Social Accountability
in
Governance of the Public Institutions

For the EU funded project

المجتمع المدني من أجل الكرامة

Civil Society for Dignity

NEAR-TS 2020/420-965

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Submission date

September 2022

هذا المشروع بدعم من

EUROPEAN UNION

الاتحاد الأوروبي

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Church of Sweden

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This research has been produced as part of the Civil Society for Dignity- Karama project funded by the European Union (EU) under the number: NEAR-TS 2020/ 420–965) and implemented by PAX for Peace, Palestinian Center for Rapprochement between Peoples (PCR), Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy (PCPD) and Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND). The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this research do not necessarily reflect the views of the organizations which conducted this project or funded its activities. They are the views of the researcher Samer B. Jaber, who is the main author of this research, in his personal capacity.

Contents

Abbreviations

APLA	Palestinian Association of Local Authorities
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CRC	Citizen Report Card
CSC	Community Score Card
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
IPAs	Independent Pro-Accountability Agencies
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPM	New Public Management
PA	Palestinian Authority
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys
QSDS	Quantitative Service Delivery Survey
TARB	Troubled Asset Relief Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

This research about social accountability aimed to put this theme within the governance regime. This governance regime integrates civil society actors, i.e. active citizens and civil society organizations, into the public policies formation mechanisms in general and in the frontline bodies decision-making process in particular . These frontline bodies such as municipalities and other local governments are in direct touch with ordinary citizens as they are the main conduits for public service delivery. It looked into social accountability tools and approaches used by citizens and non-governmental institutions in their work/activities with local governments i.e. municipalities. The research looked at how civil society actors monitor and work together with local authorities to increase accountability through cooperation and enhanced management. It elaborated about the concept of the social accountability approach through the neoliberal perspective and the alternative historical perspective.

The first chapter provides a widely accepted liberal definition of social accountability produced by World Bank scholars. This definition sees social accountability as "an approach toward building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e. in which it is ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability". It delves into the reforms needed to improve governance. These reforms are; first, Weberian reform, i.e reforming state bureaucracy management, second; marketization reform, i.e. privatisation and the use of new public management in administering the state bureaucracy, third; establishing independent agencies with a clear mandate, i.e. Independent Pro-Accountability Agencies (IPA's) and fourth, social accountability that aims to bring civil society actors to the table of governance. These reforms are connected to the neoliberal agenda which aims to transfer parts of the public sector into the private sector. They are interconnected and balance each other according to the neoliberal discourse.

After introducing the neoliberal approach of social accountability, chapter one sheds lights on the historical conjunctions that led to the development of this concept, i.e. social accountability, within the emerging neoliberal governance regime. The shifting of capitalism from state-led development to market-based development known as the neoliberal era created the context that enabled the emergence of a governance regime that counted social accountability as one of its approaches and instruments. The historical development and conceptualization of social accountability in particular and governance in general in the neoliberal era saw these concepts an ideological instruments that serve the neoliberal economic policy agenda. This is basically through introducing interventions that articulate two particular social problems created or exacerbated by the free market development. These two problems are poverty and social exclusion of the subaltern classes from the decision-making process. Social accountability came as an approach to enhance the inclusion of subaltern classes in the decision-making process through categorizing them as poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable people who need empowerment and whose voices need to be heard by the decision-makers.

Then the research proposed and introduced an alternative articulation of social accountability. This approach is through articulating the concept of social accountability as an instrument and approach in social movement using the historical perspective. The social movement approach deals with governance in general and social accountability in particular as a space for the power struggle between the upper class who dominate state power and the subaltern classes who strive to improve their living conditions. The alternative approach that uses the historical analysis gives social accountability its political characteristics. It redefines the relationship between social actors based on class struggle instead of class cooperation and reconciliation. This reconfiguration of the social accountability approach from a neoliberal instrument to a social movement instrument impacts how to view human rights. The role of human rights from a historical perspective is justified on the basis of human natural needs and not only as a moral obligation. This reconfiguration of human rights stresses the importance of social and economic rights as means to enjoy political and civil rights.

On the subject of governance, this research provides a theoretical discussion which aims to define governance from different perspectives. Thus different definitions of governance were given. These definitions see governance as either an instrument to steer public policy, a network of actors managing the public sphere, or a regime of government in the neoliberal era. Also a historical perspective of the concept of governance was given in order to show how governance evolved over time and affected the political economy of development. This covers two periods. The first started after the Second World War when the state used top-down administration methods for the public sector and economic development and lasted until the mid of 1970s. The second period began by the late 1970s and lasted up until now (late 2022) without any sign of its demise. This second period is the neoliberal era that started with massive privatization of the public sector and the withdrawal of the state from many areas of service provision in different public sub-sectors. The ongoing neoliberal era reconfigured the role of social actors and categorized them as tripartite; the state, business representatives and civil society representatives who supposedly will represent the interests of ordinary citizens.

A critical view was given of the concept of governance by using the political economy lens. This lens not only sees governance as a regulatory regime within the public sector and state apparatus management but also gives insights into the social composition and historical evolvement of the different actors. The actors of governance regulatory regimes are social classes defined by the economic structure of capitalism. This political economy lens divides social actors into two main parts; the upper and the subaltern classes. Each social class has its own interests that contradict those of other class/s. But the neoliberal governance regime aims to bring these two social actors to the same leadership table in a process that brings social peace and reconciliation. From the neoliberal perspective, this governance regime enables the political system and its economic base to have stability. This stability depends on people consenting to be governed under this mode of social reproduction.

After discussing the broad meaning of governance, the research looks at it as a theme in civic engagement. In this regard, the civilly engaged citizen is the one who is interested in public concerns and makes efforts to address and articulate these concerns to secure the interests of the public. Civic engagement could be divided into two sub-themes, either as political actions and thus part of the social movement or as non-political and related to social activities carried out through philanthropic and community-based organizations. In both cases, the political and social context provide the framework for any civic engagement activity. These activities could be divided on the basis of Arnstein's participation ladder which divides civic participation into three levels. The first has two rungs; manipulation and therapy and is considered non-participatory. The second has three rungs; informing, consulting and placating and is a form of token participation. Finally, the third and upper level also has three rungs; partnership, delegated power and citizen control. The latter level enables citizens to exercise and harness power to serve their collective interests.

The last part of the first chapter placed social accountability, governance and civic engagement concepts within the development participatory approach. Public participation in development became increasingly demanded by international organizations after the first stage of the neoliberal era, in which the state in developing countries where the public sector was privatized tended to tighten its grip on development. International organizations such as the World Bank, in their efforts to tackle the emerging social problems related to privatization and market failure, such as poverty and state corruption, called for public participation in development. For these international organizations and liberal scholars it became evident that privatization and market failure leads to citizen exclusion from the decision-making process. However, at the beginning of this process, international organizations lacked a clear and purposeful framework for the participatory approach in development other than mitigation and lessen the increasing rift between the state and the upper class on one side and the subaltern classes on the other.

Chapter two analyzes the data and information gathered from fieldwork conducted by municipalities in West Bank, including east Jerusalem. The field study covered eight out of ten governorates in the West Bank. Three municipalities in each governorate were targeted to obtain data about the level of governance in each area. In each locality, i.e. municipality area, three community-based organizations (CBOs) were contacted. In total more than forty CBOs were part of this research inquiry. The three major Palestinian NGOs that implemented the project " Civil Society for Dignity- Karama" were also part of the field research as the research looked into their experience and the degree of their involvement in the governance of local governments at the Ministry, governorate and individual municipality levels.

The fieldwork focused on estimating the level of governance of local governments, i.e. municipalities, in order to find out what governance tools might be relevant for use within the context of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The research looked into the roles played by each actor (stakeholder) in the decision-making process at the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and the municipalities. These actors are the MoLG, municipality staff and elected council members and civil society organizations including the major non-governmental organizations. The field research also looked into specific themes of work relevant to the municipalities in general and to the decision-making process in particular. These thematic areas are; budget, strategic planning, procurements and projects, services and performance evaluation and communication and connections with citizens. All of these thematic areas need further improvements though some municipalities have put more effort than others into engaging citizens in the decision-making process. However, citizen engagement in general and social accountability activities, in particular, are not institutionalized nor conducted on a regular basis.

The social accountability tools are presented in Chapter three, which sets the groundwork for accountability tools to be implemented effectively by emphasising the right to information in Palestine. Palestine needs legislation that allows citizens and civil society organizations, among others, to have free access to information. This information would include the Ministries' administrative records and detailed budgets. The chapter also sheds light on the main Palestinian civil society efforts to address the lack of laws regulating and enabling freedom of access to information.

Then Chapter three presents fourteen social accountability tools, dividing them into three categories; the first is budget-related civic engagement and accountability tools, the second is tracing, monitoring and auditing (the two sides of budget and services), and the third category is the tools through which citizens are able to voice their concerns. Each category starts with an introduction then each tool has its own introduction and objectives. Each social accountability tool has its own procedure that explains how to use the particular tool either as an independent activity or as an instrument that complements other activities in the social movement.

The first category introduces budget-related civic engagement and accountability tools. There are four such tools; participatory budget formulation, shadow budget: formulation or alternative budget, budget review and analysis, and summarisation, simplification and demystification of the budget. Tools within this category deal with decision-making related to public financial issues, whether at the general government and ministries level or at the local government and service providers level.

The second category presents five different social accountability tools under the following titles: tracing, monitoring and auditing: the two sides of budget and services . These tools are; public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS), social auditing, citizens monitoring of public procurement, quantitative service delivery surveys (QSDS), and public revenue monitoring. Tools within this category look into how financial and other resources are spent and how much citizens benefited from public services.

The third category demonstrates tools for citizens to voice their concerns. There are five tools; community score card (CSC), citizen report card (CRC), public hearing, citizen's charter, and integrity pact. This category differs from the others as most of them request the direct involvement of citizens in the activities at all stages of work.

Chapter four has two sections; a challenges and lessons section and a recommendations section. The first section presents the major challenges that will be encountered when conducting social accountability activities. These challenges have different aspects relating to; political aspects, citizens, method and approach, public servants attitudes, and technical aspects. Each challenge provides a lesson about how to be flexible and relevant when using any of the social accountability tools. The last section gives recommendations about how to use social accountability tools effectively. These mainly focus on the operation and management of social accountability tools. Therefore, this section stresses the importance of capacity building, building networks of governance, and the institutionalization of social accountability mechanisms, as this will provide sustainability to governance regime based on civic engagement.

ملخص تنفيذي

يهدف هذا البحث حول المساءلة الاجتماعية إلى وضع هذا الموضوع ضمن منظومة الحوكمة. منظومة الحوكمة تدمج الجهات الفاعلة في المجتمع المدني ، أي المواطنين النشطين ومنظمات المجتمع المدني ، في آليات تشكيل السياسات العامة بشكل عام، وفي عملية صنع القرار في مؤسسات الخطوط الأمامية على وجه الخصوص. هذه المؤسسات في الخطوط الأمامية مثل البلديات و المجالس المحلية الاخرى على اتصال مباشر مع المواطنين العاديين لأنها قنوات تقديم الخدمات العامة الرئيسية. فقد نظر البحث في أدوات ونهج المساءلة الاجتماعية الذي يستخدمه المواطنون والمؤسسات غير الحكومية خلال عملهم و أنشطتهم مع الحكومات المحلية ، أي البلديات. نظر البحث في كيفية قيام الجهات الفاعلة في المجتمع المدني بمراقبة عمل السلطات المحلية والعمل معها لزيادة المساءلة من خلال التعاون والإدارة المحسّنة. فيم تناول بالتفصيل مفهوم نهج المساءلة الاجتماعية من خلال منظور نيوليبرالي ومنظور تاريخي بديل.

يقدم الفصل الأول تعريفًا ليبراليًا مقبولاً على نطاق واسع للمساءلة الاجتماعية قدمه باحثي البنك الدولي. يرى هذا التعريف في المساءلة الاجتماعية على أنها «نهج نحو بناء المساءلة يعتمد على المشاركة المدنية ، أي يكون فيه المواطنون العاديون و / أو منظمات المجتمع المدني هم الذين يشاركون بشكل مباشر أو غير مباشر في ممارسة المساءلة". كما يخوض البحث في الإصلاحات اللازمة لتحسين الحوكمة. هذه الإصلاحات هي؛ أولاً ، إصلاح فيبري (اصلاح نظرية ماكس فيبر) ، أي إصلاح الإدارة البيروقراطية للدولة. ثانيا؛ إصلاح السوق ، أي الخصخصة واستخدام الإدارة العامة الجديدة في ادارة بيروقراطية الدولة. ثالثا؛ إنشاء هيئات مستقلة مع تفويض واضح ، مثل هيئات دعم المساءلة المستقلة. رابعًا، المساءلة الاجتماعية التي تهدف إلى جلب الجهات الفاعلة في المجتمع المدني إلى طاولة الحوكمة. ترتبط هذه الإصلاحات بالأجندة النيوليبرالية التي تهدف إلى نقل أجزاء من القطاع العام إلى القطاع الخاص. هذه الإصلاحات مترابطة وتوازن بعضها البعض وفقًا للخطاب النيوليبرالي.

بعد عرض النهج النيوليبرالي للمساءلة الاجتماعية ، ألقى الفصل الأول الأضواء على الروابط التاريخية التي أدت إلى تطوير هذا المفهوم ، أي المساءلة الاجتماعية ، داخل منظومة الحوكمة النيوليبرالي الناشئة. أدى تحول الرأسمالية من التنمية التي تقودها الدولة إلى التنمية القائمة على السوق والمعروف باسم العصر النيوليبرالي إلى ايجاد السياق الذي مكّن من ظهور منظومة الحوكمة التي تعتَبرَ المساءلة الاجتماعية أحد مناهجها وأدواتها. إن التطور التاريخي ووضع تصور مفاهيمي للمساءلة الاجتماعية بشكل خاص وللحوكمة بشكل عام في العصر النيوليبرالي جعل هذه المفاهيم أدوات أيديولوجية تخدم أجندة السياسة الاقتصادية النيوليبرالية. تم هذا بشكل أساسي من خلال وضع تدخلات تعالج مشكلتين اجتماعيتين أوجدتهما أو تفاقمتا بسبب تطور حرية السوق. هاتان المشكلتان هما الفقر والاستبعاد الاجتماعي للطبقات التابعة من عملية صنع القرار. جاءت المساءلة الاجتماعية كنهج لتعزيز دمج الطبقات التابعة في عملية صنع القرار من خلال تصنيفهم على أنهم فقراء ومحرومون ومستضعفون يحتاجون إلى التمكين ، ويجب أن تسمع أصواتهم من قبل صانعي القرار.

بعد ذلك يقترح البحث ويقدم معالجة بديلة للمساءلة الاجتماعية. النهج البديل هو من خلال توضيح مفهوم المساءلة الاجتماعية كأداة ومنهج في الحركة الاجتماعية باستخدام المنظور التاريخي. تتعامل الحركة الاجتماعية مع الحكم بشكل عام والمساءلة الاجتماعية بشكل خاص كمساحة للصراع على السلطة بين الطبقة العليا التي تهيمن على سلطة الدولة والطبقات التابعة التي تسعى جاهدة لتحسين ظروف معيشتهم. النهج البديل الذي استخدم التحليل التاريخي ، هو إعطاء المساءلة الاجتماعية خصائصها السياسية. إنه يعيد تعريف العلاقة بين الفاعلين الاجتماعيين على أساس الصراع الطبقي بدلاً من التعاون الطبقي والمصالحة. إن إعادة تشكيل نهج المساءلة الاجتماعية من كونه أداة نيوليبرالية إلى أداة للحركة الاجتماعية يؤثر على كيفية النظر إلى حقوق الإنسان. ان دور حقوق الإنسان من المنظور التاريخي مسوغ على أساس الاحتياجات الطبيعية للإنسان وليس فقط كالتزامات أخلاقية. إن إعادة تشكيل حقوق الإنسان على أساس منظور تاريخي يؤكد أهمية الحقوق الاجتماعية والاقتصادية كوسيلة للتمتع بالحقوق السياسية والمدنية.

حـول موضـوع الحوكمـة في البحـث هنـاك مناقشـة نظريـة تهـدف إلى تعريـف الحوكمـة مـن وجهـات نظـر مختلفـة. فهكـذا تـم تقديـم تعريفـات مختلفـة للحوكمـة. تعتـبر بعـض هـذه التعريفـات الحوكمـة إمـا أداة لتوجيـه السياسـة العامـة ، أو شـبكة مـن الفاعلـين الذيـن يديـرون المجـال العـام ، أو نظـام حكـم في العـصر النيوليـبرالي. كـما تـم إعطـاء منظـور تاريخـي لمفهـوم الحوكمـة مـن أجـل إظهـار كيـف تطـورت الحوكمـة بمرور الوقـت وأثـرت عـلى الاقتصـاد السـياسي للتنميـة. هـذا يغطـي فترتـين. بـدأت الأولى بعـد الحـرب العالمية الثانيـة التـي استخدمت فيهـا الدولـة أساليب الإدارة مـن أعـلى إلى أسفل للقطـاع العـام والتنميـة الاقتصاديـة ، واسـتمرت حتـى منتصـف السـبعينيات. الفـترة الثانيـة بـدأت في أواخـر السـبعينيات واسـتمرت حتـى الآن (أواخـر عـام ٢٠٢٢) دون أي بـوادر عـلى زوالهـا. الفـترة الثانيـة هـي الحقبـة النيوليبراليـة التـي بـدأت بخصخصـة واسـعة النطـاق للقطـاع العـام وانسـحاب الدولـة مـن العديـد مـن الخدمـات المقدمـة في مختلـف القطاعـات الفرعيـة العامـة. أعـاد العـصر النيوليـبرالي، الـذي مـا زال قائـم، تشـكيل دور الفاعلـين الاجتماعيـين وصنفهـم عـلى أنهـم ثالـوث. الدولـة وممثـلي الـشركات وممثـلي المجتمـع المـدني الذيـن يفـترض أنهـم سـيمثلون مصالـح المواطنـين العاديـين.

تـم إعطـاء نظـرة نقديـة لمفهـوم الحوكمـة باسـتخدام عدسـة الاقتصـاد السـياسي. لا تـرى هـذه العدسـة في الحوكمـة نظامًـا تنظيميًـا داخـل القطـاع العـام وإدارة أجهـزة الدولـة فحسـب ، بـل تـرى أيضًـا التركيبـة الاجتماعيـة والتطـور التاريخـي لمختلـف الجهـات الفاعلـة. الجهـات الفاعلـة في نظـام تنظيـم الحوكمـة هـي طبقـات اجتماعيـة يحددهـا الهيـكل الاقتصـادي للرأسـمالية. تقسـم عدسـة الاقتصـاد السـياسي الجهـات الفاعلـة الاجتماعيـة إلى قسـمين رئيسـيين ، الطبقـة العليـا والطبقـات التابعـة. كل طبقـة اجتماعيـة لهـا مصالحهـا الخاصـة التـي تتعـارض مـع الطبقـة / الطبقـات الأخـرى. لكـن نظـام الحوكمـة النيوليـبرالي يعمـل عـلى جلـب الفاعلـين الاجتماعيـين إلى طاولـة االقيـادة في عمليـة تحقـق السـلام الاجتماعـي والمصالحـة بينهـم. نظـام الحوكمـة هـذا ، مـن منظـور الليبراليـة الجديـدة ، يمكّـن النظـام السـياسي وقاعدتـه الاقتصاديـة مـن الاسـتقرار. يعتمـد هـذا الاسـتقرار عـلى موافقـة النـاس عـلى أن يُحكمـوا في ظـل نمـط اعـادة الانتـاج الاجتماعـي هـذا.

بعـد مناقشـة المعنـى الواسـع للحوكمـة ، ينظـر البحـث إليهـا عـلى أنهـا موضـوع في المشـاركة المدنيـة. فالمواطـن الملتـزم في الشـأن المـدني هـو الـذي يهتـم بالمواضيـع العامـة ويبـذل الجهـود للتعامـل معهـا والتعبـير عنهـا بمـا يحقـق المصلحـة العامـة. يمكـن تقسـيم المشـاركة المدنيـة إلى موضوعـين فرعيـين. إمـا أن تكـون أعـمالاً سياسـية وبالتـالي يمكـن أن تكـون جـزءًا مـن الحركـة الاجتماعيـة أو يمكـن أن تكـون غـير سياسـية ومرتبطـة بالأنشـطة الاجتماعيـة التـي يتـم تنفيذهـا مـن خـلال المنظـمات الخيريـة والمجتمعية. في كلتـا الحالتين ، يوفـر السـياق السـياسي والاجتماعـي إطـارًا لأي نشـاط للمشـاركة المدنيـة. يمكـن تقسـيم هـذه الأنشـطة بنـاءً عـلى سـلم مشـاركة ارنسـتين Arnstein الـذي يقسـم المشـاركة المدنيـة إلى ثلاثـة مسـتويات. المسـتوى الأول درجتـين ؛ التلاعـب والعـلاج ، حيـث يعتـبر هـذا المسـتوى غـير تشـاركي. يحتـوي المسـتوى الثـاني عـلى ثـلاث درجـات ؛ الاطـلاع، الاستشـارات، والاسـترضاء. المسـتوى الثـاني هـو نـوع مـن المشـاركة الرمزيـة. فيـم يحتـوي المسـتوى الثالـث، وهـو الأعـلى أيضًـا، عـلى ثـلاث درجـات ؛ الشراكـة، السـلطة المفوضـة، وسـيطرة المواطـن. المسـتوى الأخـير هـو تمكـين المواطنـين مـن ممارسـة وتسـخير السـلطة لخدمـة مصالحهـم الجماعيـة.

وضـع الجـزء الأخـير مـن الفصـل الأول مفاهيـم المسـاءلة الاجتماعيـة والحوكمـة والمشـاركة المدنيـة ضمـن نهـج التنميـة التشـاركي. أصبحـت المشـاركة العامـة في التنميـة مطلوبـة بشـكل متزايـد مـن قبـل المنظـمات الدوليـة بعـد المرحلـة الأولى مـن عـصر الليبراليـة الجديـدة ، حيـث تميـل الدولـة بشـكل متزايـد في البلـدان الناميـة عنـد خصخصـة القطـاع العـام ، إلى إحـكام قبضتهـا عـلى التنمية.فيـم المنظـمات الدوليـة مثـل البنـك الـدولي ، في جهودهـا لمعالجـة المشـاكل الاجتماعيـة الناشـئة المتعلقـة بالخصخصـة وفشـل السـوق ؛الفقـر وفسـاد الدولة، دعـت إلى المشـاركة العامـة في التنميـة. بالنسـبة لهـذه المنظـمات الدوليـة والباحثـين الليبراليـين ، أصبـح مـن الواضـح أن الخصخصـة وفشـل السـوق يؤديـان إلى اسـتبعاد المواطنـين مـن عمليـة صنـع القـرار. ومـع ذلـك ، في بدايـة هـذه العمليـة ، افتقـرت المنظـمات الدوليـة إلى إطـار واضـح وهـادف للنهـج التشـاركي في التنميـة ، بخـلاف التخفيـف وكسر الصـدع المتزايـد بـين الدولـة والطبقـة العليـا مـن جانـب والطبقـات التابعـة عـلى الجانـب الآخـر.

الفصـل الثـاني يحلـل البيانـات والمعلومـات التـي تـم جمعهـا مـن العمـل الميـداني الـذي تـم إجـراؤه ، أي

البلديات في الضفة الغربية بما في ذلك القدس الشرقية. حيث غطت الدراسة الميدانية ثماني محافظات من اصل عشرة في الضفة الغربية. فقد تم استهداف ثلاث بلديات في كل محافظة للحصول على بيانات حول مستوى الحكم في كل منطقة. في كل منطقة ، أي منطقة البلدية ؛ تم الاتصال بثلاث منظمات مؤسسات مجتمعية (CBOs). في المجموع، تم الاتصال بأكثر من أربعين مؤسسة مجتمعية لتكون جزء من هذا البحث. كانت المنظمات غير الحكومية الفلسطينية الرئيسية الثلاث التي نفذت هذا المشروع؛ «المجتمع المدني من أجل الكرامة - الكرامة» جزءًا من البحث الميداني حيث نظر البحث في تجربتهم ودرجة مشاركتهم في حوكمة الحكومات المحلية على مستوى الوزارة والمحافظة و مستوى كل بلدية على حدة .

ركز العمل الميداني على تقدير مستوى الحوكمة في الهيئات الحكم المحلي ، أي البلديات ، من أجل تحديد أدوات الحوكمة التي قد تكون ذات صلة لاستخدامها في سياق الضفة الغربية بما في ذلك القدس الشرقية. فقد نظر البحث في الأدوار التي يلعبها كل فاعل (صاحب مصلحة) في عملية صنع القرار في وزارة الحكم المحلي والبلديات. هذه الجهات الفاعلة هي وزارة الحكم المحلي ، وموظفي البلديات وأعضاء المجالس المنتخبين ، ومنظمات المجتمع المدني بما في ذلك المنظمات غير الحكومية الرئيسية. كما تناول البحث الميداني مواضيع عمل محددة تتعلق بالبلديات بشكل عام وعملية صنع القرار بشكل خاص. هذه المجالات -المواضيع هي ؛ الميزانية، التخطيط الاستراتيجي، المشتريات والمشاريع، الخدمات وتقييم الأداء، والاتصال والتواصل مع المواطنين. كل هذه المجالات -المواضيع تحتاج إلى مزيد من التحسينات، رغم ان بعض البلديات قد بذلت جهوداً أكثر من غيرها في إشراك المواطنين في عملية صنع القرار. ومع ذلك ، فإن مشاركة المواطنين بشكل عام وأنشطة المساءلة الاجتماعية على وجه الخصوص لا يتم إضفاء الطابع المؤسسي عليها ولا يتم إجراؤها على أساس منتظم.

