

Community-led Social Audit Pilot Program

Tool Kit

PROJECT: Civil Works for Eco Tourism Facilities
Gn. Fuvahmulaku City, Maldives | 13th – 16th November 2017



Community-led Social Audit Program (CSAP)

Tool Kit

Project: Civil Works for Eco Tourism Facilities

Gn. Fuvahmulaku City, Maldives

13th -16th November 2017

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1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this Community-led Social Audit Program tool kit is to concisely explain the conceptual theories and practical applications in execution of a Community-led Social Audit Program (CSAP) for the selected Civil Works for Eco tourism facilities in Gn. Fuvahmulah. It is a development project employed by the Ministry of Environment and Energy, Government of Maldives under the Climate Change Adaptation Project (CCAP) funded by World Bank.

This CSAP is developed and initiated by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) with financial assistance from the UNDP to support the implementation of the ACCs National Integrity Plan (NIP). The NIP stems from the ACC's Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2015-2019. Implementation of CSAP program is directly related to the policies and strategies of both NIP and SAP which is highlighted below. The CSAP that drives from SAP are incorporated under its;

Policy 6: Foster Integrity and Anti-Corruption Awareness in the Society

Strategy 1: Encourage, promote and foster a culture of integrity in the society.

Strategy 4: Collaboration with NGOs to eliminate corruption and sharing support and assistance.

Similarly, the linkage of CSAP is also prescribed in the NIP under;

Policy 3: Foster integrity and cooperation in works conducted to Strengthen Social Relationships and for Community Development

Strategy 3.5: Creating a healthy and safe family environment

Activity 3.5.7: Establish a mechanism and system that fosters integrity in utilizing funds received regarding Natural Disasters and Environment related issues

The successful completion of CSAP program will complement the interconnectedness of the above policies/strategies. This CSAP is the first of its program, systematically piloted and modelled at Fuvahmulaku City by ACC for the selected project. The fundamentals of social audit concepts used in this tool kit is adopted by the Commission after examining extensive research conducted in various countries on similar areas. Some of the key reports that were referred to design the Community-led Social Audit Program to the context of the Maldives are given below;

1. World Banks' resource paper on Mapping Context for Social Accountability by O'Meally (2013)
2. Social Audit Training of Trainers manual, Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) Projects by Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, India (2011)
3. The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Social Audit Guide, A Handbook for Communities in Kenya by Gikonyo (2008) and
4. Social Audit: A Toolkit: A Guide for Performance Improvement and Outcome Measurement by Centre for Good Governance (2005)

Therefore, on the basis of the theories, a method to execute the CSAP program in the Maldives, is newly designed and developed to include trainings and awareness for civil society, representation of the public participation, observations from local administration focus groups, interviews with

project employer and project contractor side and site surveying. The CSAP method will pilot the following activity tools.

1. NGOs Training
2. Community-led Social Audit Pilot Survey
3. Focus group interview for City Council
4. Public Officials Awareness Program
5. Focus group interview for Protected Area Management Unit (PAMU)
6. Community Awareness Program
7. Project site survey

Additionally, this tool kit comprised of an activity schedule, training outlines, case examples which will guide the learning objectives and practical inputs to deepen the hands on experience for the trainees. This hand book has annexed all the relevant survey questionnaires and interview forms used for the project.

With the collaboration of UNDPs Integrated Governance Program phase II for 2017, under output 1.2. increased transparency accountability in governance processes, the ACC highly values the UNDPs partially financed contribution to conduct the CSAP in partnership with ACC. Consecutively, ACC also acknowledge with appreciation to Fuvahmulaku City Council, for its logistics and administrative support and cooperation rendered throughout the program.

Anti-Corruption Commission
01st November 2017

2. Activity Schedule

Community-Led Social Audit Program, Gn. Fuvahmulah				
Activity Schedule				
Date	Time	Activity/ Sessions	Facilitator	Materials
Day 1				
13.11.2017	Session 1			
	16:00 – 17:00	Social Accountability	Manal Khalid	PPT& Handbook
	17:00 – 18:00	Inclusive Governance & Right to Information	Manal Khalid	PPT& Handbook
	Session 2			
	20:00 – 21:00	Introduction to Social Audit	Fathimath Shaina	PPT& Handbook
	21:00 – 22:00	How to conduct a Social Audit	Fathimath Shaina	PPT& Handbook
Day 2				
14.11.2017	08:00 - 12:00	Community Survey (Part 1)	Social Audit Team	Questionnaire
	14:00 – 15:00	Focus Group Interview (Council staff)	Social Audit Team	Questionnaire
	15:00 – 16:00	Focus Group Interview (Council Members)	Social Audit Team	Questionnaire
	16:00 – 18:00	Community Survey (Part 2)	Social Audit Team	Questionnaire
	20:00 – 22:00	Awareness Session (Public Officials)	Nasira Iqbal	PPT
Day 3				
15.11.2017	08:00 - 10:00	PAMU Interview	Social Audit Team	Questionnaire
	10:30 – 12:30	Project Site Observation	Social Audit Team	Checklist
	16:30 – 17:30	Social Audit Closing Ceremony	by invitation	
	20:00 – 22:00	Awareness Session (Community)	Nasira Iqbal	PPT
Day 4				
16.11.2017		Departure to Male / Addu Atoll		
<i>Note: Venue for all the sessions & closing ceremony: Fuvahmulaku City Council Hall</i>				

