



Social Accountability Through A Community Score Card and Social Audit Approaches in 9 Counties

Kakamega, Kiambu, Kilifi, Kisumu, Laikipia, Mombasa, Nyamira, Siaya and West Pokot CSOs Networks Counties

Background

The Civil Society Organization (CSO) Networks in Kakamega, Kiambu, Kilifi, Kisumu, Laikipia, Mombasa, Nyamira, Siaya and West Pokot Counties are consortia of diverse CSOs implementing various programmes in these counties. The networks have provided the CSOs with a common platform for information sharing, learning, collaboration and structured engagements with the national government and county governments on local development matters. The key area of focus for these Networks include advocacy in county policymaking, legislation, budgeting, budget implementation and service delivery processes. A common objective across the networks is including citizens in these processes while promoting accountable and transparent governance. Towards this endeavour, CSOs, through their networks, have played central roles in mobilising, organising and linking the citizens with the governance processes, thus providing the communities with the opportunity to participate, influence decision making and demand accountability from the duty bearers.

KDP - Timiza Ugatuzi with funding from the UK Government supported CSO networks on various interventions in the first year of implementation (October 2021 to September 2022). The 9 County CSO networks mentioned above were supported to implement social accountability interventions to address service delivery gaps in specific county services. In line with the KDP theory of change, the interventions targeted the priority devolved sectors, namely, Health, Water, Agriculture and Livestock in selected administrative wards and county service delivery institutions at the community level. In recognition of the importance of political will in such interventions, the networks formally introduced the interventions to the county leadership during inception






and secured their commitment. Among them were relevant County Executive Committee Members, County Chief Officers and County Directors responsible for Health, Water, Agriculture and Livestock. In the counties where health was the focus of the intervention, the networks also made formal introductions to the County Health Management Teams. In some counties, the CSO networks introduced the interventions to the leadership, including County Governors and Members of County Assemblies.

Upon obtaining a political commitment from the leadership of the target counties, the networks mobilised the communities, particularly the service users, the local opinion leaders of the target areas and the local government officials, mainly the relevant service providers who are charged with the actual delivery of the target services at the respective service delivery levels. These stakeholders were sensitised to the impending interventions and approaches and voluntarily took up the primary responsibility of delivering the interventions and actual change with the facilitation of the networks. The Community Score Card approach was used in 8 counties, while Social Audit was used in Laikipia County.

Under the Community Score Card approach, local communities formed ward-based and institution-specific Community Score Card Committees, leading service users in advocacy engagements with the service providers at the respective service delivery points. The Social Audit, on the other hand, was conducted by the ward-based Social Auditors, who were selected by their communities. After that, the Community Score Card Committees and Social Auditors were trained and steered their communities in advocacy processes with the government. Through mentorship from the CSO networks, they ensured active involvement of their communities in identifying, interrogating and documenting the local service delivery gaps; mobilised them for interface and lobby meetings with the service providers and government officials; followed up for implementation of the action plans adopted to address service delivery problems, and; in some cases represented their communities in strategic meetings with the county level leadership where they presented and discussed their development problems and needs.

Overall, the advocacy processes ignited positive actions from the service providers and county government officials, eliminating or minimising the problems and gaps that previously affected quality services. The issues included inadequate health personnel and livestock extension officers, lack of essential drugs, lack of health services at night (including laboratory and maternity) and lack of essential services such as ward admissions. Others were over-charging for subsidised artificial insemination services, unreliable water services, poor reception of clients at health facilities, lack of emergency health services, including ambulance services and corrupt practices. The positive response improved access to quality health, water, agriculture and livestock services in the target counties.

Below are specific examples of some of the results;

-  Timely response by a Water company, THIWASCO, in fixing burst pipes reduced water wastage, which led to improved access to water in parts of a village in Kiambu County.
-  Nyamira County Government committed during the interface meeting to have the farmers in the Bonyamatuta ward supported in essential services since the demise of the extension officer in charge of veterinary in 2016. Further, the Director in charge also committed to follow up on the employment of additional extension officers, leading to an advertisement for extension officers by the County Government being published in March 2023. The officers were finally employed end of July 2023.
-  The County Government of Siaya committed to post a doctor at the Ukwala Sub-county hospital. This was done by February 2023.
-  In Karuri Level IV Hospital in Kiambu County, the County posted an additional pharmacist, and the pharmacy operates for 24 hours rather than the previous 12 hours.
-  Shianda Hospital in Kakamega County is now operating for 24 hours rather than the previous 12 hours due to the Community Score Card intervention by the network in collaboration with the county government.

