

Social Accountability Mechanism: Institutionalisation in Public Programmes

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART) and the World Bank jointly organised a two-day workshop entitled, 'Social Accountability in India: Moving from Mechanisms to Outcomes and Institutionalisation in Large Scale Public Programmes' in Jaipur, on December 16-17, 2009 with an aim of strengthening accountability relationships between policy makers, service providers and citizens.

This workshop featured the impacts of social accountability interventions piloted in large-scale public programmes such as *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) etc. in different geographical and cultural context showing its potential and viability to be adopted constitutionally in large scale public programmes for sustained impact. The workshop witnessed the pilots from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan and discussion by eminent experts in the area particular on the issue of need, feasibility etc. of institutionalising these social accountability tools. These initiatives were executed by Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) & Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS).

- ◆ Achieving service delivery and health development outcomes through social accountability interventions in Satara district of Maharashtra
- ◆ Improving student enrolment and teacher absenteeism outcomes through social accountability interventions in Nalgonda and Adilabad districts of Andhra Pradesh
- ◆ Improving the public expenditure outcomes of the NREGS through social accountability interventions in Sirahi district of Rajasthan



These interventions could emphatically put the fact that the investment in these social accountability tools is small in proportion to the budgets of large scale public programmes, but have been able to catalysed certain impacts in terms of behavioural changes in service users and providers as well as development outcomes and thus needs to be institutionalised.

Bharat Singh, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development & *Panchayati Raj*, Government of Rajasthan; Giovanna Prennushi, Economic Adviser, World Bank; Parmesh Shah, Lead Rural Development Specialist, World Bank; and George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS delivered key addresses and remarks in the introductory session.

A N P Sinha, Secretary, Department of *Panchayati Raj*, Government of India and C D Arha, Chief Information Commissioner, Andhra Pradesh addressed the valedictory session followed by concluding remarks of the Parmesh Shah that there is no substitute to mobilise local government and people for greater accountability; there is dire need of investment on both institutions of *Panchayat* and users of services and technical assistance at all levels; there is a need to build some facilitation structure from government and CSOs for nurturing institutions; and need of getting enough legal provisions and strengthen knowledge management structure.

Several other relevant officials from Central and state governments: D K Jain, Joint Secretary, *Panchayati Raj* and Rural Development, Government of India; T R Raghunandan, Principal Secretary, Department of Rural Development & *Panchayati Raj*, Government of Karnataka; B Rajsekhar (IAS), Director, Social Audit, Government of Andhra Pradesh; Mohammad Ali Rafath, State Project Director, SSA, Andhra Pradesh; Siddharth Mahajan, District Collector, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan were key speakers for various sessions along with many delegates from academia, civil society organisations (CSOs), institutes and media enriched the workshop through sharing their experiences and learning.



Media Workshop in Jaipur

A Media Workshop on 'Governance and Accountability' was held in Jaipur on August 28, 2009 in which Guenter Heidenhof (Governance Adviser) and J V R Murty (Water Institutions Development Specialists, WSP-SA) from the World Bank participated as key resource persons. The main objective of the workshop was to sensitise the representatives from the media (both print & electronic) in general about 'governance & accountability' and in specific about various SAc approaches and tools, its potential in improving the efficiency in service delivery and bringing in transparency and accountability in the processes, and in turn, enhancing the public expenditure outcomes.

The expected outcome was more informed reporting by the media on governance and accountability issues and better collaboration with CSOs to advocate with policy makers in efforts to enhance public expenditure outcomes. George spoke about the role of media in 'governance and accountability' issues and Om shared the outcomes from SAc pilots implemented by CUTS in Rajasthan.

Guenter said that good governance is pro-poor and leads to higher growth and investment. He described the role of media



in improving governance by citing the case of Philippines. J V R Murty said that the corruption is the symptom and root cause is poor governance. Pragya Paliwal Gaur, DD News Director and Sunny Sebastian, Special Correspondent, The Hindu made responses along with other media representatives from both Hindi & English print as well as electronic media.