3. Training Outline for Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

Day 1 – Youth Training		
Session 1 – 2 hours		
Topic	Subtopics	Learning Objectives
1. Participants introduction	1.1 Ice breaker activity 1.2 Setting ground rules	Get to know each other
2. Introduction	2.1 Introduction of the program i. Training ii. Survey iii. awareness 2.2 Inform Objectives	Familiarize with the purpose of the program & training
3. Social Accountability (Theory & Practice)	3.1 Introduction to social accountability	Understand the concept of social accountability Understand the meaning of civic oversight
	3.2 Stages of Social Accountability	State the different uses the social accountability mechanism State three benefits of social accountability for the government and community
	3.3 Social accountability tools i. Participatory budget analysis ii. Citizen Report Card iii. Community Score Cards iv. Social Audit	Explain uses, strength & benefits of four social accountability tools
4. Inclusive Governance & Right to Information (RTI)	4.1 Characteristics of Inclusive governance	Define good governance Identify the characteristics of good governance
	4.2 Importance of community participation in governance	Understand the importance of having community participation to ensure good governance
	4.3 Communication for Inclusive Governance	Importance of Communication between government & community & NGOs
	4.4 Importance of RTI and its usefulness in good governance	Identify the importance of RTI and how it can be used to voice for community rights
	4.5 RTI in Maldives	Understand the community rights & responsibilities under RTI Act of Maldives

	4.6 Linking RTI with good governance & social accountability	Explain how social accountability and RTI associates with good governance
5. Introduction to Social Audit	5.1 Introduction to social audit & its uses	Understand the concept of social audit and its use in enhancing social accountability
	5.2 Principles of social audit	State the principles that needs to be followed when conducting a social audit
	5.3 Benefits of social auditing	Describe how the outcomes of social auditing can be used
	5.4 Social Audit Initiatives i. Dominican Republic	Describe some of the successful social audit initiatives from around the world
Session 2 – 2 hours		
6. How to conduct a Social Audit	6.1 Initiating	Briefly explain the factors to be considered when initiating a social audit
	6.2 Planning	Briefly explain the factors to be considered when planning for a social audit Explain how to draft an action plan for social audit
	6.3 Execution	Briefly explain the factors to be considered while implementing the planned activities Illustrate how to perform a social audit
	6.4 Evaluating	Briefly explain how to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the targeted project.
	6.5 Closing	Briefly explain the importance of post evaluation follow up
7. Social Audit of the Eco facility project of Gn. Fuvahmulah	7.1 Overview of Eco-facility project in Gn. Fuvahmulah	Explain the project plan/deliverables and timeline of the project
	7.2 Components selected for the survey i. Community-led Social Audit Pilot Survey ii. Focus group interview for City Council iii. Focus group interview for Protected Area Management Unit (PAMU) iv. Project site survey v. Community Awareness Program vi. Public Officials Awareness Program	Provide a background understanding of the components of the survey questionnaire Discussion of survey Questionnaires Understand the questionnaire developed for collection of data

4. Introduction

The main idea of social audit lay within the perceived need that at a point of time of execution of a public process be more accountable to the community ensuring that both beneficial and non-beneficial impacts of such processes are understood by the society. Social Audit attempts to embrace not only economic and monetary benefits but also social aspects, including that are non- monetary benefits. Various accountability factors are identifiable as having contributed to the significant and relatively sudden growth of social audit since 1990s.

Social Audit as a discipline maybe a relatively new concept. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that in the past, some of the authorities in the Maldives have undertaken segments of social audits as ways and means to monitoring and supervising development progressions at different islands though official reports are unavailable.

The Anti-Corruption Commission to embark on its new mission to execute a Community-led Social Audit Program (CSAP) is a loyal cause to contribute in the process of empowering civil society. Besides that, CSAP is falls within the mandated responsibility of the Anti-Corruption Commission's Act 13/2008. Its three clauses 21(c), (d) and (e) clearly prescribes the Commission to carry out research on the prevention of corruption and submit recommendations for improvement to relevant authorities regarding actions to be taken, to promote the values of honesty and integrity in the operations of the State, and to promote public awareness on the dangers of corruption and to conduct seminars, workshops and other programs on prevention and prohibition of corruption to further public awareness, to carry out researches and publish them.

Therefore, it is important that the social accountability tool explained in this hand book is used to ensure transparency and accountability in government projects which is also substantially useful as an anti-corruption machinery. In order to emphasize this, the Commission's objectives of the Community-Lead Social Audit Program (CSAP) are set as;

1. To advocate the community and related stakeholders about the concepts and tools of social audit (including social accountability, RTI and Inclusive Governance), and inform their roles of participation to enhance good governance and transparency.
2. To train and develop NGOs with required skills and competency to assess and implement social audit exercises in future.
3. To collaborate with the authorities and civil society on the performance and impacts of social audit assessments and encourage continuous civic engagements.

To conduct a social audit for any process, a strong network of social auditors is required. For this purpose, capacity building and training of human resources is a basic requirement. This tool kit is developed with relevance to the need of piloting the CSAP at Civil Works for Eco tourism facilities project. It is aimed to strengthening capacity development through delivery of knowledge, skills enhancement and awareness in order to conduct social audit by empowering the youth of Fuvahmulaku City. However, this tool kit can be modified to facilitate the need of specific project processes undertaken by organizations to conduct social audits for future use where necessary.

