



# SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PRACTICE

:

THE ROLE OF CITIZEN'S ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN  
STRENGTHENING SOCIAL CONTRACT

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# ACCOUNTABILITY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE STATE AND ITS CITIZENS

- Accountability –Responsibility for actions” -As “Compliance” to enhance programme quality, impact and outcomes
- It includes reinforcement of holding actors responsible for their actions, keeping the public informed and the powerful in check!
- “Accounting for the Use of Power” in turn community will raise their voice by questioning and later exercising the same by demanding for accountability over the exercise of delegated power- **granted** through the **social contract**.



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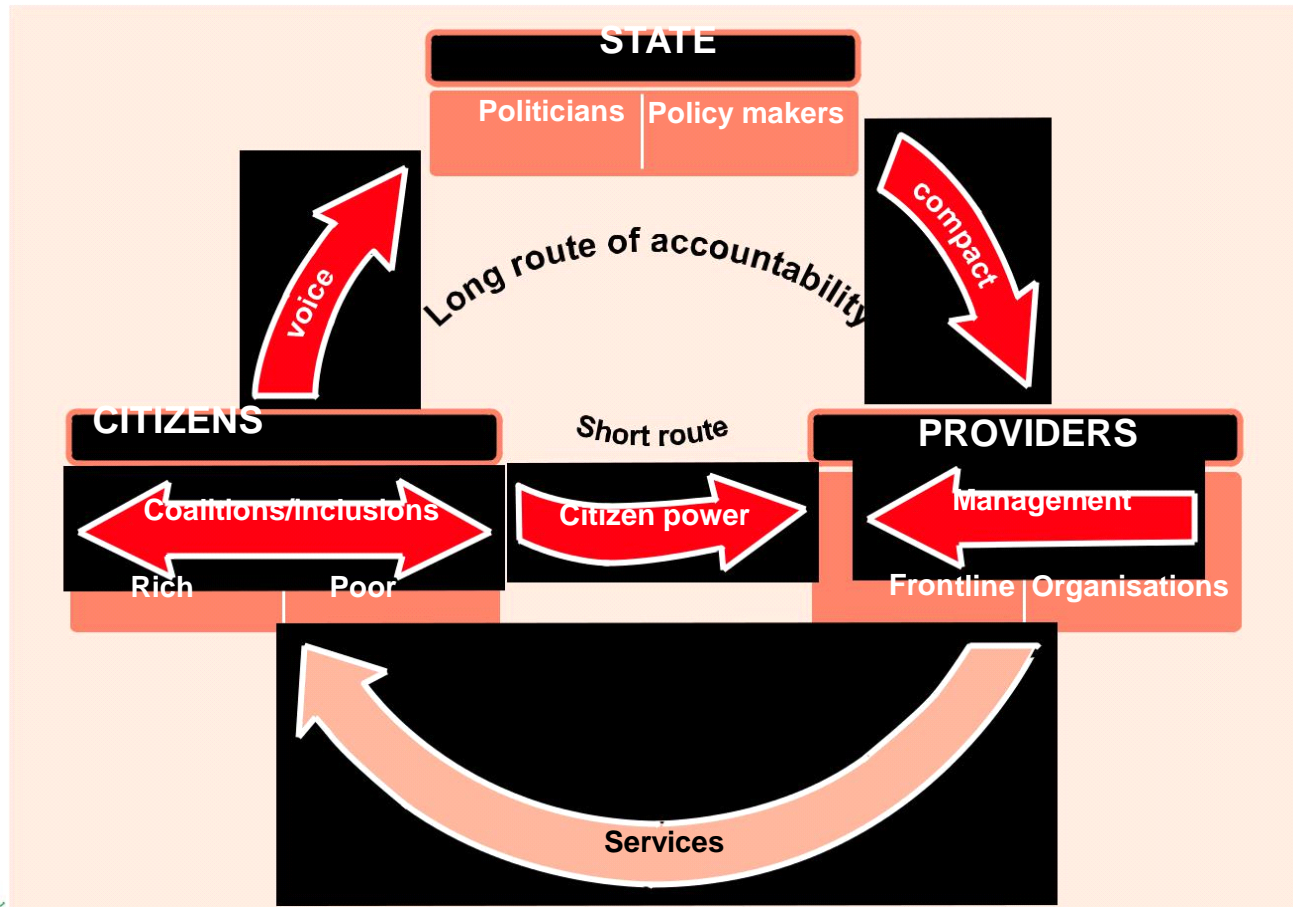
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## Defining Social Accountability

