complex issues were escalated to the policy level, which is a process that could take months or years.

Nonetheless, the fact that instant responses to issues were not always possible presented a key challenge for beneficiaries. In time, it is hoped that duty bearers will put in place mechanisms that will allow for a quick response to the issues brought up by community members. A key achievement of the project is the increased awareness and engagement of citizens on social accountability related issues. Furthermore, a community member filmed a policeman taking a bribe from a Taxi driver. The video was widely shared and helped shed light on the corruption that is embedded in the law enforcement sector.4

**4.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Senegal**

**Forum Civil**

In Senegal, Law n° 2013-10 of 28 December clearly lists citizen participation and decentralization as key principles of local development. However, the law does not clarify what constitutes the term citizen participation. On the basis on such discrepancies, Forum Civil developed in 2008, a metric to gauge citizen participation in local governance. Forum Civil is Transparency International’s local chapter in Senegal. The tool is called citizen certification. It is a citation of constructive appreciation and assessment of local governance performance. The overall objective of the initiative is to promote good governance at the local level in the 557 districts of Senegal.

Using the good governance principles handbook developed to that effect, Forum Civil assesses a selected district’s governance through key defined indicators. These indicators include citizen participation (town hall meeting, participative budget etc.), transparency, efficiency, women’s empowerment, rate of execution of the annual plan, local resource mobilisation, accountability and procurement, etc.

---

A rating system is used to calculate the degree of performance of each district under the defined indicators. Considerations related to and possible treatments of overall district performances are:

- For an overall performance within 85% – 100% (Gold certification): Good governance is a reality to be sustained in the district;
- For an overall performance within 65% - 84% (Silver certification): Good governance has begun to materialize in the district;
- For an overall performance within 50% – 64% (Bronze certification): Good governance is something that need to be materialized in the district;
- For an overall performance within 0% – 49% (Prize of encouragement): Greater attention needs to be given to good governance in the district.

As an incentive to encourage the promotion of good governance at the local level, Forum Civil advocates for an increase in the central government’s allocation to the districts that score a good performance.

The citizen certification initiative has increased good governance (through best practices) and citizen participation at the local level. Citizens are also becoming more and more involved in the development of their districts.

**COSYDEP**

COSYDEP works to promote quality, free, inclusive and accessible education for all in Senegal. COSYDEP’s initiative to ensure social accountability focuses on ensuring a participative process in the budgeting for education in Senegal. The project seeks to promote operational strategies for accountability and build the capacity of key stakeholders for greater transparency and effectiveness of public expenditure on education.

To achieve that, COSYDEP organised a series of training workshops to strengthen civil society actors’ capacity to analyse and track budgets, for effective citizen participation in the planning and implementation of the education budget.

Many tools have been developed by COSYDEP for budget analysis. Yet, the tool emphasized is the formulation of alternative and quarterly reports to highlight issues that have been neglected or misrepresented in government reports. Citizens use these reports for targeted and effective advocacy on education related policies.

COSYDEP’s efforts have increased citizens’ knowledge of budget tracking and analysis. Citizens are informed on the use of resources allocated to the education sector. In response, citizens are now more concerned and strongly involved in the management of schools’ infrastructure and facilities.

**CICODEV-Africa**

In April 2001, the African Union countries met in Abuja (Nigeria) and pledged to set a target of allocating at least 15% of their annual budget to improve Africa’s health sector. It is known as the Abuja declaration. However, 6 years after the declaration was made, Senegal like many other countries in Africa, has not reached the set target.\(^5\)

Like the Abuja declaration, other public health related policies are not fully implemented in Senegal. In addition, only 20% of Senegal’s population has access to Universal Health Care (UHC) services. This clearly explains the great inequality in terms of access to basic services that is rampant in the country.

Within this context and following the launch of the UHC in 2003, CICODEV embarked on its social mobilisation for access to health project. The main objective of the project is to advocate for an adequate funding of health services and for sustainability of the UHC to ensure a fair and equitable access to health for poor and marginalised citizens.

More specifically, the project aims to raise awareness of the UHC among Senegalese citizens and to advocate for a law on universal health care for all.6

One of the key initiatives undertaken by CICODEV was the formulation of quarterly, evidence-based progress reports on UHC that are used for advocacy towards UHC laws. Many public forum meetings were organised to raise awareness on the UHC as well as an online platform developed to encourage citizens to register.

These efforts have led to government opening many registration agencies across the country. The number of registered persons has increased from 20% to 57% in 2016. Another key achievement is the draft law on UHC that has yet to be enacted. In addition, the budget allocated to the minister of health has seen an increase of 32% from 2013 to 2017.

**ONG-3D**

The presentation delivered by the representative of ONG-3D was on *Sunu Budget*. A project being implemented by ONG-3D to respond appropriately and effectively to the growing demand for budget information, participation and accountability.

