

**Extracting the
learning from CSC
implementation
through evaluation**



CUTS in partnership with ANSA SAR

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Executive Summary

This report provides the results of an evaluation study conducted for a part of a project “Developing a culture of good governance and accountability in the state of Rajasthan, India through involving CSOs and building their capacity with a focus on improving the public expenditure outcomes” concluded in March 2012. The project was implemented by the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) in partnership with Affiliated Network of Social Accountability – South Asia Region (ANSA SAR) during 2010-12. This report is based on the evaluation of the outcomes of Community Score Card (CSC) implemented under the aforesaid mentioned projects and documents the objectives, methodology, findings, limitations, issues and influence observed during the study.

Before we move to the findings of evaluation report, it would be pertinent to know about the project in brief. With an objective of taking strategic action against the fast spreading culture of anti-governance practices, the project attempted to build a cadre of people from CBOs in all 33 district of Rajasthan province of India having understanding of the issues related to the governance and use of social accountability (Sac) approaches for improving governance. This project had envisaged to build the capacity of the representatives of local CBOs and to equip them with adequate hands on experience and resources required for applying social accountability approaches. 66 representatives of 66 organizations, two from each 33 districts were trained in CSC and provided with hands-on experience through field exercise by directly going to the field. After training, these trained people conducted CSC once in MGNREGS in their respective *Gram Panchayat* to achieve various objectives including the major aim of improving service delivery delivered under MGNREGS.

Here it would be ideal to note that the trained people from CBOs only tested their learning of community score card (CSC) once in a *gram panchayat* to see its potential of improving implementation of MNREGS in their locality. The evaluation is done for gathering the glimpses of outcome achieved through the implementation of CSC.

Objective of the evaluation

The overall purpose of this evaluation is to derive and document the learning from the intervention of implementing CSC in MGNREGS to expand the social accountability knowledge circle. The evaluation sought to assess the initial outcomes in order to indicate the achievement of the intended goals along with unintended developments, identify the key challenges and constraints faced in the programme and how the implementation of social accountability approach in variety of context perform towards improving governance and attaining improved development outcomes.

Methodology for evaluation

The evaluation process involved the approach of comparison of experimental vs. control group. Experimental group is where CSC process had taken place during the intervention and control group where CSC process had not taken place. A comparative study was conducted to see the difference found between both the places and the also to bring out reasons for differences found. There were 11 experimental as well as 11 controlled groups taken for the study. Since evaluation was not part of the design of the project, hence both the experimental and controlled groups were selected afterwards.

To do this comparative study, 3 kind of quantitative and qualitative tools - interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and repeat score card (a component of CSC)- were utilized. Repeat Score Card could be utilized in the Experimental Group only; however interviews and FGDs were utilized in both the groups. The findings were shared to the relevant stakeholders through a stakeholders' consultation process for getting their feedback and probable explanation of the findings brought out. The comments were incorporated in the final evaluation report.

The evaluation study was implemented during July - September, 2012.

Key findings

1. The community was found more aware in the experimental group and especially on those provisions which are not revealed by the service providers generally but it was not in significantly high quantum. For example, awareness on dated application receipt, provision of application in groups, unemployment allowances, and travel allowances if going to work for more than 5 km etc.
2. CSC has been instrumental in improving the status of execution of component of services under NREGS but not the overall services.
3. Analysis of data could also establish the fact of enhancement of citizens' engagement in the process of implementation like prioritizing the work to be held under NREGS, attending the *gram sabha* meetings conducted under MGNREGS etc.
4. It was also found that people are more vocal in expressing their problems to the service providers and the evaluators during discussion. The positive difference was obvious in experimental and control group with regard to citizen engagement with CSO and government entities.
5. Surprisingly, it was found that the experimental group had lesser percentage of people in good relationship with service providers than in controlled group. This came as a finding of the interviews but was not was not obvious during FGDs.
6. The status of governance was reported poor in experimental than in the controlled group. The people experimental group were also found reporting about the need of paying bribes under MGREGS.

Conclusion

Overall, the evidence for positive results of the assessment is scattered and generally not very enthusiastic. Actually, it was unrealistic to expect considerable results of changed behaviour, improved governance, relationship between the providers & beneficiaries and improved status of service delivery with the implementation of one time community score card process. While significant positive results with regard to resolving the local issues related to services under MNREGS were achieved, the findings show adverse effects of CSC on governance and relationship is also there. Hence the evaluation produces mixed evidences of positive and adverse results.

Introduction

Over the past two decades, donors and development aid agencies alike have invested heavily in participatory development. The World Bank alone has allocated almost \$85 billion to participatory projects and decentralization efforts¹. Other development agencies—bilateral donors and regional development banks—have probably spent at least as much. Driving this massive injection of funding has been the underlying belief that participatory programs enhance the involvement of the poor and the marginalized in community-level decision-making bodies in order to give citizens greater say in decisions that affect their lives.

Social accountability tools are designed to continuously engage community in the process of distributing the resources through the implementation of various schemes and programmes for the purpose of improving accountability. Civil society organizations again found it as a way forward for improving service delivery, accountability among the public servants, transparency and governance leading towards the resources reaching to the intended population. With gradual advocacy from CSOs the governments too, are in the process of adopting the process of civic engagement for maximising development outcomes.

This evaluation report is based on the findings, issues and progress observed during an assessment study of social accountability tool utilized in the project “Developing a culture of good governance and accountability in the state of Rajasthan, India through involving CSOs and building their capacity with a focus on improving the public expenditure outcomes “implemented by the CUTS in partnership with Affiliated Network of Social Accountability – South Asia Region (ANSA SAR) during 2010-12. The brief description of the project is outlined here:

Project Description

The project attempted to build the intermediary agencies having understanding of the issues related to the governance and social accountability approaches. This project envisages building a cadre people equipped with the resources required for applying their understanding for improving the service delivery provided by local government. These intermediary agencies rigorously trained in using Community Score Card – A social accountability tool to engage service recipients and providers for improving the services jointly a local level – those tested their learning for improving the implementation of MNREGS in their locality and also form a network to share their experiences during usage of the tools. They also lobby together for bringing necessary changes based on the issues emerged in the CSC.