5. Background

Citizens elect their leaders expecting them to represent their constituencies effectively and to introduce, implement and monitor public policies that will respond to collective needs. Similarly, constituencies expect democratically elected leaders and public officials to be responsible for their decisions and actions and to be accountable to the citizens they serve.

Traditionally, efforts to address issues of accountability have focused on improving and/or strengthening the “supply-side” of democratic governance. More recently, increased attention has been paid to improving the “demand side” of democratic governance. That is, strengthening the voice and capacity of citizens to directly demand greater accountability from public officials and service providers. The emphasis in this approach is in actors outside the State, comprising checks and balances on governmental actors at national, regional, and local levels. The actors outside the State is referred to as civil society and non-governmental organizations, as well as an independent media, watchdog organizations, and influential think-tanks and/or research organizations which should pro-actively demand accountability from the State.

6. What is Social Accountability?

The World Bank defines social accountability as an “approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which it is ordinary citizens and/or citizen groups who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability” Malena, Forster & Singh (2004). It is a mechanism initiated by citizen groups to hold public officials, politicians, and service providers to account for their conduct and performance in terms of delivering services, improving people’s welfare and protecting people’s rights.



Figure 1: How Social Accountability Works, Source: Jeff Thindwa, Social Accountability Practice, World Bank Institute

As illustrated in figure 1, social accountability functions as a cycle that requires engagement from both supply side (government) and demand side (society) of the governance. The governments' role is to allow participation of the community and proactively disclose information to citizens and maximize citizen's access to information. The most effective way to do this is establishing a legal frame work (i.e. Right to Information). This enables the citizens to have the rights to be proactive in demanding information about the processes that have impacts on the society. Citizens then can actively engage in negotiations and channeling feedback to the government and demand response to the citizens' request. The government must also seek information about public demands through monitoring and oversight, as well as dialogues and consultations with the local community. This in the end enhances accountability and transparency in the governing process thus, strengthening government practices which also ensures anti-corruption.

Social accountability, however, is not a cure to resolving all problems in the government. While it is found to have direct impacts on improving effectiveness in the government (e.g. making public service more responsive and appropriate to people's needs, improving public service delivery and quality of service, etc.), social accountability can successfully address efficiency issues by creating partnered relationships between the government, local level and community. Efficiency has to do with improving internal institutional processes of bureaucracy (human resource, leadership, capacity development, etc.). For social accountability to create long-term impacts on development outcomes, it has to be formalized and integrated to existing governance structures and public service delivery systems.

6.1 Civic Over-sight

A social accountability approach relies on civic engagement, in which ordinary citizens or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly to demand accountability. The basis of participatory budgeting, social audits, citizen report cards, and community score cards are to involve citizens' contributions in the oversight of government. Evidence suggests that social accountability can contribute to improved governance, increased development effectiveness through better service delivery, and empowerment. These improvements cannot be achieved however without understanding and perhaps enhancing the capacities—including skills, attitudes and behaviors—of government and civil society actors.

Citizens or their representatives are able to engage and influence public processes, in order to achieve civic objectives and goals. Civic engagement contains a strong element of participation where stakeholders are active in decision making processes (Malik, and Waglé, 2002).

6.2 Stages of Social Accountability

Social Accountability encompasses a broad range of actions that citizens, communities, independent media, and civil society organizations use to hold public officials and public servants accountable. These actions and mechanisms may fall under any of the following major social accountability tools.

6.2.1 Uses

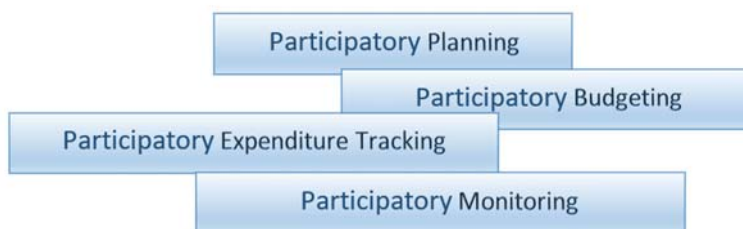


Figure 2: Major Stages of Social Accountability

- a. Identify areas of improvements and/mobilizing entry points
- b. Gather information through different techniques (to engage with evidences and demand for changes);
- c. Hold different debates and disseminating results
- d. Build alliances and supports through lobbying and campaigns to have common voices;
- e. Negotiate for changes through interface meetings and forums (service providers and receivers); and
- f. Monitor on the sustainability of change/s.

6.2.2 Benefits for the Government

- a. Strengthens government policies and effectiveness
- b. Improved governance
- c. Increased development effectiveness
- d. Gains community trust

6.2.3 Benefits for the Community

- a. Ensuring that national and local governments respond to the concerns of the community
- b. Empowering marginalized groups
- c. Responsive local government

6.3 Social Accountability Tools

Explained below are selected social accountability tools that are being widely used in different countries.