---

6 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQSjMyQLZxk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQSjMyQLZxk)
Beginning in 2012, there was a sound legal and institutional environment for transparency and citizen participation in the management of public resources (budgets mainly). However, on the 'demand' side, some challenges were still being noted in terms of transparency, participation and accountability.

With respect to transparency for example, there was no law on the freedom of information. Furthermore, budget documents were published with serious delays, there was weak monitoring of public spending as well as public procurement processes.

Under participation and accountability, there were no avenues for civil society’s participation in the budget process as civil society organisations were only allowed in budget orientation debates as observers.

In response to that, ONG - 3D designed SUNU Budget to support governments in making budget information accessible (physically and intellectually). SUNU Budget was also designed to enforce effective citizen budget monitoring mechanisms while creating functional citizen budget participation frameworks.

ONG-3D set up multi-stakeholders’ committee of CSOs on budget monitoring frameworks. The CSOs are classified per component based on their expertise. Thus, actions regarding the national budget are led by a coalition called CONASUB, those related to education are led by COSYDEP. In addition, ONG-3D also engaged the academia to build evidence from research and budget analysis to ensure effective citizen participation and accountability.

The key achievements recorded include:
- A guide on “how to improve Open Budget Index” available to duty bearers who have taken actions to improve their practices: CSOs are now informed throughout the budget process;
- Civil society coalitions trained and actively involved in budget tracking;
- Draft of freedom of information act is available and is expected to be enacted in 2017;
- Quarterly meetings between government (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Good Governance, Parliament and Court of Auditors) and CSOs to discuss budget implementation;
- Civil society regularly produces memos to share its view and make recommendations on the budget implementation process etc.

5.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Benin, Cote d’Ivoire and Niger

Social Justice - Cote d’Ivoire

Cote d’Ivoire is Africa's fastest growing economy in 2016, with a phenomenal growth rate of 9%. However, as highlighted in the National Development Plan (2012 – 2015), Cote d’Ivoire is still a developing country with 46% of the population languishing in poverty and poor infrastructures across the country. The poverty rate in the rural areas is more than 56%. To cope with the inequalities in terms of wealth distribution, the central government enacted the decentralisation law to facilitate an effective and efficient distribution of the growth across the population. According to law no. 2012-1128 of 13 December 2012 on the functioning of districts and regional authorities, the local authorities are solely responsible of the development of their communities through an inclusive decision making process.
Unfortunately, the inclusive development remains a myth and bad governance continues to be the hallmark of local authorities.

Within this context, Social Justice embarked on two projects aimed at promoting and strengthening participatory local governance to create the necessary conditions for sustainable and inclusive local development. The overall objective was to promote social dialogue for transparency and better use of resources to achieve sustainable local development.

Three approaches were used to achieve the objective including capacity building and sensitisation of the marginalised communities (women, youth, PWD etc.) on the importance of being involved in decision-making processes.

Fig 7: capacity building and community meeting

The second approach was setting up a watchdog committee that demands accountability and transparency from the duty bearers and engages them in the designing of the local development plan while the last approach included communication through community radio. Social justice uses channels such as local radio stations to disseminate good governance and accountability principles through a guidebook developed for citizens.
As result of all these efforts, the capacities of the population, local authorities and the media on the concepts of participatory governance and accountability have been strengthened. Another key achievement is the involvement of local media (as pressure groups) in the promotion of good governance, transparency and better public service delivery at the local level. Finally, citizens are now active actors in the development of their districts through constant dialogue with duty bearers.

**SOS Civisme – Niger**

SOS Civisme’s work on social accountability focuses on assessing social accountability projects and tracking the achievement of the MDGs. In addition, SOS Civisme strengthens the capacity of CSOs on social accountability.

From 2005 – 2007, UNDP and SNV implemented a project that aimed to strengthen the capacity of duty bearers, civil society practitioners and private sector actors towards the achievement of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) /MDGs in Niger. Another expected outcome of the project was the development of social accountability principles guidebook and the formulation of alternative reports on the PRSP /MDGs by civil society.

At the end of the project, SOS Civisme was chosen by the implementing partners to assess the impact of the project. The assessment revealed that district development plans were aligned with the MDGs. The project has also strengthened the capacity of local authorities on citizen participation.

Some of the concerns raised by the assessment include poor knowledge of Niger’s CSOs on social accountability concepts and principles. Additionally, the non-existence of a representative and committed civil society body, designed to produce the alternative report on the monitoring of the PRSP /MDGs.

Subsequent to that, another project was initiated to address the aforementioned shortcomings. Key CSOs were selected based on their expertise related to the 8 MDGs to produce alternative reports on the achievements of the MDGs, as captured in the pictures below.
The 8 sectorial reports put together by the selected CSOs were then compiled into one report and these reports have served as the basis for advocacy towards the achievement of the MDGs in Niger.