Objective

The central purpose of this evaluation was to gather and document the lessons learned, the best practices and the recommendation which arise from the whole intervention that can expand the social accountability knowledge circle with the aim of offering better guidance to other social accountability work on grounds. The other purpose of the

¹“Localizing Development: Does Participation Work,” a World Bank Policy Research Report published in November 2012

evaluation was to assess the initial outcomes marked through the aforesaid project in order to indicate the achievement of the intended goals along with unintended developments, identify the key challenges and constraints faced in the programme and mainly to derive learning from the implementation of social accountability approach towards improving governance and attaining improved development outcomes. The final objective of the evaluation was to establish how relevant were the activities of social accountability approaches, bearing in mind the socio-political context of the places.

Methodology

Since this is an evaluation of considerably large scale (66 community score card in the project area) it was not felt necessary to carry out an examination of every individual CSC. For reasons of time and budget too, it was not possible to consider all the CSC under the project. Consequently, it was decided to undertake around 20 percent of the CSC for the study. It was decided to review eleven CSC and use participatory tools at both experimental as well as the controlled places to compare and assess the situation. Then the results achieved were noted, discussed with a relevant group of stakeholders, the successes and difficulties were identified, as were the conditions, which could promote or jeopardize the actions. From there, the main lessons or teachings were drawn, forming the conclusions.

The evaluation process involved the approach of comparison of experimental vs. control group. Experimental group is where CSC process was taken place during the intervention and control group where CSC process had not taken place. A comparative study was conducted to see what and why the differences could be made at both places and also to bring out reasons why the differences could not be made. There were 11 experimental as well as 11 controlled groups taken for the study.

To do this comparative study, 3 kind of quantitative and qualitative tools – interviews (40 MGNREGS workers in each experimental and control group, in total; 880 interviews), focus group discussions (FGDs) and repeat score card with programme participants along with the other MNREGS workers in experimental group and interviews and FGDs in control group – could be utilized. Local surveyors oriented by the CBOs identified for the evaluation study from the CBOs who implemented CSC conducted the interviews. Stakeholders were consulted through a stakeholders' consultation process for getting feedback and probable explanation of the findings brought out through interviews and FGDs. The comments were incorporated in the final evaluation report.

The evaluation study was implemented during July - September, 2012.

The problem of selection bias

CSC is a tool which needs consent of front level service providers responsible for the particular service for its implementation. The selection of the places (*Gram Panchayat*) to conduct CSC under the project was based on 1) earlier rapport of the trained CBOs with the citizens and the service providers in the catchment area 2) getting the consent of the service providers to conduct the score card 3) the socio-political atmosphere of the place because in this case local *sarpanch*, who is a political body, was one of the service

providers and 4) visible problems in quality implementation of MGNREGS. The whole purpose of mentioning it is to understand that the selection of places to conduct CSC was not random.

While selecting the places to be included in the control group, the *Gram Panchayat* which were adjacent to the *Gram Panchayat* of treatment group were considered so that it can match with socio-economic condition and other factors like distance from dist. Headquarter, geographical condition etc. But these were not exactly similar *Gram Panchayat* and their nature varied in several aspects. Hence the results arrived could not be completely attributed to the intervention and in case the results could not be achieved, the intervention could not be completely blamed for.

Status on Ground regarding implementation of MGNREGS

Providing a job security to each rural family for 100 days in a year through MGNREGS has finally become a fading dream for both the local providers and the recipients. Even after 6 years of inception of implementation of MGNREGS, the system could not be structured in a way where 100 days job can be a guaranteed phenomenon and people can exercise it without hassles. The implementation is continuously deteriorating and various changes brought to improve the implementation from the higher level go un-embraced at the ground level. Everybody at lower level talks about the prevalence of corruption at the higher level and make it an excuse for their involvement in the same.

The MGNREGS is stopped at many places because of many reasons. One of them is too much use of information technology to track the misappropriation and many people in need have forgotten MGNREGS. In such a scenario, the implementation of CSC had limitations to bring results. The improvement of service delivery can happen only if the implementation occurs. However, there are some encouraging results after the implementation of MGNREGS but before that it would be helpful to understand the status on ground.

Issues related to Application for Jobs

Application forms are not easily available in most of the *gram panchayat*. Job application is not accepted orally as earlier. So an illiterate person requiring jobs under MNREGS may need to visit the photo-copy shop and pay for the services of making the application form available and filling it. Even after availing this paid service, applicants do not get the dated receipt for submitted application. Since the unemployment allowances have to be provided by state government by NREGA guidelines, the government officials are discouraged to leave any scope for unemployment allowances.

Wage less than the minimum official wage

There is severe shortage of jobs under the scheme due to negligence from the side of implementing agency. The reason behind this negligence is the benefit is not proportionate to the effort need to be made for implementing the scheme by front line service providers. The existence of certain accountability measures in the scheme is also one reason.

Due to shortage of work, wage seekers are not able to get enough supply for their demand of jobs. This leads a sort of competition among the job seekers and nobody, especially poor and marginalised who really are in need of jobs dares to go against the government officials.

Labourers are divided in the group of five for execution of MNREGS work and daily measurement has to be done by *mate* and to be noted on a prescribed sheet of paper which should remain with labourers. For formation of the group, wage seekers need to apply in group of five. Wage seekers apply in group of their choice, but when the final list come after processing, they do not get the group of their choice. They are informed that this has happened due to computer and they cannot do anything in this regard.