6.3.1 Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is broadly defined as a mechanism or process through which citizens participate directly in the different phases of the budget formulation, decision making, and monitoring of budget execution. PB can be instrumental in increasing public expenditure transparency and in improving budget targeting since it is a useful vehicle to promote civic engagement. After the design phase of the budgeting, effective local governments should inform and engage civil society and the community in the PB process, there by involving the community to generate ideas to set priorities before development of the budget.

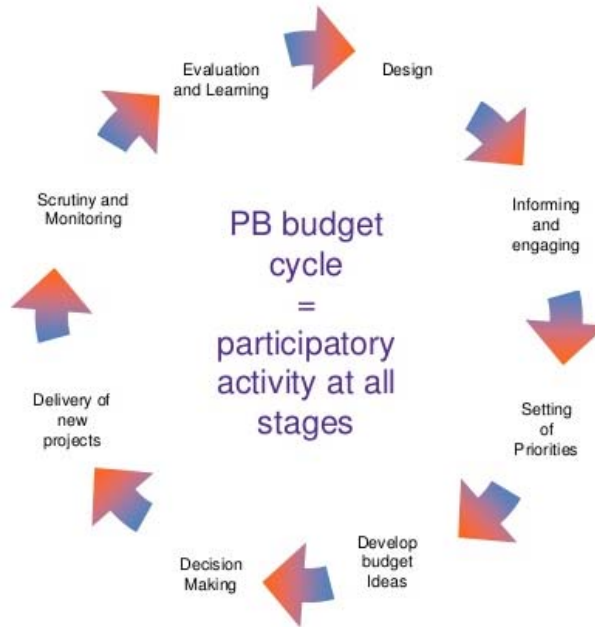


Figure 3: Participatory Budgeting Cycle

Strengths

- a. Maximizes the ability of citizens to identify irregular actions on the part of local government authorities. This is because participation in the PB process exposes citizens to all aspects of the budgeting cycle in their local government.
- b. Reduces the opportunity space for corrupt actions
- c. An effective trust building activity. This is because PB involves intense interaction between citizen and local government officials.

Challenges

- a. Raising false expectations: When the government is not transparent about fiscal information or cannot provide a budget forecast, citizens are unaware of the fiscal constraints and can demand services and goods that the government is not able to deliver.
- b. Tension with elected representatives: Tension is often voiced by elected members of the legislature who fear losing their power as citizens’ representatives.
- c. Sustainability: Citizens have a tendency to abandon PB processes after their demands have been met. Political changes in the administrations can potentially disrupt the PB process, particularly when PB is used as a political tool.
- d. Quality of participation: The knowledge disparities between the poor and the wealthy also affect the quality of participation and equity of final budget priorities.

6.3.2 Citizen Report Cards

This is a participatory survey that assesses users’ feedback on the performance of a specific public service, which collects useful demand-side data. It collects data about Citizen Report Cards (CRCs) are used to collect data about access, availability, quality and satisfaction of public services. It systematically gathers data to check if service providers are doing good and the areas where they need to improve giving a performance reflection mechanism. It is an efficient governance tool, helping people measure and benchmark performance of their (local) government representatives.

For example, it can collect the data to assess the satisfaction of children and parents from the public education system in a specific island. It will reflect upon the existing situation of public education in the island, and will provide specific recommendations to the local political representatives for improvement. CRC is a useful medium through which citizens can credibly and collectively ‘signal’ to agencies about their performance and advocate for change.

Strengths

- a. CRCs can be used to assess either one public service or several services simultaneously.
- b. The feedback can be collected from a large population through careful sampling.
- c. CRCs are quite technical and thus there may not be a need for a major citizen mobilization effort to get the process started.
- d. Perceived improvements in service quality can be compared over time or across various public agencies involved in service provision.

Challenges

- a. CRCs require a well thought out dissemination strategy so that public agencies take note of citizen feedback and take the required action to correct weaknesses.
- b. In locations where there is not much technical capacity, CRCs may be difficult to design and implement.
- c. If there is an error in sampling, the quality of service may not be reflected in the survey results.

6.3.3 Community Score Cards

The Community Score Card (CSC) process is a community-based monitoring tool that is a hybrid of the techniques of social audit and citizen report cards. Like the citizen report card, the CSC process is an instrument to extract social and public accountability and responsiveness from service providers. By linking service providers to the community, citizens are empowered to provide immediate feedback to service providers. Illustrated below is sample of CSC.

A Sample Community Score Card for a Health Centre

Sl. no.	Indicators (in order of importance)	Score out of 100	Scores after 12 months
1	Attitude of staff	20	
2	Affordability of services	50	
3	Availability of medicine	40	
4	Distance to health centre	35	
5	Equal access to the health services for all community members	25	

Figure 4: Sample Community Score Cards

Strengths

- a. This approach can be conducted for one public service or several services simultaneously.
- b. This is a community level process bringing together service providers and users to discuss possible ways of improving service quality.
- c. Perceived improvements in service quality can be compared over time or across various public agencies involved in service provision.

Challenges

- a. CSCs rely on good quality facilitators, which may not always be available.
- b. Reaching out to stakeholders before beginning the scorecard process is critical, but may not always be feasible.
- c. In locations where there is not much local technical capacity, CSCs could be difficult to design and implement.
- d. CSCs cannot be easily applied to large geographical areas.