Furthermore, about four workshop trainings on social accountability concepts and principles were organised for the CSOs using the participative planning budget and public spending level guidebook.
CONGAFEN – Niger

The exclusion of women and vulnerable groups from decision-making at the political level, especially the local level, and their lack of access to the benefits of development is the hallmark of Niger. The affirmative law quota of 10% has not been fulfilled. Within this context, CONGAFEN designed a project to strengthen women’s participation in the political sphere to promote inclusive development.

Through the project, CONGAFEN seeks to make women aware of their importance and key role in decision-making processes. Several advocacy actions were undertaken by CONGAFEN for the respect of the 10% quota.

Live debates on TV and Radio stations were organised by CONGAFEN, as well as formulation of alternative reports. Social media platforms have also been actively used by CONGAFEN to raise awareness on the subject matter.

Two other projects have been initiated by CONGAFEN. The first project aims to promote girls’ enrolment in school, while the second seeks to improve Nigerien women’s reproductive health.

As a result, of the first project, the enrolment of girls in school has significantly increased while the rate of dropout has decreased. With regards to the second project, the mid-term assessment has revealed that participating women are now more knowledgeable of the importance of pre- and post-natal consultations, birth spacing, and sexual and reproductive education.

Social Watch- Benin

The presentation expatiated on a tool used in Benin to analyse the effects and impacts of service delivery by the public sector on the standard of living of citizens at the local level. The tool is called Participatory Local Impact Monitoring (SILP).

The tool involved various stakeholders to track the use of financial, material and human resources allocated to a specified public service delivery. SILP also assesses the performance of the public offices involved in the provision of those services. When necessary, corrective measures are recommended to deal with dysfunctions and deficits observed.

The overall goal of the initiative is to ensure a strong involvement of citizens in the monitoring and control of public spending for improved living conditions of citizens, through relevant and effective public service delivery.

SILP’s approaches involved:
  o Mapping various of the sectors;
  o Monograph;
  o Tracking of resources;
  o Initial assessment of the public-sector services delivery;
  o Implementation of action plans; and
  o Releasing of the results.

An assessment of the health centres across the various districts in Benin through the SILP tool revealed a lack of hospitals in some districts, lack of qualified health personnel (picture below), lack of adequate materials and inadequate health facilities, etc. The assessment also showcases the quality of service delivery and the working environment.
At the end of the assessment, the following recommendations were directed to the ministry of health (government), district assemblies and health personnel:

The ministry of health and district assemblies should:
- Equip all districts of Benin with a health centre;
- Equip the health centres with sufficient and qualified staff;
- Provide each health centre with an ambulance;
- Improve the supply chains of medicines to health centres to avoid frequent shortages;
- Equip each district health centre with vehicles (cars and motorbikes);
- Allow health centres to directly recruit qualified staff when they can afford it.

The district health centres personnel should:
- Put in place effective measures to fight corruption in the health sector;
- Enforcing the principle of separation of duties between pharmacy clerk and cashier;
- Refrain from strikes without a minimum service in the health centres.

**Promotion Jeunesse Unie pour le Développement (PJUD - BENIN ONG)**

Following the decentralisation that took place in Benin in 2002, the districts were called upon to boost development at the grassroots level as a prelude to the development of the entire nation. However, the young decentralized entities have been facing challenges of good governance and mobilisation of resources, especially financial.

The central government does not respect target of at least 15% of the state budget to be allocated to the districts. For example, only 3.1% of the national budget was transferred to the decentralized entities in 2015.
Therefore, the districts had to rely on their own strengths. Unfortunately, the efforts and strategies to mobilise their resources have yet to be improved. The Local Development Tax (TDL) is not within the habits of local populations.

Within that context, PJUD conducted a pilot study on the effectiveness of the mobilisation of internally generated funds in a selected district. The result was alarming, the study revealed that the district does not even mobilise one-third of its own resources.

After that, PJUD, initiated a project aimed at increasing the district’s internally-generated funds by at least 30%, to ensure local development at the grass-roots level and to strengthen the fight against corruption.

The citizens were highly involved and educated on the importance of internally generated funds for the development of their districts. The approaches include community meetings, public forum discussions, awareness sessions, optimisation of the new communication tools, etc.7

As shown in the pictures below, the key actions taken by PJUD include the opening of 10 single desks equipped with computers in 10-selected district. In addition, 10 boards with tariff of the district assembly services were also installed in the selected districts.

These efforts led to an increase in internally-generated funds within the selected districts as citizens are now more willing to pay their taxes. Eventually, a citizen conscious of his/her rights and duties will become an active player in public management at the grassroots level. In the long run, it is envisaged that the project would create a new type of active citizen, one that constantly promotes accountability.

6.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Nigeria

Community Life Project

Every year, massive funds meant for providing services to citizens in Nigeria end up in private pockets. Transparency International rated Nigeria one of the highly corrupt nations in 2012 with a score of 27. The World Bank estimates that over $400 billion dollars of oil money has been stolen from Nigeria since 1960.