The group which finally listed on the muster roll, many times it includes the name of old, disables, or the people of higher caste who either is not able to perform their task or they don't perform deliberately. Secondly, however this group exists on paper, in reality the group work concept is not in practice and measurement is done on collective basis.

Measurement is not done properly. In some cases, junior technical assistant does the measurement even without visiting the worksite and blames about severe workload on them. However, the MNREGS guidelines allow the reduced task in case of digging the hard soil, but it was not being considered in some cases. Due to wages lower than minimum wage and delay in payments, the real wage seekers are forced to travel to the city and work in mines etc. and get exploited.

Delay in wage payment

Across the state Rajasthan, serious delays in the payment of NREGA have been witnessed. Apart from violating the law (the Act stipulates that wages be paid within 15 days of work being done), delays cause great hardship to NREGA labourers. When wages are delayed, they are forced to resort to lower-paid or exploitative employment, and even distress migration. The delays cause reducing interest of labourers in employment provided under the Act.

Now the administration plays blame game on banks and post offices for the delays. Government officials often claim that they do their work in a timely manner but the banks and post offices are unable to cope with the volume of payments.

However, in rural banks and post offices, where number of employees is less, it is difficult to process payments in quick manner, but it is also true that these employees are not adequately sensitized and generally create problems deliberately for the NREGS labourers. They don't understand that their bank and post offices are getting huge profit out of interest due to the scheme. In one case, it was found that the official asks the all family members at the bank to sign the withdrawal before releasing the money as this is a joint account. In another case, the one man run cooperative bank generally do not open the bank every working day.

Delay in payment is also caused by lack of motivation among service providers to speed up the process of implementation as embezzlements in MNREGS have become difficult. Even if the implementing agency expands measurements and fills fake names in the

muster roll, they need to collude with the labourers/job card holders in order to embezzle the fund as the money goes directly in to the accounts of the labourers.

100 days' work to every rural household

As mentioned earlier, implementing agencies are showing ignorance in the implementation of MNREGS as the money goes to the account directly. Secondly, the village *panchayat (GP)* have exhausted most of the *kuchcha* work and generally find it difficult to propose work under the criteria given to them.

Even after repetitive request and applying for work for complete 100 days, many of the families are not getting jobs. A GP consists of 5-6 villages and job card holder of one particular GP can get jobs in any of these villages. In some cases, it was found that the labourers from one village experiences protest when they are given job in other village as the villagers of the village, where work is going on, are not given work as per their demand. This happens because of the shortage of jobs in the GP.

Most of the labourers are women. They need to complete their household chores before moving to the worksite. Since Rajasthan is geographically wide and villages are situated at distance, it becomes difficult for women to complete their household chores, work under NREGS, return their home and then again complete their evening work and thus they are not able to travel long.

People are gradually losing their interest due to several reasons. People don't have ownership among work done due to no consultation in *Gram Sabha* members during proposal making. Proposals are formulated based on political influences made by elected representatives without consultation of villagers.

Worksite management

Other than the drinking water facilities and first aid box, in most cases, the facilities of shade and crèche had been reported to be absent at the worksites. Water was also found not adequately available at many worksites. It was informed that the main problem behind making these facilities available is to carry them to the worksite. In most places at Rajasthan, water is a scarce commodity and not available everywhere. To fulfil the need of water for a group of 40 labourers (One person is assigned for making water available to 40 labourers) huge quantity of water is required especially in summer season but to carry that to the worksite no allocation is made. The tent and crèche given to the GP can also not be carried out by a single person.

The behaviour of the service providers (*Mate, Gram panchayat* officials, Bank & post office service providers) are also sometimes discriminating. The caste, power and other factors determine their behaviour. The people of higher cost generally do not work at the worksite. The measurement for the work done is done on collective basis which results in to exploitation of the real wage seekers and thus loss of faith in MNREGS.

The measurement of work done is critical to the wage payment to the labourers and that should be on time in order to release payment on time. Many a times, there is huge workload on the technical assistants and engineers. This gives them excuse to do the measurement without visiting the worksite. In some cases they also inflates the

measurement in order to enhance the wage rate and this further hamper creation of assets for the livelihood generation as per the objectives of MNREGS

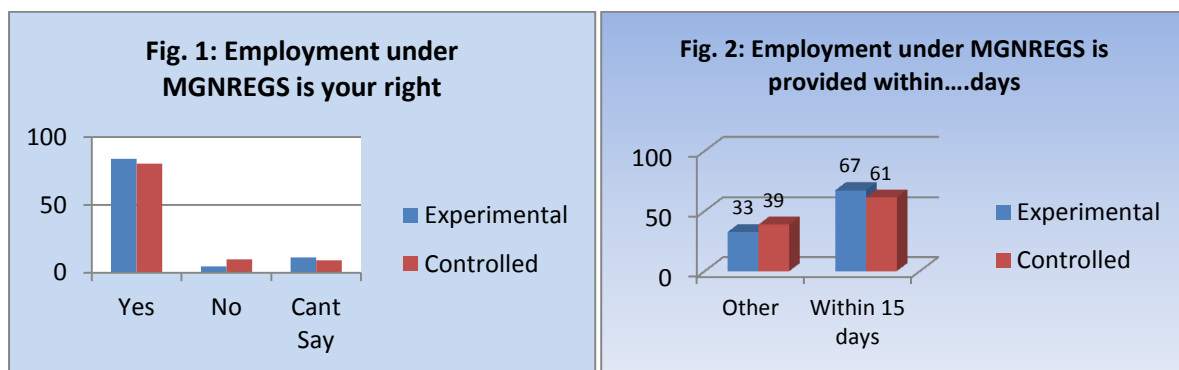
Key findings

Since the CSC tool is effective at lower level of service delivery and very effective in engaging service providers as well as the recipients, it was envisaged that there will be achievement of several objectives like 1) Generating awareness on the entitlements of the programme, 2) improving community participation 3) improving service delivery and resolving immediate MGNREGS concerns 4) improving relationship between service providers and recipients 5) enhancing citizen-government engagement and some larger goals like 6) improving governance etc. through the implementation of community score card by trained CSOs representatives.