6.3.4 Social Audit

Social Audit is also one of the methods of social accountability. It is a form of community monitoring that allows citizens who receive a service to review and cross-check the information reported by the service provider against information collected from users of the service. In simple terms, it is way of assessing and evaluating the non-monetary benefits such as participatory engagement, quality or satisfaction of service delivery to the community of the service provider by the community itself. The planning and conducting a social audit is explained in detail in section 9.

7. Inclusive Governance and Right to Information (RTI)

A fair democratic system promotes the participation of civic society in the governance process and use the right to information for its rightful purpose. The service providers and service users such as civic society, the local administration and the government working together to achieve the societal benefits can be called as inclusive governance.

7.1 Characteristics of Inclusive Governance

Governance in general relates to the process of decision-making and how those decisions are implemented for the common benefit of the society. Accountability is an essential characteristic of good governance, where leaders and authorities are accountable for their decisions to people and processes affected by those decisions. When processes are institutionalized, they become a system of governance. Governance is good when it is accountable, transparent, just, responsive and participatory. Some characteristics of good governance include:

- a. Accountability
- b. Existing the right to information
- c. Access to information
- d. Public trust & support

7.2 Importance of Community Participation in Governance

The community participation is about meeting the interests of the whole community irrespective of political diversities. When every member of a community has the chance, directly or through representation, to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of community-level initiatives, there is a higher likelihood that the program accurately reflects their real needs and interests. The approach takes into consideration the different experiences, needs and capabilities of various groups in a community – women and men, youth and the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The community participation helps in mobilization of:

- a. Local governments gain greater credibility with their own constituencies and can better lobby national level decision-makers because they are truly aware of local needs and have local support
- b. Reducing their dependence on outside aid, as they become adept at identifying and solving their own problems
- c. A more stable foundation for breaking cycles of intergroup tension and achieving lasting stability
- d. Preparing for or respond to corruption issues

7.3 Communication for Inclusive Governance

Communication connects citizens, civil society, the media system, and government, forming a framework for national dialogue through which informed public opinion is shaped. According to this definition, the key actors in communication are government, citizens, civil society, and the media system, consisting of both the media professionals and the media environment where they operate. When people can discuss openly and possess all necessary information, they form public opinion. Public opinion is a critical force in governance. Respectful open communication should be encouraged by concerned parties to minimize frictions between politically divided communities that are disastrous to the developments of island communities.

7.4 Importance of Right to Information (RTI)

The citizen participation is a fundamental aspect of a democracy. Citizens cannot participate in the governance of a democratic State without access to information. The constitution provides

freedom of thought and speech, within the tenets of Islam, to its citizens. Thought and speech must be based on valid information, thus the right to access valid information is vital to uphold the constitutional right of thought and speech.

Accessing RTI by the citizens are closely dependent on the transparent processes and actions of the service provider. There is no commonly agreed definition of transparency, but there is a general consensus that it relates to the right to know and public access to information. In a broad sense, transparency is about: how much access to internally-held information citizens are entitled to; the scope, accuracy and timeliness of this information; and what citizens (as "outsiders") can do if "insiders" are not sufficiently forthcoming in providing such access. Excessive secrecy can undermine the quality of public decision-making and prevent citizens from checking the abuses of public power which can negatively impact the governance system and lose confidence in the government. This is why laws and regulations are implemented to protect the rights of the society.

7.5 Right to Information (RTI) in the Maldives

The President of Maldives, H.E. Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom signed the Right to Information Act of Maldives on 11th January 2014 and endorsed the ratification of the Act. Under the Act, information requests are to be answered in 21 days, or 48 hours if the information is relevant to an individual's liberty or protection of a person's life. The Act also provides protection to whistleblowers publishing information regarding corruption or breach of the law.

7.6 Linkage of RTI with Good Governance and Social Accountability

Activity

Discuss and share how the RTI Act can be used to exact information and demand accountability of government officials based on the scenario given below.

Scenario

There is an on-going project at your local school to build new classrooms. You, as representatives of the local community want to ensure the materials being used during the construction phase are of good quality and adequate cost. How will you approach to get the information required for this assessment?

8. Introduction to Social Audit

The social audit is an accountability mechanism where citizens organize and mobilize to evaluate or audit government's performance, processes and policy decisions. In principle the concept of social audit advocates that when the actions of government/public officials are watched and monitored, they feel greater pressure to respond to their constituents' demands and have fewer opportunity to abuse their power. Social audit can be defined as an approach and process to build accountability and transparency in the use and management of public resources. It relies on engagement from citizens and/or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to directly and/or indirectly demand accountability and transparency in the public policy and budget cycles. Some of its uses are given below;

- It is an accountability mechanism to evaluate government performance, processes & policies
- It includes building accountability and transparency in the use and management of public resources
- It relies on engagement from citizens and/or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to demand accountability and transparency in the public policy and budget cycles
- It is participatory, and can be an anti-corruption and efficiency enhancing mechanism.

The concept of the social audit is simple: collect information about public services from the intended beneficiaries and from service providers, and use this as a basis for involving the public and service providers in making changes to improve the services. Application of such a method would help mitigate corruption and ensure confidence in the government performances, process and policies. The scope of social audit activities is very broad, hence for the purpose of this program only limited information is presented in this tool kit.