7 https://youtu.be/5IVay7Y4Qws
In 2012, Nigeria made over $100 billion dollars from oil export, much of which could not be accounted for. As a direct result, 61% of Nigerians have become impoverished and lack access to basic services. Over a 100 million Nigerians live on less than $2 dollars a day; 63 million have no access to affordable shelter; 63.6% of the population lack access to portable water and only 32% have access to good sanitation.⁸

In response to this discrepancy, Community Life Project empowers grassroots people and communities to hold government accountable by equipping them with necessary knowledge and skills. The strategies include participatory budgeting training for grassroots community leaders and local government officials to increase popular demand for public accountability in governance through citizen action and Strengthen democratic governance.

Following that, community members are more involved and participate actively in the monitoring and execution of projects in their community. In addition, access to water, roads, electricity, and ICT tools, education have improved.

As lessons learnt, it is believed that when more and more citizens and grassroots leaders become, enlightened and can hold their elected officials accountable, it reduces corruption and misuse of public funds. A participatory budget brings transparency and deals with corruption. In addition, civic education helps citizens to understand that access to good infrastructure and increased development are their rights.

**International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR)**

The ICIR is an independent, non-profit news agency that seeks to promote transparency and accountability through robust and objective investigative reporting. The ICIR’s mission is to promote good governance and entrench democratic values by reporting, exposing, and combating corruption.

With support from Ford Foundation, ICIR has been building the capacity and providing mentorship to newsrooms and journalists in critical investigation to effectively carry out their missions. In addition, ICIR provides small grants to journalists to do investigative report that exposes, fights and reduces corruption and impunity in the public space.

---

The successes of these efforts are reflected in the quality of the news and journalistic articles seen in Nigeria. Journalists' capacity to raise the issue of corruption has only been possible through the strong, collaborative relationships ICIR has developed with CSOs.

**Social Action**

Nigeria's Niger Delta is a region of abundance in terms of natural resources. The region has some of the richest sub-national governments (Niger Delta Development Commission, Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs) with 13% of the oil derivation revenues allocated to the region.

However, Niger Delta is known as a region in crisis, which was ravaged by conflict until recently. Poor education and health ratings, high levels of poverty and destitution, anarchy and underdevelopment are the hallmarks of the Niger Delta.

Unfortunately, this situation is not driven by lack of resources but rather, by the way in which State resources and local governments are managed. A management characterised by:

- Lack of Transparency
- Lack of Accountability,
- Lack of citizens’ awareness and participation,
- Lack of access to fiscal documents
- Neglect of key and critical sectors in budgets, etc.
- Very poor fiscal processes

Mindful that the issue of Niger Delta was not an issue of lack of resources but resources failing the reach the citizens, Social Action came out with a budget tracking process through an initiative called campaigning for open budgets and accountability in Nigeria’s Niger Delta Region.

The strategic approaches include capacity building, creating awareness, generating evidence, and collaborating with the government, building networks, community budget advocacy, creating an open budget movement, among others.\(^9\)

Through Social Action interventions abandoned projects are now completed, government priorities are straightened. Furthermore, there is an increased account in the governance at the local level.

Another key result is the increased collaboration between government and citizens. Citizens are more knowledgeable of fiscal governance, which in turn has improved their engagement in the Niger Delta's governance processes, for the benefit of every citizen.

**Reboot**

Reboot works with governments, foundations, and civil society to effectively support the government. Reboot is dedicated to inclusive development and accountability in governance. It supports local organizations in partnering with government more effectively through:

- Empowering local partners to lead the way;
- Building capability through shoulder-to-shoulder collaboration;
- Defining strategy based on in-depth contextual research;
- Engaging government institutions and media as long-term partners;

Adapting to leverage emerging contextual and project realities; and
Building social accountability mechanisms into existing institutional processes.

Reboot and its partners of Nigeria and Ghana have initiated some innovative engagement with government such as building open government capacity within State Ministries and Institutionalizing citizen feedback into Public Service Delivery Providers.

Based on Reboot's experience from working with CSOs in West Africa, some of the key strategies to make accountability program successful include having original evidence, amplifying the reach through media (partner with media), and putting citizen at the centre.

**BudgIT**

BudgIT believes it is the right of every citizen to have access and understand public budgets. Therefore, BudgIT works to make budgets easily understandable to everyone. So far, BudgIT has reached at least 1,112,500 citizens in Nigeria.

To address the lack of civic inclusion in the development of projects, which has led to an increased number of abandoned public projects and poor quality execution of the few projects implemented. BudgIT started Tracka in 2014, a project-tracking tool designed to track the implementation of various projects at the local level.

Tracka is about putting citizens as the most important element in ensuring the delivery of public services in their communities. In this line, BudgIT organises civic-education for citizens to understand if their needs are covered in the budget. BudgIT further educates people to engage duty bearers ahead of the budget session, to ensure the inclusivity of their needs and to follow up on implementation processes.

Technology, including the media, is at the core of Tracka’s success. Social media is used to amplify discussions on projects. Citizens use technology to track budgets and report to executive and legislative bodies. These efforts have increased engagement, accountability and transparency in the areas of BugIT's operation.