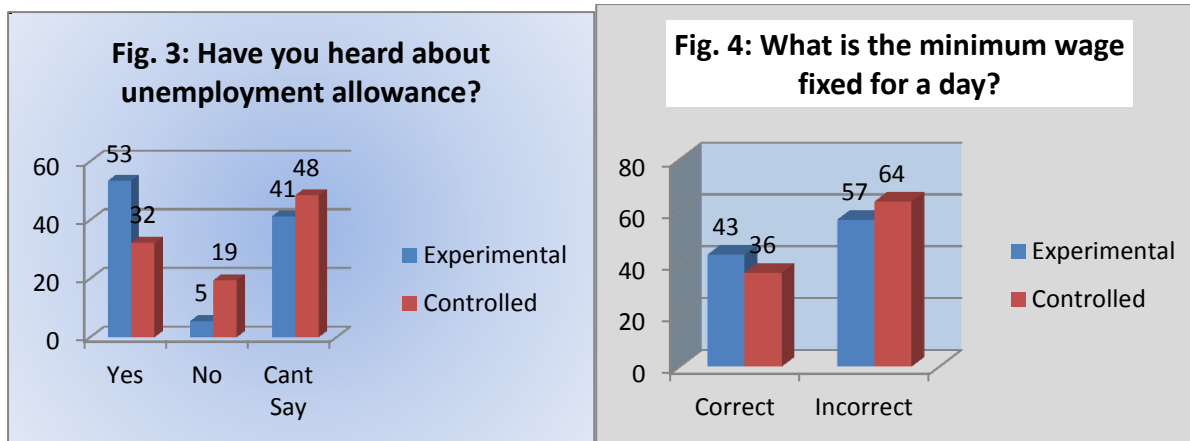
The purpose of this evaluation study is to see the effectiveness of CSC in achieving the objectives. The findings of CRC with qualitative inputs from FGDs and repeat score card are described below.

Generating Awareness:

The community in the experimental group was found more aware on the rules, wages, entitlements and the procedures adopted in MGNREGS than the community in control group. The community in experimental group was having more awareness especially on those provisions which are generally not revealed by the service providers. For example, awareness on dated application receipt, provision of application in groups, unemployment allowances, and travel allowances if going to work for more than 5 km etc. However, the level of awareness was found better among places under experimental group, but not in significantly high quantum.

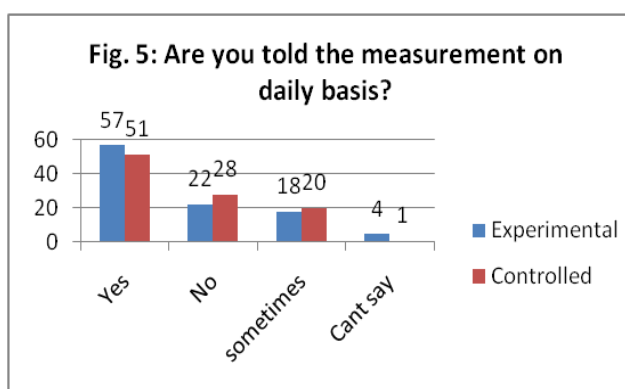


While conducting the FGDs, it was found that workers in experimental group were more aware and vocal about the prevailing situation of MGNREGS. The activity of input tracking under CSC has made them aware about the procedure like budget allocation and expenditure. The workers were informed about the specific entitlements such as unemployment benefits and worksite facilities. The information helps in empowering workers to demand their rights, also adjudge performance of the service providers, but in many cases it was found that even after the information, people were found helpless in getting their entitlements. The degree of enhancement in voice power is not always proportional to the degree of awareness and many times it depends on the context.



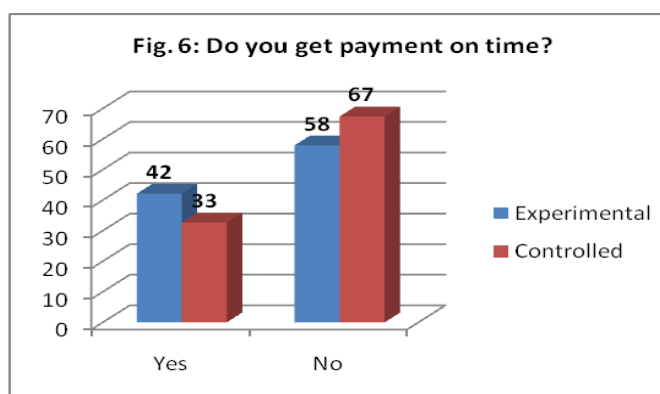
Gradual Improvement in MGNREGS service delivery:

Whether it is the case of applying for getting work in MGNREGS or demanding for dated receipt or getting payment on time or about informing measurement of the work done to the workers, it was found that CSC has been instrumental in improving the status of execution of component of services under NREGS but not the overall services.



The service delivery could be improved to the extent through action plan generation during interface meeting of CSC, as reported by several beneficiaries and CBOs in the repeat score card.

During the focus group discussion, it was revealed that the community benefitted from the CSC process. Once they committed for bringing some improvement in service delivery or resolving some concerns of people regarding MGNREGS implementation, the providers were compelled to answer the community about the progress. Collective bargaining also became one of the ways forward to get resolved he issues. Earlier, when the *panchayat* officials were approached individually, it was easier to give an excuse for non-performance. The collective interaction happened during interface meeting of the CSC provided people with significant voice power and they feel more confident in asking questions in the experimental group than in control group.