These results were realised through positive actions by the relevant service providers and government officials in response to Community Score Card and Social Audit interventions. The efforts by the government included increasing the number of staff, including doctors and nurses in health facilities, supplying essential drugs, increasing the number of days for water supply, fixing non-functioning lights, improving the quality of reception services, strengthening enforcement in compliance with official fees and innovation in service provision. In addition to the actual changes in service delivery, the government actions also entailed allocating resources in supplementary budgets to address citizens' needs in the case of Laikipia County and including the priorities in the medium-term plans in Kisumu, Laikipia and West Pokot Counties.

Key Learning Points



Purpose and value-driven community mobilisation reawaken the citizens to seize their sovereign power. It was noted in the community scorecards and social audits that the citizens resonate better with and see more excellent value when their mobilisation is aligned with the issues that affect them most and directly affect their lives and livelihoods. Such mobilisation enables the citizens to appreciate the value of participation if they are convinced their involvement would improve their livelihoods. With the hindsight of the impending benefits, this approach enhances ownership of the advocacy processes, thus encouraging the citizens to spend their time and resources in the related advocacy processes. The Community Score Card Committees and Social Auditors were critical in voluntarily serving their communities as resource persons. Among others, they mobilised, sensitised and linked their communities with service providers and the relevant engagement processes while focusing on the target services to improve access and quality.



Political goodwill and recognition are vital to unlocking the gaps in social problems through social accountability. Introducing Community Score Card and Social Audit interventions to the government leadership and the target service providers and sensitising them on the purpose of the interventions promotes acceptance and collaboration with them in improving service delivery. Once they appreciate the processes, it increases the chances of cooperation, leading to the government's willingness and commitment to address service delivery issues. During some periods, such as the election years, however, obtaining commitments from government officials could be challenging because of the transition. There are, however, a few exceptions where this approach may not work, particularly when the target individuals who are expected to address the issues may be responsible for creating the gaps or problems.



Objectivity in Community Scorecards and Social Audits promotes collaboration and partnership with the government and is cost-effective and sustainable. Unbiased and solution-based advocacy free from personal persuasions and affiliations encourages the decision-makers and implementers to collaborate positively with advocacy processes in delivering appropriate solutions. The confidence of duty bearers often increases when the advocacy processes are led by the target beneficiaries of the interventions or service users whose involvement often promotes the legitimacy of the operations while simultaneously building ownership and their skills for sustainability.



Proper skills and experience in social accountability are core to the success of the interventions. Like any advocacy process, effective planning and management of the Community Score Card require the relevant skills and experience. The skills are essential at all stages, from entry to mobilisation, interface meetings and follow-up to ensure the implementation of service improvement commitments. The skills were necessary for all stakeholders involved in managing the Community Score Card, including the CSOs and Community Score Card Committees, in facilitating proper identification of the interventions practicable within stipulated timelines, adequate mobilisation of stakeholders and management of successful collaborative processes to address service delivery problems.

Recommendations

- a) **Sustained mentorship for a reasonable period:** For citizens to build effectiveness and self-confidence in social accountability, uninterrupted mentorship for a minimum of two years is recommended. This period of continuous support would enable the citizens to learn and nurture the skills and build the confidence to lead Community Score Card or Social Audit. Similarly, the duty bearers should be sensitised on social accountability, including the processes and tools to appreciate the concept and proactively collaborate with the citizens in the processes.
- b) **Documentation of lessons learnt:** Learning, including best practices and challenges, is critical in advocacy processes and should be documented continuously. It is, therefore, essential that continuous documentation of the lessons is integrated into the functions as an ongoing process for use in the future to strengthen advocacy interventions and minimise potential lapses that are avoidable.
- c) **Learning processes:** Integrating the mechanisms for continuous sharing of the lessons learnt, including best practices and challenges among CSOs and social accountability practitioners, is essential for actual progression in advocacy. The learning processes allow practitioners to share and learn continuously, thus strengthening their interventions.
- d) **Time consciousness in the selection of interventions:** While identifying and selecting activities for social accountability, there should be consciousness throughout implementation if the interventions are based on external resourcing to ensure that the intended outcomes are realistic.
- e) **Integration of sustainability:** For sustained benefits and continuity of social accountability, the support where external should integrate accountability. This could include facilitating the Community Score Card Committees through joint income-generating activities from where the members would continue drawing funding for their future facilitation, thereby ensuring continuity.



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2021 - 2025

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