**Institute for Innovations in Development (IID)**

Elections make room for the selection and appointment of thousands of new state officials in Nigeria - up to 10,000 officials were elected or appointed following the 2015 general elections.

Many elected/appointed officials lack leadership capacities. This creates an urgent need for a programme of public affairs education to help prepare and support them for such positions. An essential part of tooling new entrants into public office in a democratic system is to make them aware of their responsibilities to citizens. This calls for the creation of a robust framework of meaningful consultations between officials and citizens.

As a result of the absence of programmed engagement between public officials and CSOs, legislators do not get the benefit of the input of civil society in developing their legislative agendas. They also cannot leverage the enormous skills and knowledge available among CSOs, as well as the transparency that their oversight could bring to governance.
In response to this glaring gap, Institute for Innovations in Development (IID) with support from Ford Foundation, embarked on a project aimed at strengthening democracy and governance in the South-East Zone of Nigeria, through civil society engagement with public officials. Institute for Innovations in Development (IID) was established in 2010 as an initiative of a group of scholars at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nigeria. IID focuses on using innovative research, training and advocacy to transform communities by promoting public affairs education, civic engagement, networking of grassroots organisations, as well as expanding democratic practice and culture.

Through the project, IID seeks to improve the quality of democratic governance by filling the following four needs:

- The need to appropriately prepare newly elected public officials for their roles in governance and to support them with the necessary capacity while in office;
- The need to create a robust framework for civic engagement and consultation between public officials and citizens;
- The need to harness and make available to new entrants into the system, the knowledge and experience of past public officials; and
- The need to improve the quality of CSOs as oversight agencies for good governance in the South-East Zone.

The key approach developed to achieve the intended objectives is a biannual dialogue. The dialogues aim to establish Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) among the major stakeholders to implement the outcomes of the dialogues through legislation, policy and advocacy.

It is envisaged that the project would strengthen the capacity of local government officials to make them more effective in carrying out their functions, while strengthening their relations with and easy connection to community and policy makers.

7.0 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Organisations from Sierra Leone and Liberia

Accountability Lab, Liberia

Integrity Idol is a project run by Accountability Lab Liberia, to inspire a new generation of public servants that struggle with high levels of corruption.10

Integrity idol aims to honour and celebrate Liberia’s most honest government officials. It also seeks to build an ecosystem of active citizens and responsible leaders, through the celebration and honouring of honest civil servants who serve the public well.

Every year, a nation-wide campaign is opened to every Liberian (through Radio, TV and social media) to nominate their integrity idol.

The nominees are narrowed down to a final five after scrutiny by an independent panel of experts. The selection process involves volunteers gathering information on nominees’ work from their friends and family made public through a film broadcasted on national television and radio platforms.

---

10 [http://www.integrityidol.org/countries/liberia/](http://www.integrityidol.org/countries/liberia/)
In just two years (two editions) of running, more than 5 million people have been reached and made aware of the project, with over 500 volunteers involved in the project. 3,650 nominations have been received and 8,020 votes (SMS and online). Over the two editions, there have been 10 nominees and 2 winners. The initiative is continuously building citizen’s confidence in civil servants by showcasing Liberia's most honest. It is also creating a network of Integrity Idols to strengthen an environment of accountability.

Institute for Governance Reform (IGR)

Sierra Leone was ravaged by a 10-year civil war (1991–2002). As the country was recovering from that sad memory, it was unfortunately hit in 2014 by another plague. The Ebola virus epidemic occurred in Sierra Leone in 2014, along with the neighbouring countries of Guinea and Liberia. Sierra Leone recorded 13,500 cases and almost 4,000 deaths. The World Health Organization (WHO) finally declared Sierra Leone Ebola-free by in November 2016.

Premised on that, the Institute for Governance Reform (IGR) realised the need to rebuild basic service after the epidemic. With support from OSWA, IGR developed a Service Delivery Index (SDI) for health, education, water and sanitation in MP constituencies and local councils of Sierra Leone to improve the delivery of health, education, water and sanitation services in key MP constituencies.

Through the SDI results, IGR provides vital information to enhance MPs oversight and scrutiny of the work of local councils in Sierra Leone’s post-Ebola recovery process. The indicators enable the government, local administration and service providers to identify gaps and track progress in promoting inclusive growth.

Secondary data and primary data are collected from citizens to inform the indicators. For example, a survey on education concerns raised by parent in the selected constituencies reveals the results below:

- Lack of textbooks 89.80%
- Overcrowded classrooms 86.40%

• Services being expensive 82.70%
• Poor conditions of facilities 82.50%
• Absent teachers 81.20%
• Poor teaching 80.10%

Media and CSOs use the information for advocacy engagement with key stakeholders through radio, newspapers, WhatsApp. The key achievements recorded include an increased MP roadshow public debate on services, cross-party cooperation on services, and increased CSO understanding of service monitoring.