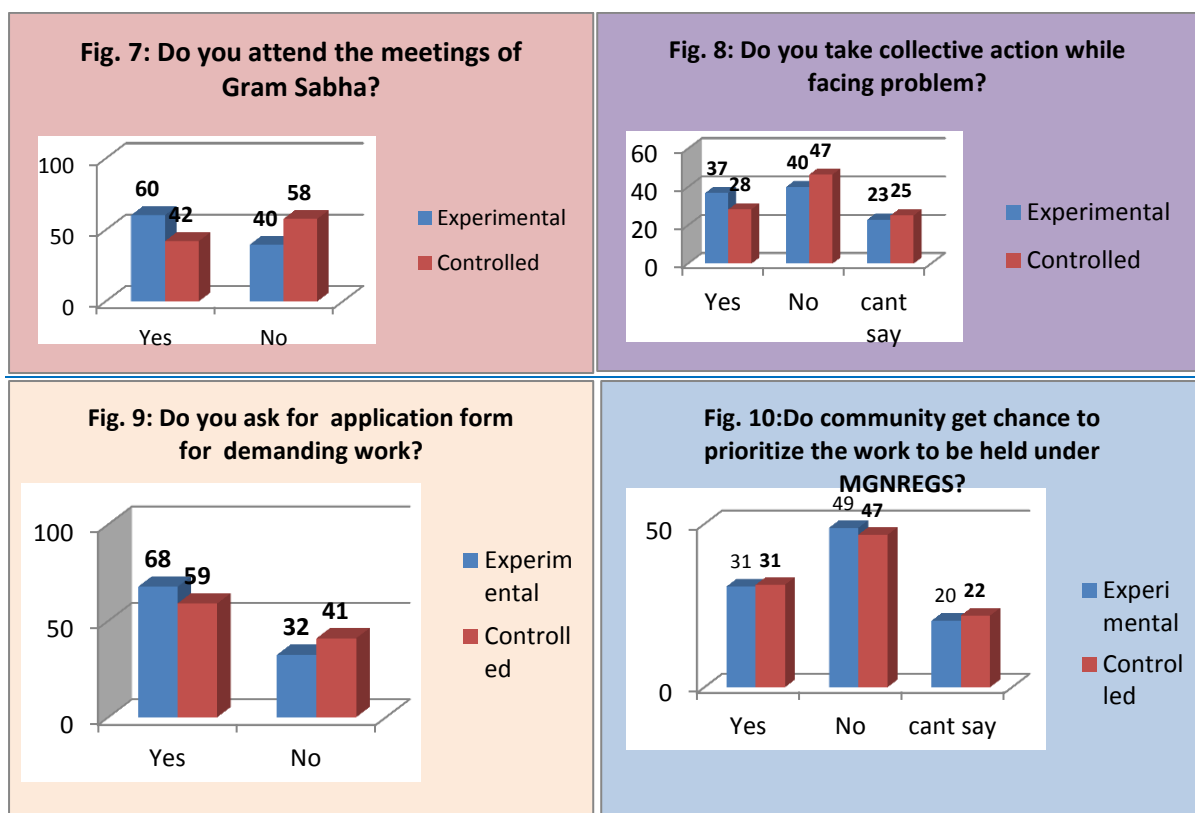


Consolidating the experiences of the CBOs, it came as a fact that there is at least partial improvement in service delivery through the use of CSC and big changes cannot be

expected from one CSC in the area particular. More permanent changes can be brought with regular use of CSC.

Citizens' engagement in the implementation process:

Analysis of data could also establish the fact of enhancement of citizens' engagement in the process of implementation process like prioritizing the work to be held under NREGS, attending the *gram sabha* meetings conducted under MGNREGS, community putting the point of their interest collectively to get the problems resolved under NREGS. It was also found that people are more vocal in expressing their problems to the service providers and the evaluators during discussion. The positive difference was obvious in experimental and control group with regard to citizen engagement with CSO and government entities.

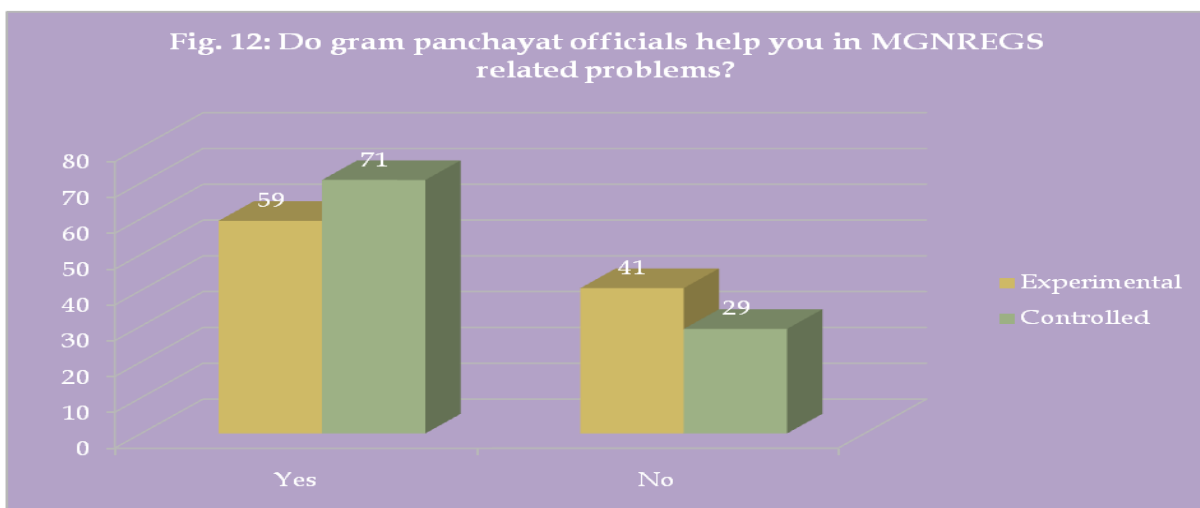
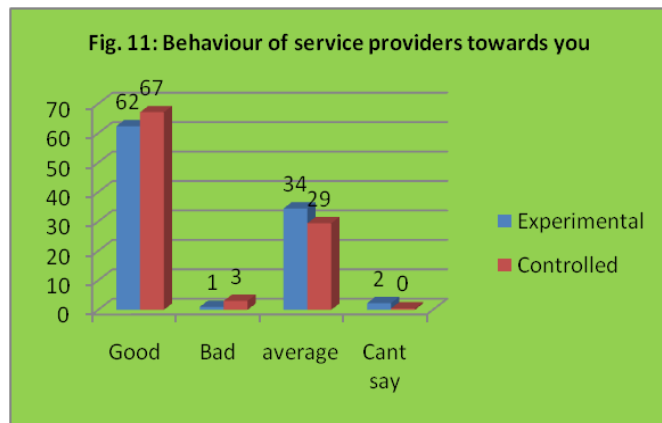