تم عرض أدوات المساءلة الاجتماعية في الفصل الثالث. يحدد الفصل الثالث أسس استخدام أدوات المساءلة حتى يتم تنفيذها بشكل فعال من خلال التأكيد على حق المعلومات في فلسطين. تحتاج فلسطين إلى تشريع يسمح للمواطنين ومنظمات المجتمع المدني من بين آخرين بالحصول على المعلومات بحرية. وتشمل هذه المعلومات السجلات الإدارية للوزارات والميزانية التفصيلية. كما يسلط الفصل الضوء على جهود المجتمع المدني الفلسطيني الرئيسية لمعالجة نقص القوانين التي تنظم وتمكّن من حرية الوصول إلى المعلومات.

ثم يقدم الفصل الثالث أربعة عشر أداة للمساءلة الاجتماعية تقسمها إلى ثلاث فئات ؛ أولاً ، أدوات المساءلة والمشاركة المدنية المتعلقة بالميزانية. ثانيًا ؛ التتبع والمراقبة والتدقيق (لجانبي الميزانية والخدمات). ثالثًا ، أدوات للمواطنين للتعبير عن اهتماماتهم. تبدأ كل فئة بمقدمة ثم لكل أداة مقدمتها الخاصة وأهداف خاصة بها. كل أداة من أدوات المساءلة الاجتماعية لها إجراءاتها الخاصة التي تشرح كيفية استخدام أداة المساءلة الاجتماعية إما كنشاط مستقل أو كأداة تكمل الأنشطة الأخرى في الحركة الاجتماعية.

تقدم الفئة الأولى أدوات المشاركة المدنية والمساءلة المتعلقة بالميزانية. حيث ان هذه أربع أدوات؛ وضع الموازنة التشاركية، موازنة الظل، وضع موازنة بديلة، مراجعة وتحليل الموازنة، و تلخيص، تبسيط وإزالة الغموض عن الموازنة. تتعامل الأدوات ضمن هذه الفئة مع اتخاذ القرارات المتعلقة بالقضايا المالية العامة ، سواء على مستوى الحكومة العامة والوزارات أو على مستوى هيئات الحكم المحلية ومقدمي الخدمات.

تقدم الفئة الثانية خمس أدوات مختلفة للمساءلة الاجتماعية تحت العنوان التالي: التتبع والمراقبة والتدقيق: لجانبي الميزانية والخدمات. هذه الأدوات هي؛ استطلاعات تتبع الإنفاق العام (PETS)، والتدقيق الاجتماعي، مراقبة المواطنين للمشتريات العامة، والمسح الكمي لتقديم الخدمات (QSDS)، ومراقبة الإيرادات العامة. تبحث الأدوات ضمن الفئة الثانية في كيفية إنفاق الموارد المالية وغيرها ومقدار استفادة المواطن من الخدمات العامة.

تستعرض الفئة الثالثة أدوات للمواطنين للتعبير عن اهتماماتهم. حيث ان هذه خمس أدوات: بطاقة التقيم المجتمعية (CSC)، بطاقة تقرير المواطن (CRC)، جلسة الاستماع العامة، ميثاق المواطنين ، وميثاق النزاهة. وتختلف هذه الفئة عن الفئات الأخرى ، حيث أن معظمها يتطلب مشاركة المواطنين المباشرة في الأنشطة في جميع مراحل العمل.

الفصل الأخير هو الفصل الرابع الذي يتكون من قسمين ؛ قسم التحديات والدروس ، وقسم التوصيات.

يعرض القسم الأول التحديات الرئيسية التي ستواجه عند إجراء أنشطة المساءلة الاجتماعية. هذه التحديات لها جوانب مختلفة تتعلق بـ؛ الجوانب السياسية، المواطنين، الطريقة والنهج، مواقف الموظفين العموميين، والجوانب الفنية. يقدم كل تحد درسًا حول كيفية التحلي بالمرونة و وانت تكون الاداة ذات الصلة عند استخدام اي من أداوات المساءلة الاجتماعية. القسم الأخير هو القسم الذي يقدم توصيات حول كيفية استخدام أدوات المساءلة الاجتماعية بشكل فعال. ركزت هذه التوصيات في الغالب على الكيفية العملانية لادارة استخدام أدوات المساءلة الاجتماعية. لذلك يؤكد هذا القسم على أهمية بناء القدرات، بناء شبكات الحوكمة، وإضفاء الطابع المؤسسي على آليات المساءلة الاجتماعية، حيث سيوفر ذلك الاستدامة لنظام الحوكمة الذي يتم إنشاؤه والذي يقوم على المشاركة المدنية.

Methodology

The literature review conducted for this research about social accountability intended to situate the topic within its policy theme; governance. The purpose of the overview was to look at how the concept of social accountability and its framework evolved historically over the last few decades to refer to a specific policy instrument that has been used by international organizations to serve specific approaches; liberalize the market and redefine the state's role. The literature review looked into the topic from a social movement approach in order to reconfigure social accountability tools to serve political activism that seeks wider social change on the basis of social justice. This review shows how the same tools can be used to serve different and contradictory policies. Thus, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the different concepts relating to governance including social participation.

The research inquiry also looked into the available documents developed by the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), municipalities and international and Palestinian non-governmental organizations. It looked mostly into the strategic plans, updated laws and regulations, and policy papers of the MoLG to figure out how MoLG has adapted the concept of governance, and how the participatory approach evolved over time from public participation to social accountability. The research also looked into the "citizens budget" documents that were developed to summarize the MoLG, which represents a sub-sector budget. The researcher looked into several "citizens budget" documents that were developed as part of NGOs projects to give a glimpse into the activities of a selected number of municipalities. These projects have been labelled under different concepts, including citizen participation and good governance.

In preparation for carrying out key informant interviews and surveys, a number of operational steps were taken. The researcher updated the contact list of the targeted municipalities, as most of the municipal councils were changed because of the municipal elections held a few months ago. Also most of the available email addresses of the municipalities had been either changed or did not work; an updated list was made. The CSOs contact list also needed updating. It is important to point out that most of the CSOs' contact persons/representatives do not use emails to communicate as most are women-led community-based organizations. The researcher had to create a WhatsApp group to bring CSOs representatives together and update them about the research issues and their importance. With regard to the MoLG, the researcher established new connections with the Ministry at different administrative levels to see how it articulates issues relating to municipalities at different bureaucratic levels.

The researcher conducted many interviews. Some of these were formal with semi-structured questions to inquire about specific issues, i.e. strategic plans, monitoring systems at the Ministry and municipality levels, and the role of the CSOs in the governance system. There were also some informal discussions with MoLG employees and municipalities' staff (from targeted and non-targeted municipalities). Most of these interviews and inquiries were conducted via phone and online interviews.

The researcher developed four different questionnaires. Each questionnaire targeted a group of stakeholders. These questionnaires inquire about the same themes (angles) relevant to the work of the MoLG and municipalities and the role of CSOs in governance. Also, there was a questionnaire directed to the three leading Palestinian NGOs that looked into these NGOs expertise in promoting governance in the local government sub-sector (only two out of three NGOs completed this questionnaire). The questionnaire directed to the Ministry intended to establish a legal and regulatory baseline for governance activities at the Ministry and the municipalities.

A total of 24 questionnaires (sample) was directed at the CSOs. Out of those 24, only ten completed it, and this, only after contacting them a number of times by phone and WhatsApp. Those who completed it came from six different governates in the West Bank, including Jerusalem. The number of questionnaires "filled" by the municipalities was eleven, although one was sent back empty. In addition, 32 individuals were contacted at the municipalities and represent the total sample of participants. Those individuals are either municipalities' employees or municipalities' council members. The municipalities who "filled" the questionnaire were from eight different governates out of the ten targeted by this project.

The researcher checked the social media pages of many of the targeted municipalities, as most of them use social media to announce or publish information about their activities. The researcher also visited some municipalities accompanying citizens who wanted to benefit from municipal services to see how they were treated and if there were price lists or citizen charts available at public service centers in the different municipalities.

Chapter 1: Discussing the Social Accountability Approach

Social Accountability

Definitions of accountability and social accountability:

Accountability is a legal, social science and ethics concept that is defined on the basis of the historical development, political context and culture of the society. In administering and governing the public sphere, accountability is technically defined as "the obligation of power-holders to account for or take responsibility for their actions" (Malena, Forster and Singh, 2004). Olson expands the definition of accountability from "compliance and control" to "being answerable to somebody else, to be obligated to explain and justify actions and inactions- how mandates, authority, and resources have been applied with what results, and whether outcomes meet relevant standards and principles" (2014, p.107).

Social accountability is a broad form of activities and instruments that can be used by citizens and civil society to address public concerns. It ranges from public interest lawsuits to wide-scale mass demonstrations and protests. The concept is used by international organizations in the neoliberal era to refer to a specific category of governance-related activities. It deals with the social consequences of market failure in developing countries1 (Ackerman 2005). In their efforts to conceptualize the concept of social accountability, World Bank scholars integrate it into the concept of governance of neoliberal policies. This is clear in Ackerman's (2005) work entitled 'Social Accountability in the Public Sector: a conceptual discussion'. This will be discussed later.

The World Bank scholars defined social accountability as "an approach toward building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability" (Malena, Forster and Singh, 2004). According to the same source social accountability " is not meant to refer to a specific type of accountability, but rather to a particular approach (or set of mechanisms) for exacting accountability" (ibid). These mechanisms have the aim of "[e] nhancing the ability of citizens to engage with public servants and politicians in a more informed, direct and constructive manner" (ibid).

These scholars argue that the neoliberal approach to social accountability will not only lead to improved governance but also to increased development effectiveness which is achieved through "improved public service delivery and more informed policy design" (ibid). Engaging citizens in social accountability practices will also lead to citizen's empowerment, defined by the World Bank "as the expansion of freedom of choice and action" (ibid). It functions better in decentralized contexts as it "strengthens links between citizens and lo-

1 It is actually de-developed countries.

cal-level governments and assists local authorities and service providers to become more responsive and effective" (ibid). It is different from other participatory approaches because it can "expand opportunities for participation at the macro-level". (ibid), However, using it at the micro-level is easier as "change at this level can often appear less threatening to national powerbrokers, thereby reducing resistance to citizen participation by the regime in power" (Ackerman, 2005).

Involving citizens and civil society in the governance process in general and social accountability, in particular, means bringing different agendas to the same table. Civil society is not one group. It includes business representatives and non-business representatives. What will determine the overall agenda of civil society is the power struggle (based on class, gender and groups with special interests) between the components of civil society actors. But opening the door for civil society components to participate does not mean all agendas are represented. Indeed, only those with enough power are able to put their demands on the table.

Thus accountability definition aims to hold those in power accountable for upholding and protecting the existing political system. It does not require the power-holders to uphold social justice as social justice is a socio-historical development. Therefore, the World Bank's definition of accountability is historically connected to a certain political and economic structure and is defined by the political economy of the legal system that defines the rights and sanctions of social groups one the basis of individual rights in the capitalist social system which disguises social classes power relationships.

World Bank scholars argue in support of neoliberal governance2. Neoliberal governance aims to bring non-state actors to the governance table to deal with state failures in steering development and providing public services. In this type of governance, "state failure can be reconstructed through the action of an informed citizenry that knows its rights and requires the government to uphold them" (Ackerman, 2005). State failure is one of the major sources of citizens' poverty as it fails to deliver services. Even with neo liberalizing the economy, the market failed to provide the coveted economic growth, and the state is responsible as its institutions enacted the economic policies of the free market. According to Ackerman, improved government accountability requires reform in the concept of accountability and the practices implemented by state administrations in the era of state-led capitalism (after World War II to mid 1970s). He does not call the new era, neoliberalism, and he introduces his approach (World Bank approach) as a reform that has the aim of complementing democracy with "good governance and the rule of law" (ibid).

These reforms target four aspects of governance. Firstly, the management of state bureaucracy in which the state shifts from the traditional model of public administration (based on Max Weber's theory) into New Public Management3 (NPM). The traditional public administration model requires the public servant to follow specific procedures in a top-down control manner, while the NPM allows the manager to be proactive and use results-based management. Ackerman calls this; Weberian reform. The second reform is through the marketization of the state's work. Marketization emphasizes both the privatization of public services and the imitation of private sector management techniques (ibid) by governments

2 More about governance definition under governance topic

3 NPM is a corporate management adopted by the state

using the NPM4. According to Ackerman this reform will improve the accountability of service provision by introducing the discipline of the market.

The third reform aims to create Independent Pro-Accountability Agencies (IPAs) that work on monitoring the state apparatus' performance and be "responsible for holding government accountable in a specific issue area" (Ackerman, 2005). He points out that the effectiveness of IPAs depends on these agencies' connection with society which relies on the level of civic engagement activities of a particular society. The fourth reform of social accountability aims to translate the potential power of society into actions (ibid) that work for the public interest. In conclusion, the premise of Ackerman's reform hinges on privatization and governance where "marketization seeks to send sections of the state off to society, social accountability seeks to invite society into the state" (2005).

Ackerman makes a connection between marketization and social accountability as a balance to improve state performance. However, this argument hides the fact that marketization is basically privatization and thus moves service provision from public ownership to private companies, and not society in general as he argues. Also, if management is the source of service delivery problems, then it is not certain that the private sector will manage the provision of services any better than the public agencies5. Furthermore, social accountability does not mean inviting society in general into the state; it invites businesses into shaping the state's public policies and lets ordinary citizens bear the price of this public policy when the market fails. The policy of too big to fail is a prominent historical example as states have used public money to subsidize the big financial institutions in 2007–9 financial crisis.

Ackerman refers to the potential for increases in inequality when using marketization. However, he points out that it has a positive effect on marketization as one of its premises is the "consumer choice" discourse that deals with citizens as consumers fully understanding their own preferences. The positive effect of marketization, combined with NPM participative elements, has a high potential to overcome the negative effects of marketization which increases inequality. Also, Ackerman thinks combining the positive effect of marketization with social accountability will avoid the inequality-producing effects of market-based service delivery and cater to inclusion and social justice more directly. After these combinations of the positive effects of marketization with NPM and social accountability, Ackerman still thinks that privatization of service delivery should take place but on a selective basis, as there is high "possible loss of strength in the accountability signal when "citizens'' are replaced with "consumers"". (2005)

As social accountability is related to citizens' relation to the state, the privatization of public services delivery will add another layer of problems to the state-citizen relationships related to accountability. When entering the public service delivery sector, private companies, do so for profits and not as benevolence. Thus assuming a new accountable relationship will be established that brings state-citizens-companies to govern the public sector with the assumed positive effect of NPM is complicating how to pursue accountability and hold the companies responsible. Accountability in the market is not only through enforcing the law, it also depends on the power struggle between the two main actors (citizens from subal-

4 Hughes in his book; public management and administration (2018) chapter 4 explains how NPM concept emerged and how it is loosely defined

5 Citizens look for lowering the costs and improving the quality while business are driven by profits

tern classes and companies). One example is how to determine the "fair" pricing of services and how to establish the conditions of employment.

Ackerman did not point out the basis on which these agencies engage citizens, whether as subjects or as agents. This is because these institutions, such as human rights bodies, corruption control bodies and auditing departments, treat citizens mostly as subjects, collaborators, the abused and the victim. Dealing with citizens as subjects strips them of their agency and class membership (becoming a class "for itself") which gives them their historical roles/dimensions in the development of society. It is important to indicate also that public interest and concerns are defined by the interests of the dominant class, on the one hand and by the power struggle between subaltern classes and the dominant class, on the other.

Historical perspective:

Since the late 1990s, World Bank scholars have made efforts to address the issue of public participation as a means of enhancing government accountability. The basic theme of the bank's World Development Report 2004 was to make services work for poor people. It sees that " [i]ndividuals and households have dual roles... [a]s citizens they participate [in]... political processes... [a]s direct clients of service providers, [they]... hope to get clean water, have their children educated, and protect the health of their family" (p49). Individuals in their role as citizens participate in the accountability agenda to monitor service delivery. The report indicated that there is "rapid growth of citizen initiatives [that] have been described as a new accountability agenda"(p85). These initiatives are categorized by international organizations under social accountability.

The social accountability concepts and methods became part of the World Bank and international organizations toolkit as a result of the Washington Consensus policies that created or exacerbated the social problems of the subaltern classes. The post- Washington Consensus era tried to tackle what those policies had made worse i.e. the exacerbation of poverty among the popular masses, but this was without dealing with concentration of power and capital in the hands of small social groups and the sidelining of lower classes from the decision-making process.

Social accountability, as formulated by the World Bank, international organizations and foreign aid agencies, was seen as a central concept that can be used by civil society actors to engage in efforts aiming to reduce poverty through the "good governance" eclectic toolkit. This toolkit has technical intervention methods that are focused on enhancing management. These methods were presented as methods that promote, advocate and regulate the inclusiveness of a wider range of people in the decision-making and monitoring process under policies that promote free market and wide privatization of public-owned enterprises, aka neoliberalism.

The social accountability tools were developed after comments from and discontent within the rank and filed institutions which developed and implemented the neoliberal policy prescription, especially the World Bank6. These tools were not developed from scratch; they are mostly adopted from the long experience and heritage of peoples such as the town hall meeting in North America and tribal meetings in Africa. In addition there are techniques developed by researchers and experts such as auditors and surveyors that depend on citizen participation either as subjects or consumers.

For a public authority, i.e. the state and local authorities, to rule through consent, there should be mechanisms and conduits that allow individuals and social groups to participate in the decision-making process and hold public entities accountable for their actions. This does not necessarily reflect the power dynamic of the whole society, i.e. social classes' conflict of interests, but still reflects the dynamic of the democratic process i.e. its modus operandi, in bringing about peaceful conflict management.

In the historical era of neoliberalism, social accountability is part of the good governance prescription developed by international organizations to make the free-market and its guarding institutions work better. The neoliberal era opened huge opportunities for the capitalist class to invest in new sub-sectors, but this opportunity created conditions for social unrest7. Thus it involves civil society actors, whether individuals or organizations, making neoliberal policies work efficiently under democratic conditions. Through the social accountability approach, civil society actors engage in planning, implementing and monitoring the implementation of neoliberal policies. This transfer of responsibility, by holding the power-holders legally responsible, aims to put part of the responsibility for the "failure" and "success" of these policies on the shoulders, actually pockets, of the subaltern classes.

The liberal discourse presents civil society actors as either beneficiaries or representatives of the local community without highlighting the power relations in the specific society based on the classes' interests and the conflict of the social classes. This strategy starched that state politics comes into the realm of civil society without weakening the state's power to take the final decisions. This explains how civil society, according to Gramsci, is the state extended beyond its formal institutions, enabling it to rule by consent. In this regard, economic policies of the neoliberal era are being implemented with lower classes' consent by engaging their "representatives" in developing and carrying out policy implementation at the local level.

Social accountability concept as ideological instrument:

The liberal discourse in general and the neoliberal discourse in particular is an eclectic discourse in the service of the free-market agenda. As a discourse it is an ideological in-

6 For example, Joseph Stiglitz criticized the neoliberal policy approach that is based on Washington Consensus when he was the senior vice-president and chief economist of the Wold Bank (1997- 2000) and outlined what he called 'post-"Washington Consensus". The following article provide an overview of Stiglitz proposed strategy : THE POST WASHINGTON CONSENSUS CONSENSUS, acceded on: https://policydialogue.org/files/events/Stiglitz_Post_Washington_Consensus_Paper.pdf

7 The withdrawal of the state from the service sector or providing services through the private sector increased the size of the market which allowed the private sector to invest in areas where it was not able to do before. The free movement of capital across borders make the de-developed countries susceptible to financial shocks. These financial shocks also created opportunities for profits through credit market. The free trade agreement reopened the market for the benefit of corporations and increased the size of the market and led to unfair completion with the local businesses and as a consequence destroyed the local industry.

strument that justifies the economic and political policies of the dominant capitalist class. It gains its cohesion not from its internal logic but from its unifying political objectives termed as development objectives. These objectives relate to maintaining the capitalist system's ability to function and articulating its systematic failures. The social accountability concept/approach as it is conceptualized by this neoliberal discourse aims to serve these objectives.

The theoretical way, i.e. ideologizing the concept of social accountability, is through integrating civic engagement into the ""accountability system" as a whole". This sociopolitical ideology justifies enacted free market policies and describes the free market milieu as a functioning democracy. This then categorizes the social problems generated by such policies as market skews and temporary failures that need corrections through readjusting the system itself by using its policy instruments. In this regard, the "correction" and "re-adjusting" is the responsibility of all social classes, i.e. social accountability, which requires the empowerment of the powerless subaltern classes to participate in this correction of the skewed system i.e. its governance. Through the participation of the subaltern classes, they can negotiate how this socio-political system functions and demand improvements in their living conditions. According to the liberal ideology, this requires cooperation between the "tripartite"; the state, the upper class, ie businesses and workers i.e. subaltern classes (termed as the poor by this ideology).

In discussing the conceptual development of social accountability, the World Bank intellectuals did not look at the subaltern social classes' roles[8]. They are categorized as poor, disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable. The Bank also, in its eclectic ideological discourse, amalgamated the classical liberal perspective that sees the individual as an independent active agent with a communitarianism (distorted liberal approach) perspective that sees in community interest the primary motivation for action. It also mixed the utilitarian perspective with neoliberal discourse. This is because the utilitarian perspective in establishing moral standards related to how to provide benefits for all individuals (not classes) of the community[9] uses the costs/benefits assessment and statistical analysis which is also used in private business analysis. The eclectic discourse is basically a pragmatic approach that sees collective efforts as essential instruments in achieving the collective interest of people as individuals and not as social classes that have a role in the social reproduction of the economic and political system. This discourse leads to, first, seeing socially generated problems, i.e. poverty and corruption, as mismanagement of resources and an abuse of power. Thus in handling these problems, it addresses institutional (managerial) inefficiency and weak performance on the one hand and institutional (in)adequacy in terms of carrying out their mandate on the other. However, this discourse stops short of viewing the socio-political structure that created the existing institutional arrangements and sets its agenda. Secondly; this discourse produces distortion in how the subaltern classes understand the social, economic and political reasons for their problems. This distortion of subaltern classes' consciousness prevents the lower classes from seeing the relationship between specific policies, the modus operandi of the political system, and the mode of economic production and the source of their suffering. Thus, issues pertaining to the free market, privatization and the limited role of the state in economic development ,i.e. neoliberal discourse feasibility, will not be addressed when criticizing the neoliberal policy agenda.

8 The meaning here is not forming class "in itself" by sharing same source of oppression and grievances, but becoming a class "for itself" by dismantling the system of oppression

9 Margaret Thatcher- the first neoliberal leader and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (1979–1990) said: who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first

Furthermore, when the neoliberal discourse concerning accountability is focused on being a viable way towards good government and the rule of law, aka good governance according to Ackerman, then, how can the government be held accountable for something beyond its mandate and the law? Good government then correlates with how much the government has been efficient in carrying out its platform and upholding the rule of law. Additionally, this discourse produces a definition that ignores social classes' historical role and avoids questions such as who holds class power and what is the relationship between protecting the political system and sustaining the existing socio-economic structure.

The World Bank admits that the social accountability approach, evoked as part of the neoliberal governance framework, is a response to the fact that top-down development approaches are insufficient and to the need for combined government and citizen efforts to advance poverty reduction (Alsop, Ruth, et al. forward vi) not only to mitigate social conflict and class antagonism but also to create class harmony and collaboration[10]. Therefore, social accountability governance is an ideological instrument that aims to "enhance the ability of citizens to move beyond mere protest toward engaging with bureaucrats and politicians in a more informed, organized, constructive and systematic manner"(Malena, Forster and Singh, 2004). As such, its core purpose are class conflict mitigation and management because the source of class conflict is the private ownership of the means of social production. This class struggle takes place between those who own and control wealth and accumulate capital and those who do not own capital and thus sink into poverty.

Neoliberal scholars assume that capitalism is rational and disciplined and that good governance methods aim only to correct the mistakes of the market that generates poverty. Neoliberal scholars do not admit that market failures are systematic failures and that poverty is an integral part of the market-based production i.e. capitalism. They use the elusive language of the promotion and touting of neoliberal polices instead of analyzing and looking for systematic causal relationships. It is true that the World Bank's interest in governance and promotion of social accountability "derives from its core goals of promoting poverty reduction and effective and sustainable development" (Malena, Forster and Singh, 2004). However, this discourse distorts the reality as it fails to explain how neoliberal development, here referred to as effective and sustainable development, will solve the problem of poverty it systematically generates?!

In justifying the social accountability concept/approach, World Bank scholars connected it to other attractive fashionable concepts also redefined and conceptualized within the neoliberal agenda such as gender mainstreaming, democratization and good governance. In touting the neoliberal social accountability approach the World Bank links it to its programs related to poverty reduction and gender empowerment, as the first programs are described by the World Bank as " more-pro-poor policy design, improved service delivery, and empowerment. ….[which] allow poor people to be "in the driver's seat"", and the latter programs are "bottom-up, inclusive and demand- driven nature, enhance the ability of women to make their voices heard" (ibid). It correlates social accountability to enhancing transparency which makes it a tool against corruption (Malena, Forster and Singh, 2004). These fashionable concepts and the language of advertisement slogans such as "pro-poor" and "to be in driver's seat" do not mean that problems created by a neoliberal policy agen-

10 No empirical data support their arguments that the social accountability in neoliberal governance will mitigate the negative effect of the market. However according to Ackerman, (World Bank scholar) there is growing body of evidence from the World Bank projects shows that liberal social accountability is fruitful as it complemented state accountability.

da will be solved using the same methods that created them i.e. free market, as for "master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (Lorde, 2018)

This neoliberal discourse is based on civil and political rights and gives the illusion of equality between individuals simply by conferring to them the same legal rights. When it comes to the state's role, the discourse focuses on the state's involvement in service delivery and ignores the state's role in formulating and implementing economic policies which lead to poverty and inequality. It ignores the fact that inequality in the capitalist economic system is protected by the legal right of private ownership of the means of production which generate the unequal distribution of "income". This private ownership is disguised by the principles of the equality of individuals before law and the right of all individuals to ownership. When subaltern class individuals lack economic means they do not enjoy the same quality of legal rights but can use the same legal procedures as upper class people when they have financial means. But in reality, having civil and political rights does not mean that individuals in lower classes enjoy the same social and economic status as those in the upper class and thus, bringing them to the table of governance will not necessarily have positive outcomes for the subaltern classes' standard of living .