**Action Plus**

In accordance with Action Plus Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018, principles of accountability and transparency are at the heart of all programme designs and implementation.

Action Plus enables and empowers ordinary people - individually and collectively- to effectively perform the function of monitoring the implementation of interventions rolled out in their name.

In line with that, Action Plus, with support from OSIWA, implemented a two-year project titled *Address Barriers that Limits Women's Participation in Governance project*. The main goal of the project was to promote gender-sensitivity and inclusive governance by creating an enabling environment for the contribution and involvement of women as well as addressing the barriers and limitations to the role and participation of women in local governance and decision making processes.

The project has significantly contributed to making governance processes more transparent, responsive, democratic and accountable. The project has improved public policies, public services, enhanced implementation and impacts of development projects.

The project objectives were achieved through information and awareness raising and sensitization campaigns, focus group discussions, participatory planning as key approaches, among others.

Key lessons learned by Action Plus from its experience include:

- Citizens’ trust in government grows when they feel they have a say and an eye on government’s activities and when government listens and responds to their concerns;
- Social accountability approaches can contribute to better-conceived and more effective policies, budgets and plans that are more responsive to citizen preferences and better adapted to their needs.

**Frank Bio, Focus 1000**

FOCUS 1000 is an NGO in Sierra Leone, which as the name stipulates, invests in the first 1000 days of a child’s life – the period from conception to the child’s second birthday. FOCUS 1000 is committed to making the best investment to enhance the health and development of children and women by holding government and the community accountable.

In its five years of operations, FOCUS 1000 has implemented and initiated many actions/projects such as: Community-based Action against Ebola, Community Ownership Lens, Kombra Media Network and Api Kombra Network, among others.
Api Kombra Network is a community-based social network designed to support mothers and their babies during the first 1000 days of life. FOCUS 1000 believes that the first 1000 days' period is often referred to as the golden window for the following reasons:

- Child’s brain and cognitive functions develop to almost 80% by age two;
- Investments made during this period have an everlasting impact on the child’s likelihood to survive, thrive, and become a productive member of society;
- Return-on-investment yielded from the first 1000 days is invaluable, and the associated effects are largely irreversible.

The overall objective of Api Kombra Network is to keep each mother and baby alive and healthy.

The network members are empowered through trainings on how to sensitize and educate communities across the country on scaling up nutrition, uptake of immunization, exclusive breastfeeding, health systems strengthening etc.

The network members are encouraged to report deaths encountered. All pregnant women, especially if they show any danger signs, are also encouraged to attend ante-natal clinics (ANCs) at least 4 times before they deliver.

Data collected by community health networks in the Kombra Network would feed in a wider component of the Saving Lives Project. Saving lives Project in an upcoming initiative of FOCUS 1000 to investigate into the causes of Maternal and Child Mortality using a community and health facility reporting system.

**Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (NMDHR)**

Unlike other West African countries, Sierra Leone has made laws and policies that are aimed at increasing access of the poor to good quality healthcare services. For example, the free healthcare policy targets children under-five, lactating mothers and pregnant women across the country.

Despite the implementation of this policy, the benefits to the poor are still marginal because of several reasons that include the poor information and communication strategy of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, weak supervision and monitoring systems, corruption, citizens’ apathy and citizens’ low knowledge of the provisions of the policy and of their rights.

To address this challenge, Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (NMDHR), with support from OSIWA, embarked on a community monitoring for accountable and effective service delivery project in the Health Sector of four chiefdoms in Kailahun district.

The project seeks to improve the governance systems relating to the delivery of public services in the health sector in the project communities. The overall objective of the project is to increase citizens’ access to improved healthcare services through increasing community participation in local governance, accountability, empowerment and awareness raising initiatives.
NMDHR focuses predominantly on advocacy-community led approach and the following are key tools are used for this initiative:

- Incident reporting checklist for independent free healthcare community monitoring teams;
- One on one community consultative dialogue with community stakeholders;
- Constructive media engagements (Monthly Radio, TV, Newspaper publications);
- The use of Social media (What’s app, Facebook etc.);
- Community outreach sessions on the free healthcare system;
- Monthly publication of data –key measurable indicator such as maternal and child mortality and morbidity; and
- Hiring of local artist to sensitize and raise awareness to community people in different local languages in project locations.

Through the project, the targeted communities are becoming vibrant, demanding accountability from their leaders, specifically on free healthcare service delivery. The youths are actively involved in the monitoring aspect of the project implementation. Furthermore, community members have been sensitized on the government’s inclusion of people with disability and Ebola Survivors on the free healthcare initiative.

**Movement for Resettlement and Rural Development (MoRRD)**

The inadequate oversight and poor monitoring mechanisms for performance in service delivery have always resulted into mass corruption and misuse of public funds in almost all sectors. A proven principle that is common in Sierra Leone. In addition, most service delivery in local community lacks ordinary citizens or civil society organisations participating directly or indirectly in exerting accountability from service delivery actors. Before now, direct citizen/CSO participation in the formulation of various public policies and budgets at the national and regional levels were also absent.
It is within this scope that MoRRD initiated a pilot social accountability project in 3 chiefdoms to stimulate demand from citizens and thus put pressure on service providers to meet their obligations to provide quality services in local communities.