Advocacy Meet in Jodhpur

Divisional Level Advocacy Meeting (DLAM) was held in Jodhpur, on July 16, 2009. The main objective of the meeting was to sensitise the district administration about various SAc approaches and tools. About 200 relevant stakeholders, including Divisional Commissioner J P Chandeliya and District Collector (Jodhpur) Naveen Mahajan and several key officials participated in the event. J P Chandeliya said that the NREGS is a very important development scheme for the people at the grassroots. There is a need of involving community and public representatives for the effective implementation of the scheme as well as ensuring accountability. He appreciated the efforts made by CUTS in this regard. Naveen Mahajan opined that it is a welcome step taken by CUTS to increase the accountability and community participation in various developmental schemes.

Advocacy Meet in Kota

A DLAM was held in Kota, on August 19, 2009. About 70 relevant stakeholders including Kamla Meena, *Zila Pramukh* and D R Meena, Chief Executive Officer, *Zila Parishad* and several key officials participated in the meeting. Kamla Meena said that due to lack of transparency and accountability in governmental schemes, many people do not get expected benefits. There is a need to make social audit effective in various schemes. D R Meena said there is need to involve public representatives in development schemes. George Cheriyan and Om Prakash Arya made presentations on the 'SAc Approaches' and 'Outcomes of SAc Pilots' respectively.



CUTS Interventions in the Area of Social Accountability

CUTS CART first time piloted SAc approaches in the context of MDMS in Rajasthan. The objective of this pilot is to test the potential of this mechanism in assessing the implementation of the MDMS at the district level. This involves a mix of the Participatory Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) and Citizen Report Card (CRC) tools. PETS is meant for tracking expenditure releases and spending while CRC is meant for interviewing students, parents, teachers, cooks to gauge outcomes, satisfaction levels and shortfalls (CRC method). This approach was executed in Chittorgarh district where CUTS has considerable field presence. The dissemination of the pilot findings had resulted in a number of changes in the implementation of the MDMS, such as timely transfer of funds,



improvement in quality of food grains and basic infrastructure and increased involvement of teachers/parents in the school processes.

The Centre's second pilot addressed the lack of public awareness and participation in the flagship wage employment guarantee programme of the Government of India – the NREGS. A combination of two social accountability tools – Community Score Card and CRC – gathered feedback from NREGS wage seekers as well as state-level government functionaries on NREGS and initiated a series of behavioural and institutional changes. A District-level technical committee has been formed to measure the technical feasibility of the *Gram Panchayat* proposals and a Task Force is set up to explore more comprehensive convergence of NREGS.

About CAPSAC

CUTS CART has applied the approaches of social accountability through its two consecutive pilot projects over the period of three years for assessing the effectiveness of implementation of Mid-day Meal Scheme (MDMS) and NREGS in Rajasthan, with the aim of judging the potential of the SAc approaches in influencing the public expenditure outcomes. The pilots have proved the potential of these social accountability (SAc) approaches and influenced policy makers by triggering a lot of changes.

The dissemination of the pilots has created an enabling environment for generating demand in the supply-side constituency. Thus, the decision makers have started showing genuine interest in it and also recognised the strength in achieving good governance. To strengthen



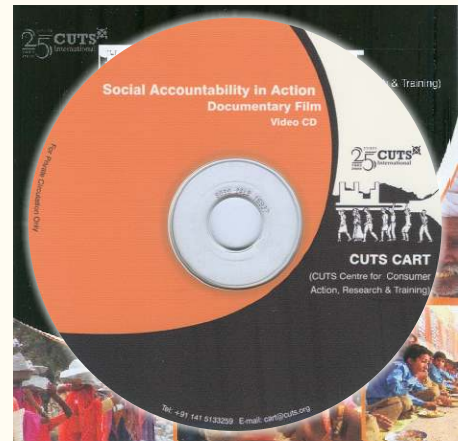
this generated urge in the supply side constituencies, a strategic communication and dissemination project '**Crafting Market for SAc Tools & Approaches in Supply-side Constituencies through Strategic Communication and Dissemination (CAPSAC)**' was designed and implemented in Rajasthan.

The activities under the project included two divisional level advocacy meetings at Jodhpur and Kota, media workshop, a documentary narrating the potential of SAc tools in influencing policies etc. and a national level workshop on 'Social Accountability in India'. These activities could further propelled the environment building process and drawn more attention and interest of decision makers to institutionalise such mechanisms.