Alternative discourses to the neoliberal approach see individuals as equal citizens and advocate for citizens' entitlement to enjoy health and education basic services, not as customers and clients but as part of the collective ownership of public services. The concept of customers then privatizes the process of service provision and mediates it through the market at some point when public services are outsourced to private enterprises.

Hence, according to the eclectic neoliberal discourse in the World Development Report-2004, individuals, as political citizens, look for collective actions to demand and protect their rights (and thus, it views their actions as selfless). But individuals as clients are self-focused (and it views their actions as selfish). This seemingly complex discourse leaves out questions relating to who benefits from the dominant system of production and distribution? And who is exploited directly by the production process or indirectly by the externality incurred by the public? These questions do not deal with the conditions related to why citizens sometimes behave as "selfless" and sometimes as "selfish" when pursuing their individual interests. This contradiction between individuals of the same class is not based on whether they are citizens and clients but is created by the system of production and its inherent competition. Working class individuals compete with each other over job positions which mostly lead to lower wages for laborers. This situation is created by capitalism and the competition is referred to as " labour freedom". Market advocates tout this destructive competition as freedom though it is one of the main sources of workers' poverty. The alternative discourse sees that the core contradiction is between the person as a member of the working class and the capital (class) that seeks to privatize many publicly owned items including service delivery.

Considering the "involvement" of citizens while using some accountability tools – civic engagement, social accountability and participatory approach – is problematic. The involvement of people through the filling out of questionnaires is different from mobilizing them in a social movement. In the first instance they are subjects and in the latter they are agents. Also, informing citizens does not necessarily imply real participation[11]. The active participation of citizens will lead to social and class solidarity among subaltern classes' members based on the subaltern classes' agenda. While participation pursued by international organizations and the neoliberal agenda is based on the capital social cohesion which serves capital accumulation as it is market driven and continuous competition of the working class individuals (Angelis, 2005). The social capital term touted by international organizations intends to conserve civil peace and class reconciliation. If social accountability is civic engagement then it also could be the instrument to engage individuals in the political process and thus it is not a governance related issue only; it is a power struggle issue i.e. it is political actions.

Social accountability and human rights

Human rights perspectives conceive of the state as a duty bearer and thus consider state actors, as duty bearers who are obliged to and responsible for providing basic rights to individuals and their community, and who must refrain from violating human rights. This discourse provides a framework within the legal system, nationally and internationally, to provide for people's essential needs, as individuals and social groups, and make these needs entitlements. It provides legal support for the non-governmental organizations to justify their activities. However, this discourse is used by international organizations as an extension to the neoliberal discourse which can limit NGO's activities. Firstly, these activities have no political identity because they do not seek to transform the whole political system. The political system inflicts injustice on people as part of its regular practices that sustain its existence. Secondly, certainly the work carried out by NGOs does not seek broader social change based on social justice. This work is part of efforts by global organizations to deal with the problems created or exacerbated by neoliberal polices. And thirdly, the technical limit, as most of the NGOs work is project-based, means it lacks sustainability and individuals who are engaged in this type of work, i.e. NGOs staff are exogenous in terms of their generally belonging to the middle class and view their role as catalysts for change.

It is important to split or shift the human rights discourse away from a liberal discourse that prioritizes civil and political rights based on capitalism's legal rights system above social and economic rights. This split will focus on human needs as a result of historical development that makes economic and social rights as important as civil rights. By making this split and integrating the human rights discourse into social justice and freedom from class exploitation, the natural human rights discourse becomes a class-based approach. It is important to bear in mind that the human rights discourse was developed historically as a class-based discourse to defend the rights of the emerging capitalist class. Thus, this reconfiguration of the human rights position as class-based makes the struggle for justice a human need. The injustices defined here are political oppression and lack of economic resources to live as civilized people in a specific historical period. Struggle aims, when the human rights approach becomes a historical approach recognizing the citizens evolving needs, to change the existing political economy conditions that keeps reproducing injustice, i.e. private ownership of the means of reproduction of life conditions. This approach sees social accountability from the point of view of the working class. It also makes social accountability practices a part of the class conflict that aims to change the balance of power between the subaltern and upper classes in order to create conditions that reduce the level of oppression and human rights violations.

11 More about this when presenting the ladder of participation

Human needs vs moral accountability:

Dealing with the issue of social justice as moral accountability only, might render it non- urgent and implies the need for the middle and upper classes to have greater understanding of the needs of the subaltern classes in order to bring about social changes (Jürgen Habermas along other intellectuals stresses the importance of the middle class in bringing about social change). Stressing that social change is motivated by universal and non-class moral values makes justice an absolute moral standard and not a specific life condition related to a specific historical era. This approach sees moral issues as universal values and not social class related ethics. This view hides the source of oppression and the fact that class conflict stems from the objective reality of social production. It makes struggle for justice a moral practice based on moral values while it is in reality a moral commitment engendered by the exploitative and oppressive conditions of the material reality that should be changed. Thus viewing social responsibility as a moral value implies that the power-holders (who represent the upper class that benefits from the system) should have moral motivation to bring about change based on humanistic moral values. The moral value approach, which is a liberal approach to human rights discourse, leads to class reconciliation that brings about civil peace. This point of view is promoted by the World Bank and other global organizations in addition to liberal scholars.

The issue here is that holding the upper class and power-holders accountable on the basis of legal and moral standards will not necessarily bring about justice for the subaltern classes. For example, the "market efficiency" slogan, promoted by neoliberals, led to the withdrawal of the state from the service sector and to the provision of services through the private sector, which increased the profits of the capitalists. At the same time, these businesses were given incentives through tax cuts. Meanwhile, workers' real wages, even in core capitalist countries such as US and UK, did not increase since the 1970s, and most importantly, workers continue to pay the same rate or increased taxes. This has led to the dwindling living standards of the working class and other subaltern social groups while the one per cent capitalist class increased the amount of its profits[12]. This situation is legally and morally acceptable to the liberal system while it is not acceptable from a human needs perspective as these needs are historically given standards related to the degree of social development.

Social accountability beyond neoliberal discourse:

The neoliberal approach to social accountability tends towards depoliticizing the political by focusing on the empowerment of individuals and communities through the assistance of non-governmental organizations. It presents individuals' and peoples' needs and demands as social demands without addressing the root causes of why these demands are not met, and the historical limits of the capitalist mode of production. The alternative social accountability approach is to politicize subaltern classes' demands. Its sees the work of NGOs as an extension of the political realm outside the formal state structure (Gramsci perspective). It holds the state fully responsible, and thus accountable, for its economic policies advancing the interests of a certain social class. The state, represented by the senior bureaucrats and political decision-makers, represents the political system that protects the collective interest of the upper-class or a group within it, such as financiers or military junta.

12 The rate of profit decreased but the amount is increased

By definition, social accountability is a civic engagement activity and thus can be a means of political actions to achieve certain political objectives. However, social accountability is also part of governance activities. In 1 class-based society, governance is political as it deals with classes' rights as an expression of class conflict of interests and struggle. Beyond neoliberal discourse it represents an alternative approach based on developing individuals' and social groups' class-based awareness about their rights in the public sphere. This is possible through class conflict and collective actions, used as ways to improve or fulfill these rights. This alternative path hinges on socio-political movements that empowers individuals as members of subaltern classes. It vests power in the popular classes (labour class, lower segment of the middle class and peasants), and in particular, the working class, accordingly transforming people into agents of change.

Viewing social accountability from an alternative perspective leads to the idea that this approach is not power-sharing. It sees in social accountability, social class power struggle through which the subaltern classes strive to hold the authority (power) accountable for the policies that negatively affect them. This accountability is beyond the legal mandate but is based on political struggle that is related to the historic era. The alternative social accountability approach intends to hold authority accountable for what it did to serve the special group interest and preserve the structure of power to support the upper class interest . This expands the responsibility beyond the legal definition to politics[13].

The aim of developing an alternative social accountability approach is to consolidate the power of subaltern classes. This power is generated when the subaltern classes form their organizing instruments, i.e. the political parties and their civil society organizations. Thus, subaltern classes organization is the basic element in forming people's power. The alternative social accountability approach is part of a wider theory of change. This theory provides a deep understanding of the existing reality of individuals as members of social classes. This reality has a historical dimension, an economic base and a political framework. The organizing instrument and the theory of change enable the subaltern class members to act purposefully, but also to have a strategy and to be able to form coalitions. This approach should make sure that the diversity of actions will serve towards the achievement of the overall goal which is to bring about social justice and freedom from exploitation.

Viewing social accountability from different classes' lenses (subaltern class interests) will see it as a broad range of tools that can be used on the long road of struggle. These tools will assist in mobilizing and organizing subaltern classes in their struggle for collective rights. The lens of the working class, for example, will not see the existing reality as the end of history[14] nor will it consider capitalism as the only politically possible reality i.e. capitalist realism[15].

The alternative social accountability approach will redefine the actors and their role. In social movements, the actor, the person of interest, is to be redefined as all the subaltern

13 Politics here defined as "the most concentrated expression of economics" according to Vladimir Lenin (On the Question of the Trade Unions and their Organization,1 April 1920)

14 According to Fukuyama who is one of the prominent representatives of neoliberal discourse and liberal ideology the humanity reached "the end-point of mankind›s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government." Fukuyama, Francis (1989). «The End of History?»

15 Mark Fisher, the British progressive thinker and critic of neoliberalism, in his essays de-construct this idea and indicate that it is possible to have a different reality (Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?, 2009)

classes' members. This will hinge on class consciousness and class solidarity which gives a historical raison d'être to political activities. Thus, class solidarity of the civilly engage members of subaltern classes seeks to bring about social transformation. It does not mean socialization activities or activism but rather mindful, and purposeful actions. Although embarking in social change is a process, it should have a time frame. This is important to avoid fatigue and to set limits for evaluation, reflection and strategizing.

Nevertheless,the understanding, consciousness raising and actions that social movements aim for should not focus only on action but also on the analysis of these actions and how much they contribute to the overall change. This is what Paulo Freire called praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it (P51, 2005). Focusing on actions will reduce the process into activism (ibid p87). At the same time focusing on "raising awareness" and intellectual discussions is verbalism (ibid p87). The alternative social accountability approach views its role as a method of transforming the whole political system through praxis of the social movement members. When they participate, individuals should know what they do, how they are going to do it, but most importantly, participate in the intellectual process of how and what change the social movement aims to make.

Governance[16]

Governance, like any political concept, has evolved over time. It is based on the historical development of the political and economic structures that create the structure, instruments and norms of governance, for a relevant historical era[17]. Governance in the neoliberal era, is an evolving concept that refers to the way the neoliberal state and its dominant capitalist class i.e. the financial social groups, use state apparatus and global organizations to run political and economic policies that promote free market capitalist development. Governance in the neoliberal era refers to state and non-state actors –i.e. businesses representatives and civil society representative–working together to sustain the political system and economic relationships that reproduce the capitalist mode of production. Thus, it is important to indicate that governance is not only referring to technical aspects of political and economic practices, but also to an ideological connotation of the neoliberal ideology. This ideological connotations reflects the interest of the capitalist class, and justify it as public interest and common sense. As such, this ideological connotation is presented as social class neutral, and as being a scientific articulation of the objective reality.

16 The etymology of govern in Latin (gubernare), Greek (kubernan), which means to steer. In English and Arabic implies or directly mean of steering and to steer. Governance in English and Arabic means many things including control and exercise of power to put things in order based on some reference rules. In Arabic and Greek governance means steering and control.

17 Massimo De Angelis refer in his paper (2005) that he searched in the British Library catalogue from the beginning of recorded time till 1975, and he got 47 titles with the word "governance", as compared to almost 1000 titles for the period between 1975 to May 2003.

Neoliberals, scholars[18], statesmen[19] and international organizations[20] tend to focus on the technical side of governance when defining it by looking into governance as process and outcome (Pierre and Peters, 2021) (Fukuyama, 2013, 2017) . Some scholars argue that governance is what was formerly known as public administration (Frederickson 2005, p284) as it intends to steer the economy and society (Pierre and Peters, 2001) (Torfing and Sørensen, 2014, p38) by using public policies as the "principle instrument" to achieve its ends (Pierre and Peters, 2021, p2) . Thus, governance constitutes the institutional framework that allows government to operate where there are networks of interdependent actors of state and non-state actors (Torfing, 2012). Some neoliberal scholars find these concepts useful, especially at a time when-the world is going through an era of shared power and when the authority of states is to some extend being diffused (Hughes 2018, P131) i.e. shared among interdependent policy actors who negotiate the policy formation and intended output (Kooiman,1993)

In their definitions, neoliberal scholars (and even liberal scholars) separated the state from society, even placing it above society. This separation paved the way for the designation of the state as independent of the classes. According to liberal scholars such as Kennett, the neoliberal era is characterized by a shift from government to governance, meaning that the government is now only one player amongst many others in the policy arena (2008, p4). According to this explanation, the neoliberal era is enabling players who represent different interests to engage in administrating public life through public policy, thus assuming for the benefits of all.

Neoliberal scholars, and amongst them World Bank scholars, see the concept of governance as describing the management of the public interest that allows for free market mechanisms, new public management and privatization of public goods and services to function within a capitalist political system. It describes and justify, how in the neoliberal era, the state apparatus and government shed off or abandoned some of its previous roles, i.e. provider of essential welfare, and that characterized the state modus operandi between the Great Depression and the mid 1970s.

In the past, Public administration as a concept referred to and described the state apparatus management of public policies and services in the era of state led capitalism. Some liberal scholars admitted that saying that governance is, in fact, the extension of what was formerly known as public administration , is only a slight exaggeration (Frederickson 2005, p284). These liberal scholars explain that the re-emergence of governance as a concept in public and private management happened because the concept of government is too narrow and

18 Hughes (2008) in his book: Public Management and Administration, chapter 6 (p130–153) about governance cited many liberal scholars

19 See Auditor-General in British Columbia (2008, P17)

20 Mainly the IMF, World Bank and OECD. The following examples attest the idea

OECD (2005), Modernising Government:The Way Forward, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264010505-en

World Bank Group. 2017. World Development Report 2017 : Governance and the Law. Washington, DC: World Bank. © World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25880 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO."

The world bank "World Bank. 1997. World Development Report 1997 : The State in a Changing World. New York: Oxford University Press. © World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5980 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO."

Picciotto, Robert 1995, Putting Institutional Economics to Work: From Participation to Governance, World Bank discussion paper 304, The World Bank, Washington DC. https://doi.org/10.1596/0-8213-3458-1 has inadequate explanatory power at a time when societal institutions organize and provide a societal benefit without the direct involvement of any governmental authority (Hughes 2018, P130). Alternatively, governance, which is regulating public sphere, could take place without the direct intervention of government.

Thus, the neoliberal era opened the door for an evolving concept of governance to overtake the concept of public administration. In this era, government significantly cutback on public expenditures and focused on regulating and coordinating the provision of the public services (Pierre and Peters, 2021, p1). As such, this neoliberal era is typically associated with austerity measures and widespread privatizations of the public sector' services provision and productive enterprises. This does not mean that the state shrank in size or social class identity during the neoliberal era but that its role and institutions transformed to meet the neoliberal policy agenda (ibid)

Some liberal scholars stretch the definition of governance to include the management of private economic enterprises i.e. corporations and any non-state association such as non-governmental organizations (NOGs) without or with the association of governmental bodies (Keohane and Nye, 2000, p12) (Hughes 2018, P133). They point out that governance does not always require government authority. These liberal scholars (Hughes 2018, P133–134) (Koomiman, 1999, p70) see social-political governance as a sub-category of governance, and define it as the interaction between public and private actors that aims at solving society's problems or creating societal opportunities though institutional arrangement.

The liberal definition of governance tends to strip governance concepts from their political core meaning or disguise their role as shared management between government agencies and non-state actors to deal with societal issues. This stripping or disguising works to hide class interest conflict on one hand and promote the collaboration between the state and different societal entities as described by Pierre and Peters (2021, p2–3) on the other hand. For neoliberals, governance is the mechanism through which to harmonize and resolve conflicts among individuals and groups within society (Ibid p4).Instead it is clear that the state in the neoliberal era, in particular, is there to protect and sustain the private sector's interest and suppress the working classes. The working classes organize to improve living standards and transform modes of production to end their exploitation, which partially explains the increase gap in inequality between upper and subaltern classes.

The political economy of governance i.e. the social fabric of governance:

The Commission on Global Governance (1995) formed by the United Nations defined governance as a regime of regulations implemented by formal institutions and informal arrangements. According to the commission, this regime of governance is implemented at the neighbourhoods level as well as on the global level and is defined as "the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken". This means that governance as a regime is ubiquitous, and most importantly, self-regulating. The self-regulating nature of governance regime enables the political system to function by consent on one hand while on the other hand, making the coercive element of the governance regime an integral part of its system. As such, it is justifiable and indigenous to the system to discipline individuals to maintain peace and social stability.

By looking into governance as regulatory regime, it then becomes a management issue. This management structure is de-politicised in terms of the politics of class conflict. However, it could be a power struggle, not based on class conflict anymore but situated within groups who pursue a leading position in the political system. On the policy level, it is based on contending agendas within the same political and economic spectrum i.e. neoliberal economy and neoliberal politics. In both cases, management and policy issues, the contending parties' point of contention is how to reform the system whether locally, nationally and on the global levels (De Angelis, 2005).

Acknowledging that governance is a network of actors who function as a regulatory regime, coming together to steer the issues of public concerns i.e. public policy and economic policies. However there are questions such as who will determine who are those social actors? Who is invited to the table of discussion? Who sets the agenda? Who implements the agenda? Who monitors the agenda implementation? To answer these questions, it is essential to look into the balance of political and economic power between the social classes that determine the composition of the civil society and its dominant agenda.

Government representatives come to the governance table having the means and power to influence the economy i.e. fiscal and monetary policies and the state apparatus. Business representatives come to the table with their power of private ownership of economic enterprises and their ability to lobby the state apparatus functionaries and the elected representatives. For the working class, its political weight is more important than its economic size, and depends on its organizing power, the instrument of organizing i.e. political parties and the grassroots organizing structures. But in the class conflict, the capitalist class do what is possible to prevent the working class from organizing itself politically while claiming that its political parties represent all social classes. However, in the neoliberal era, the balance of power between the labour and capital shifted dramatically in the benefit of capital. In rights perspectives this means more legal rights for capital which, in turns, enables the capitalist class to shape the state policy to support their private interest (Lapavitsas and Harvey, 2021).

The technical/operational meaning of governance i.e. governance as a regime of regulations, is important because it is shows concretely how it works, however, its historical and political economy analysis will highlight how it evolved, and why it evolved in the way it functions, or in other words, what is the historical conjunction and how did a specific social class interest i.e. capitalist, and specifically, how the financial capital, push for evolving and shaping it as an instrument and process at the same time.

Governance emerged as a response to the diversity of institutional arrangements of the market economy (Aoki, 2001) that are focused on running the economy with corporations, and with the financial sector dominating. By their dominance, corporations are gaining more and more independence and are subject to less regulations and more protection from the state. The 2008–9 financial crises and the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) in the US is the most relevant example of how the state rescued the financial sector's dominating corporations using public money. This explains the meaning of governance as network and self-regulatory regime (self-organizing and self-enforcing) as exemplified by the meeting between then US-Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, New York Federal Reserve Bank President Timothy Geithner, and Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke along with the representatives of the nine major financial corporations in US to "solve the financial crises of the US market". While all those representatives were not elected officials, their decisions were adopted and endorsed by the elected politicians. Thus, in this network, the corporations have increased their decisive weight in formulating the governance regime that sites them beside the state that seemingly represents the collective interest of the capitalist system by seeking its political stability.

These organizational arrangements (institutions) around the state apparatus determine how the running of the economy has or is intended to have social and political impact (Aoki, 2001)[21]. This social impact is the political economy of governance. In other words, the relationships of different social groups i.e. classes to the economy and the state power in term of rights within the existing capitalist system.

The critical political economy of governance, looks into governance beyond its static regulatory regime to analyze its historical evolvement and limitations on one hand and the impact of this evolved governance regime on the disruption of power between the social classes on the other hand. This critical perspective looks into the social impact of governance, as it deals with institutional arrangements and the way to steer these institutions altogether (modus operandi). Additionally, it also looks at the impacts these institutions have on the economy, politics and thus on social groups (classes and sup-classes and groups within classes based on gender, ethnicity and age segments). Therefore, the macro perspective of social rights looks at the roles- written rights (legalized)- or established norms developed as a consequence of the institutional arrangements of the governance regime based on the social relation of production during a certain era (historical development) and reflects the political balance of power between the social groups in this specific era.

The neo-liberal governance in its evolution since 1980s, and particularly since 2000s, has been moving from self-disciplined to self-regulating, i.e. from classic government administration to the regime of governance management that sees government as being one amongst other players. self-disciplined behavior, is when making the individual watch and monitor his/her behavior to not go beyond what is acceptable by the dominant power. In the case of government administration and according to Max Weber's theory, what is acceptable is defined by the government's books and established roles. Group of individuals, become self-disciplined when they watch each other's behaviors in order to make sure that their members' behavior do not go beyond what is acceptable to the existing system or regime. In self-disciplined cases the rules are imposed from above. In the governance regime each individual/actor is responsible of his or her action, as it is a system of self-censorship.

21 Aoki gives many examples about the evolvement of institutions however he does not view it through critical political economy analysis of the capitalist system, but as incident and its consequence

Then if governance is self-regulating, but at the same time is a regime that has many actors, how does it build the momentum to continue, and how is its internal balance of power reached? At the same time; if businesses are able to lobby the government then why bring-in the voices of others i.e. labour unions, peasants and different segments of the middle class?

The political system seeks to rule by consent and transfer part of the responsibility on the non-capitalist groups such as the labour class. Most importantly, through consultations with subaltern (powerless) social classes' representatives, the system presents itself and its neoliberal policies as public policies developed by the different representatives of the social classes and representing these classes shared interests. Thus the political system has the countenance of legitimacy, as different contending socio actors participate in policy development. As a consequence, the social groups should abide by what they seemingly participated in developing, as this gives the regime the momentum of self-regulation.

Furthermore; self-regulation happens when the actor, by himself or with other actors, seemingly participates in creating the rules and monitors their implementation. In a self-regulating regime, the others' management mistakes and policy failures are seen as being the collective responsibility of the political system ruled by people's consent. This self-regulating regime has two faces; First the seemingly democratic ruling shared between equal partners. This lends the regulatory regime cohesion by making all partners share interest, values and norms to maintain the existing system serving the dominant actor i.e. class interest of capitalists. This participation makes the agents in this regime shareholders and thus holds the regulatory regime together because of the shareholders consent Second; the regulatory regime has the coercive power to punish those who do not meet its roles. As such, this coercive power is disciplinary. Thus Wiener (2001) see in governance "a purposive act of providing stability, normally entails more or less coercive systems of regulation".

Thus the accountability that is related to neoliberal governance has two faces: persuasion and coercion. Thereby individuals and groups become accountable within the framework of this regime and its sub-regimes. Examples of sub-regimes include the anti-money laundering regulations that make banks accountable of their customers' source of money. Another example is the anti-terrorism regime that implicated citizens and civil society organizations not only in abiding by the anti-terrorism law, but also shaping their political and cultural views, subsequently enabling the state apparatus not only to violate the basic civil and legal rights of individuals and groups but also to justify this morally.

Historically the neoliberal discourse is filled with anti-union views that are wrapped up in the parlance of the freedom of labour. This discourse, for example, claims that inflation is partially because of wage increases and that a cap on wages is a way to get out of stagflation. It also holds that instead of waging struggles to improve their wages and living conditions, the working class should cooperate with the state and the capitalist class. This led to the emergence of the tripartite partnership among the social actors, which became the pith of the neoliberal discourse that tries to reconcile the irreconcilable interests of labour and capital. This partnership between contradictory interest groups aims to "draw mutual benefit and their respective goals are pursued efficiently. Areas of application range from drawing up codes of conduct, to social audit and particular micro projects on the territory "(De Angelis, 2005).

The outcome of neoliberal policies has led to socio-political unrest and protests in developed liberal economies (the core centre of capitalism) and in de-developed capitalist economies (peripheral capitalism) (Walton and Seddon 1994) from the late 1970s onward. The austerity measures known as shock therapy that were enacted in the former socialist countries and before that in South American countries restructured these societies and their capitalist systems in which oligarchs benefited from privatization and monopolized the state apparatus whereas the majority of people who form the working classes lived in poverty.

The implementation of neoliberal policies increased societies'polarization due to the increase in inequality. At the same time, in de-developed capitalist economies (peripheral capitalism), these policies increased the exclusion of the lower classes from political representation as a result of the relative decrease in their political weight while a coalition of oligarchs along with the state bureaucracy monopolized the state and steered it towards further support for their class interests.

From the late 1990s onward neoliberal institutions re-articulated increased poverty, especially in de-developed countries and the social exclusion of the subaltern classes. However, when articulating these problems, the neoliberal discourse saw social problems as a source of political instability and a motivation for subaltern classes to create social unrest. The World Bank has been an instrument to deal with the problems created by market-based policies. It adopted a new discourse that focuses on partnership (Chandhoke, 2002) and introduced a depoliticized concept of governance (Jayal: 1997) along with other concepts such as sustainable development, preservation of natural resources, equitable development, and democratic development (Chandhoke, 2002). This rhetoric did not change the modus operandi of the neoliberal agenda but enabled the repackaging and labelling of neoliberal policies to make them seem friendly pro-growth policies that serve the working classes.