- Social Accountability can be defined as an 'approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, in which ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability.
- The goal of social accountability is initiating demand-driven and bottom up citizen voice and oversight in public service delivery



# Conceptualizing social accountability



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## Conceptualizing social accountability cont'd

- Service delivery can be improved 'by putting poor people at the Centre of service provision:
  - building their capacities to enable them to monitor and feedback to service providers;
  - by amplifying their voice in policymaking,
  - and by strengthening the mechanisms and structures for providers to serve the citizens.



# Building Blocks in Social Accountability Approaches

- Investing in Capacities for the citizen groups is the largest success of social accountability.
- Strengthening citizens critical and analysis skills: From awareness creation to conscientization of their rights (HRBA approach)
- We also must invest on the supply side ( duty bearers) capacity to understand the human rights framework for planning, budgeting and provision of services.

# Cont'd

- Making the voice of citizens heard entails the expression and communication to power-holders of **needs** and **priorities** of citizens in order to implement social accountability.
- This provides a **platform for citizens'** and **Women's voices** to be heard by **service providers** and **public institutions**.
- Social accountability **promotes** civic engagement amongst the citizens, women and young people to hold public officials accountable for the decisions they take in the administration of community affairs.



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# ActionAid's journey towards building citizens strive for Social Accountability-

- Community led participatory Change Plan (participatory planning tools)
- Social Audits
- Citizen report cards and scorecards,
- Community monitoring,
- Public Hearing/Village/Community Assembly
- ELBAG -Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability Group
- Gender responsive budgeting
- Open Information Boards
- Community Led Procurement Audit/Budget Tracking/ Public expenditure tracking
- Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms
- Information Summaries



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# Basic elements of social Accountability

ELEMENT		DESCRIPTION
Preparing community and civil society groups to engage	-	Raising the awareness of citizens,
	-	Building confidence and capacity for engagement,
	-	Building networks and coalitions.
Collecting, analysing and using information	-	Finding, securing and analyzing information on state activities, policies, legislations, frameworks
		Translating information into different formats, styles and languages,
		Sharing information through the media and social and different actors
Undertaking accountability engagements with governments	-	Using instruments such as scorecards, audits and budget analysis to engage with a government,
		Making use of formalized spaces of participation
	-	Creating new spaces for participation,
	-	Mobilizing social actions.
Using information from accountability engagements with governments	-	Following up on commitments through advocacy, lobbying and campaigning work.



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# Citizen participation as a means of fostering social accountability

- *Constitution of Kenya; Public Participation Bill; Public Finance and Management Act, Access to Information Act; County Government Act; Urban Areas Act; Public Procurement and Disposal Act.*
- Participation of the people is recognized in Article 10 of the CoK as one of the national values and principles of governance.
- Further Article 174(c) provides that the object of devolution is to: “enhance the participation of people in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them.” Article 184 (1) (c) also requires that mechanisms for participation by residents be included in the national legislation relating to urban areas and cities governance and management. The centrality of public participation cannot therefore be over-emphasized
- Social accountability mechanisms involve citizens seeking information from government (e.g. budgets, expenditures) and in creating new information about access to and quality of services. Twaweza is an example of citizen-led initiatives in East Africa established to trigger social action by enhancing citizen agency.



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# Key lessons from Citizen led Accountability initiatives

- Investing in awareness raising and capacity building (Women's rights agencies); inclusiveness, importance of policy analysis and timing, impact is greatest when strategies are multidimensional and system-wide, flexibility and innovation.
- Accountability requires strong public voice and strong accountable institutions and rules, additionally its important to build alliances with the international community in promoting accountability



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# Challenges emerging from social accountability initiatives

- Resistance by duty bearers to engage and political hegemony .
- Unwillingness of some authorities and some leaders to work in consultation with citizens and their institutions.
- Failure by the government to enact the Public Participation Act and some counties to assent to by laws where they exist.
- Absence of a clear social accountability policy framework.
- Lack of citizen especially women and young people's ty to engage



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