An Introduction to Social Accountability

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Influencing processes

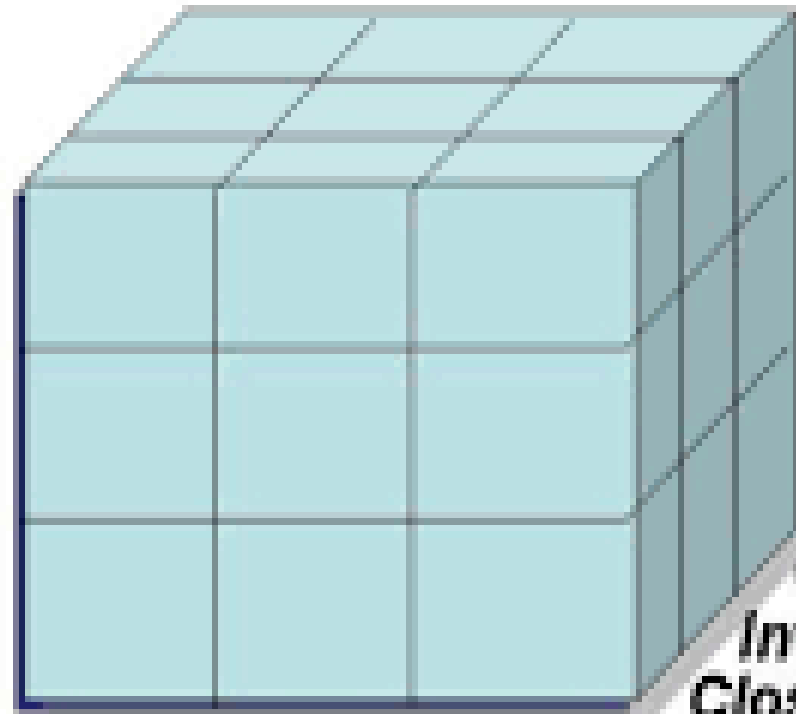It is not only what we do, but also what
we do not do, for which we are accountable'

Moliere

What is social accountability?

Refers to the various actions, tools and mechanisms that can be used by civil society organisations (CSOs), the media, citizens and communities to **hold elected public officials** and ***non-elected public servants*** accountable.

Accountability involves **answerability** and **enforceability**

Accountability is all about delivering on a promise.

This is Social accountability

- Citizens working together to ensure their **governments** are **meeting their community's rights** and **managing their resources effectively and transparently**.

- This approach to citizens' **action** actually involves **systematic analysis and intelligent use of data:** is about getting and using critical information about budget, expenditures, corruption, performances etc. in a way that can **generate sound evidences** **of poor governance**.

Human Rights Obligations

Duty-bearer's obligation to:

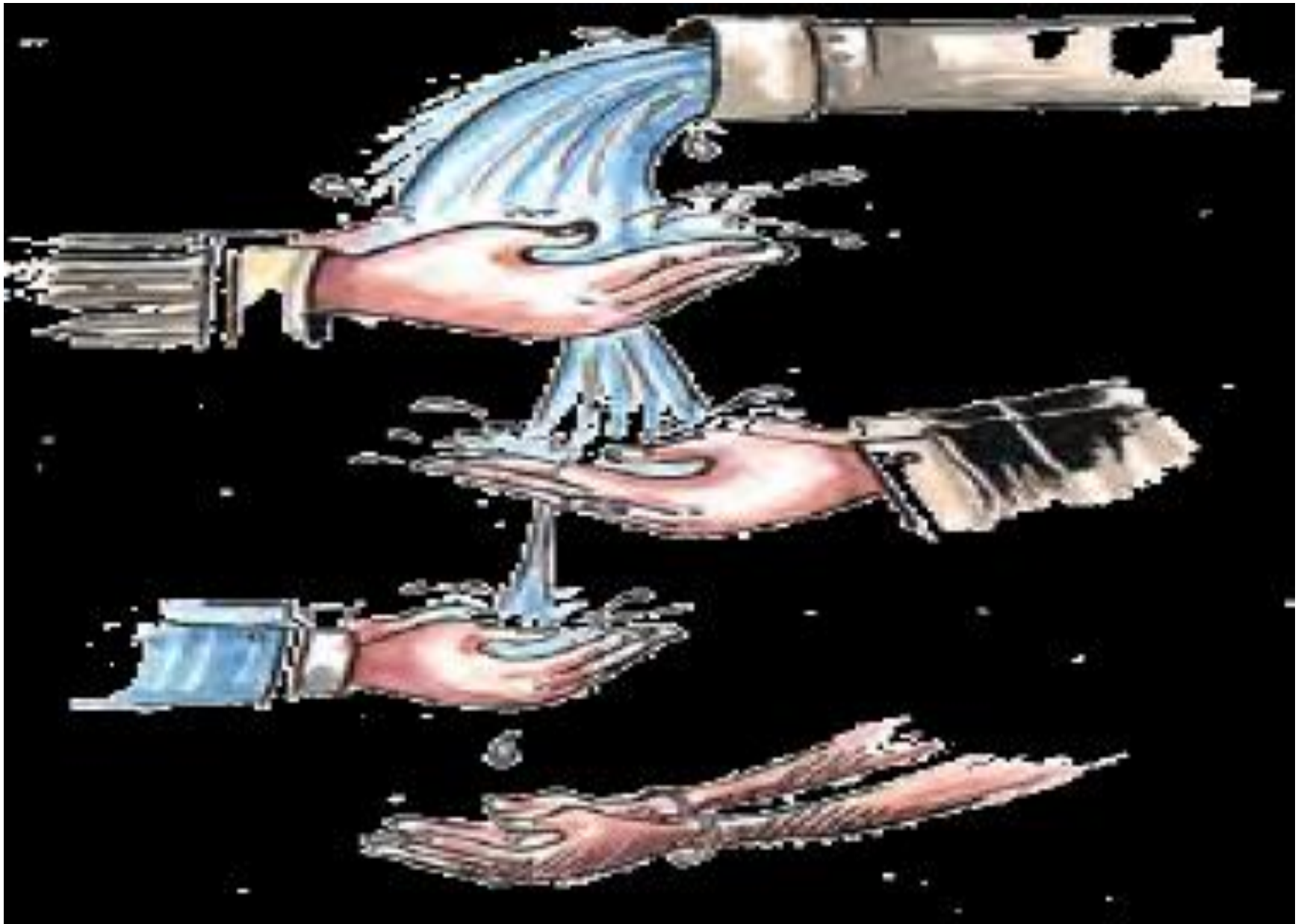| **Respect**	**Protect**	**Fulfil**
refrain from interfering with the enjoyment of the right	**prevent others from interfering with the enjoyment of the right**	**adopt appropriate measures towards full realization of the right**