This led from 2000 onwards to the re-emergence of governance regimes within the neoliberal agenda. It aimed firstly to decrease the corruption of the state institutions (in the 1990s). Indeed, at that time, the neoliberal global institutions figured out that protests and social instability were a consequence of non-democratic and corrupt state institutions. Along with this development, the so-called "third sector" emerged as an instrument to assist with the handling of poverty but within the neoliberal agenda (Chandhoke, 2002). This "third sector" refers to the international non-governmental organizations that work with international neoliberal organizations and receive funds from the governments of the core centre of capitalism to mitigate the effect of poverty and social exclusion.

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After the 2000's, the "third sector" or global civil society organizations grew rapidly to play a political role in governance through so-called social inclusion, civic engagement and poverty reduction. This role for non-state actors at the national and international levels is political in that it advances the claim that the neoliberal agenda and capitalism is the only viable way to solve social problems. This discourse was later coined "capitalist realism". According to the notion of capitalist realism, existing market mechanisms and the configuration of property rights are *given,* and there is no need to justify them to the public. According to this idea, there is no civilized social life outside of capitalism and its free market mechanisms. This neoliberal discourse does not recognize the universality of human needs but rather the universality of the market norm (De Angelis, 2005).

Some non-state actors and not-for-profit organizations are directly involved in promoting neo-liberal policies by emphasizing the role of the capitalist market in promoting growth and even solving certain social problems The prominent role played by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in advocating for the privatization of Covid 19 vaccines and its role in articulating the health policy agenda in redeveloping countries are just two examples. The well-known NGO Oxfam not only implements projects that connect small producers to the market but has also promoted the idea that free trade is a viable strategy for tackling poverty[22]. Since 2010 many other prominent NGOs, local and international, have depicted the neoliberal agenda of the free market as the viable way towards growth and governance. They do this through promoting and implementing projects related to micro-finance and public-private partnership projects.

The pragmatic approach of the dominant civil society actors i.e. NGOs and CSOs, justify their participation in the governance regime by referring to the balance of power between the upper class and the subaltern classes. This balance of power is tilted severely towards the benefit of the upper class thus, the neoliberal policies are enforced whether they accept them or not. However, when NGOs and CSOs participate, they make sure that different views are "taken on board" through the process of consultation on how to implement neoliberal policies (De Angelis, 2005). This implies, from their perspective, that efforts by NGOs and CSOs are conducted to modify the impact of neoliberal policies by implementing poverty reduction and social inclusion programs.

Thus, in the governance framework, civil society organizations perform a number of functions including the following; (1) educating the public about complicated things allowing NGOs, for example, to use a broad range of ideas and perspectives but always within the neoliberal agenda, (2) civil society actors having the ability to raise the flag/ alarm when rules are breached – a watchdog role, giving NGOs a "progressive" and "revolutionary" image in the eyes of ordinary citizens and (3) civil society actors promote transparency and accountability to make sure the political regime is stable and functioning. These roles within the governance framework suit middle class individuals who carry out their work mostly as professionals. At the global level of governance, global civil society organizations that work as international NGOs, occupy (are given) a position in world governance that allows them to act as the guardians of liberal values and the market system. Their role is focused on providing a morally informed consensus on the minimum [needs] of human beings (Chandhoke, 2002). This role is articulated by using an eclectic discourse made from human rights jargon, the participatory approach and the neoliberal discourse of market freedom.

The Word Bank and the IMF either co-opted many civil society organizations and NGOs by including them in consultation and making them "partners" in decision-making activities (ibid) or by creating many NGOs to represent local communities in development projects (De Angelis, 2005). The project development of CSOs in World Bank financed projects has increased from 21% in 1990 to 88% in the fiscal year 2015, for example. This increase is an indicator of how important it is to include civil society actors in the governance regime of the neoliberal political system.

22 For more information see Oxfam report in May 2002 titled: Rigged Rules and Double Standards. Trade, Globalisation and the Fight against Poverty. This report can be accessed through https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/112391/cr-rigged-rules-double-standards-010502-en.pdf;jsessionid=9F527BDCF021D0200EDA4AC47FAD0540?sequence=18

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is a broad concept that does not refer to any specific action or actions within a certain category. The activities of civic engagement can be political or apolitical. Individuals and groups engage in civic activities, voluntarily and/or by being recruited in programs such as university or government programs to do "good" for the welfare of society. This public good or common good is defined by local culture and norms, the political ideology of the organizers if it is a political organization or by the hegemonic ideology if the intended "good" is an apolitical activity.

Civic engagement has two characteristics. Firstly, it is participation in public issues and is part of the public sphere whether it has a direct political message or not, eg philanthropic work. Secondly, it has social impacts on the targeted community in which a social issue is at least addressed or the problem articulated through conscious and deliberate efforts by civilly engaged individual/s. The concept of civic engagement is applicable on simple (low profile activity) and sophisticated issues. Some haphazard activities of individuals that are relevant to the public such as helping old people and school children to cross a busy road are part of civic engagement activities. The activities of individuals who engage in social movements to bring about wider social change are included in civic engagement but could be categorized as high profile activity. Both examples address social problems; the former deals with a traffic issue whereas the latter is a premeditated action that requires a higher level of consciousness and political organizing. The concept encompasses activities that address community sensitization as well as taking direct action to achieve a certain social goal. As civic engagement is part of the public sphere that people share, then it also includes activities that are focused on the health of the ecosystem. People who are engaged in environmental activism are part of the social accountability framework as they demand decisions from public institutions to improve the quality of the ecosystem to safeguard it and hold accountable any entity that inflicts damage on it. Individuals engaged in environmental activism are addressing common social issues that affect peoples' civil life and even their existence.

The level of an individual's ability to make independent decisions that serves his/her social group interest (agency) and his/her involvement in the governance of civic life gives civic engagement its identity. Individuals who volunteer in food banks, Takyeh or Zakat committees have a low level of civic engagement impact though they are articulating a sensitive issue, i.e. helping poor individuals. While organizing subaltern classes to demand better public services and enjoy their civil rights requires high level of agency and has an impact on governance although the impact of their actions require a longer time with no guarantees of success.

There are two major approaches to the issue of civic engagement and participation. The first approach has the aim of dealing directly with certain social issues of concern without dealing with the structural and institutional formations of these social concerns. this approach could deal with poverty and hunger related issues with a focus on providing relief assistance to people who suffer. Thus, the individuals who use this approach work in a way that is mainly community-based and deals largely with immediate responses to social problems.

The other approach is to tackle social issues through institutional and structural means with the aim of producing change in existing official public policy. Those using this approach could organize themselves and put their efforts into intermediate instruments such as a political party or social and environmental movements, to achieve the targeted change. The level of change could be community-based such as introducing changes to frontline service delivery systems i.e. services facilities. The aimed for change could be at a higher level through organizing politically to pressure the government to change its policy approach. In reality, when individuals encounter social issues of concern, a number of factors will determine what approach to use to tackle an issue. However, what gives civic engagement a class-based identity is whether it aims at direct political targets or if it is a non-political activity that has social impact.

Civic participation as an abstract concept, whether it is referred to as community participation or citizen participation, does not give information about who organizes the activities, about which individuals are recruited for participation nor does it details the political, economic and social agenda. Making participation an end in itself does not empower citizens as individuals or citizens as members of social classes that have collective class interests or as citizens who belong to a community and a nation and share some collective interest. Mostly, when civic participation happens at the community and/or group of citizens level, it is at the grassroots of society, i.e. at the final destination of the social policy, and not at the top level where planning and decision-making takes place. In addition, grassroots as a concept does not tell us what class, gender and power this social group has. Carrying out projects/ civic engagement activities could be in affluent upper-class neighborhoods or in working-class or peasant communities.

The framework of participation is determined by the political context that includes institutions at the political organization level, the social structure of the targeted community and which social group is hegemonic, as well as the power dynamics between these social groups and the level of economic development locally and nationally. The outcome of participation, at the political level, is determined by who organizes the subaltern classes; namely political parties, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (local and international). Most important is the basis on which political, economic and social agenda the subaltern classes are organized and mobilized. Thus, it is a means to achieve a certain outcome that serves a specific social group's interest rather than other groups.

A social accountability framework, whether it is carried out on the basis of a neoliberal agenda or as an instrument in subaltern class politics, has the aim of reinforcing civic engagement values in order to hold those in power accountable for their actions. Without engaging individuals civically, the social accountability framework does not work, as the framework tends to change the perspective of individuals towards public services from mere recipients to stakeholders who can hold public officials and agencies accountable based on the mandate they have.

Will civic participation in governance lead to power distribution? There is no straight forward answer that would make the connection between civic engagement and power distribution in political terms. It is important to know first what is the source of power. Is it through the control of the official state authority? Or is it an extension and projection of something else? This 'something else' is the ownership and control of the economic means of production.The state apparatus is thus the structure that represents the power of ownership against the people who do not have power. The organizing of and participation of the subaltern classes is a means to coalesce and harness the power of the subaltern classes who become able to challenge the class interests of the people represented by the state power and thus force them to share power and redistribute "benefits" to stabilize the political system.

Therefore, engaging citizens in the governance process is an essential step to realizing the political and economic rights of the subaltern classes. Participation reflects the power struggle between those who have, i.e. power holders and upper class, and those who have not, i.e. the subaltern classes. In this power struggle, those who hold power try to empty participation of its meaning as a means of gaining rights while civil movements have tried historically through participation to become empowered to enable them to gain social, political and economic rights. This has generated a ladder of participation that contains different categories of participation. Sherry Arnstein, in the late 1960s in US, simplified the types of civic engagement in governance when she described the power struggle between authorities which carried out many social programs, under the title "war on poverty", and the people who tried to benefit from these programs. Sherry, in her paper, indicated that the "maximum feasible participation" of the subaltern classes, i.e. have-not people, is a fruitful thing for those social groups when their participation is located in the upper rungs of her ladder. Their participation is a means to improve their situation that trapped them in structural problems of poverty. Sherry Arnstein's participation ladder categorizes each type of participation, categories that are called "rungs'. Among these categories there are the fruitful participation rungs (upper rungs) and the pseudo-participation rungs(lower rungs). Each category of participation was noticed in the programs implemented in the US that aimed at alleviating the effect of poverty on people of subaltern classes. The following is a summary of Arnstein's paper as it is relevant to this research.

The first two rungs of the participation ladder refer to the efforts of the power holders to show others, including the participants, that they have granted them the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. These two rungs are termed manipulation and therapy. The first category is manipulation. This type is pseudo-participation as the power-holders (public officials) manipulate and deceive participants into letting them agree and give their support for the power-holders decisions. They make participants think that they took the relevant decision regarding poverty alleviation activities simply by being in official meetings and by signing the decision document. The second rung refers to the power-holders' way of dealing with subaltern classes, i.e. the have-not members. The power-holders treat have-not individuals as though they have mental capacity and thus need to go through certain mental/ psychological rehabilitation, in order to be able to participate in the decision-making process relevant to anti-poverty programs.

The second level of the ladder contains three rungs/categories. The first rung is participation by informing. In doing so the power holders use their access to information and managerial expertise to inform participants of their rights. They control the communication process by instructing citizens about what is best for them with no mechanism for feedback and no ability to negotiate the power terms. Thus the participation here is superfluous carried out under the facade of enabling and empowering the subaltern classes, i.e. the have-nots, by educating them about decisions taken on their behalf. The second rung is the consultation of the subaltern classes through attitude surveys and other methods. These methods seek to explore individuals' opinions regarding socio-political or socio-economic issues in order to formulate different options and alternative solutions. This is a widely used method that converts subaltern classes into statistics based on whichpower-holders then try to weigh options and make decisions. Of course, the power holders determine the indicators to be used and they do not tell people about other options they can utilize outside the consultation instrument.

The third rung of the second level is placating. Authorities usually tend to placate people when they start to express their discontent and rage. People at this level could participate but still have not enough power to make decisions. Participants could put the subaltern classes demands on the table to be included but power holders still have enough power to keep their interests superior to other interests. Thus a power struggle takes place as the power-holders try to prevent the subaltern classes, i.e. have-nots, from benefiting from the programs and as they make decisions ensuring their dominance is maintained. Participation at this second level is token; part of liberal democracy tokenism.

The upper level of the ladder of participation has three rungs that represent citizens' power in managing governance. The first rung is partnership. This occurs when citizens realize their class power and organize themselves to negotiate the power terms with the power-holders. In this rung, power-holders do not have enough strength to turn down proposals to negotiate the terms of their leaderships. The power-holders find out that without power sharing and cooperation with subaltern classes their dominance is in jeopardy. The second rung/category is delegated power. In this rung, lower class citizens have power through having the majority of seats and thus control the decision-making process through democratic means. The delegated power rung could also refer to the ability of the subaltern classes to develop a parallel governance structure that counters the power of the dominant class and power-holders. The third rung is citizens control. This is when citizens from subaltern classes are able to control the whole governance process using democratic means. The subaltern classes members, i.e. have-nots, continuously gain a greater degree of power over decision-making which limits the effect of the bureaucracy i.e. the power-holders. Here, citizens' control refers to the situation where the balance of power is almost equal between the upper and lower classes without change in the political and economic system. At this level of participation, public policy is controlled democratically through citizens' power.

Upper classes and power-holders tend to use the lower rungs of the citizens' participation ladder as these rungs tend to depend on non-participation or regards participation as pro-forma and tokenism. These lower types of participation give impression that subaltern class interests and opinions are considered. A number of methods would be used in the manipulation process such as the co-opting of the have-nots, placating them and hiring them to work for the power-holders to solve social problems on the basis of the upper class agenda. A meaningful level of civic engagement and participation would allow subaltern classes to not only have a large stake in governance but also a bigger proportion of economic resources. This level of participation is imposed on the power-holders and the upper class through long socio-political struggle led by the subaltern classes trying to wrest power out of the hands of the power-holders.

Participatory Approach in Development

Participatory Approach; historical view

International organizations actively promoted Participatory Approaches after the first stage of neoliberalism (1980's), also known as the Washington consensus policy, i.e. privatization of the public enterprises and the withdrawal of the state from providing many essential services, widened the gap between capitalists and the subaltern classes (aka rich and poor). The World Bank attributed the increase of poverty and the widening gap not to neoliberal policies but to the way these policies have been implemented and the weakness of state institutions. In order to tackle these weaknesses the World Bank promoted the incorporation of citizens into the decision-making process, firstly under the title "Participatory Approaches". Over time, this concept developed to become participatory governance in which citizens not only participate in decision-making regarding how to apply neoliberal policies, but also to monitor and hold accountable state agencies to become effective, efficient and less corrupt when implementing these policies. Governance here refers to the state's role in providing enabling conditions for the market to function freely and to deal with market "by-products" that generate social problems. This led to participatory governance that generated networks of governance between the state and non-state actors, i.e. state institutions and civil society actors including business and non-business representatives.

The neoliberal era set the framework for the participatory approach. Based on this framework, a set of indicators were proposed to gauge the participatory tools' efficiency and effectiveness and pave the way for generating an ideology that promoted the use of the participatory approach within the neoliberal agenda to tackle inequality and poverty and produce good governance. The ideological discussion about participation that intended to strip it from its political identity and deal with the concept apolitically is actually leading to keeping the discussion within the liberal agenda under the assumption there is no valid discussion outside the liberal framework. The liberal discourse will lead to a superfluous discussion about participation as an end or as a means, and the discussion will lead to nowhere other than generating a "sober" ideology in the form of literature and discussion. While, for the non-liberals and socialists, the core issue in development agenda is the question of who benefits from economic relations of production and their policies; the capitalists or the subaltern classes.

Participatory approach: the definition

The World Bank Groups, the leading neoliberal development institution, defined participation as "... a rich concept that means different things to different people in different settings. For some, it is a matter of principle; for others, a practice and for still others, an end in itself " (1996). However, it adopted one of its working group's definitions which defined participation as "a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them". (1994). While the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development defined participatory development "as a process by which people take an active and influential hand in shaping decisions that affect their lives" (1995).

Some World Bank researchers noticed that participation can be viewed and thus identified from two different perspectives; the social movement perspective and the institutional perspective (Tufte and Mefalopulos, 2009). The social movement perspective defines participation as the mobilization of people to eliminate unjust hierarchies of knowledge, power, and economic distribution. While the institutional perspective defines it as "the reach and inclusion of inputs by relevant groups in the design and implementation of a development project" (Ibid). Both perspectives think that participation is "the involvement of ordinary people in a development process leading to change" (Ibid).

Both Cohen and Uphoff, two World Bank researchers in the 1980s, and Tufte and Mefalopulos, also former World Bank researchers (2009), divided participation into two different sets of four operational stages. While for Cohen and Uphoff these stages are, (i) participation in decision-making, (ii) participation in implementation, (iii) participation in benefits and (iv) participation in evaluation, Tufte and Mefalopulos created four different participation stages, namely, (i) research stage, (ii) design stage, (iii) implementation stage and (iv) evaluation stage.

According toTufte and Mefalopulos, social movement deals with the participatory approach as an end, as a target that will empower the community. While institutions deal with participatory approach as a means, a tool that intends to achieve a pre-established goal. Thus the catalyst of a social movement is its internal initiative while for the institutional approach the catalyst is external (international organizations and non-governmental organizations, wether at the local and international levels, can be viewed as external catalysts). This categorization (two perspectives) will raise the question of the ownership of development activities and projects, including social governance activities.

Regarding the line of communication in participation; the social movement is a grassroot movement by nature and the line of communication is bottom-up and horizontal. According to Nelson and Wright (1995), this participation style has high level of control over the development agenda. While it is not necessary that the institutional perspective uses a top-down communication style, as each operational stages have their own characteristics, and though it deals with participation as a tool to achieve certain social project objectives, development institutions have to adapt their communication methods to the context and developmental needs (Tufte and Mefalopulos 2009).

Social Participation: social accountability critical approach

The modern concept of participation that has been used by international organizations and the majority of non-governmental organizations (local and international) actually developed in ancient societies such as the Athenian democracy (classes based society) and in tribal contexts (egalitarian membership society). What these organizations have been doing is reconfiguring this approach with its practices to meet its modern, institutional objectives, i.e. to have a functioning capitalism that brings every citizen, from the subaltern classes to the operations of the market, as the market in capitalism is the instrument for inclusiveness and empowerment of citizens – this is without addressing conflicting class interests and how capitalism generates inequality, structural disempowerment and exploitation.

Participation is an instrument in liberal governance that makes citizens from the subaltern classes partially responsible for how the system functions. It is an instrument to improve the efficiency of the bureaucratic capitalist system by "empowering" citizens to share in decision-making regarding the allocation of public resources and the implementation of public policies, programs and projects in transparent and less corrupt ways. But this process of participation is not totally controlled by the state, and the upper classes as the lower classes, also have power that can be mustered through the organizing and awareness of the conflict of interests between social classes.

Citizens' participation by itself, whether it is a means or the target, will not achieve strategic changes, i.e. provide equality and social justice based on political, economic and social rights, if citizens are not organized on the basis of class interests. So subaltern classes' participation in any dialogue or network of governance is based on its political weight, i.e. political power, as a result of organizing and class struggle to have more say in public policies. There is only effective and efficient dialogue between social groups when citizens are aware of their social class interests and of the existence of a conflict of interest between classes. Thus, dialogue is a participatory way to manage class conflict in democratic (peaceful) conditions.

Participation in decision-making and policy implementation is not synonymous with power-sharing and the inclusiveness of development because what decides the outcome of participation is the power structure, i.e. political and economic structures. These social accountability tools will enhance citizens' social participation in the accountability process based on established legal parameters set by the political system. To generate a strategic impact, citizens' participation should have a political identity based on social classes' conflicts of interest. The participation approach to holding those in power accountable based on established parameters and framework is a tactic that can apply pressure to induce reform based on the available resources in the existing context.

The form of participation is associated with the forms of democracy in a class-based society, as democracy is the political system that provides a framework for negotiating the terms of the dominance of the hegemonic social class and the exercise of power peacefully through the consent of the subaltern classes (Gramsci, 2005). The dynamism of power is non-static and the subaltern classes can gain more weight in terms of power when they organize and mobilize their social and political resources. Thus, participation could open new opportunities for subaltern classes to change the balance of political power for their own benefit. However, it would only be conducive to them if conducted on the basis of their political-economic-social platform and not only as a method for co-opting the human resources of the subaltern classes into the existing political system, a practice used under the so-called policy of inclusiveness which has been developed and re-shaped in the neoliberal era.

The participatory approach in public issues can be used by government agencies and non-state actors. It can be used by civil society organizations and by international organizations such as international non-governmental organizations or World Bank Groups

What defines how much citizens will be involved in social matters, in general, and development projects, in particular, and the way they are involved can be viewed in three ways. Firstly, through the lens of the existing political system (local and international), secondly, through the dominant economic mode of production with its trends, i.e. neoliberal or state-led capitalism, and thirdly, through considering the dominant ideology and approaches to social development promoted by international organizations and their extensions and partners, i.e. international non-governmental organizations. This is the environment that determines the type of parameters or indicators that will "serve" citizens in improving their well-being.

Citizens' engagement through the participatory approach is not enough to say that people are shaping the decisions taken on their behalf and bringing about changes that suit their way of living. Nor will participation make citizens play the role of real guardians of their own interests by holding those responsible accountable when the power holders deviate from what people planned and demanded to be implemented (because it is important first to figure out how much these plans and demands serve the collective interest of the subaltern classes). This is simply a naive approach that disempowers citizens by implicating them to take responsibility for their existing situation when they do not have a real say, the resources, or the instruments to change this reality. This is simply the core meaning of governance from a liberal perspective which academics and policy-makers try to hide when they talk about the network of governance and citizen participation without highlighting class interests and the political structures that serve these interests. Also, development is a political issue and dealing with it as an apolitical matter means that class interests and benefits are hidden to conceal class conflicts of interest.

Citizen participation without defining citizens' social class interests (in addition to gender roles as defined within this class system) will let the dominant group dominate the voices of those groups. Thus the participation process regarding any public interest issue should start with mapping the interest of different social classes. In other words, any participation process should begin with mapping the benefits of each social class from the targeted change.

Even when neoliberals politicize the participation concept by placing state institutions as opposite to non-state actors, including civil society organizations, and deliberately emphasize the power struggle between these two "opposites" without addressing the political-economy agenda of each part, this represents a pseudo-political conflict. This is a pseudo-political conflict because the development agenda (broad economic policies) could be the same i.e. liberal economy. The point of contention between them could be about who would implement the liberal economic agenda efficiently and effectively with fewer "by-products", i.e. poverty and environmental problems. This is actually the central issue of the political struggle between the majority of international non-governmental organizations funded by international development organizations and the state institutions in de-developed countries, and refer to it as promoting democracy.

Chapter 2: Field Analysis

Governance of Local governments in West Bank Including East Jerusalem

The following analysis of local government governance looks at the fieldwork from different angles, each angle representing a certain theme. It also looks into the role played by different stakeholders and tries to determine how each party sees its role. The analysis looks into how municipalities handle their finances, especially focusing on how they manage their budget. Additionally, it looks into the role of strategic planning in guiding the municipalities' work and how municipalities carry out their procurements and implement development projects. The analysis' final angle (theme) is the broad methods used by municipalities in connecting and communicating with citizens. This angle stresses the importance of communication and access to information as essential in starting effective participatory governance.

The fieldwork also looked into the different ways used by the municipalities and citizens to evaluate local governments services' delivery and performance. The research inquiry looked into broader ways of carrying out the work of municipalities and others rather than into specific procedures. This is because it was clear from the beginning that there are no structured methods or established practices to implement municipal projects, nor are there particular ways to regulate and systematically evaluate municipal work.

There are three stakeholders who potentially play roles in the governance of local government, i.e. municipalities. The first stakeholder involved is the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), which is mandated to monitor the performance of municipalities and regulate municipal service delivery. The second is the municipalities themselves. They carry out service delivery or service delivery coordinated through them, and most of the responsibility lies within their mandate. Finally, the third stakeholder comprises civil society organizations (CSOs) which, it is assumed, represent citizens' voices and are instruments through which citizens can be organized and mobilized to call for improvements in service delivery. The stakeholders' roles and/or performance in certain areas of work (mentioned above, such as budget) and how they evaluate/view their roles were the subject of inquiry through the field research. This is because the stakeholders' way of working and their points of view establish the governance system of local government that this analysis is interested in.

Budget:

Since 2016, there has been a trend amongst non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Palestinian and international, to produce short descriptions of the public budget and call it the citizens' budget. These citizens' budgets could be documents concerning the Palestinian Authority, i.e. the state of Palestine, the general budget or at the Ministry level. Such budgets are descriptive in general and not analytical. They give a general idea about where the money has been spent without analyzing the effectiveness of the spending and without presenting citizens with alternative options for using the available resources. The following analysis will focus on the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG).

The MoLG compiles a budget at the beginning of each financial year. This budget is made behind closed doors as no law or regulation obliges the MoLG to invite civil society organizations to compile budgets or revise them. After the compiling and ratifying of the budget by the government, the MoLG publishes it on its website. At the end of each fiscal year, the MoLG audits its budget as part of the Palestinian government's auditing of the general budget.

Since 2016, several Palestinian and international NGOs with funding from foreign agencies started to compile what they called the citizens' budget. Citizens' budgets are part of good governance projects, which are intended to produce a summary of the budget document for some of the Palestinian ministries, including the MoLG. Through these coalitions of NGOs, the MoLG produced, between 2016 and 2019, a summary budget known as the citizens' budget. However, when NGOs consumed the funding or when the funding period reached termination, the Ministry did not produce these summaries anymore thus pending new funding.