8.1 Principles of Social Audit

- Multi-Perspective/Poly-vocal: Aims to reflect the views (voices) of all those people (stakeholders) involved with or affected by the organization/department/ programme.
- Comprehensive: Aims to (eventually) report on all aspects of the organization's work, process and performance.
- Participatory: Encourages participation of stakeholders and sharing of their values.
- Multidirectional: Stakeholders share and give feedback on multiple aspects.
- Regular: Aims to produce social accounts on a regular basis so that the concept and the practice become embedded in the culture of the organization covering all the activities.
- Comparative: Provides a means whereby the organization can compare its own performance each year and against appropriate external norms or benchmarks; and provide for comparisons to be made between organizations doing similar work and reporting in similar fashion.
- Verified: Ensures that the social accounts are audited by a suitably experienced person or agency with no vested interest in the organization.
- Disclosed: Ensures that the audited accounts are disclosed to stakeholders and the wider community in the interests of accountability and transparency.

8.2 Benefits of Social Audit

- Keep the community informed about government policies and actions and in articulating citizens' demands and needs that might not be otherwise transmitted through more regular channels
- Inform the government about the potential impact and consequences of public policies

- Verifying consistency between plans/programs/policies and actual results can lead to improvement
- Can also play a critical role as an anticorruption tool
- Effects of social audit in democratic governance

8.3 Successful Initiatives

Project title: Good Governance Practices for the Dominican Republic: encouraging changes in the culture of citizen participation and government management towards fairer, more equitable and participative fiscal policies.

Project date: 1st August 2013 to 31st August 2016

Objectives:

Organized citizens are able to obtain easy-to-understand information about use of resources in the national budget and to use this information to support the improved performance of the public administration.

1. CSOs and citizen movements contribute concrete proposals to the development, implementation and evaluation of public policies, programs and projects.
2. The organizations, civil society movements and State institutions increase their capacity for democratic dialogue and implement collaborative actions aimed at improving performance and quality of public spending.

Expected Outcomes:

Transparency: People are able to get more information about government activities and are able to use this information effectively

Representation and Voice: People have a mechanism and/or policies through which they can voice their concerns to the government and influence policy

Accountability: Governments are more accountable to beneficiaries in delivery of services and in management and use of public resources

Learning for improved Results: GPSA beneficiaries have greater knowledge and practice of social accountability, and civil society organizations have greater capacity to implement social accountability initiatives

Funded by: World Bank

9. Conducting a Social Audit

Explained below are the major steps to conducting a social audit.

9.1 Initiating

9.1.1 Define a Clear Objective

Social audit objectives vary greatly, for example, they can be the quality of health services, the use of targeted public resources, teachers' attendance rates at school, the quality and completion of a government project, or the compliance with legal regulations. What is important is that citizens have a clear idea of what they are monitoring, its relevance, and who within the government is responsible for the service, action, program or decision they are monitoring. Having a clear objective is essential for defining good indicators of government performance and generating adequate information that serves both to inform the community and to provide feedback for public authorities about specific government actions or programs.

9.1.2 Define What to Audit

One of the first steps to designing and implementing social audit activities is to determine what will be the subject of the social audit exercise, and/or determine the entry point. The subject and/or entry point may be of a specific or general nature and may be identified at a local, provincial or national level. For example:

- Policies/Laws/Programs/Plans, such as investment and/or development projects, annual operative plans, access to information, procurement processes and compliance with regulations.
- Specific policy/program topics that are the basis for human development, such as health, education, housing and human rights.
- Public Services is another potential area with a number of possibilities, such as property registration and taxes, public transportation, trash and recycling services, water and sanitation services, courts and judicial services.
- Infrastructure and public works, such as street electrification projects, pavement of streets, and construction of drainage systems.

9.1.3 Establish Person/Organization Responsible for the Social Audit

Once the entry point has been determined, then the stakeholders should be identified. That is, who are going to be the main players involved in the process, including the beneficiaries, government offices and officials, technical advisor and leading social audit group, commission or committee. It is here where the formation and promotion of collaborative relationships between civil society and government, and among CSOs is crucial.

9.1.4 Secure Funding

The funds to carry out the planning and audit process should be obtained through a donor agency, international organizations or the State, as long as there is no conflict of interest. Similarly, the ACC is also initiating this social audit pilot program with the funding from UNDP. Hence, obtaining funding is necessary in the initiation phase.

9.2 Planning

Once the subject of social audit /entry point has been selected, the stakeholders should move to designing the strategy and/or action plan to implement the exercise. In this part of the process, answering how would the exercise be conducted and implemented is a key element.

This plan stage should guide the entire process and at minimum should describe objectives, activities, time framework, responsible entities and/or people, and funding requirements. It would be important at this stage not only to have a realistic budget, but also an analysis of funding and potential gaps and sources to fill those gaps. This is also the stage where CSOs would want to engage donors and other international and national sources of funding. The sequence of steps to implement the social audit process needs to be well articulated and linked to availability of resources.

9.2.1 Selecting Strategy/Methodology/Approach/Tools

At this stage consensus should be formed around a methodology and approach, including means to collect data, and pre-feasibility assessments. Thought should also be given at this stage to the beneficiary community to clearly identify their needs and manage their expectations. Also, deciding who specifically (an ad hoc team, a NGO, a Social Audit Committee and/or Commission) will actually be conducting the exercise is another important element of this stage in the process.