Government resource trickle down

VALUE FOR MONEY MATRIX

Equity is located in the centre because it should guide what the government does, where and for whom.

Effectiveness is prioritised because if government is not effective at achieving its outcomes then value for money will not be realised.

Example questions

Are the government programmes reaching the right people?

Are the government programmes achieving equitable outcomes?

Effectiveness

Equity

Economy

Efficiency

Example questions

Do government programmes achieve the goals they were created to reach?

Will the impacts from the goals be long-lasting and have multiplier effects?

Economy and Efficiency support the achievement of outcomes and contribute to the overall cost-effectiveness of a programme.

Example questions

Do government programmes purchase quality inputs and services at the lowest reasonable cost?

Do government programmes efficiently convert inputs into outputs?

Source: Adapted from Oxfam (2015)

Accountability – *supply-side*

To state servants acting for us

To managers and ministers

To audit officers, financial controllers

To Parliament (for implementing policies)

To judiciary

To Anti-corruption & oversight bodies

Accountability – *demand-side*

Most systems allow more *direct* accountability.

- Citizen complaints, ombudsmen
- Collective lobbying of MPs etc
- Protests; direct action
- NGOs, consumers unions, PTAs etc
- Independent media
- Think tanks and advice bureaus

Social Accountability tools

1. Participatory Budgeting
2. The Community Score Card (CSC)
3. Independent Budget Analysis
4. The Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)
5. Social Audit
6. Public hearings
7. Citizen Report Cards (CRCs)
8. Information Campaigns
9. Community radio
10. A Children's charter

Public Resource Management Framework

Process 1: Planning and Resource Allocation

- Identify what resources are available for service delivery
- Draw up detailed strategic plans
  - Respond progressively to pressing social and economic needs
  - Plans must be costed and adjusted to final allocations
- Final budget and plan approved by the Legislature
- Management documents:
  - Draft budgets (or pre-budget statement)
  - Strategic plans
  - Contracts with outsourced service providers
  - Service level agreements
  - Infrastructure and maintenance plans
  - Detailed budget policy statements
  - Estimates of revenue and expenditure
  - Detailed final budgets

Public Resource Management Framework

Process 2: Expenditure management

☐ Supreme Audit Institution reports on financial statements

Process 3: Performance management

■ Monitor and report on performance in implementing strategic plans

■ Performance agreements must be signed by all staff (based on strategic plan outputs)

■ Management documents:

☐ Annual performance reports

☐ Supreme Audit Institution reports (including financial and performance audits)

Public Resource Management Framework

Process 4: Public integrity management

- Systems to track ineffective use and abuse of resources and potential conflicts of interest
- Prompt corrective action in response to breaches of the regulatory framework
- Management documents:
  - Supreme Audit Institution reports
  - Reports on corrective action in response to cases of misconduct and incapacity
  - Registers of private interests

Process 5: Oversight

- Rigorous and independent audits of financial and performance management
- Legislature recommendations to improve service delivery
  - Scrutinise annual reports and Supreme Audit Institution audit findings
- Management documents:
  - Supreme Audit Institution reports
  - Oversight committee minutes

What do states need to be able to realise people's socio-economic rights?

- Act as an efficient public resource management framework
- Made up of 5 key processes:
  1. Resource Allocation and Strategic Planning
  2. Expenditure Management
  3. Performance Management
  4. Public Integrity Management
  5. Oversight
- Documents must be produced for each process to work
  - Rigorous and detailed documents enable public managers to effectively manage public resources
  - Justify their performance using these documents
- If documents not produced, or are of poor quality, then public officials unable to effectively manage public resources or to deliver the public services necessary to realise socio-economic rights

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