The citizens' budget of the MoLG is a leaflet of a maximum of two pages. This document contains a section for the budget allocation of the MoLG programs, such as the local authorities' empowerment and the administrative programs. It also includes a section that gives a glimpse into the percentage distribution of the MoLG's budget on development and capital expenditures. In addition, the citizens' budget has a third section that gives a view of the MoLG's main projects, which are usually funded by foreign assistance.

The citizens' budget selects one of the MoLG's programs, such as urban development and local land resource management programs and highlights how much money is spent on its components. In addition, the citizen's budget gives a general idea about how the MoLG's budget is distributed to the governorates and the type of locality, i.e. cities, villages and refugee camps. Regarding the issue of gender, it gives numbers about the sex distribution of the Ministry employees. In some leaflets that present citizens' budget, a new section is added to the yearly citizen budget. This new part is a simple comparison between the MoLG budget vs actual expenses. This section is meant to show the difference between the planned expenditure (budget) and the actual expenditure (financial statement).

The citizens' budgets are also produced through NGO projects at the municipality and local government levels. This type of budget is also in leaflet form of one or two pages. It gives a general idea, i.e. bulk numbers, about the financial resources of the municipality budget and how the municipality uses these resources. The municipality citizen budget highlights the major projects the local authority is carrying out with the amount of money spent on each project. It also gives an idea about the municipality's debit and credit by showing the municipality expenses in relation to revenues. For example, if the municipality's revenue decreases and/or its expenditure increases more than its revenue, then the municipality's debt will increase. This can be shown by a diagram that compares two years (increase or decrease in debit). This comparison gives a general idea about a municipality's debt but does not provide an understanding of why it has increased or decreased, nor does it give options in terms of how to deal with revenue decreases nor how it affects service delivery at a relevant municipality.

Each local government, i.e. municipalities, according to the law, has the right to formulate its annual budget without direct interference from the MoLG, and the Ministry only approves the budget after a general check. In formulating the local government budget, the municipality has the right to invite active citizens and civil society organizations for discussion and deliberation. However, Palestinian municipalities only do this if an NGO has a development project concerning a budget-related issue. Municipalities are obliged legally to audit their budgets at the end of each financial year using an external auditor but are not obliged to publish the results of the audit to the general public and the MoLG does not produce a general report about the audit results of local government. If the auditor finds some potential misconduct, the issue is usually discussed internally at the municipality level and only the more serious cases would be looked at by the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). The ACC works as an independent institution to investigate and prosecute offences related to corruption.

In surveys conducted to explore what the municipalities and civil society organizations know about issues relating to the MoLG and municipalities' activities, including the budget, the following results were related to the budget. Ten municipalities and CSOs answered their surveys. One municipality did not know that the municipality/local government should audit its budget and was not aware that auditing is carried out by external independent auditors. Six municipalities said that they allowed CSOs to participate in the budget formulation.

Municipalities produce monthly reports about their financial income. These reports are discussed in municipal council meetings. The municipalities are not obliged to publish income reports to the public. In the survey, the municipalities said they publish these reports to the public, but they do not appear on the municipalities' websites nor are they produced in print form printed. However, municipalities that are part of the citizen's budget project issued an annual income briefing. Also, some members (staff) of the CSOs are also members of the municipalities' councils, and thus, can discuss and review the income report and the budget. This dual membership has caused some confusion in the survey results in that if those individuals are not council members, will they be able to review these reports?

Six CSOs knew that the municipality budget is audited at the end of each year. Seven said they did not know who audits the budget (the MoLG auditors, municipality staff or external auditors), and one CSO said they knew external auditors audit the budget. One CSO said that the municipality budget is not audited at all. The citizens' budget (referred to above) gave the impression to some CSOs that they participated in the budget formulation as two CSOs participated in citizens' budget projects, and another one knew about this project but did not have the opportunity to participate in it.

Strategic plan

The MoLG started formulating a strategic plan for its work in 2010. The first strategic plan (2010–2014) was prepared by the MoLG staff and funded by USAID through an international NGO (CHF, which later changed its name to Global Communities). In 2011, the MoLG developed a policy paper entitled: Promoting and Institutionalizing Public Participation in Local Government Units' Affairs. It was part of a USAID project to promote good local governance. This project, which included the strategic plan development and drafted a policy paper, triggered a number of separate meetings at three different institutional levels; at the Ministry level, municipality level and civil society organizations. As a result, a number of recommendations were formulated and several civic committees bringing municipalities and CSOs together were established. These bodies carried out some activities based on the project's funds, but as these projects reached their end, the civic committees were disbanded and their activities disappeared (as described by many former members and staff of municipality councils).

The MoLG is also in charge of formulating the latest strategic plan (2017–2023). As such, the strategic planning unit and the five biggest municipalities in the West Bank were invited to participate in the pre-launch events. The formulation of a strategic plan and the midterm revision of this plan is usually carried out when there is foreign assistance. The latest revision of the strategic plan (in 2019) was part of the project implemented by the Palestinian Association of Local Authorities (APLA), an arm of the MoLG working in cooperation with the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, funded by the EU and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry described the consultation events as a participatory approach although it conducted the preparation activities perfunctorily because the international development projects approach requires stakeholders' participation in the meetings.

According to the results of the survey completed by eleven municipalities (one was sent empty), out of the eight municipalities which answered this question, two municipalities participated in the MoLG strategic plan events.. Regarding the launch event of the strategic plan, three municipalities attended the event out of the seven which answered this question, and one thought that the MoLG took their feedback seriously. Additionally, six out of ten CSOs said they knew that there is a strategic plan for the MoLG, and two participated in the events related to the preparation of this plan. The CSOs which participated in the strategic plan development thought that their points of view were seriously taken into account during the discussions and in compiling the strategic plan (the text). Finally, one CSO participated in the Ministry's launch event for the strategic plan.

Although no regulation or law obliges municipalities to formulate strategic plans, all of the ten municipalities which answered this question said they are required to do this, as municipalities should have such plans to qualify for development projects funded by foreign assistance resources through the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF). The MoLG approved eight of these strategic plans (as a procedural act). These plans are usually funded by local NGOs in cooperation with international NGOs and foreign assistance. Local society actors in each municipal area are invited, and usually, more than five CSOs participate in the formulation of municipalities' strategic plans.

Of the ten CSOs surveyed, 50% believed that a law existed to oblige municipalities to formulate strategic plans and that municipalities fund this activity from their own local resources. 60% knew that municipalities formulate strategic plans in their localities. Furthermore, four out of ten CSOs who participated in municipalities' strategic plan formulation thought that their points of view were taken seriously in the discussions and in the final plan formulation.

When municipalities asked the CSOs if they thought municipalities worked based on the developed strategic plan, nine out of ten said they believed municipalities were doing so \while only four out of ten thought that the municipalities in their localities did so. After developing the strategic plan, CSO's do not follow up with the municipalities to make sure their work is based on the strategic plan, and only two out of ten said they would follow up (these two CSOs have members who either work for the municipality or are members of the municipality's councils).

The municipalities with strategic plans publish them on their websites and social media accounts. They also have launch events at the municipality after developing their plans. Seven out of nine municipalities said they issued annual reports on the implementation of their strategic plan. However, five out of ten CSOs saw or heard about an annual report related to the strategic plan implementation related to their local municipality. Two reported they did not know if this kind of report tracing the progress of the strategic plan's implementation actually existed. Furthermore, three said they were sure municipalities in their localities do not issue this kind of report.

Procurements and projects:

The MoLG said it follows up and monitors procurements and projects related to the municipalities by issuing of guidelines for each type of procurement and making almost all bids for development projects through the MDLF, which is the Ministry development's arm. Procurements and project bids are opened by the Ministry with the attendance of the relevant municipality. The Ministry does not invite civil society representatives, such as CSOs, to attend bid openings. Of the municipalities which answered the question about MoLG follow-ups and the monitoring of projects and procurements, seven said that the Ministry does follow-up projects bids and five said it monitors the opening of procurement bids. Three said (contrary to the fact) that CSOs attended openings: the reason for this confusion is the number of municipality council members or employees who also represent CSOs (dual identity).

All the surveyed municipalities said they consult with the local community during the development of their projects, and four out of ten CSOs said they participated in these consultations to formulate development projects. Also, five CSOs said they were never invited to consultations concerning project development, and one said the invitation for consultations with the civil society actors depends on the type of projects as consultations for projects developed by the municipality are typically not open. But these CSOs said that municipalities consult with citizens when they develop a project that affects the citizens directly, such as infrastructure projects (some active citizens said these are not consultations but rather described these activities as "announcements" to citizens in a relevant neighborhood but labeled as consultations). These announcements or consultations are part of a procedure that obliges the municipalities to consult with citizens before submitting a proposal to the ministry or donors to carry out certain projects. Also, these consultations/ promulgations could be part of a strategy to fulfill promises by an elected list in the municipality to develop a certain neighborhood. After awarding the project, municipalities do not issue reports about the progress of project implementation. Seven out of ten CSOs said they did not see any reports about projects' financial issues such as total amounts or payments transferred.

Two-thirds of CSOs said that municipalities do not disclose technical details of the projects to the public, and thus, the public does not have the required information to monitor the quality of project implementation nor about the bill of quantities (BOQs) related to infrastructure projects. When municipalities and the MoLG were asked why they did not disclose such information, some said there are no legal requirements to disclose it to the public, and there is no tradition of doing so. In addition, each project is monitored closely by municipality staff and independent supervisors. This explains why seven out of ten municipalities said they do not publish any details about their implemented projects. Also seven out of nine CSOs said they have no opportunity to conduct monitoring activities concerning municipalitiy projects. Two of the leading NGOs who completed the survey (one NGO did not do so) said they did not have an opportunity to see projects' BOQs, one, however, said it was part of a committee to monitor project implementation.

With regard to issues such as the quality of project materials or quality of work, CSOs' answers were as follows; 33.3% said the issue is discussed at the municipality level, 44.4% said the Ministry and the municipality work together to solve the issue, and 22.2% said they have no idea how these issues are resolved. The same question was directed to municipalities and produced the following results; seven out of ten municipalities said they discuss the matter with the Ministry before making any decisions when they find out about divergences from the bill of quantities or the quality of work. The two Palestinian NGOs said that either the municipality will investigate the issue of divergence or the Ministry; usually the issue is not investigated by citizens or external and independent bodies.

Services and performance evaluation

When the municipalities were asked if there are lists that let the public know about prices or fees paid by citizens to get each type of municipal service, eight out of ten said they do have such lists, while the CSOs said that only 4 out of ten have them. The Ministry said it priced municipalities' services and that information is updated frequently and provided to local governments. The MoLG, however, does not share these lists with the public via websites or other means of publication and does not oblige the municipalities to publish price lists but demands they abide by the stated prices. When asked if they publish price lists for their services and administrative work fees, 50% of municipalities said they did not post them on their websites as no law obliges them to do so. Eight out of ten reported that they were not asked by members of the public nor CSOs to publish such lists.

With regard to the quality of the services provided by municipalities, the municipalities have, according to the MoLG, specific quality standards to meet for each service and certain administrative procedures they need to follow to process each bureaucratic service. However, only four out of ten municipalities said they published these qualities and procedures. Also, CSOs reported that only four out of ten CSOs knew about them. The CSOs said that only three out of ten municipalities provide some kind of information about service quality and procedures and this was only after these CSOs demanded to be provided with these information. The CSOs (six out of ten) said they expect a certain quality of service delivery from the municipality and when they do not meet those expectations, they demand certain improvement from it. Only three out of nine CSOs think that the MoLG monitors the quality and delivery of services: the other six CSOs believe that the Ministry does not do the monitoring work expected of them.

There are two ways the MoLG monitors municipal service delivery and quality. The first is when the bureaucratic (administrative) services need approval by Ministry agencies. This makes the Ministry's staff revise and ensure that the processed documents meet the legal requirements and regulations. The second way is when a complaint is lodged by a citizen complaining about the municipality's performance, which negatively affected the public interest. In this case, the MoLG is legally obliged to check the validity of the complaint and give answers to the person or persons who lodged the complaint. Four out of ten CSOs said complaints lodged with the Ministry are taken seriously and dealt with; the other CSOs reported that complaints disappear in the administrative system. All municipalities said they investigate all complaints, and nine out of ten said the MoLG investigates citizens' complaints lodged at the Ministry level.

According to eight out of ten municipalities, complaints are usually submitted to the municipalities if the complaint is against an employee. This type of complaint is investigated and the complainant receives an answer from the municipality. Over the last few years, an increasing number of citizens have expressed their indignation and disapproval of municipality work by posting on the social media pages of the relevant municipality. However, this type of complaint attracts little attention from the municipality and no attention at all from the MoLG since these complaints are mostly not directed against specific municipality staff or a specific service.

The "complaints box" system practiced within municipalities across the West Bank did not ensure an effective way of monitoring municipal service delivery and performance. In five out of eight municipalities surveyed, any ordinary employee can open this box, and eight out of nine municipalities reported that the box was opened on a regular and timely basis. Four out of nine municipalities announce the contents of complaints to the public, and these municipalities look after the person who lodged the complaint to solve the issue directly with him/her (which breaches the purpose of this system which is meant to provide anonymity subsequently threatening the safety of persons lodging complaints).

Only some CSOs knew if the municipality had a complaints box; seven out of ten knew, one CSO said there was no box at their municipality and two CSOs did not know. Six out of ten CSOs said they did not know who opened the box, two thought that a regular municipality employee opened it, and two believed that the MoLG did it. Three CSOs said the complaints box is opened regularly, and seven said it is not. Also, three CSOs believed complaints were disclosed to the public after they had been processed. These CSOs all reported following up complaints to ensure the Council took them seriously.

Communication and connections with citizens

The MoLG does not have a standard and clear mechanism connecting it directly with the public, although it has stressed, since 2010, the importance of public engagement and social participation. It has a complaints mechanism that allows citizens to lodge complaints, but there is no formal and regular mechanism that connects civil society organizations and NGOs to the Ministry to be able to create a network of governance that is sustainable and based on power-sharing. The relationships formed between the CSOs/NGOs and MoLG are based on internationally funded projects. Foreign donors and global organizations oblige the two parties (the government and non-state actors) to cooperate and work together on foreign-funded projects. This type of project paved the way for temporary relationships that last throughout the project period. This actually formed unsustainable relationships in which personal connections with ministries staff and decision-makers are more important for the implementation of these projects than for establishing continued and institutionalized relations.

The municipalities are frontline service providers and, thus, are in direct contact with citizens in their localities. The most used way to get in touch with citizens is through social media, i.e. municipality pages, as four out of ten municipalities say they rely on this type of communication and six out of ten rely on this according to the CSOs. However, if all municipalities have social media pages, they are used for different purposes. Public meetings are the least used way of communication and connection between municipalities and their citizens. One municipality uses public meetings regularly to keep in touch with the public, and eight out of ten held public meetings at least once in the last year. All the municipalities said they listened to citizens' opinions at these meetings. Four out of ten CSOs said they participated in organizing public meetings with the municipalities, and thought that the municipality adopted and listened to around 50% of public opinion.

Three out of ten municipalities said they conducted satisfaction surveys to measure the range of citizens' satisfaction regarding service delivery and performance. Only one CSO used a satisfaction survey to measure the level of citizens' satisfaction of municipality work. Eight out of ten municipalities said that when citizens do not complain, it is an indication of their satisfaction and two CSOs out of nine said this could indeed be used as an indication of citizens' satisfaction.

Municipalities do not have clear and reliable mechanisms to evaluate their performance and service delivery efficiency . Though each employee has a job description, no serious performance evaluation is conducted to evaluate every staff member. Municipal councils and staff consider it to be business as usual as long as there are no corruption cases against them.

Some municipalities, staff and council members think that publishing financial documents to the public, such as budgets or monthly financial reports, is not always conducive and has positive results. For example, ordinary citizens could misunderstand these reports, by focusing on municipality income and underestimate its expenses, leading them to conclude that resources are misused. Some CSO representatives agree that ordinary citizens might not have the capacity to grasp financial reports therefore, it is necessary to summarize them and raise awareness on how to read and understand such statements. This argument by CSOs representatives stresses the importance of civil society actors providing expertise to facilitate communication between the municipalities, one of the most important service providers, and the public at the grassroots level. However, the argument does not point to the way to institutionalizing communication between the municipalities and the local constituency (citizens). For example, municipalities should have the capacity (and be obliged) to publish summaries of their budgets and invite citizens to participate in their strategic planning. Building this capacity in the municipalities will create sustainable conduits for communication between the municipality and its citizens without the need for internationally foreign-funded projects. Also, these activities, i.e. budget summaries, are not expensive to provide, and municipalities can use their own resources to do so.

Chapter 3: Social Accountability Tools[23]

Rights to Information

Rights to information legislation paves the way for social accountability practices

Political will and free access to information are the two cornerstones for establishing a reliable accountability mechanism. The right to access and collect information becomes essential when non-state actors, especially civil society actors, are engaged in accountability practices. As there is a growing movement to enable civil society organizations to be involved in activities that hold government and public sector agencies accountable for their actions, it becomes essential to ensure that access to information is a legally protected right. Access to information will enable civil society components, especially political parties, to engage in political actions to preserve or strengthen citizens' economic, political, social and cultural rights, which are essential human needs.

There is a need for legislation to ensure that the PA allows citizens to access records of the ministries, government agencies, and any entity working in the public sector, such as non-governmental organizations (local and international), to ensure the accountability of public institutions. The right to access information also applies to legislative, judicial and constitutionally established bodies. This law should apply to all the offices owned, financed, maintained and established by money generated by the Palestinian Authority or collected to serve the interests of the public in the occupied Palestinian territories, i.e. international foreign assistance for the public budget, international organizations or non-governmental organizations (local and international). Additionally, this law should give any national non-state actor the right to inspect works, documents and records, to obtain information whose disclosure is in the public interest, and to take notes, samples, extracts or certified copies of information in paper or digital formats.

Citizens have the right to seek, demand and acquire any information of public concern in order to improve transparency and accountability in government functioning in particular and in the public sector in general. It is essential for civic groups to obtain information from the government regarding the budget, development plans, policies and projects. Without this information, civic groups cannot assess government policies and priorities from the perspective of subaltern classes and put pressure on the government to be responsive to the needs and demands of the people.

To strengthen civil society's struggle for the enacting and enforcing of the right to information, the use of the law is essential in empowering civil society components to hold those in power accountable for their activities. When civil society components engage in accountability activities, they participate in the governance of power which could have two mutual-

23 These tools were adapted from and informed by many resources cited in the bibliography

ly exclusive results; either this will dilute social class conflict, though it could achieve some social improvements by taming the power holders, or it could activate the class struggle by demanding strategic changes in political and economic structures that would benefit subaltern classes. Civil society groups should be aware of why they are engaged in governance activities, such as holding power accountable as this will affect their enacted strategy and their role as civil society actors.

State of Palestine rights to information status:

The level of transparency and access to information in the State of Palestine (PalestinianAuthority- PA) is gloomy. No law that gives access and regulates the right of citizens to access information, despite continuous demands from civil society actors and their involvement in discussing the first draft of the law with past Palestinian authority governments. In order to establish the Right of Access to Information law, the official Palestinian structure has to approve the National Archive Law, which is not yet prepared.

Many Palestinian civil society organizations, including AMAN-Transparency Palestine, have been pushing for adapting and ratifying two important laws, the Right of Access to Information and National Archive Law, both in accordance with national legislation and international agreements (AMAN:2021). In its priority number 5, which refers to effective government, The Palestinian government indicated in policy number 10 that it would pursue the "Strengthening Integrity, Accountability, Transparency and Fight against Corruption" (National Development Plan 2021–2023). In April 2014, the State of Palestine acceded to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Also, it adopted the 2030 Agenda i.e. Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to "ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements" in its target 16.10:

There is no legal mechanism to enact and ratify laws as the Palestinian Legislative Council has been unable to function effectively since 2007 due to the internal conflict between Fateh (the PA party) and Hamas (the Islamic opposition party). Since 2007, the PA president has ruled by presidential decrees without any due legal process according to the Palestinian Basic Law. Moreover, the PA president declared the dissolution of the PLC in December 2018. The changes in laws and policies, such as the reform plans, come about through negotiation between the PA government and President Abbas' office on the one hand and with international donors on the other. Sometimes these reform plans occur following pressure from International donors on the government to meet the terms and conditions of its international assistance.

Thus, it is left to public agencies or organizations that use public money to publish reports and give access to its data. For example, the Ministry of Finance has been removing from its website the monthly reports and other reports relevant to the public budget without explaining this (Bassoumi, 2022). Another example, The Civil Society Team for Enhancing Public Budget Transparency, raised a number of issues in 2022 on the matter of the public budget, indicating that the government published only a summary of the budget, did not allow civil society representatives to discuss the budget items and determine the priorities and did not disclose the expenses related to the offices of power holders. The Team indicated that the policy of blocking citizens' access to public information would contribute to the continuing deterioration in the trust between the citizens and the government in general and the Ministry of Finance in particular (Quds News Network, 2022).

The Plan to Reform and Modernize the Palestinian Public Financial Management System was developed without the engagement of Palestinian civil society. Moreover, this plan, which is the second part of the Public Financial Management Project, to improve PA accountability and transparency as part of the World Bank's and international donors' policy to improve PA governances (World Bank:2022 (a)(b)(c)) is being developed and implemented by the Palestinian Authority in coordination with the bank behind the backs of the Palestinian people in general and civil society in particular.

The Tools

Budget related civic engagement and accountability tools

Introduction

The budget for any public entity, whether a state budget or a local government one, has two characteristics. Firstly, it is cyclic as it re-initiated every year and goes through the same cyclic stages; formulation, approval, execution and oversight. Secondly, it is a process in terms of a series of progressive and interdependent activities, tasks and events conducted by the public entity to achieve a particular policy and keep the system functioning. Therefore, the aforementioned cyclic stages are not separate and happen one after the other. They are overlapping, interrelated and complementary operations. What makes them distinct is the timing; i.e. at certain times, most of the work is focused on budget approval; at other times, the execution of the policy through allocating budget resources is the pivotal activity. Oversight is continuous, but the evaluation of the efficiency of budget allocation and policy performance is periodic.

Civil society components i.e. political parties, non-governmental organizations, media and intellectuals, should be able to adjust their activities regarding a budget to be efficient and effective in order to meet its objective. The following budget-related tools are time-sensitive as, for example, it is not reasonable to call for budget formulation during the fiscal year. Also, sometimes a civil society actor does not intend to influence the budget stages directly, as it has no power or ability to do so, and thus it may choose to influence the milieu in which the budget process is happening or prepare the conditions for making its intervention desired, acceptable or unavoidable.

Initiating budget formulation usually coincides with the last budget oversight stage i.e. program and policy evaluation. The official budget formulation is technical and is conducted by technocrats who usually carry out their mission behind closed doors. Direct access to those technocrats by civil society organizations who represent the subaltern classes is generally limited. However, those technocrats could be reached by lobbyists and representatives of the private sector as there is a revolving door between top officials and top managerial positions in that sector. Even so, actors from civil society organizations can seek formal and informal meetings with technocrats, depending on the official mechanisms and existing political conditions, that could open up opportunities for them and ordinary citizens to engage in budget formulation, either through using participatory budget formulation or through providing an alternative budget (both will be discussed later and separately)

Not being in direct contact with state technocrats does not mean that civil society actors cannot influence budget formulation. The following can be enacted to put the subaltern classes at the table:

(a) release reports, research and studies that focus on the relevant theme prioritized by subaltern social classes that is concomitant with the last stage of the formulated first draft of the budget.

(b) waging media campaigns highlighting the subaltern classes' priorities on the one hand and the failure of government policies in tackling certain socio-economic issues on the other.

(c) when the government seeks input and conducts a pre-consultation exercise, civil society actors should be ready to give their input based on a participatory approach with the subaltern classes.

It is important to articulate subaltern classes' demands and needs by civil society actors by relating them to a political agenda ,not only demands to ameliorate living conditions. Therefore these budget demands should be presented during the second stage of the budget cycle/process i.e. the legislative budget approval.

The approval of the budget is not merely a technical and managerial step. It is a political step that determines the political economy agenda of the legislature on the one hand and reflects the power struggle in the legislative chapter in particular and the level of the class struggle in society in general on the other.

During the legislative council budget deliberation, the civil society actor should produce a summary of the draft budget that is comprehensible to ordinary individuals and civil society actors. This summary could analyze the budget under different categories; i.e. sector, policy, and theme. This will enable civil society organizations to come together and build coalitions around or under a certain category. Most importantly, these categories should be relevant to ordinary people in the subaltern classes, which would raise their awareness regarding budgetary policies and their implications and in mobilizing these masses.

During the implementation stage, civil society actors could provide independent oversight of the quality and quantity of the services provided to citizens. The aim of oversight of budget implementation is to assure citizens that resources are used legally and efficiently. However, this requires those civil society actors involved to know who is responsible for certain accounting operations. To oversee implementation, it is important to establish parameters to gauge work advancement and work results based on budget policy. Most commonly, the government and civil society develop procedures to track expenditures based on budget provisions to counter corruption and the embezzlement of public funds. Civil society organizations could also conduct satisfaction surveys to measure citizens' satisfaction with budget-funded policy.

The role of civil society actors in articulating budgets at different stages will only work if certain conditions are met. The availability of information, its clarity and timely collection are essential. This information should be connected to relevant policies and who is responsible for them. It is crucial to have free access to this data. Also, specific mechanisms and procedures of accountability should be formally instituted as budget-related activities have two faces; administrative (managerial) and political.

The following tools are focused on handling the budget:

a. Participatory Budget Formulation

Introducing the tool:

Budget formulation for any public entity is the process of determining the resources necessary for that entity (ministry/department/agency) to carry out its programs, perform its mission, and to achieve strategic objectives and goals. Typically the budget office in the finance ministry coordinates the process. It consists of all steps, actions, and documentation to compile, analyze and summarize probable financial income and expenditures, and allocates funds for specific purposes within a given time frame. It looks into program performance to determine its position, expected advancement, and when it achieves its stated goals and objectives. It implicitly looks for alternative approach/s to achieve its objectives.