Showcasing Pilots to Influence Policies

[A documentary Film on Social Accountability in Action]

A documentary film highlighting the interventions made by CUTS CART in the area of social accountability is produced showing processes, evidences from the field and narrating the experiences for wider dissemination of pilot results.



ACCOUNTABILITY IN MEDIA

Accountability structures still weak in India

HT Correspondent

JAIPUR: The benefits of development schemes are not reaching the target groups even though social accountability tools like social audits are being used to monitor them because of corruption, nepotism, and lack of political stability and effectiveness of institutions.

and Institutionalized Scale Public Program workshop has been organized by CUTS.

According to leading rural specialist at the workshop, social audits are being used to monitor them because of corruption, nepotism, and lack of political stability and effectiveness of institutions.

India has more control over corruption: World Bank

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: The World Bank rates India better in aspects of accountability, control of corruption, rule of law and regulatory quality than China but the country lags behind the latter in the bank's perception on political stability and effectiveness of institutions.

ulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption," said Guenter Heidenhof, Government Advisor to World Bank, during his recent visit here.

Political corruption

He attributed the breakdowns in governance to political corruption, nepotism, weak institutions and lack of performance.

nance in India, Mr. Heidenhof said the country fared better in most of the major aspects of good governance during the period between 1998 and 2006, while in some aspects it recorded a slight deterioration between 2006 and 2008. In accountability its position improved considerably on a scale of 100 in 2006 but remained static thereafter till 2008. In political stability there was a slight deterioration between 2006 and 2008.

tiveness of the country's governance, pointed out that after 1998-2006 to cross 55 points it went down marginally in 2008. In regulatory quality India registered a steady progress from 1998-2006 to cross 55 points it went down marginally in 2008. In regulatory quality India registered a steady progress from 1998-2006 to cross 55 points it went down marginally in 2008. In regulatory quality India registered a steady progress from 1998-2006 to cross 55 points it went down marginally in 2008.

Two-day Workshop

Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS International) in partnership with the World Bank will organize a two day workshop on Social Accountability in Action.

Stress on good governance

World Bank Governor Advisor Guenter Heidenhof said, "Good governance is pro-poor and leads to higher growth and investment." Heidenhof was presenting the thematic presentation on governance and accountability.

'Good governance leads to higher growth'

Fighting corruption seen as interference: World Bank official

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: Representatives of the World Bank at a workshop on accountability here have expressed the view that the bank's attempts at fighting corruption in the Government's welfare schemes often get interpreted as acts of "interfering".

Emphasises the need for community activism to extract more accountability

The two-day workshop, organized jointly by CUTS (Consumer Unity & Trust Society) International and the World Bank's South Asia Sustainable Development Department, discussed social accountability in-terventions in-cluding social audits and community activism to extract more accountability.

more people themselves demanding a more transparent functioning of the Government would be forced to act, he said. "The biggest draw is when we are not at all satisfied with the way things should be punished," Singh said promising to check corruption in NREGS.

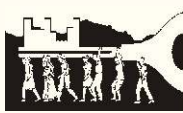
George Cheriyan, director, CUTS International, while introducing the theme noted that some of the accountability interventions in-cluding social audits and community activism to extract more accountability.

Accountability in India: Moving from Means to Outcomes and Large Scale Public Programs



जवाबदेहिता पर पिछड़ा देश

जयपुर, 16 दिसंबर। ग्रामीण विकास एवं पंचायतीराज मंत्री भरत सिंह ने कहा कि देश ने आजादी के बाद ही जवाबदेहिता के मुद्दे पर देश निश्चिंत नहीं रहा। उन्होंने कहा कि सामाजिक विकास योजनाओं और कार्यक्रमों पर व्यय को गंई राशि के उचित रूप में संबोधित कर रहे थे। विश्व बैंक की आर्थिक सलाहकार गियोवाना प्रेनुशी ने कहा कि विश्व बैंक के अंतर्गत कार्यक्रमों पर व्यय पर बेहतर परिणाम सुनिश्चित करने के लिए सामाजिक योजनाओं पर किए गए व्यय को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए यह सब



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