9.2.2 Identifying Stakeholders, Recognizing Viable Entry Points, and Drafting of an Action Plan

Once a common objective has been identified and understood, an action plan needs to be drafted explaining how the monitoring of government performance will take place. This includes, how will the different activities be coordinated, who will be responsible for what; what kind of information needs to be collected; what government agency needs to be approached; and the timeframe for completing the activity.

9.2.3 Understanding Government Decision Making Process

As well as the substantive issues involved in the public policies that are being audited. The more complex the subject matter being analyzed and evaluated, the more technical sophistication is required on the part of social auditing groups. Without this understanding and technical capacity, citizens can make unrealistic evaluations about government performance, can overload the government with unsupported and non-viable requests, and can lose credibility, thus risking generating greater frustration and distrust about the government.

9.3 Implementing

9.3.1 Perform Audit

The plan for the audit process will be implemented and the audit will be performed by the selected person or organization that best guarantees technical expertise and objectivity throughout the process.

9.3.2 Collection and Analysis of Information

Producing relevant information and building credible evidence that will serve to hold public officials accountable, is a critical aspect of social audit. There are a number of tools that can be selected to collect and analyze data for social audit. Nonetheless, generally all aim at obtaining “supply-side” data/information (from government and service providers) and “demand-side” data/information (from users of government services, communities and citizens). On the one hand, social auditors must have accessibility to information from government officials and institutions, and on the other hand, the capacity to obtain and effectively analyze and present the information. When information about particular government policies or activities does not exist, social audits need to develop creative ways to generate useful information, such as surveys, report cards, or even less sophisticated

information sources such as using cameras to photograph the humiliating conditions of public hospital rooms in Mexico or rulers to measure the width of cement applied to local roads in the Dominican Republic.

Often information provided by the government may not always be up to date, and/or it comes in an aggregated and/or unfriendly format. For social audit to be successful, this may involve working with trained specialists in such areas as budget, surveys, and access to information, who can help to unbundle financial information and collect and analyze data using techniques that will guarantee credibility and objectivity. Often at this stage, and with proper training, stakeholders can get involved in the collection of data and in testing systems and services. In any case, the goal is to produce meaningful findings that can be understood by all stakeholders and used to shine a light on a policy/program/service/issue and provide appropriate recommendations. Similarly, evidence shows that any methodological approach that is developed to conduct a social audit must be easily understood by other stakeholders.

9.3.3 Disseminating Findings and Information

Bringing information and findings into the public sphere and generating public debate around them are a key element of most social audit initiatives. The information, analysis and findings produced in a social audit exercise can be key evidence to raise awareness, improve public sector initiatives and/or build support for reform. Reporting and dissemination of results and findings, has to be done in the most constructive way. Definition of a viable communication plan to disseminate the results of the activity, generate broader social support, increase awareness about a particular issue that triggered the social audit and advocate for reform.

The communication plan needs to consider who the appropriate audience is, what is the most appropriate medium of communication, how will the messages be delivered, and who will take responsibility for responding to government and/or citizens' concerns. Effective communication strategies and mechanisms are, therefore, essential aspects at this stage. These may include the organization of press conferences, public meetings and events as well the strategic use of both modern and traditional forms of media.

Transmitting relevant information to government officials who are in a position to act on it (and, ideally, Participation, Procurement, and Municipal Ordinances) to facilitate social audit, and/or providing training on these laws to a variety of audiences, such as national public officials and bureaucrats, mayors, governors, mayors, NGOs and CSOs, and the media to name just a few. Clearly having a grasp of the enforcement boundaries and elasticity of these laws, can create spaces for social audit processes to obtain and get better access to public information, recognition of citizen committees, guidelines for greater citizen participation.

At this stage it is also important to address the concern of sustainability in order to create long-term results. Thus plans should be made to ensure sustainability of the social audit process, beyond the duration of the specific exercise being planned. In addition, it is important at this stage also to think on ways to leverage additional resources in order to institutionalize the process. Social auditing, like any other social initiative, requires financial resources to train and guide participants, conduct particular actions, communicate and disseminate its results, and advocate for change. Therefore, if ultimately, the social audit exercise can demonstrate that it has improved key aspects of public sector management of resources, government efficiency, and democratic citizenship, it may provide sufficient evidence to justify additional funding, even from the public sector.

9.4. Closing

In the closing phase of a project, the following processes of social audit should be carried out for the successful implementation of the outcomes.

9.4.1 Follow-Up

The interaction between government and citizens ultimately promotes interacting directly with those decision-makers on an on-going basis) is also an essential aspect of social audit. Moreover, the reporting and dissemination process must be thought as a dialogue, to establish cooperative partnerships (either informal or formal) between government authorities and citizen groups performing social auditing. Out of this dialogue process, political will for change, action and follow-up if not already present, can begin to develop and/or strengthen.

As mentioned earlier, social audit initiatives are not ends but means to improve democratic governance, policy performance and impact. Therefore, the reporting and dissemination of the analysis and findings are only the beginning of a process and should not only inform citizens about the status of their rights and the impact of policies on them, but also engage their interests and mobilize them to build coalitions and partnerships with different stakeholders (like bureaucrats, media, legislatures, the business sector).