Civic engagement, i.e. participation in the budget formation, could influence the budget formation on many levels. Firstly, it could push for changes in policies that serve the subaltern classes. Secondly, it induces the public entity to look into alternative approaches to achieving its stated goals and funneling more resources to the lower classes. This can be applied to the local government level as well as at the ministerial level.

It is essential to formulate formal mechanisms that allow citizens and their representative groups from civil society components to engage in budgetary consultations and make their voices heard before finalising government/local government spending priorities. The participation of multiple components of civil society ensures the voices of the lower classes are heard. This reflects the democratic and policy inclusiveness of government/local government, and the balance of power within the government between the different social classes. This balance of power would determine the composition of the budget and the kind of macroeconomic policies pursued by the government and local government.

Civic engagement empowers people from the lower classes. Those empowered people participate in the activities and decision-making processes relevant to their lives. In order for empowered citizens and their civil society groups to actively engage in budget formulation, there are many conditions that should apply. Firstly, they need access to reliable data about the revenues and expenditures of public entities, which means freedom of information is essential. Secondly, there needs to be a clear mechanism for the decision-making process regarding the budget items formulation. The connection between public policies and programs and resource allocation needs to be transparent in terms of who benefits from the policy output and who would receive these resources. Thirdly, the citizens and civil society groups who participate in the budget formulation should be able to understand the budget jargon on the one hand and formulate the demands of the lower classes into policies that require specific resources within a given timeline on the other.

Such participation in the budget formulation will make it hard for ruling groups from the upper classes to dominate the process and impose their interests. This also limits the effect of clientelism, patronage and favoritism by technocrats and statesmen, and contributes to checks and balance mechanisms. The participation of citizens and civil society groups p in budget formulation does not eliminate or downgrade the role of official representatives who officially bear the responsibility of approving the budget after discussing it as part of an enactment procedure. Active participation in budget formulation is part of checks and balance instruments as it will keep the elected representatives and government officials under oversight by active citizens and civil society components.

Some would claim that participation in the formulation of the budget would lengthen the process and obfuscate it. From this point of view, participation could weaken or limit the power of the legislator/ representative as it would interfere with his/her work. As such, one question arises: how can the representative be held accountable for a policy that was "forced" on him/her by people from lower classes?!

Policy and budget formulation reflects the power struggle between the different social classes, sometimes criticized in power struggle between the classes representatives. Also, serving as a legislator means that this representative is elected to serve those social groups and advance their social interests. Thus, accountability relates to how much representatives are able to function within the balance of power between social groups to implement their agenda.

Social participation is intended not only to engage civilians from lower classes, but also to empower them politically by representing their demands as a collective social class/s. Without politicizing the demands of the subaltern classes, civil engagement would be either procedural and pro-forma or a way to defuse the power of those social groups and their representative by undermining their political weight in the decision-making process. Depoliticizing social participation, i.e. civic engagement, will implicate citizens in a governance process and make them responsible for their bad situation as they were seemingly part of the decision-making and oversight process.

Objectives:

1. The aim of citizens' participation in budget formation is to enhance the quality of citizens' lives through funneling financial resources to programs that citizens prioritize.
2. To monitor the priorities of public entities in order to hold them accountable to citizens.
3. To empower citizens from subaltern classes and their representatives from the civil society components by enabling them to participate in the decision-making of relevant public entities.

Strategies to facilitate citizens' participation in budget formulation:

1. Organize active citizen groups. Organizing will consolidate the power of the subaltern classes and enable them to use their limited resources efficiently and effectively. Active groups are an instrument for educating people and mobilizing them in the struggle to achieve better living conditions
2. Support the lower classes' socio-political and socio- economic demands through data collected through quantitative and qualitative surveys and public opinion surveys.
3. Mass campaigns to raise the awareness of ordinary people from the lower classes through the distribution of information and surveys results
4. Organizing, networking and building of coalitions. This is because small communities and separated social groups and their representatives have little weight to influence decision-making. Building coalitions between different social groups from the subaltern classes will increase their impact.

How participatory budget formulation is carried out:

1. Approaching elected representatives to adopt a proposal for participatory budget formulation.
2. Elected representatives submit a proposal to be discussed by the legislative or local government council.
3. If this is a general budget formulation, then the proposal should divide the area into smaller administrative areas i.e. governorates and sub-governorates.
4. Developing a parameter for equitable resource distribution. This could be through using an objective index i.e. Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI). This index gives a value of the average of three statistics: basic literacy rate, infant mortality, and life expectancy at age one. A combination of indices could be used along with macroeconomic indicators (unemployment rate, Consumer Price Index (CPI)) . In the case of Palestine, the degree of threat and targeting by the colonial power should be added as Israel targets East Jerusalem and Area C more frequently, in addition to the siege of the Gaza Strip.
5. To make sure citizens and their representative groups reflect the wide range of people across the nation, a democratic institutional structure should be developed. This does not mean that individual citizens or citizens' representative groups cannot campaign for their demands at the local level. However, when coalitions are built, citizens from different parts of the nation should elect their representatives to reflect diverse representation in terms of class, gender, region and communities on the one hand and subaltern classes' shared and similar experience of bad living conditions on the other. Also, citizens' representative

groups could develop a monitoring mechanism for the budget implementation that could focus on general spending priorities i.e. health, education etc. and/or could focus on specific public projects such as building cancer treatment hospitals.

6. At the governorate, municipal, and community levels, the budget should take into consideration population distribution in terms of density and the degree of urbanization. An index should be developed to trace resource distribution and benefits based on class and gender.
7. Before any discussion and deliberation, citizens and their representative groups should have access to information about policies, programs and projects. They should have knowledge of the resources that are available or expected to be available to the government or local government. Therefore, they should collect data about budgets systematically and in a timely manner.
8. The active citizen and/or the citizens' representative groups should analyze existing programs and projects based on their social utility and prepare proposals for alternative policies, programs and projects deemed necessary by a high percentage of people from subaltern classes.
9. If necessary, engage in consultation with elected representatives and campaigns through media outlets and civil-based activities to create pressure on them.
10. The elected representatives expressed their support by voting to adopt the submitted proposals.
11. Participatory budget formulation does not end by ratifying the budget; it is important to follow up by examining the efficiency of its implementation and by holding the government/local governments accountable for their actions.

What is expected of civil society actors:

1. The role of civil society organizations in budget formation is to facilitate communication between citizens and the government or local governments to address their needs as budget priorities.
2. Civil society organizations should monitor, along with active citizens, the budget discussion in parliament (if the parliament has a real role) or at the local government level, i.e. municipality council .
3. Civil society organizations should be able to provide the media with relevant information and create pressure through media campaigns.
4. During policy and program implementation, citizens' representative groups should be able to track public expenditure and information should be shared at the community level.
5. Civil society organizations should be able to simplify and demystify the budget audit reports to make them more accessible and, thus, open discussion at a wider level.

Comments on the state of Palestine (PA) budget formulation:

In the state of Palestine (Palestinian Authority-PA), there is no formal policy that can force any public entity, whether national or local governments, to invite citizens to participate in budget formation. Budget formation is usually carried out by professional bureaucrats in a centralized manner. The government budget is formulated behind closed doors, asare local governments' budgets. As the Palestinian Legislative Council has been non-functioning since 2007 due to internal political struggles, the PA President, even though his term of office ended in 2009, has been the one who approves the State of Palestine budget by issuing a decree. Thus, the PA executive branch is the sole decision-maker on resource allocation and expenditure.

The role of civil society organizations in Palestine is limited due to many reasons. Firstly, there is no formal mechanism allowing civil society actors to participate in budget formulation. Secondly, civil society organizations usually work on the basis of one-off projects; thus, their participation is subject to the project's funding. Thirdly, these civil society organizations' lack or weakness of budgeting skills forces them to resort to external contractors. The one-off project and the use of external contractors will affect the experience of civil society organizations in handling budget formulation. Civil society participation in budget formation requires those participants to be able to examine the budget's line allocation and spending priorities. Thus, it is important to build the capacity of those actors (citizens or entities) to participate constantly and systematically and not only based on of free time availability.

Budget formulation is not separate from policies and plans made by public entities, but it is an integral part of these policies, though they technically look separated. These policies and plans become viable when resources are allocated to carry them out. Without resources, these policies and plans are merely written text. After formulating the budget, it is important to monitor expenditures and ensure that goods and services are delivered efficiently. The government of the PA announced many times projects and funds for supporting specific governance activities, however, these announcements were empty as the PA lacks sufficient resources to conduct even its most essential functions in education and health.

At the local government level, in theory, elected representatives should play an active role in discussing and deciding priorities based on citizens' best interests and needs. However, in reality, there is no actual participation by elected representatives in budget formation in Palestine. Most elected representatives in local governments, i.e. municipalities, are budget-illiterate and need training to be able to understand basic budget formulation.

b. Shadow budget: Formulation of Alternative Budget

Introducing the tool:

An alternative budget is an advocacy tool that can be used along with other tools or as a strategy to provide parallel proposals on how much to allocate resources for a specific sector or sectors. This tool can be used for articulating public budgets at the national level and can be used with limitations at the local government level. At the local level, the authority has limited ability to generate resources.

As an advocacy tool, the alternative budget is used to highlight the weaknesses or the type of policies the government is interested in supporting. Civil society components use it to develop a pro "poor" or pro "marginalized" social group approach. Most importantly, it is a policy- resources allocation proposal that works within the same policy framework as the government without the intention of making critical changes, such as proposing alternatives to the market mechanisms that keep the subaltern classes disempowered. The alternative budget could focus on specific sectors such as health and education. It could also address cross-sectoral subjects such as environment and employment. As an advocacy tool, the alternative budget focus on equity with inclusiveness and responsiveness themes. This tool uses the participatory approach by working with people from lower classes and can be developed by professionals who use research and surveys. In both cases, it is important to quantify the alternative needs, monetize them and make the computations. This requires fine skills to articulate empirical data into national, regional or local account aggregates. It should be consistent and comparable with the government's proposed budget.

objectives:

1. To highlight the government's policy priorities and their inconsistency with the subaltern classes' needs and empowerment.
2. To raise awareness among the subaltern classes and mobilize and build campaigns to change the government's policy.

How the alternative participatory budget is carried out:

1. Mission kick-off:
   The first step consists of building a network of civil society components whose activities and areas of interest are relevant to the budget priority under focus.
2. Determine the work scope and its specific objectives:
   The alternative budget is used as a strategy in advocacy campaigns to highlight the possibility of introducing change in certain sectors or cross-sectors by allocating the same country/regional resources within the official budget in a different way. The objectives should be determined after consulting with people from the subaltern classes and not be imposed on them from above. Therefore, it is important to select specific priorities that address specific themes that resonate with the broader population's interest, such as fighting poverty, improving education for subaltern classes, or improving health through green economy. These objectives become the focal point of organizing and the slogans that rally the grassroots behind them.
3. Scrutinize the government budget:
   This step consists in enabling political critics and theme specialists to conduct a deep analysis of the government's budget with a focus on the sector/theme of concern. This requires state agencies to open their data records. The analysis should show how the government's budget supports specific policies that do not reflect the interests of the subaltern classes or how budget resources do not meet the government's declared objectives.
4. Compile alternative budget:
   It is essential to quantify and monetize the subaltern classes' needs. This will require the computation in the alternative budget of the costs of these needs. In parallel, a section of financial and policy analysis should be added to the alternative budget that shows either the shortcomings of the government's budget or that the outcome of this budget is not conducive to people from the lower classes.

5. The tools' usage:

   The alternative budget can be used for;

   - Critical consciousness method: as the alternative budget analyses the official budget based on policy analysis and proposed alternatives, this makes people aware of how government policy supports a particular class interest and has an adverse effect on other social groups. Thus, it builds class, gender and environmental consciousness by challenging and comparing governmental policies that benefit the upper classes with the alternative budget representing the subaltern classes' interests. However, it is crucial to keep in mind that the alternative budget is a reform-based budget and not a budget to overthrow the existing socio-political system.
   - Lobbying based on evidence: the civil society organizations coalition/ network can lobby elected representatives by providing them with an alternative budget ready to be submitted for parliamentary deliberation. This alternative budget is evidence-based and pro-subaltern classes which makes it inclusive and responsive and which addresses the social justice question.
   - Advocacy campaign instrument:
     When advocating for alternative policies, media and political mobilization campaigns must base their work on facts and critical analyses. A participatory alternative budget is an effective tool since it not only criticizes government policy and resource allocation but also provides an alternative path for government policy and budget. This alternative document assists in building a wider class-political coalition around a specific policy theme to bring about concrete change.

c. Budget Review and Analysis

Introducing the tool:

During the fiscal year, governments can conduct budget reviews either periodically or when there is an urgent need. A review is done based on analyzing the revenues and expenses budgeted over a timeframe and comparing them to the actual situation on the ground. Civil society components can also conduct a budget review and analysis using different parameters than the ones used by the government. The following parameters for budget review and analyses can be used to gauge the governmental budget's inclusiveness and how much it represents the interest of the subaltern social groups and classes:

1. How much actual resources the government's budget funnelled to serve each social group i.e class, gender. This parameter analyses the actual benefits of the budget and not only looks at how much resources were assigned to deal with the policy theme in general. For example, the government could provide subsidies and loans with low-interest rates (cheap money) to economic enterprises to encourage them to employ and train workers. However, the amount of money reaching those workers is little in comparison to private enterprises.
2. How much does the government's budget serve social groups based on locality, i.e urban vs rural, affluent vs poor, etc. This parameter looks at the budget through geographic lenses. Sometimes regions can receive more financial resources and support from the government because they have more political weight than others. As such, urban affluent areas usually receive more funds because many people in top managerial positions in the government live in cities and developed areas and have advanced education and access to power networks.
3. Policy perspectives such as privatization vs public ownership. Some political parties and civil society organizations use a political approach in analyzing the efficiency of a specific

budget policy. For example, the government could privatize public transportation because it sees market-based management as being more efficient than public administration, while civil society components see in privatization of public transportation the interest of the private sector, which also receives subsidies from public funds. Businesses and the upper class usually lobby the government at the policy level to ensure that their class interests are preserved. The same should be the case with organizations which claim to represent the interests of the subaltern classes. Deregulating the economy and privatizing public enterprises and services will affect the government's ability to meet its duties towards the lower classes especially in terms of health, education and infrastructure.

The budget review and analysis can be conducted at a general budget level, sector level and cross-sector (theme) level. It can apply to local government and be used to trace a specific program or a project.

Objectives:

The purposes of conducting budget reviews and analysis are:

1. To show where the government stands regarding its declared commitments. This is by comparing the budgetary items and the actual expenses.
2. To gauge the efficiency and viability of government spending on specific policies. This is by focusing on the actual results and outcome of expenses.
3. To highlight how government policy empowers certain social groups/classes and marginalizes others. This is connected to a wider debate of political approaches.

How the budget review and analyses usage:

It is usually conducted by auditors and professionals and then articulated by politicians and political critics. Also, to be able to conduct budget reviews and analyses, it is essential to have sufficient data in the public domain. This reflects the level of transparency, openness and professionality of government institutions which enables them to be held accountable for their actions.

The budget review and analysis generates knowledge making it an instrument to raise awareness among people of subaltern classes about policies that affect their lives. Without awareness, people will not be motivated nor mobilized to bring about changes that serve their interests. Furthermore, it is an instrument to hold the government accountable for its broken promises and actions by using evidence based on the government's platform itself i.e. rhetoric vs actual.

It assists in building networks and coalitions between different political and social groups, which can act to bring about change and keep the government under scrutiny and hold it accountable for the policies it implements. Thus, the budget review and analyses can be used to lobby representatives to change specific policies. It can create media pressure on official representatives and top managerial statesmen to change enacted policies to become more inclusive by supporting the empowerment of people from subaltern classes.

d. Summarisation, Simplification and Demystification of the Budget:

Introducing the tool:

A budget is a plan of spending by the government which is compiled on the basis of income and expenses over a specified future period of time. It is long, complicated and filled with technical and financial terms. Therefore, it is important to draft a budget summary that is accessible and easy to understand for non-finance experts and ordinary people. This summary should avoid using heavy jargon and professional terminology and count the gross total of each theme or sector in separate slots without going into too much detail. It should connect between specific policy and its aggregate number, in addition to comparing and contrasting the aggregate numbers to show government priorities.

Objectives:

1. To make the budget themes understandable and accessible by civil society organizations and ordinary people to increase their awareness of government fiscal policies.
2. To enable civil society organizations and ordinary individuals to engage in activities intended to introduce changes to the existing budget that would be more reflective of subaltern classes' demands and needs.

How the budget simplification is made:

To simplify, a budget should show more than just the aggregate numbers of government expenditures designated to each sector or theme. The simplification should:

1. Divide each aggregate spending into operating expenses and capital expenditures. The operating expenses include personnel costs and annual facility operating costs. While capital expenditure is used to fund major improvements of the country's relevant facilities and infrastructure that need development. Each type of spending is funded and supported through multiple funding sources.
2. The aggregate budget numbers sometimes give an amplified aggregate amount of spending in specific sectors while the benefits are in reality, limited. To demystify this issue, the summary should look into the actual output in terms of services and public goods. In other words, how much actually trickles down to benefit ordinary people.
3. It is important to show how much of the budget is available and how much of this budget is projected (as deficit). The available budget is the one funded by government revenues. If government spending exceeds revenue then many governmental activities risk not being implemented. Therefore, it is crucial to ask how each activity will be funded.

Tracing, Monitoring and Auditing: The Two Sides of Budget and Services

Introduction:

The following five tools are technical tools that scrutinize the public fiscal policy of the state by looking into budget, expenditures, procurements and/or revenues. These techniques can be used efficiently if the data and information is accessible. They can be used at a local government level after providing basic training to active citizens and civil society organizations' staff. However, these tools will not bring positive concrete changes on their own. Change needs a civic movement where the masses purposefully engage in political actions.

A general state budget or a local government one has two sides; income (revenues) and expenditures (spending). Civil society actors can use a number of tools to track, monitor and/or audit the activities related to both sides of the budget. These tools enhance civic engagement by empowering citizens and civil society components to hold the government and public agencies accountable for their actions.

There are many reasons the administrative system does not function well and produces a situation where the resources do not reach their intended destination or fail to generate the expected impact. Among these reasons are; corruption, mismanagement and/or the structure of management. Different tools are used to address these problems by identifying them first and second by determining the main reason or combination of reasons that generate these problems i.e. weaknesses, irregularities and/or leakages in the bureaucratic system.

To explore the technical reasons behind system mismanagement and corruption, one or multiple accountability tools can be used in a way that complements each other. These tools use qualitative and quantitative techniques to identify social problems; their depth (bureaucratic level) and size (frequency) in the relevant context. Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) and Quantitative Service Delivery Survey (QSDS), for example, look into the links between public sector service providers and the rest of the public sector. These two tools (PETS and QSDS) can be used together as PETS has a frontline facility component while QSDS looks into the connections between these frontline facilities and the bureaucratic hierarchy of chain of command in the public sector and thus who bears the responsibility.

Some problems cannot be solved by managing the existing resources or funneling more resources. These problems are often policy issues. Policies cannot solve problems they generate, and intervention without changing the policy tends only to mitigate the effect of these problems. This is clear when leaving the provision of public needs to private market forces. The market mechanism prioritizes the generation of profits, while public needs require the prioritization of human needs. For example, to solve the problem of unemployment in a capitalist society and satisfy the human need for work, it is important to convert human ability to work into a commodity which is subject to the forces of demand and supply. Reconciling the market mechanism with human needs could work in the short run when converting the human need into a commodity (labour-power becomes a commodity). Thus, when the unemployment problem is solved, It is solved by subjecting the laborers to market exploitation not only by extracting from them the surplus value but also by paying them low wages despite the fact that they are the major contributor to the public budget. This phenomenon has been observable since the mid-1980s with the emergence of neoliberalism which has seen the longest wage stagnation period in modern history i.e. capitalism era. Therefore, political problems need political solutions, and the above-mentioned civic engagement-social accountability tools assist in identifying problems and mobilizing the masses to bring change.

Using the public revenue monitoring tool along with the monitoring of public procurement by civil society actors is another way of gaining a deeper understanding of the budget's two sides with the aim of identifying how public revenue is administered and how the state manages public financial issues and expenditure policies to achieve a certain level of efficiency in allocating public funds.

General budget auditing, which requires a high level of expertise, is another accountability tool that can connect the state's macro policies in economics to the social programs at the micro level that are related to frontline facilities i.e. service providers. Each level of spending represents a certain level of command and control and, thus, is a source of information. It is important for citizens who fund the budget and in whose names the state's policies are enacted to understand how the budget functions and who benefits most from economic policies, bearing in mind that the state is not a neutral entity and enacts laws which represent the power imbalance between social classes. Budgets and policies are the tangible results of the class conflict between the social classes .

(I) Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS):

Introducing the tool:

Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) are research tools that allow for the tracking of the amount of resources received at each administrative level in the bureaucratic chain of public service delivery. These tools are financial auditing instruments which gauge the flows of financial resources from the top to the actual public facility, i.e. from the origin to the destination. Tracking funds could start from the treasury of the government and/ or international donor to the school or health facility where the funds are intended to be spent.

PETS are effective instruments that provide indicators to government officials and administrators at the service facility, i.e. school, health centre, , and to civil society actors, about a number of important dimensions, i.e. policy, bureaucracy and auditing. Most importantly, it helps to detect and measure the rate of malfunctioning (leakage) and how this impacts the public work output and outcome.

The scope of PETS can vary according to the type of expenditures tracked and the number of bureaucratic levels of public administration involved. Each survey should be designed and implemented in a way that fits with the context and the type of tracked-fund destination, as each sector has its own characteristics.

Government usually does the auditing, however, this tool is important when public accounting systems malfunction or provide inadequate data. In functioning public auditing systems expenditure, tracking is systematic and done in a timely manner. What is important is the transparency and openness of data to the public but mainly to civil society actors in order to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending. Public and civil society actors can see if the spending follows established procedures for bidding, awarding and the quality of the input and output generated by the fund.

PETS can be used in two ways; Firstly, to look into how big the problem of leakage in the public expenditure system is, the bureaucratic levels that contribute most to this problem and the factors that sustain this problem. By conducting the PETS, a baseline is established to tackle the problem. However, there is no guarantee that by disclosing the problem, the system will readjust itself and start to function efficiently again. This is because bureaucrats develop, over time, vested interests in the way the expenditure system runs. Therefore, it is important to develop systematic interventions that amend the expenditure system and hold the malfunctioners legally accountable.

The second way PETS can be used is through periodic use. When a civil society organization carries out PETS it should do so systematically and periodically over many years. This is because PETS are carried out in coordination with the relevant public agency or ministry which needs to gain their trust, build experience and establish norms. After conducting PETS, the results will be submitted to the public agency or the ministry, or international donors in case there are international organizations or non-governmental organizations. Along with the results, civil society actor/s give their recommendations and lessons learned from the survey.

What makes these tools a part of civic engagement, i.e. social accountability tools, is the work carried out after conducting the PETS by civil society actor/s. The results should be published along with the recommendations. This should be part of a broader strategy of social ownership aimed at empowering subaltern social classes and their communities to claim their entitlements. This will also help engage citizens, and civil society components in fighting corruption, nepotism and public money embezzlement, as the disposed money is public money taken out of people's pockets.

Civil society campaigners can use the PETS results to amend or change specific policies as they provide evidence to policymakers about the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending. These campaigns could recruit citizens on school boards if the policy is related to education. It could work with labor unions if the policy is related to job benefits, unemployment benefits, and even to health system issues.

Objectives:

a. To measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the resources allocated to fund specific policies, programs or projects.

b. b. To identify and detect malfunctioning managerial levels (bottlenecks) along the chain of public service delivery.

c. c. To enable government and civil society actors to fight corruption and work towards ensuring transparent, accountable and effective public financial management.

How to conduct Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS):

1. Setting the general goal and building the coalition:

Many preliminary steps must be taken to prepare the ground for launching PETS.

Among these are:

a. The civil society organization which takes the initiative should pick a strategic goal that is achievable, urgent, clear and relevant to a wide range of social classes, in addition to providing a leadership focal point. This will pave the way to building civil society coalitions which would set a plan and select the instruments/tools that serve the strategy that will achieve the goal.

b. By selecting the general goal, the potential framework of the problem in general is determined. This will assist in identifying the key stakeholders and their interests (parties to the conflict) on the one hand and potential partners at the local, regional and national levels.

c. Selecting the tools will determine how the civil society coalition will handle the problem at hand. In this case, the Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS), along with other instruments, aim to provide evidence to raise awareness among the subaltern social classes and engage those people in holding the government parties responsible for their actions.

2. Defining the scope, objectives of the survey and the purpose behind using the tool i.e. PETS:

- The leading organization, which could be a political party or non-government organization, should determine its purpose for using PETS. Determining the purpose will set the survey's scope and objectives, taking into consideration that this tool i.e. PETS, is one of many tools used in achieving the overall goal.
- Defining the purpose of using PETS will determine; how the survey will be designed to collect data, and the specialty of the team which will conduct the survey and the amount of resources required to conduct it. If the purpose of the tool i.e. PETS is to fight government agencies' corruption, this will determine the type of information/data the survey will look for. The information/data will also be different if the survey investigates the malfunctioning of state bureaucracy by looking at different issues, such as inefficiency (in terms of fund distribution) or ineffectiveness (in terms of managerial performance).
- The scope of the survey will determine, partially, its objectives. Also, the amount of data is determined by how wide the scope is. The scope could be based on geography (locality, governate, region, national) or on sectors (targeting a whole sector, sub-sectors or across sectors). For example, the survey could target the education sector in a certain area with

an emphasis on primary education and focusing on a number of schools within it.