Interface meetings have deepened interaction between the citizens and service providers. In a closed governance structure, where people did not feel comfortable in individually interacting with the service providers, interface meetings gave the opportunity to collectively express their concerns and develop an action plan for the community. Interactions with the beneficiaries suggest that the earlier when the service providers were approached individually by the beneficiaries, it was easier for the *panchayat* to make an excuse, however, in a meeting, the service providers are obligated to give an answer to the concerns raised by the people.

Further, the community believed that the relationship between the community and service providers has improved. The attitude of service providers to ignore beneficiaries or procrastinate in resolving their problems has changed to an extent.

Relationship between service providers and service recipients:

However, one of the major outcome of the implementation of CSC is to improve the relationship between citizens and the service providers, surprisingly, it was found that the experimental group had lesser percentage of people in good relationship with service providers than in controlled group. This came as a finding of the interviews but was not obvious during FGDs. It may be possible that the service providers feel more irritated due to awareness and questions on citizen's side after CSC. It was also found that that less percentage of people in experimental group are satisfied with the help provided by service providers than in controlled group. But if these are not the reasons for poor relationship, one of the major objectives of CSC remained counter-productive.



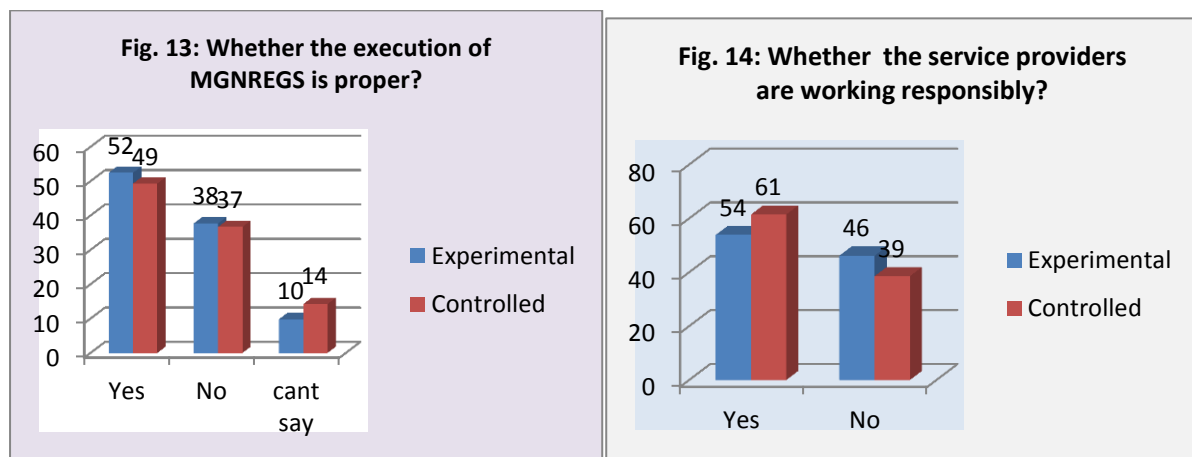
The political situation had been very contrast in case of several *gram panchayats*. Due to revolving electoral system, the seat of the *gram panchayat* get reserved for the candidates of a particular category (women, SC,ST) for the period of five years. The candidate from particular category can only fight election from the *gram panchayat*. This system creates a very different political scenario at many places. In such a contrast situation, the dynamics of the relationship between *sarpanch*, village secretary and community residing in the *gram panchayat* is very difficult to understand. The relationship between the community and service providers remained a puzzle.

The other reason for deteriorating relationship in the experimental group may be the increase in voice power of the community and development of a questioning attitude which the service providers do not like generally. It may be possible that the service providers feel more irritated due to awareness and question on citizen's side after CSC.