The overall objective of the initiative is to ensure that community people adapt to an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement (using voice rather than vote as a tool for public accountability).

The specific objectives of the project are to:
- Help to ensure that development funds reach the beneficiaries instead of being diverted or misused by service delivery actors;
- Strengthen citizens’ voice and community empowerment;
- Reduce corruption, absenteeism, inadequacies in service delivery processes;
- Improve transparency in service delivery and budget utilisation in three chiefdoms where we piloting social accountability tools.

Some of the most common tools used through the project include (1) community score cards (CSC), (2) participatory budgeting and public expenditure tracking, (3) access to information through ICT and social audits.

The initiative has given voice to the needs and concerns of communities on the delivery and quality service systems and promoted community participation as a route to increasing access to services.

Another key result recorded that the project has contributed to the reduction of inefficient and ineffective services due to strong engagements of service users in service delivery systems at the local level. Importantly, the introduction of ICT has reduced corruption in service delivery at all levels.

8.0 Field Visit to Ningo-Prampram (CDD Beneficiaries) and Ho (GACC Beneficiaries)

The participants of the workshop were given the opportunity to visit CDD and GACC beneficiaries of social accountability initiatives respectively in Ningo-Prampram (Greater Accra Region) and Ho (Volta region).12

The beneficiaries shared with participants how some of the above-initiatives have positively impacted the quality of their life and strengthening the governance process in their community.

The beneficiaries included community leaders, members of district assembly, unit community, chief, and persons with disability, opinion leaders and women market association among others.

---

12 See picture at Annex 1
9.0 Closing Remarks

EVA Kouka, Ford Foundation

Ms. Kouka in her closing remarks thanked WACSI for organising the workshop. She also thanked OSIWA for joining Ford Foundation in supporting the initiative on sharing experiences and lessons learned from social accountability initiatives undertaken by CSOs in West Africa. Ms. Kouka indicated it was not the first collaboration between Ford Foundation and OSIWA on a joint initiative and encouraged participating organisations to also network among themselves.

Recalling the background of the learning workshop, Ms Kouka indicated that the discussion about the workshop started in late 2016 in Ethiopia while herself, Dr. Aidara and Ms Nana Afadzinu (WACSI’s Executive Director) attended a meeting together. Ms Kouka further expressed her satisfaction that the workshop has successfully come to fruition.

Afia Asantewaa Asare-Kyei, OSIWA

Ms Asare-Kyei indicated that the workshop itself was an exercise of open society as it represents its elements. She stated that open society is about voice, participation, active consultation, negotiation (not contestation) and inclusion, which is reflective is the decision during the workshop.

Ms. Asare-Kyei indicated that the question of civil society’s legitimacy to carry out social accountability is a question that is not often discussed. Ms. Asare-Kyei argued that legitimacy of CSOs can also be derived from that fact that civil society practitioners are also part of the society they are operating in. For example, when there is no electricity in an area, it affects everyone including CSO practitioners.

Ms Asare-Kyei concluded by indicating that the workshop was a fruitful learning and networking forum. She expressed her delight with the fact that the workshop had presented an opportunity for all participants to obtain first-hand information of challenges and lessons from the various social accountability initiatives presented.

Charles Vandyck, WACSI

Mr. Vandyck reiterated that it was a pleasure for WACSI to engage with its constituency, namely civil society in West Africa. Mr. Vandyck also indicated that the workshop was a very wonderful learning experience in the sense that it provided the space for cross border collaboration and the emulation of best practices.

Mr. Vandyck thanked all the participants for their active participation and for making time for the workshop. He also thanked Ford Foundation, OSIWA and WACSI’s colleagues for their support in making the workshop successful and thanked CDD and Voice Ghana for their tremendous assistance in organising the field visits.
ANNEX 1: PICTURES OF FIELD VISITS.
ANNEX 1: MEDIA COVERAGE

http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/west-africa-civil-society-institute-holds-workshop-on-social-accountability-113463

https://www.newsghana.com.gh/wacsi-opens-3-day-workshop-on-social-accountability/
ANNEX 2: WORKSHOP AGENDA

Regional Learning Workshop and Study Tour on Social Accountability in West Africa

Date: February 20-23, 2017, Mensvic Hotel, East Legon, Accra-Ghana

PROGRAMME AGENDA

Monday 20 February 2017

0800-0900  Registration
0900-0920  Welcome and Opening of the meeting

**WACSI:** (Charles Vandyck, WACSI)

**OSIWA:** (Ibrahima Aidara, OSIWA)

**Ford Foundation:** (Eva Kouka, Ford Foundation)

**Chair:** (Charles Vandyck, WACSI)

0920-0930  Presentation of the programme (Charles Vandyck, WACSI)
0930-0940  Participants’ introduction
0940-1015  Scaling-up Social Accountability in West Africa: Opportunities and Challenges (Udo Jude Ilo, OSIWA)