- There is a dynamic relationship between the overall goal and the survey's scope and objectives. If the goal is to bring about broader sector-wide public expenditure reforms, then the scope will be wide. This will require a wide coalition, high organizational capacity and expertise. Also, this dynamic relationship is affected by many factors; the socio-political context, the structure of public institutions and their financial structure.

3. **Role distribution and stakeholders' identification:**

It is important to distinguish between the beneficiaries whose lives will change positively and those representing the main parties to the problem. Parties, as in any social, political and economic conflict, are arranged in two opposing camps with contradictory interests. However, what makes the issue "hot" or "cold" is the level of polarity. The major roles are played by the stakeholders while the leading civil society coalition carries out the leading role.

There are two main dimensions when carrying out the PETS, i.e. roles : an extensive technical role and an organizational-managerial role. Looking after the expenditure of a country program at the national level would require more expertise and professional teams than tracking a project or expenditure in a specific region for example. The leading coalition will hire professionals and enter into cooperative relationships with different types of organizations that have the required expertise, such as finance and accounting firms, policy institutes, and non-governmental organizations that are national and foreign.

The organizational-managerial role will have two sub-levels. Firstly, the coordination of the whole technical process of public expenditure tracking surveys requires coordination with various government agencies, from the top bureaucrats to frontline service providers. This might require coordination with local communities and grassroots initiatives. The coordination line will be along the money spending chain, as each chain is a source of information. The second sub-level requires that the management of all the processes contribute to concrete change (the goal).

This is also an essential step which requires consultations with different actors; i.e. the civil society coalition, the relevant state institutions and donors if the program funded is by non-government funding (local and international donors).

Another round of goal setting will be carried out with the coalition partners. Determining the goal of the surveys with coalition partners will lead to integrating PETS as an instrument into a strategy to tackle specific socio-political and socio-economic problems the partners view as needing urgent attention as these problems affect the daily life of social groups from subaltern classes.

As PETS is a social accountability integrated instrument and not an academic or research exercise, it allows for expanding the civil society coalition to bring about the targeted change.

4. **Designing and pre-testing the survey/s:**

The surveys intend to gather all the required data by using qualitative and quantitative methods, in addition to examining official administrative records. Therefore, qualitative and quantitative testing would be conducted to assist its technical quality and how the informant understands and answers the survey questions. Piloting will assist in determining the basic chains of information on the one hand and providing good estimates of the required resources, i.e. fund, on the other. Piloting gives an initial view of the availability of data and its quality and how much the data holders are willing to cooperate, whether they are top bureaucrats or frontline service providers, the private sector or non-governmental organizations.

5. **Data gathering and analyzing:**

Based on the pre-testing results, which validate and evaluate the reliability of the survey/s instruments, i.e. questions and questionnaires, the study work will begin by:

a. Conducting a training program to enable the collection of high-quality information. This will only be done once a survey team with members familiar with the targeted sector or program and from different locations and communities has been recruited.

b. The tracking of information has two tiers. The first is the collection of data directly from the fund resources to find how much was in the conduits and how much was leaked. This is based on the assumption that the last destination is the frontline service provider, whether it is in the human development program, i.e. education and health, or/ and related to infrastructure and administrative service delivery.

   The second tier involves crosschecking data by combining multiple resources. Thus the data from frontline facility records, such as procurement, stock registry and disbursement reports, is collected and compared with the actual disbursement. Each involved party i.e. government and non-state actors, should be examined, thus facilitating the crosschecking.

c. When analyzing the data, it is important to;

   1. Determine how much the collected data contributes to answering the main survey question.
   2. Find out the institutional arrangements and the modus operandi of these institutions.
   3. Find out the financial aspect related to the amount of resources allocated to the program or institution and how much is being converted into public goods and services (the efficiency aspect)
   4. Examine the quantity and quality of public goods and services.
   5. Draw a concrete conclusion that diagnoses the problem type, source and scale.

6. **Integration of the PETS results in a broader political issue campaign:**

Alongside PETS work, an advocacy and public awareness campaign can be launched. Its purpose would be to raise subaltern classes' awareness of the issues affecting their daily lives, and pressure the government to amend existing misconduct and hold those responsible accountable.

The PETS results could work with other tools that address budget priorities as they provide information about certain policies or programs from top bureaucracy to expenses on the frontline (microlevel).

PETS opens opportunities to engage the subaltern classes' representatives as civil society actors in the government's formulated policies which reflect the balance of power between different social classes and groups in the established political system. However, if the government/state decides not to engage those actors in decision-making, the PETS implementation will be a mere activity that decorates the state's face.

7. Problems encountered:

In tracking information about expenditure, the following problems need to be solved:

Tracking the distribution of money from source to recipient might encounter different problems. Some difficulties are created by those who either have vested interests in sustaining the way the system runs or those who will be held responsible in case of misconduct. Also, some public servants view PETS as something imposed on them from outside and nothing in the law obliges them to cooperate.

As PETS does not carry with it a legal obligation to make public servants take part and as this type of work is usually carried out by the government's internal auditing agency, there are two choices concerning how PETS is presented. Firstly, it needs to be presented as research that looks at finding answers to certain questions and, secondly, as an instrument that seeks broader reforms in the public sector without stressing its accountability consequences. In all cases, to conduct PETS, government cooperation is required.

In addition, some projects are carried out through international funds and local and foreign non-state actors to benefit the public sector, i.e. the government. There is no clear mechanism that obliges those actors to open their books, and there is no precise explanation about how to carry out the work. This creates other loopholes in the accountability mechanism.

There are some technical difficulties related to the timing of data collection and the time constraints for conducting the survey. Thus, PETS should be conducted within a reasonable timescale that does not disrupt the work of the agency, and in the time the data is available. Additionally, the survey should be conducted over a short period of time. Another aspect of the technical difficulties relates to lack of clarity in government guidelines over who should carry out each task and thus who would bear responsibility for accomplishing it and who would be responsible in cases of misconduct or the failure to implement the activity properly.

(II) Social Auditing:

Introducing the tool

There is a difference between public and social auditing. A public audit is carried out by a state's official agency with the authority to conduct investigations and make inquiries about public spending on programs and projects. The public auditor has the legal right to access all the administrative and financial records of the government agency. He or she has the power to assist government agencies in maintaining integrity and hold them accountable for their performance, ensuring they operate in accordance with the professional standards enshrined in each agency's mandate. Social auditing is carried out by a non-state actor with the approval of the relevant government agency to audit a public program or project. It is social because local communities affected by such programs and projects participate in the auditing process. People from subaltern classes review and monitor government expenditure records in projects and programs relevant to them and compare them to the actual expenses in a process that allows them to validate these records.

Social auditing could greatly benefit the public auditor and the government as it provides an effective tool for data validation. But as social auditing looks at resource misuse and mismanagement, it is expected to be a challenging process. The government functionaries responsible for implementing the relevant public program or project do not find themselves obliged to cooperate with social auditing as it looks for misuse they are allegedly implicated in. Also, the government at the top level holds power to monitor and govern public programs and projects. Thus, the government would not accept social auditing voluntarily unless the top officials thought they could benefit from it and unless knew there were no legal implications for them when misuse was discovered and disclosed.

Whether the government accepts social auditing voluntarily or is pressured to accept, it will positively impact the state management process andthe people from subaltern classes. This creates conditions to democratize the public sphere by increasing the political weight of people from subaltern classes in the decision-making process and converting them from mere beneficiaries of government goods and services into active actors in administering public life at the local community level.

Social audit can be carried out in cooperation with the government, which is better because the government then opens its records and engages in the process. Thus, the government has a mutual interest in the social audit findings. The alternative option is to conduct social auditing in parallel with public auditing without government cooperation. This would raise questions regarding how to procure the required data and how to make the government accept and use positively the social audit findings.

In order to sustain social audit practices, i.e. social participation of people from subaltern classes, it is essential to encourage governments to engage in the social auditing experience voluntarily, otherwise it would come under massive pressure. After first experiencing social auditing, the civil society coalition, which took the initiative, should call for the government to integrate the social auditing methodology into public auditing. By doing this, the social auditing method would be institutionalized into the state's official work.

Objectives:

1. To allow people from subaltern classes to reach official records and collect their data to verify how much the official records reflect the actual situation on the ground with relevance to a specific project or program that affects their lives.
2. To gauge project or program efficiency based on established indicators that reflect people from subaltern classes' needs.
3. To use the auditing results to amend or introduce changes in government policy and its programs and/or projects through lobbying, advocating and mass pressure.

How to conduct social auditing:

The scope of social auditing will determine the amount of resources required and the skills to be advanced. The auditing could cover a national program and could focus on a certain project in a region. When civil society components carry out auditing, it can be for political reasons or as an off-project funded by donors of non-governmental organizations. In all cases, the following steps are applicable for carrying out social auditing:

a. Build a civil society coalition and decide the targeted program/project to audit.

The civil society initiator usually decides to audit a program or project when there is pervasive corruption or mismanagement in public programs and projects and when people in the subaltern classes express their indignation. Thus the civil society initiator builds a coalition from civil society components and elected representatives. They together determine the targeted program or project. By determining the target, they define the scope of the auditing and, thus, the resources needed to carry it out.

A leadership body should be formed to coordinate and manage the auditing activities. The leadership team should devise a plan and define who are the main stakeholders in the relevant program and projects. Those stakeholders, in addition to a government agency, could be contractors and active citizens from local communities.

The main auditing activities are of two types. First; efforts to coordinate with government functionaries to request the government to open its reports for auditing. There are also coordinating efforts with other stakeholders who are non-governmental actors who have information and data about the program or project under investigation. Second; the auditing team which comprises of auditing experts and their assistants.

b. Gathering and analyzing data:

There are a number of requirements that need to be met to conduct an effective audit. First; the objective, mission statement and outcome/s of the program or project under investigation should be available and at the disposal of the auditing team. Based on these objectives, the auditing team should establish their indicators of evaluation. Second; The institutional structure responsible for implementation, along with the chain of command and control, should be determined and clarified . This is because the auditors need to determine who takes responsibility for each action. Third; the data in the records and the actual situation on the ground should be compared. This is in terms of quantities and qualities of the output (public goods and services).

It is important to access the original records of the relevant program or project. The modified version of the records could mislead the auditors. Thus, based on the type of the program or project, the following records are necessary for auditing. First; accounting records are of primary interest for auditors as they deal with monetary transactions, ledgers, journals, and any supporting documents such as checks and invoices. Second; technical records which contain the workbooks, check sheets, issued test reports, and any document that provides evidence about observation, work performed, or activities relevant to the project or program under scrutiny. Third; managerial records which contain the utilization certificates of the project or program.

Data should also be gathered from the stakeholders and direct beneficiaries. The extent of participation of the targeted community in providing data and verifying it is what gives this type of auditing its social face although in the end auditing experts are the ones who articulate and analyze data and boil it down to reach a conclusion.

c. Raising awareness and public outreach campaign

Collating the data into clear and simple categories and reaching specific conclusions is essential for disseminating awareness about government policies, programs or projects. These conclusions could be seen as answers to questions from people in subaltern classes about how much of government spending benefits ordinary citizens.

A civil society coalition could organize public meetings to discuss the audit's conclusions. Also, the final report should be sent to government agencies and the public auditor office, along with recommendations on how to amend the existing situation in case of mismanagement. The recommendations should contain a policy component explaining how to make the relevant program or project efficient and effective for subaltern classes.

d. Integrating the social auditing tool into public auditing and wider political campaigning:

Civil society components can do one-off auditing schemes for programs or projects. However, auditing should be systematic and institutionalized with independent financial resources. Most importantly, auditing is empowered by legislative support and the executive's enforcement of the law. Auditing public records is a tool that enhances governance at national, sub-national and community levels. Thus integrating social auditing methodology into public auditing by enabling public representatives, civil society actors and active citizens to participate in the public auditing process and validating the auditing report. Integrating social auditing methods into public auditing will have a positive impact on how to divert public resources to serve the majority of the people i.e subaltern classes.

Social auditing is a tool that can generate information. This information could be useful for raising awareness and public consciousness of the subaltern classes members about their entitlements. However, the utilization of this tool can only generate a ripple effect if it is integrated into a wider social and political movement that calls for democracy and social justice.

(III) Citizens monitoring of public procurement

Introducing the tool

In order to convert public funds into goods and services in a capitalist market-based society, a high percentage of funds is funneled through a procurement process. This procurement can take place between two public entities and, in a neo-liberal era, a great amount takes place between the public and the private sector. The procurement process entails many sub-processes and activities before, during and after the purchase of goods and services takes place. The procurement sub-processes involves as follows; purchase planning, standards, specifications determination, supplier research, selection, financing, price negotiation and inventory control.

The procurement process, like any other managerial process in the public or private sectors, needs to be monitored otherwise, there is the potential for it to be infected by graft, corruption, mismanagement and inefficiency, leading to poor quality goods and services and the waste of resources. At government and local government levels and in the private sector, monitoring is a top-down process

Monitoring, as a concept, refers to an ongoing activity which could be regular or irregular, systematic and structured or random and unorganized. It acquires a specific, purposeful quality when it has clear objectives, a specific scope and when it is integrated into a particular process, i.e. project, program or policy implementation. Thus monitoring is an activity integrated into a concrete process which examines whether the objectives of this process are met properly within an established framework. By playing this role, monitoring meet its objectives.

The monitoring of public procurement intends to ensure that the procurement process is carried out legally and efficiently and in a timely manner by going through an established procedure. This type of monitoring is systematic and conducted by a professional team which has the mandate and the power to perform their work independently. Monitoring entails collecting data about each tendering process, analyzing the data and publishing it to show the public how much the tendering was transparent, open, competitive and efficient. Monitoring public procurement is a top-down mechanism whether it is at the government agencies level or at the local government level.

The monitoring of public procurement, to be part of the social accountability tools and part of the civic engagement process, civil society components including active citizens should be able to be involved in it. Their involvement should not only be procedural by giving the system a democratic facade, but enable the citizens bodies to be involved in any tendering process and make independent decision. The involvement of citizens' bodies would be granted by legislation and have a regulation procedure. Citizens' monitoring is not limited to making assessments of legal compliance of public procurement with the law. It also entails assessing if public funds are spent efficiently and effectively within compliance with public procurement principles and the fulfilment of tendering to pre-defined objectives and targets.

There are a number of conditions which need to be met to have effective monitoring systems for the procurement system. First; the consistency of the policy objectives. As procurement allocates resources to implement certain policies; this consistency allows for comparing results over time and explains gaps. Second; in order to compare between results, data should be available, sorted and categorized. Third; the availability of a trained and professional team which is able to analyze the available data and report to the public. Fourth; the monitoring system will not function unless it is independent and has the full backing of the authorities. Fifth; have citizens engaged in this monitoring system- civil society actors from local communities and nationwide who have the necessary skills to be able to participate in the monitoring activities effectively.

In order to have an effective monitoring system, especially for the public procurement, it should be developed to be able to cope with the technical aspects of procurement and the extended diversity of public goods. The system is part of the public expenditure tracking system and thus it strategically assists in assessing the viability of a certain policy enacted either by the state or by local government.

Monitoring the procurement system requires three types of qualifications and expertise, as each purchasing activity should go through three levels to be accomplished. First; procedural compliance. The monitoring team will check if the tendering meets all the legal aspects and went through all the required steps from preparation to awarding. This check also includes compliance with certain government policies such as competitiveness and encouragement for local industries/vendors. Second; performance evaluation which gauges the effectiveness and efficiency of the procurement process against established indicators. In order to asse the level of efficiency and effectiveness of each tendering, it is important to collect specific data. This data will give an idea about the performance of individual tendering and about the functioning of the monitoring system as a whole. The following information should be collected; a) the number of tenders submitted, b) the number of tenders rejected, c) the number of complaints d) the duration of the review procedure, e) the time span between the publication of the procurement opportunity and the conclusion of a contract and f) the value of the contract and the prices of selected tenders.

Comparing the tenders within a reported period will not only give idea about the effectiveness and efficiency of the tendering process, but also about its transparency, stability and competitiveness. Comparing the tendering process data over time i.e. time series data within a sector or across sectors, will provide an idea about the evolution of the monitoring system on one hand and the efficiency of the public procurement system to allocate resources.

The role of each participant in the public procurement monitoring system must be determined on a legal basis. This includes how they are selected, how they carry out their functions and what manuals and guidelines will be used. This will ensure that the civil society actors' participation in monitoring is both formal and systematic rather than intermittent or on an ad hoc basis.

Joining the monitoring of the procurement system by civil society components at the national level is a political matter even though it is carried out by professional non-state actors such as research centers. This is because it evaluates how the state apparatus functions and what policies are implemented. Enabling civil society components to monitor tendering at the local government level is less political and increases the citizens' sense of ownership of the allocated resources. This will also empower ordinary citizens to hold public servants accountable for their actions.

Part of the monitoring of public procurement is focused on policy compliance. This monitoring type increasingly gains importance since it deals with green public procurement where environment-related considerations are included, and leads to socially responsible procurement which focuses on procurement that has benefits for the wider society. This type of monitoring enables a wide range of civil society actors to engage in monitoring because it focuses on changing strategies in procurement and not only on mismanagement and misconduct.

Objectives:

1. To enable citizens and their civil society bodies to monitor the procurement process by making it transparent, open, less susceptible to corruption and decrease resource waste.
2. To inform citizens and their civil society bodies about the extent of availability and distribution of public fund for goods and services, both geographically and on the basis of social class.
3. To enhance the efficiency of public funds.

Methods for using this tool:

1. Civil society actors, in coordination with state agencies, launch the online tool to support procurement monitoring by civil society. This Civil Society Procurement Monitoring (CSPM) tool can function if the procurement process is transparent and data is available. It becomes an effective tool when its reports are taken seriously by the authorities, mismanagement is rectified, and those responsible for misconduct are held accountable and face sanctions.
2. Sample survey. Civil society actors could conduct surveys to verify the regularity of award procedures and the efficiency of contract executions. These surveys could be conducted regularly or based on need. Such survey could help to address certain failures.
3. Investigating delivered goods and services. This monitoring focuses on checking the quality of the delivered materials and services. It is effective in environments with low levels of access to information. However, access to technical specifications and contracts should be possible.

How to conduct citizens monitoring of public procurement

At the national level, it is essential to integrate citizens' representative groups, i.e. civil society actors that include academic institutions and research centers, in the monitoring of public procurement processes. This requires legislation that enables them to participate. Their participation needs a) clear manuals and guidelines for their roles, b) transparency and free access to the data resources, c) funding which is independent of the state so they can conduct their work without financial constraints, d) being able to publish their reports independently and e) there is a clear mechanism to hold those who are responsible for any misconduct accountable.

To conduct citizens' monitoring of public procurement at the local government level, the following steps are essential:

a. Initiate the process:

[24]a civil society organization takes the initiative to build a coalition of civil society actors to start a citizens' procurement group. The labor and technical unions should be part of this initiative as they can supply the group with essential technical skills.

this citizens procurement group determines which sector it can function in and what type of projects their procurement can monitor.

the group establishes its mandate and gains approval from the responsible authority so its work becomes legal and part of the public procurement process.

the group will consult with local communities, especially those in subaltern classes communities, to set a table of priorities for the projects to be monitored.

b. Build the capacity and maintain continuity:

assess the technical skills acquired by the citizens' procurement group's members in order to build their capacity to be able to conduct this work.

group members should take essential training that enables them to deal with different kind of bidding procedures.

official registration of the group also obliges the state to provide essential core funds to enable the group to function.

c. Independence of the citizens' procurement group:

although group members are integrated into the official structure of monitoring, they still have the right to express their opinions freely and conduct their research independently.

the group should be able to publish their reports periodically or when there is a need to highlight a specific case of procurement misconduct.

group members should enjoy state protection as their work could endanger them.

the group should hold public meetings and consultations with local communities to listen to their concerns.

(IV) Quantitative Service Delivery Survey (QSDS)

Introducing the tool:

Quantitative service delivery surveys (QSDS) are a survey-based tool to collect quantitative data in order to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided by public frontline service delivery bodies. These multi-purpose surveys collect quantitative data related to human development programs, i.e. health and education services, infrastructure services such as water and sanitation and administrative services (civil services), which are fundamental for social welfare, especially for the subaltern classes. The QSDS tool's approach focuses on evaluating costs, the quality of basic services and the incentives to deliver these services. This tool tracks public spending at the local level and its final destination, i.e. services to the citizens.

The QSDS focuses on efficiency by looking at how much service delivery achieves its stated goals. Efficiency, in this context, refers to the economic side of service delivery and thus, the survey inquires into the question of how much the allocated resources, i.e. funds and expertise, brought about inputs to produce the intended results in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives, in the context of the planned time frame.

The efficiency of service delivery is important to the government and civil society, making it not only an operational matter but also a political issue related to the enacted policies. The government, which is in charge of money allocation in support of different policies and programs, could be held accountable for how these resources were spent. The efficiency of service delivery is also an issue of importance to the beneficiaries who come from subaltern classes. Most of them are taxpayers, and in a democratic system can ask the government, through civil society actions, about how much in money terms the government provided for services to people.

The QSDS looks into service delivery effectiveness. Effectiveness here refers to the policy or program as a whole by inquiring if it has achieved its stated objectives based on results. By using effectiveness as a lens to evaluate service delivery, the tool investigates whether any failure to achieve the intended results is due to service delivery shortcomings by the staff and management or the plan's design and system failure.

The QSDS tool can be used to measure the extent of community involvement in the management of the services in certain sectors, with education and health as the most prominent sectors.

Objectives:

1. To examine the efficiency of public spending relevant to service delivery carried out by service providers, especially in frontline services.
2. To determine the amount of services provided to people and the quality of the services given to the public.

How to conduct QSDS:

There are a number of stages that the QSDS must follow in order to generate the desired results.

These stages are:

Stage one (preparatory stage) : picking the target and building the coalition:

a. The organization which decided to use the QSDS in its work to address the people's needs has to select a target within a certain sector. This target should be clear and be a priority for people in the subaltern classes.
b. This organization shall start a consultation with other civil society components to build a coalition which will determine the following;

- The objective of their work in general and the objective of the QSDS.
- The scope of the work; it could target services in urban or rural areas or a certain program within a sector.
- Establish a team to conduct the QSDS and recruit a team of experts familiar with the context and the targeted service. This team of experts should go through a capacity-building training.
- The overall policy and political implications of using this tool, i.e. QSDS' along with other tools.

c. Stage two: the coordination work

- The QSDS team will start coordinating its work with the stakeholders. By doing this, the team figures out the role of each party in the service delivery system.
- Mapping the government bureaucratic structure along with the resources flow. This is to determine the role of individuals, the mechanisms and rules for resource allocation, and who is responsible at each point from the top to the frontline service delivery point.
- Mapping the service delivery system facilities the QSDS is targeting as in most developing countries services provided by; government, private for-profit and private not-for-profit service providers.
- Reach an agreement with stakeholders to conduct this research, and if necessary, sign a memorandum of understanding with them.
- Explore the availability of data at different bureaucratic levels of government agencies and other private service providers. The availability of records does not automatically mean the data is good and of the required standards. Thus, a rapid data assessment is necessary to determine the quality of data at different bureaucratic levels with a special focus on frontline facilities. This data is the baseline or a reference point for research and will be compared later on with the collected data in order to be verified.

d. Stage three: the tool's development

A number of questionnaires will be developed based on the quality of the available data from the records and the research's main questions. In addition to collecting primary data from the field, these will cross-check the data available in the records. Each administrative level of the service providers (government, private for-profit and non-profit) should have its relevant questionnaire, but at the service facility level, it is important to collect the same type of data to ensure comparability. This multi-angular data collection strategy, using a combination of information from different sources, will assist in overcoming any misreported data. As the QSDS focuses on the endpoint of service delivery, the questionnaires should be able to collect information about:

- Facility characteristics which would include the following; ownership type, how big it is, size and class/income level of the targeted population, where it operates and when it began, and the number of staff working hours per week. These characteristics will allow for the categorization of frontline facilities based on size, i.e stature, staff numbers, locality, class and many others.
- Resources as inputs: it is important to separate salaries and allow inputs from other expenses. The non-salary input could be categorized, and items should be quantified and then valued in money terms and according to importance.
- Services outputs: as the research deals with services, the output is directly connected to beneficiaries and service users.

- Efficiency and effectiveness (quantity and quality) of the service: the efficiency of the service provision can be calculated by dividing the resource allocation to a specific facility (input) by the number of individuals benefiting from the service facility. However, the number/s generated does not tell if the program's objectives have been met and if the output (delivered services) will have the program's stated impact. Thus, it is important to examine the quality of service by collecting data about the level of quality with reference to certain standards, for example, the ability of students to solve certain mathematical problems at a certain age.
- Financial information: this is based on the records of the source of the fund. It is important to find out how the facility received this fund, i.e in kind or monetized.
- Bureaucratic structure and the accountability mechanism: the administrative structure will show the supervision structure and the accountability mechanism will show the records and any auditing and how to hold functionaries accountable for their actions.
- The questionnaires should be tested in the field before carrying out the full research. This testing will give a glimpse into the viability of each questionnaire and determine if modifications are needed. Any modified instrument should also be tested before starting the fieldwork.

e. Stage four: Data collection articulation and analysis

- When collecting the data, collectors, i.e. enumerators, should be supervised to make sure they are collecting the right data from the targeted source.
- The data is recorded and categorized in order to go through a verification process which depends on triangulation by comparing each set of data with other similar sets from other resources or comparing data based on locality.
- Analyzing process will crunch data based on certain indicators to answer the research questions, which try to identify the source of problems in the service delivery under investigation.

f. Stage five: Reporting, raising awareness and mobilization for change

The analyzed data is usually reported based on of the research question and the targeted audience. With regard to the QSDS research report, it should resonate with the concerns of the people, the majority of whom are from the subaltern classes. This reporting will answer some of their questions about the quality and quantities of services provided to the public and the policy and managerial reasons behind service/s not matching people's needs.