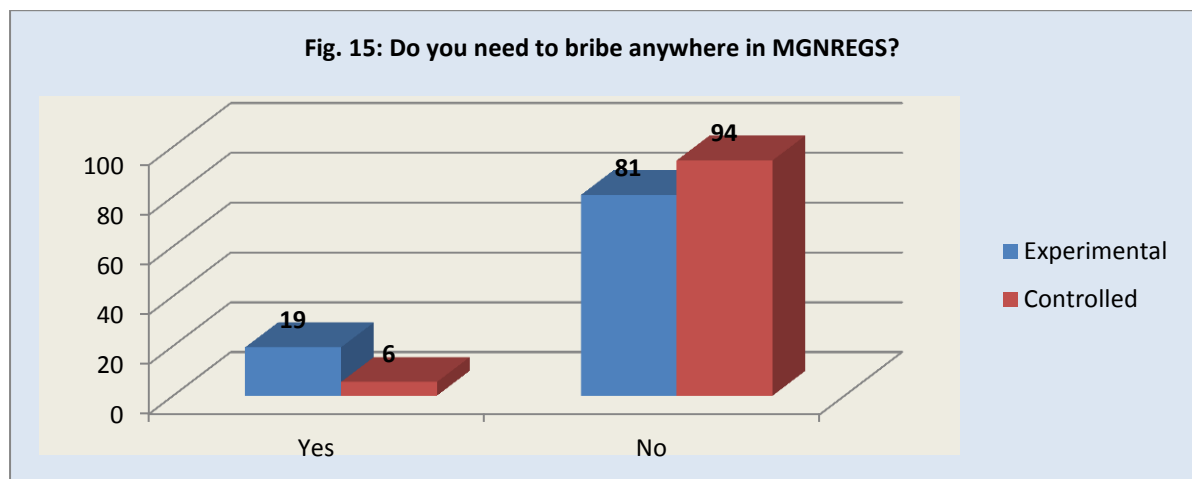
In stakeholders' consultation meeting, it came out as an analysis that the relationship may get better in long term as the long term effect on both the providers and recipients would certainly be better, but it is bound to deteriorate initially.

Governance and accountability:

The status of governance was reported poor in experimental than in the controlled group. The people experimental group were also found reporting about the need of paying at occasions under MGREGS. This finding was surprising as it indicates that situation is more difficult in case of experimental group. The controlled group was found better in cases of execution, accountability and corruption.



However, the overall condition with respect to governance and accountability depends on many external factors in experimental and controlled group; this can also be interpreted as increase in voice power of beneficiaries to open up and speak out about the poor accountability, behaviour of service providers and corruption that was not the case earlier.



One problem expressed by community was their reluctance to make any complain regarding poor governance. The members of the community said that they don't like complaining about various problems as most of the people involved in implementing the scheme (*Rojgar Sahayak, Mate, Sarpanch*) are form village *panchayat* itself.

Case Study

Community Score Card (CSC) in Village Bheem Nagar, Dhikola Gram Panchayat, Bhilwara

Bheem Nagar village of *Dhikola Gram Panchayat* in *Bhilwara* district of Rajasthan, 250 KM away from Jaipur turns in to an island during rainy season and prevents the possibility of livelihood outside the village. This is a village where majority of the people belongs to *Bheel* and *Meena* tribes. They are considered as socially disadvantaged groups and such groups have a higher probability of living under adverse conditions and poverty. They suffer from a phenomenon of discrimination due to social exclusion in every aspect of life. Job Guarantee Scheme, a legal entitlement scheme also discriminates.

CUTS involved two organizations including *Saraswati Bal Seva Samiti* (SBSS) from District Bhilwara in its project after capacity gap analysis and the facilitator from SBSS was trained in the process of Community Score Card (CSC) under the project. *Dhikola Gram Panchayat* was selected for implementation of CSC as SBSS had already been working in this *Gram Panchayat* and was familiar among the villagers and service providers. It was very easy for them to build their rapport for initiating CSC process. Team member did group work to mobilize the community and to sensitization of the PRI members for implementation of CSC process.

SBSS with support of CUTS conducted CSC process for MGNREGS services. The people were mostly at the receiving end of society and were unable to demand work. They were afraid of the awful consequences of further not getting jobs or any such benefits coming from the government through *Gram Panchayat*. Political and administrative interest to implement the scheme properly was not found adequate. The prevalence of acute poverty in the section of *Gram Panchayat* was leading distress migration and exploitation of the laborers of the disadvantaged section. Lack of infrastructure facilities was causing lot of problems to the commuters including death.

During the ground level preparatory work, it was found that MGNREGS work was not being performed in the area for 2 years. The *Gram Panchayat* record tells that a work sanctioned on March 28, 2008 could fetch fund only on May 28, 2010 for construction of *Gravel* road from *Bheem Nagar* to *Badesara* and in the meantime there was no work. When the CSC was conducted during the October 2011, the work 'construction of *Gravel* road' was in progress in which out of 181 job card holders, only 26 were employed for the work and several other problems came out during the scoring process those are as follows.

- Late payment of wages (2-3 months delay) for various reasons including delayed execution at *Gram Panchayat*, block and bank level.
- The community was also complaining for the distribution of wages during dark when people feel inconvenience in collecting money.
- The community put very low score on the indicator of facilities like first aid, shade (tent) and drinking water. The main reason for non-availability of worksite facilities was the problem of carrying the facilities at the worksite on daily basis for which extra fund is not allocated under the scheme.
- The people were also having complain of low wages and the problem of measurement of individual work on a daily basis

- Non-availability of jobs for all who are in demand due to less interest of service providers in implementation of the scheme.

Interface meetings provided the opportunity to discuss the problems encountered by service recipients and the providers. The action plan emerged with a fix responsibility and time period.

After the CSC, the shift is noticed in behaviour of the service provider. The *Sarpanch* has started interacting with the beneficiaries on a regular basis and taking steps to solve the emerging problems on a regular basis. The people were provided with the measurement tape etc., to measure and note down the daily work. Drinking water and tent were made available at the worksite

The Adult Nurse Midwife (ANM) also started visiting the worksite regularly and provided the necessary medical aid.