Session Moderator (Dieudonne Houinsou, Social Watch, Benin)

1015-1030  Discussions

1030-1100  **Tea/ Coffee Break**  - Group Photograph

1100-1230  Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Participants from Ghana & Guinea

Session Moderator (Abiola Afolabi-Sosami, BudgIT, Nigeria)

1230-1300  Discussions

1300-1400  **Lunch**

1400-1530  Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Participants from Senegal

Session Moderator (Eva Kouka, Ford Foundation)
1530-1600 Discussions
1600-1615 Wrap-up and Close (Charles Vandyck, WACSI)
1615- Tea Coffee Break

END OF DAY ONE

Tuesday 21 February 2017
0830-1000 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Participants from Benin and Cote d’Ivoire and Niger
Session Moderator (Amadou C. Kanoute, CICODEV, Senegal)
1000-1030 Discussions
1030-1100 Tea/Coffee Break
1100-1230 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Participants from Nigeria
Session Moderator (George Osei-Bimpeh, SEND, Ghana)
1230-1300 Discussions
1300-1400 Lunch
1400-1530 Experience Sharing and Learning Panel: Participants from Sierra Leone & Liberia
Session Moderator (Dayo Aiyetan, International Centre for Investigative Reporting, Nigeria)
1530-1600 Discussions
1600-1630 Highlights and Wrap-up (Ibrahima Aidara, OSIWA & Charles Vandyck, WACSI)
1630- Tea/Coffee Break

END OF DAY TWO

Wednesday 22 February 2017
Study tour and field visit to CDD Beneficiaries in Ningo-Prampram, Greater Accra Region, Ghana

Thursday 23 February 2017
Study tour and field visit to GACC Beneficiaries in Ho, Volta Region, Ghana

Friday 24 February 2017
Departure
## ANNEX 4: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>CONTACT PERSON</th>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Amadou C. Kanoute</td>
<td>CICODEV-Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Maleine Amadou Niang</td>
<td>ONG 3D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Marie Elisabeth Massaly</td>
<td>Cosydep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Dr Binette Ndiaye Mbengue</td>
<td>Forum Civil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>Dieudonné Houinsou</td>
<td>Social Watch- Benin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>Djowamon A. Cyrille</td>
<td>PJUD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Mamadou Alfa Diallo</td>
<td>ABLOGUI-MoSSeP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Abdourahamane Sano</td>
<td>Plateforme nationale des Citoyens Unis pour le Développement (PCUD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Aminou Laouali</td>
<td>SOS Civisme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Fatima Moussa</td>
<td>CONGAFEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Cote d'Ivoire</td>
<td>KRA Kouamé Constantin</td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Lawrence Yealue</td>
<td>Accountability Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Abiola Afolabi-Sosami</td>
<td>BudgIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Ken Henshaw</td>
<td>Social Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Dr Nkwachukwu Orji</td>
<td>Institute for Innovations in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Dayo Aiyetan</td>
<td>International Centre for Investigative Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Adam Talsma</td>
<td>Reboot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Ngozi Iwere</td>
<td>Community Life Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Andrew Lavali</td>
<td>Institute for Governance Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Cecilia Sumie</td>
<td>Action Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Frank Bio</td>
<td>Focus1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td></td>
<td>Movement for Resettlement and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Lahai Galiwah</td>
<td>Rural Development (MoRRD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Abdul Karim Habib</td>
<td>Network Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (NMDHR)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>George Osei-Bimpeh</td>
<td>SEND Ghana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Paul Osei Kufuor</td>
<td>Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Aborampah Mensah</td>
<td>Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Franklin Oduro</td>
<td>Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD Ghana)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Isidore Kportufe</td>
<td>Imani Ghana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Beauty Emefa Narteh</td>
<td>Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Samuel Harrison-Cudjoe</td>
<td>Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Kwami Ahiabenu II</td>
<td>Penplusbytes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Francis Asong</td>
<td>Voice Ghana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coordinating Team**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Eva Kouka</td>
<td>Ford Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Dabesaki Mac-Ikemenjima</td>
<td>Ford Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Padma Ugbabe</td>
<td>Ford Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Ibrahima Aidara</td>
<td>OSIWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Afia Asantewaa Asare-Kyei</td>
<td>OSIWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Ibrahim Bangura</td>
<td>OSIWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Joe Pemagbi</td>
<td>OSIWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Udo Jude Ilo</td>
<td>OSIWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Jody Stephenson</td>
<td>Rockdale Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Katy Barksdale</td>
<td>Rockdale Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Charles Kojo Vandyck</td>
<td>WACSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Isaac Hubert Arthur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Matel Sow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Leandre Yao Banon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Chamrid Kpadonou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Khady Ndour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>