9.4.2 Considering Institutionalization and Sustainability

The mechanisms that bring social audit into completion include basic processes such as how to channel participation and engage policy-makers, to more specialized steps such as a technical mapping of the subject of the social audit exercise. There are often additional technical needs such as understanding pertinent laws.

10. Social Audit Pilot Study

The practical part of this social audit is to assess and evaluate the project Civil Works for Eco-Tourism Facilities development in Fuvahmulah. The employer for this project is Ministry of Employment and Energy, Maldives. This project is carried out under the Climate Change Adaptation (CCAP) funded by the World Bank. The total budgeted amount for the project is equivalent to MVR. 8,883,633.97. The project has been contracted to a private company named ‘A Man Maldives Pvt. Ltd’ on 11th July 2017. The project completion date is given as eight months from the date of contract.

An overview of this project is given below. Further explanations are given in the presentations.

10.1 Objective

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to contribute to improved monitoring and management of environmental risks to fragile coral reefs and other wetland habitats.

10.2 Beneficiaries and Description

The project beneficiaries are the local communities and the council.

The project descriptions include;

1. Establish a protected wetland management system
2. Support the development of ecotourism and other sustainable activities
3. Establish a model for management of the Protected Wetland Area
4. Project time line (refer annex)

10.3 Components and Activities selected for Social Audit

Following are the survey questionnaires and interviews used to undertake the social audit.

1. NGO Training for Social Accountability and Social Audit
2. Community-led Social Audit Pilot Survey
3. Focus group interview for City Council
4. Focus group interview for Protected Area Management Unit (PAMU)
5. Project site survey
6. Public Officials Awareness Program
7. Community Awareness Program

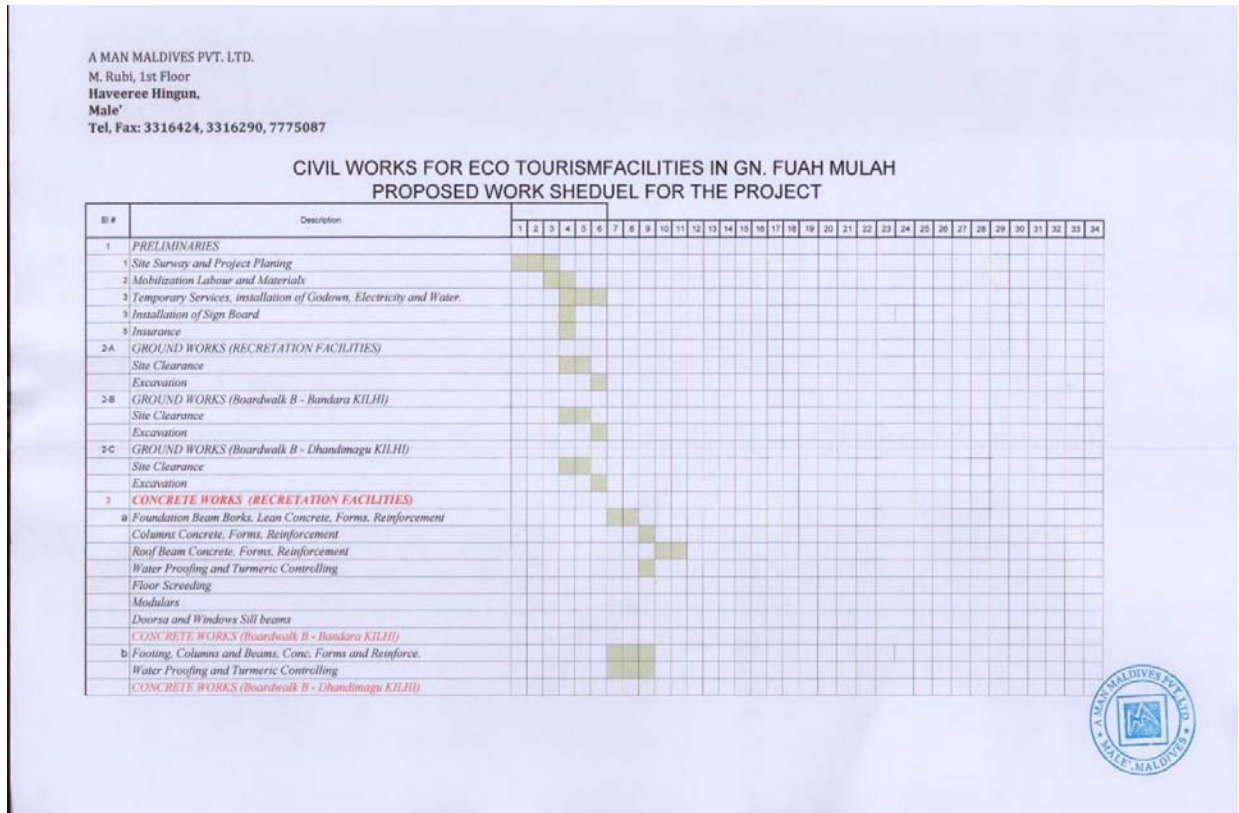
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12. Annex 1: Project Time Line



13. Annex 2: Focus group interview for Protected Area Management Unit (PAMU)

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16. Annex 5: Community-led Social Audit Pilot Survey Questionnaire

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