Evaluation study revealed that several changes happened by the CSC process. But these changes have not happened only due to one-time implementation of CSC but also the rigorous follow up by Secretary of SBSS, Mr. Anuj Kantia and his interest in taking the agenda of improving MGNREGS forward. Few key developments happened in the village are mentioned below:

- Community is more aware about their rights and entitlements.
- The delay up to 5 months was usual in payment of wages, but now the process is accelerated and payment is possible within 15 days of duration.
- Proper measurement of the work could be started through tape in which the MGNREGS program officer was also involved by SBSS. This has led the workers get increased wages proportionate to their completed work.
- Visits of ANM at worksites are happening regularly and medicines are available. Four tent and crèches have been provided by the department. Water facilities are also available.
- Average wage is increased and remains now between Rupees 90-120 which was as lowest as rupees 19 in earlier case. The payment is also timely now and given during day time in a school which is closer to the village. But the measurement on individual group basis is still not started and average payment is made to all the workers.
- Another work of a gravel road is also started after the CSC process in the *Gram panchayat* to provide work to more workers in demand of work.
- Beneficiaries are happy to share that service providers listen to their issues with more patience and try resolve them. This has considerably helped in improving the relationship between them.
- The enhanced level of empowerment among women is visible in *Gram Sabha* and other fortnightly meetings

There is a hope that the service providers will continue resolving the problems of implementation and the trained facilitators will also continue implementing CSC in MGNREGS and other services.

Individual Cases

In experimental *Gram Panchayat Tordi* of Tonk district, several changes have been noticed. The awareness is visible in the monthly meetings of MGNREGS, Gram Sabha meetings. The women are seen more participatory. The ward members are also seen more active here after CSC. The people in Tordi had raised voice against the selection of members of social audit committee. Taking the opposition in to consideration, *Gram Panchayat* selected new members. The *Gram Panchayat* office remains open for relatively more period of time.

In experimental *Gram Panchayat Bardia veerji* of Jhalawar district, the wage related problem has been resolved. The worksite facilities have also improved. Crèche facility is also provided when there is more than 5 children. The first-aid box is kept at the worksite and the behaviour change is noticed in Mate, who regularly asks about their problems. The enhanced voice power is witnessed among few female workers, who also have started participating in the Gram Sabha and raising their concerns.

In experimental *Gram Panchayat Dolia* of Kota district, the level of awareness about the provisions of MGNREGS among the workers has enhanced. There is increase in the discussion at the Gram Sabha meetings and the relationship between service providers and service recipients has improved. The worker have gathered the information about the implementation of MGNREGS and started taking part in monitoring activities and report to the village council office for further correction. It has some rippling effect on other services like ICDS. Two new ICDS centres have opened in the *Gram Panchayat* after demand from community

In experimental *Gram Panchayat Khariberi* of Jodhpur district, the service providers accepted that information gap on the provisions of MGNREGS was creating problems in the implementation of the scheme. This has been substantially reduced after the implementation of CSC in his *Gram Panchayat*. The service providers have started providing the relevant and new information regarding the implementation to the workers. Several changes like job demand in group by the workers, the service providers providing the dated receipt to the workers after application, mate providing the information to the group workers after daily measurement. The people after collective bargaining from the post office have succeeded in getting their wages in their village by the postmaster.

Lesson learned

1. The use of social accountability approaches is most effective when it is used in a situation where both the providers and the recipients are willing to improve the scenario through mutual cooperation.
2. CBOs at the local level also do not want to be in confrontation with the service providers and don't want to be seen as the agent of community working against the providers; hence sometimes they become submissive to the providers and start talking diplomatically. One of the important component of CSC is to prepare the

ground for CSC in which providers has to definitely participate. This creates a situation, where the CBOs become docile and start taking the guidance from the providers.

3. Evidences suggest that the people who are geographically isolated and more in need of improved services are not benefitted in most of the cases as visualised in the concept of the CSC.
4. The evaluation suggests that CSC has very limited effect, when there are provision of little inputs for the services, however, it creates big impact when the inputs for the service is strong
5. Community is benefitted from the collective action taken by them which is not in case of approaching service providers on individual basis. When the providers are approached individually, it is easier to ignore. The community members also felt that approaching the service providers in a group is more suitable option for resolving grievances.

Limitations

The greatest limitation in the evaluation of this intervention was the difficulty in isolating the effects of the initiative from other factors contributing to the desired change. Since the evaluation was not designed in the project implementation process, there was no baseline information available and thus quantifying change was very difficult.

Another major limitation is the difficulty in operationalizing (defining how to measure) key concepts that have great conceptual power but do not translate easily into quantifiable indicators (e.g., citizens' voice power). Hence it was only a kind of adopting progress markers those can show some results to complement the quantitative indicators with qualitative assessments.

The representatives from CBOs who were trained in CSC could only test their learning in one of the service deliveries under MGNREGS in a *Gram panchayat* to see its potential in achieving its objectives including major objective of improving service delivery. One time implementation of CSC had a limited effect and thus was difficult to segregate and quantify.

Other limitations were related to the methodology adopted for the evaluation. In controlled group, the situations were not so much controlled to do the comparative analysis. There was also limitation of nullifying the selection bias in the methodology.

Conclusion

Overall, the evidence for positive results of the assessment is scattered and generally not very enthusiastic. Actually, it was unrealistic to expect considerable results of changed behaviour, improved governance, relationship between the providers & beneficiaries and improved status of service delivery with the implementation of one time community score card process. While significant positive results with regard to resolving the local issues related to services under MNREGS were achieved, the findings show adverse effects of CSC on governance and relationship is also there.

The use of qualitative tools to substantiate the findings of the study could be helpful in zeroing in on the reasons for both the positive and adverse results. The simplest explanation for the adverse effects on governance outcomes is that existing structures are resilient and more fundamental change is not being achieved. The findings with regard to the deteriorated relationship and behaviour of service providers, it can be said that the behaviour might have changed negatively in short term, but in long term it will improve. Another possibility is that the scale of the CSC was too small to generate positive changes but even then the indicators related to awareness, community participation etc have shown considerable progress. Hence the evaluation produces mixed evidences of positive and adverse results.