Raising the awareness of the subaltern classes will enable them to act and mobilize to improve their living conditions and shape their lives. The QSDS report should spur discussions about the service delivery as part of the government-implemented policies and who benefits from the existing situation. The people from subaltern classes join this discussion as active citizens of civil society. As active citizens, they seek to hold the responsible accountable. This is what makes this tool an instrument of civic engagement to hold mismanagers and wrong doers accountable. This tool i.e. QSDS, deals with the existing situation at the micro level, which makes it relevant to people and enhances the political mobilization of people for demanding better services and living conditions.

(V) Public Revenue Monitoring

Introducing the tool:

The term public revenues refers to the government's financial income of the government, which comes from different sources. A government's major sources of income are taxes, goods and services. Taxes are mandatory payments levied by the government on individuals and enterprises that can be direct or indirect and come under different categories. Also, governments generate income through their administrative services; i.e. fees and special assessments. In addition, government-owned enterprises and natural resources generate income for the government. These types of revenues are non-repayable to the public, and the government collects them to fund its operations and invest in public infrastructure and enterprises.

Public revenues determine the size of the public budget and, thus, the size of government operations. States that own public enterprises tend to have relatively big budgets and operations. The neoliberal state usually does not have public enterprises and tends to privatize the public sector and depend on taxation policies and revenue administration to fund its general budget. In both cases, what determines the size of the budget and the amount of expenditure on public goods and services is the amount of money the government can generate each year.

Public revenues represent government policies and are part of the state's politics related to running the country's economy and funding essential public services. Thus, monitoring the state's income requires understanding the state's politics and economics. For example, the amount of taxes levied on each social class, directly and indirectly, represents government policies in terms of how the government determines the burden of taxation on certain classes and how it relieves other classes or social groups. Those who advocate for a neoliberal state coined the myth of trickle-down economics, where taxes are cut for the upper capitalist class to encourage them to invest and provide jobs, and at the same time, the state would cut its basic social services to the subaltern classes as its revenues decreased.

Local governments, i.e. municipalities, also have the ability to generate income through some taxes and administrative fees. However, this ability is limited as local governments lack the political and legal means of the general government to collect revenues from the citizens and enterprises. Thus, local governments usually receive part of their budget from the general budget as a gift, a non-refundable fund, to maintain their operations.

The general government and local governments sometimes receive funds under the category of official development assistance (ODA). ODA can refer to grants the country will not pay back or loans with low-interest rates. This source of income can be part of the general budget, or it can be transferred to local governments and non-governmental organizations. ODA is part of the government's revenue and needs to be monitored by the state and civil society actors.

The monitoring of public revenues is meant to address the fairness of the taxation system on the one hand and the efficiency and effectiveness of tuning and managing public enterprises and natural resources on the other. In many countries, the state favors big businesses over the majority of people from subaltern classes, not only in terms of taxation but also by awarding licenses to companies to extract natural resources in a way that does not always serve the public interest. The privatization of the provision of public services is a prominent example of how the state sometimes prefers to collect tax rather than provide the services by its own enterprises. This leads to higher costs of services and fewer benefits for the state.

Objectives:

1. To have knowledge of the sources of public revenues and their relationships to the economic policy implemented by the government.
2. To hold the government accountable for the management of public income by referring to inefficiency, leakages and/or misconduct.
3. To advocate for changes in taxation policies to serve the people in the subaltern classes.

How to conduct public revenue monitoring:

a. The civil society actor, which takes the initiative to address public revenues issues, should form a coalition of civil society components. The coalition should determine the policy lens through which they wish to view the issue of public revenue as it is not simply a management issue but also a political issue about how the economy is run.

b. Establish a committee of experts who are going to look into:

- What type of revenue reports are publicly available. Without these periodic reports the monitoring of public revenues cannot go forward.
- How government agencies (and local government) justify the amount of revenue they generate.
- How the general government (and local governments) connect its revenue and the implemented policy.
- In the case of public enterprises and income from natural resources, it is important to look into the amount of money spent on administrative work, royalties and bonus payments to find out if it is justifiable.
- The committee should look into public debt; its amount, and how it is managed, including how the government will pay it back.
- In the case of international aid, the committee should look into how this aid is spent and what projects and programs are funded by such funds.
- The committee should be able to produce a summary report about public revenues that is simple and understandable by ordinary citizens.

c. The civil society coalition should then use the committee's report to address policy problems by:

- Disseminating the report to raise awareness among subaltern classes about how the taxes they pay is administered, who benefits from taxation and whether there are better ways to channel this money to them.
- Pressure and lobby the government to introduce changes that serve the interests of the majority of people.
- Mobilize people through political campaigns in order to transform economic policies to ensure they serve the interests of the subaltern classes and improve services.

Tools for Citizens to voice their concerns

Introduction:

The use of the following tools enables citizens to voice their concerns regarding the implemented policy, programs and the public services they receive. These tools gauge citizens' satisfaction regarding the public service delivery at frontline facilities.

These tools provide either direct interactions between citizens and bureaucrats and policy-makers or between citizens and service delivery staff. These interactions focus on how to make services better and attainable. Each tool has its own uniqueness and is used in a specific context. The Citizen Score Card (CSC) needs a friendly environment where the two sides, i.e. citizens and public service providers, are ready to engage in a conducive dialogue and introduce changes. The Citizens Report Card (CRC) enables citizens to express their opinions, but their identities will be anonymous as they might fear official and organizational negative reactions (retaliation). The Public Hearing tool brings citizens, experts and policy-makers into one place to highlight an issue of public interest and enable the two sides to take further steps towards progress in the near future. None of the results of these tools are legally binding on the decision-makers and bureaucrats.

CRC and CSC both aim to assess the performance of public service schemes and programs by enabling citizens to express their opinions as individuals and collectively. The data provided through these tools is based on citizens' perceptions, i.e.subjective, and their experiences. The subjective nature of the data will limit the tools' ability to be a comprehensive service delivery indicator for operational efficiency and policy effectiveness.

These tools require the active participation of citizens, whether their identities are disclosed or not. The citizens who are engaged in the use of these activities should be aware that public services are entitlements to citizens and that citizens have the right to question officials and institutions about the quality of work they do.

Community Score Card (CSC)

Introducing the tool:

The Community Score Card is a civic engagement tool that empowers citizens from subaltern classes at a community level by enabling them to have a voice regarding the services provided for them in their locality/s. As a local governance tool, it assists citizens in monitoring the quality of services and holds those responsible, i.e. staff and local decision-makers, accountable, a mechanism through which citizens' groups can come together to hold service providers accountable at the facility and locality level. The SCS approach empowers citizens to express their perceptions regarding public services provided by state agencies, non-profit organizations and the private sector.

The way the Community Score Card is administered determines the tool's impact. It enhances citizens' participation in monitoring the quality and quantity of services when conducted at a community level. It allows for monitoring the performance of a project or a program when conducted in multiple communities, sub-regions and regions. It also can be an exercise in civic engagement in social accountability when it is conducted as part of a one-off project. It can also provide a governance mechanism when conducted repeatedly over a long period. To adopt this tool either as an official government mechanism or as an official tool to measure citizens' satisfaction requires the usage of CSC to be institutionalized and the creation of democratic norms which would convert the use of CSC from a mere procedure to a mechanism that gives people a stake in the official monitoring system. These norms oblige the state to enable citizens to voice their opinions and concerns via an open-the-door system and for civil society actors to be part of the frontline service monitoring system.

To be able to carry out CSC activities, close collaboration is needed between the state agencies, which, according to the human rights discourse, represent those who have a duty to provide public services (directly through state agencies, non-governmental organizations or through the private sector) and those who are entitled to receive these services as citizens. The CSC approach is also based on mutual interest by establishing a feedback mechanism between the beneficiaries and the service providers. In opening a dialogue between the two parties, it ensures an informed decision-making process which enhances service provision and the sense of collective ownership of public enterprises.

The CSC is not a "complaints box" system practiced within government agencies nor "a customer's complaints box" in the private sector. The aim here is not to complain as individuals but to build collective power by organizing the community of the subaltern classes. It is a collective call by the community to introduce change in terms of the quantity and quality of the relevant services. In addition, it maintains the independence of the community within the monitoring mechanism by entering into a discussion and dialogue with the service providers with an agenda that has concrete demands. Thus, the matter of deciding community demands is not subject to the service provider alone; the community which benefits from these services also has the power to decide if these services are adequate and suit it.

It is also not a satisfaction survey usually conducted by private businesses. The satisfaction survey is an instrument that deals with customers' "questionnaire responses" through which a business seeks the customers' opinions to ensure goods and services meet the average customer's taste. The CSC positions citizens as agents of change engaged in the governance process by empowering them to shape the way they receive services, the services themselves and their quality. It treats public services as citizens' entitlement, not as commodities but as basic human needs, and their quality does not depend on how much citizens are willing to pay. CSC is not conducted for business purposes, i.e. improve marketing or increase demand, but to respond to the needs of individuals and groups for certain historical living standards.

The CSC is an effective tool when the capacity of the civil actors, i.e. active citizens and community-based organizations, is built and enhanced in terms of both holding public agencies accountable and allowing for public deliberations in deciding local communities' service priorities. An enhanced capacity of social actors and community-based organizations makes them capable of establishing, in collaboration with the facilities agents, performance criteria for frontline facility operations with clear, measurable benchmarks.

What makes CSC a tool for social accountability is its viability in terms of organizing individuals and groups to represent community social demands through raising the consciousness of subaltern class citizens of their rights and entitlements. Moreover, this tool involves citizens in changing the process through their representative bodies i.e. civil society components.

The CSC is a civic engagement tool to monitor the quality and quantity of service delivery at frontline services facilities. It is a flexible tool that can be managed by a community to monitor a specific service, such as immunizations for children and adolescents at local immunization clinics, or it can be used in a wider scope to include service delivery at frontline facilities in a certain sector or program, i.e. health, education, security, water and sanitation, agriculture etc. The basic steps for conducting the CSC are the same. However, its effect depends on the strategy through which this tool is used. The political strategy to bring change in a political and bureaucratic system that manages service provision differs from a one-off development project by a non-governmental organization that wants to improve a certain service provision without being implicated in changing the whole sociopolitical context.

Objectives:

1. To empower citizens to evaluate their experience with the public services they receive and hold those responsible for any misconduct or wrongdoing.
2. To organize the communities of the subaltern classes to participate in the decision-making process and the planning of service provision in their communities.
3. To enhance the trust between citizens and state agencies by enforcing the feeling of collective ownership of public enterprises.

How to conduct a CSC:

The following steps are used when conducting a CSC with the intention of achieving the stated goal of the activity:

Step 1. Preparatory work

1.1 Determine the aim and scope of conducting a CSC

The civil society component, which took the initiative, should have a clear, achievable goal representing a basic human need and a social demand of the relevant community/s. It is also essential to determine the scope of the work.

1.2 Organize, plan and build a coalition

The lead civil society component should build a coalition of civil society actors interested in engaging in this civic engagement work. This means establishing a leadership committee and recruiting community organizers, social activists and social leaders to support these efforts. This committee will develop a work plan that needs to be accepted by the local community/s.

1.3 Map and research the targeted service/s

The leadership committee should map the service/s provided by the targeted facility/s by focusing on the chain of command and responsibilities and generating a social map that ranks the people involved from the individuals and groups most affected by the service/s under scrutiny to the least. Also, preliminary research should be carried out into the amount, quality, and frequency of service provision in addition to the priorities of service provision (based on facility records).

1.4 Recruit and train community organizers (facilitators)

The leadership committee will recruit and train community organizers to conduct the CSC activities. Their work will also encourage people from subaltern classes to join the CSC activities, to facilitate the upcoming discussions and dialogues. The number of community organizers (facilitators) will depend on the size and number of the targeted communities.

1.5 Awareness campaign

It is important to make the general public in the targeted community/s aware of this civic engagement activity in general terms and that a CSC is to be carried out. When people become aware of the purpose and benefits of successful CSC activities, they will join and/or support the organizers' efforts. The awareness campaign should focus on public services as rights and entitlements provided by the state.

1.6 Public meetings

In each targeted community/s (locality), the organizers shall invite people to come to a meeting to discuss the proposed CSC targets and ask people for feedback on the developed activity work plan. It is important to gain people's acceptance and support for the plan. The CSC scheme budget should be shared with the community in order to maintain transparency and gain local people's trust.

Step 2. Developing CSC with local community participants.

2.1 Based on the public meeting held during the preparation, community members entitled to the services under scrutiny are invited to participate in the CSC development and scoring. The purpose and methodology of the CSC scheme must be explained to the attendees, so they become focused and have achievable expectations.

2.2 Divide the participants into focus groups of 7–8 participants with similar interests, from the same gender, and within the same age group (range). Assign two community organizers (facilitators) to facilitate the discussions of each focus group.

2.3 Develop the first part of the CSC: Input Tracking Table

The Input Tracking Table contains the amount and quality of resources (inputs) allocated to the service delivery facility. These inputs include; staff numbers, the amount and type of equipment, types of services provided, and the length of time per person to receive and process the relevant service etc... These inputs depend on the type of tracked services

2.4 Compare assigned inputs and actual inputs. For example, the number of employees attending their work.

2.5 Develop the second part of the CSC: performance indicators and scores.

2.5.1 The discussion group should develop indicators to evaluate the quantity and quality of the service under scrutiny. Each indicator deals with a specific issue, such as waiting time, availability of service during weekdays, attitude of staff, equal access to the services etc...

2.5.2 Indicators should be ranked on the basis of priorities and specific reasons given for the way they are ordered.

2.5.3 Let the discussion group give a score for each indicator and state the reason/s for each score.

2.5.4 When a score is low, the facilitator should ask the group for suggestions for improvement, and when a score is high, the group should propose how to sustain the same level of performance.

2.6 By the end of the discussion, each group should elect a person to present the focus group's results in front of all the group members. This person will also represent the group in further activities.

2.7 The focus groups' representatives meet to consolidate the groups' CSC results in one score card representing the community's opinions. Simple statistical techniques are used to average each indicator and explain the variances. These variances will be explained to the representatives of the community.

2.8 The participants in the focus groups are invited to a meeting, and the consolidated CSC is presented to them. If the work is carried out in several communities, focus groups should elect representatives to attend a regional CSC, which would compare the results and explain any variance. Also, they will be invited to face-to-face meetings (Interface Meetings) with service providers' staff.

Step 3. Conducting CSC with Service Providers

3.1 The leadership committee, along with two community organizers (facilitators), should contact the targeted service facility/s administration as soon as the community has determined the priority services they wish to evaluate and introduce changes to the quality and quantity of services they receive. For the service providers, it is important to explain that the CSC is not conducted to blame or threaten them.

3.2 Invite the facility staff for a focus group/s discussion. The facility staff could select representatives to join the discussion. The date for the discussion would be after the focus group discussions with the community, so the facilitator would manage the staff discussions to include all or most of the indicators addressed by the community.

3.3 Begin the staff discussions by identifying the regular services the facility provides and the essential operations for the facility to continue functioning. This discussion will relieve the staff from stress and let them focus on the policies, methods of work, the administrative work and structure of the facility

3.4 Establish the performance and output indicators. Some of these indicators could be already used by the facility's management to evaluate the performance of the staff. These indicators include; services administration and management, staff skills and attitude, equipment quality and quantities etc...

3.5 Then, the facilitator will ask the staff to score the indicators and provide the reason/s for each score they give. The facilitator should then ask the staff to suggest ways to improve the indicators that received low scores.

Step 4. The interface meeting

4.1 This meeting is intended to enhance the communication between the community beneficiaries and the service provider's representatives and staff. Also, key decision-makers, i.e. officials and civil society actors, will be invited to the meeting.

4.2 The agenda should include the presentation of the two scorecards, i.e. community and facility, an action plan and a timeframe.

4.3 The community representative will present the consolidated scorecard results then the service provider representatives will present theirs.

4.4 The meeting facilitator/s will compare the scorecard results and suggestions and then will open a discussion between the two parties, taking one issue after another.

4.5 Developing the action plan: each issue (indicator) discussion should include proposals for improvement/s that are clear and measured within a defined timeframe and a mechanism to monitor any advancement.

Step 5. Action plan implementation and monitoring

5.1 A full report should be compiled. The report should contain the consolidated CSC's findings, including the community's proposed service improvements. It will contain the facility's CSC, including the staff suggestions. Most importantly, the report will contain the joint CSC, in which both parties accepted the issues and indicators. Along with this joint CSC, the report should include a timeframe and mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the action plan. The action plan can also be published separately.

5.2 The report should be published to raise awareness amongst community members that public services are entitlements and that they have the right to monitor service provision. The report will also be used to lobby and advise the policymakers regarding the service delivery system status and any proposals to improve it.

5.3 It is officially the responsibility of the service providers' management to implement the CSC action plan as it concerns the performance of the facility output and staff. However, the result of implementation should be transparent by periodically publishing details of the progress of action plan implementation.

5.4 The two groups should hold a meeting on a date determined during the action plan development to evaluate action plan implementation. Before this happens, the community will re-score the CSC and facility staff should also evaluate their progress. Then, during the meeting, a conversation will be held to gauge the real progress as perceived by the community.

5.5 The CSC could be institutionalized when frontline service providers adopt basic elements of its approach, i.e. participatory performance evaluation of managerial and staff work conducted periodically, i.e. annually, with the results shared with the public.

Citizen Report Card (CRC)

Introducing the tool:

The Citizens Report Card is a participatory tool that engages citizens of the subaltern classes in assessing the quality of the public services provided to them. These services could be in social development sectors and programs i.e. health and education, infrastructure, and poverty alleviation programs.

The CRC, which is a survey, asks citizens as beneficiaries to rate the public service institutions they were in direct contact with. The citizen (respondent) will be asked about specific service/s s/he experienced. It gauges the adequacy of the service provision by looking into the quality of these services and, as a consequence, the level of satisfaction of those who benefit from them. The survey will inquire about various elements of the delivered service, such as staff attitude and service quantity and quality.

The CRC could target one particular public service to measure citizen satisfaction or evaluate a cluster of services. When evaluating a cluster of services, the survey will rank them in terms of overall citizens' satisfaction using specific aspects, such as quality, access, availability and reliability, in addition to the level of agency responsiveness, transparency of the service provider and corruption etc...

This tool can be used to compare citizens' satisfaction across various geographical areas, social classes, genders and ages. This is because services should correspond with the citizens' needs. As such, it is important to know whether the delivery of these needs is affected by locality and culture, income, sex and age segment. Also, it is an effective instrument to enhance the collective ownership of public services, transparency, government responsiveness and accountability, as the survey asks citizens about the changes and/or improvements they would like to see in the services they receive.

In order to ensure the accountability and responsiveness of public agencies, the civil society components need to use the results of the CRC to lobby and or put pressure on government agencies and policymakers to introduce changes. The results can also encourage people to organize around a specific target to achieve, i.e. improve public services.

Though this tool generates data with a subjective nature, as it collects data about how citizens feel about these services, this does not make it a less-scientific or unreliable tool to evaluate service delivery efficiency. This is because the services should satisfy citizens' needs. Conducting a CRS regularly and over a long period will enable the management of the service facility and the citizens to gauge any advancement in service provision.

It is true that the effect of the CRC results depends on the response and level of engagement of frontline facilities and relevant decision-makers to citizens' demands. However, the role of citizens is not passive in CRC as the survey questionnaire inquires about what changes and improvements the ordinary citizen would like to see in a specific service. These individuals' opinions gained through the survey could form mass pressure on the decision-makers and service delivery employees, encouraging them to initiate changes that correspond with citizens' demands.

There are a number of elements that determine the government's responsiveness to citizens' demands associated with the satisfaction surveys. Among these are; the state's capacity in allocating resources and holding bureaucracy accountable, and bureaucratic (administration) effectiveness. States which depend on international organizations to provide and/or fund essential services whether governmental agencies, non-governmental non-profit or profit organizations, are primarily accountable to donors. Also, when the bureaucracy is not held accountable based on results, they tend to ignore the citizens' demands.

In non-democratic countries or in countries were citizens have apprehensions regarding decision- makers' reactions, the CRS is an instrument that keeps respondents' identity anonymous and avoids the associated risks. This shifts the risks to the civil society actors who take the responsibility to represent citizens' demands. In such cases, the citizens' public services are introduced as political demands by the subaltern classes and not just as mere services. Thus, further organizing work should take place to empower citizens to get their entitlements from public agencies.

In such cases, the citizens' public services become the political demands of the subaltern classes and are not only seen as services. As such, further organizing work should take place to empower citizens to receive their entitlements from public agencies.

Objectives:

1. To collect credible data about citizens' level of satisfaction with public service delivery.
2. To encourage public service providers to be citizen-oriented by being receptive to citizens' demands.
3. To allow citizens to comment on service quality and the quantities they receive by sharing their suggestions on how to improve services.

How to conduct CRC

Like any other civic engagement- social accountability tool, the CRC's implementation depends on the context. It can be used as a questionnaire and be supplemented by key informant interviews and focus group discussions. This depends on the political situation and the government's responsiveness to citizens voicing their concerns. The following are the major steps that can be modified to suit a particular context:

Step (1). Determine the overall goal and build up a coalition of civil society actors.

As public services are an issue that concerns ordinary citizens, mostly from the subaltern classes, civil society actors should come together to represent the citizens' demands. The coalition will form a leadership committee which will lead and supervise the process. The coalition will empower citizens and civil society organizations to achieve positive changes.

This coalition will be able to organize large numbers to put the social demands of the citizens on the political agenda.

Step (2). Identify the CRC objectives, relevant actors and scope.

The leadership committee will determine the objectives to be met through the CRC. It is important to select the service or cluster of services subject to evaluation. The scope of the CRS will determine the depth and width of the evaluation scheme as it is related to picking the geographic area and the population segment. Also, initial work will be carried out to identify the key actors behind delivering public service/s in order to look for conduits to communicate with them to seek their cooperation

Step (3). The technical work.

The leadership committee will hire or recruit a team of researchers to carry out all the technical work related to the CRC survey. The committee will recruit data collectors who are familiar with the context and who will undergo training. The technical team will host focus discussion groups and interviews with key informants to develop the questionnaire/s. This will determine the appropriate sampling size and the suitable type of questionnaire/s. Each questionnaire should be tailored for specific citizen groups, service providers, and state officials. Pre-testing should be conducted to validate the developed instruments before carrying out open fieldwork.

Step (4). The fieldwork.

The data collectors (enumerators) will be deployed in the field to fill questionnaires from the targeted citizens and hold interviews and focus group discussions with facilities staff and decision-makers. The team will supervise the work of the enumerators and receive their feedback about the fieldwork.

Step (5). Entering the data, analyzing and reporting it.

It is important to enter and process the data as soon as it is ready. This will allow for dealing with emerging problems and determining the quality of data. Then the data will be analyzed based on established indicators that provide specific results about quality, access, reliability, problem incidence, problem resolution, favoritism and bribery etc... The data analysis findings should be reported with a brief summary. The report should include citizens' suggestions about how to improve services in addition to the the experts' proposals on how to tackle service quality. The summary should be understandable, simple and relevant to ordinary citizens, service delivery staff and decision-makers.

Step (6). Report dissemination and citizen awareness-raising.

The civil society coalition should distribute the report to media outlets, other civil society organizations and decision-makers to shed light on the quality of the services received by citizens and the level of citizens' satisfaction. It is important to disseminate the report's findings among citizens as this will enable the civil society actors to mobilize citizens by educating them on the quality of services they receive.

Step (7). The forward movement.

In order to generate a sustainable impact, the civil society coalition should fight to do satisfaction surveys, e.g. CRC, an integral evaluation tool used by frontline service facilities. The result of the CRC should be accessible to ordinary individuals and civil society components.

Public Hearing

Introducing the tool:

The public hearing is a forum or public meeting that is open to everyone. The attendees generally present ideas, voice their opinions, and ask questions. Official representatives, government agencies, and civil society organizations hold public meetings either to hear from the targeted citizens on topics of interest, or to discuss specific upcoming projects or programs. Citizens are invited to ask questions and express their opinions about the topic under deliberation, i.e. policy, service delivery issues. It is for any citizen a way to let those responsible know in-person about the citizen's issues that matter to him/her. For the political representatives, the public hearing is an opportunity to connect or reconnect with constituents. Thus, during periods of active political debate, public hearings can be a locus for active debate. The public hearing could take the form of a public gathering or a virtual one via online services and social media.

The number of people attending a public hearing depends on public interest in the topics being discussed. If the turnout is large, and if the objective of the particular public hearing (meeting) is to give as many people as possible an opportunity to speak, then the attendees can be broken down into smaller discussion groups. Each smaller group, in that case, appoints someone to summarize the discussion of their group. Prior to the meeting the organizers may announce rules concerning attendees' (citizens) behavior and the scope of questions that may be asked. The hearing organizers make some opening remarks and the key speakers, e.g. local leaders, address the audience by presenting the topic under discussion. Then the floor is opened up to questions and comments from the audience.

The public hearing is a non-official meeting and its results are not binding on the organizers. However, it opens a window for direct exchange between officials and citizens. Some citizens see in public hearings an opportunity to stage a protest against government policies or implemented programs, but the main purpose behind holding these meetings is to make it possible for citizens to question those who hold power and run the projects from their offices.

Objectives:

1. To provide the opportunity for citizens to engage in a conducive discussion with officials and public figures.
2. To put the demands of the local community on the agenda of decision-makers and public officials.

How to hold a public hearing:

Stage (1) leadership and planning

Step (1). establishing a leadership committee

The civil society organization takes the initiative to form a coalition and partnership with civil society allies and active citizens. The type of organizations which form this alliance will influence how much credibility and weight the local communities, key figures and decision-makers give to the organizations which organize the activities, i.e. public hearings.

The coalition organization should form a leadership committee. This committee will plan, manage and promote the activity. The leadership committee might form other sub-committees to carry out specific tasks, such as logistics or media committees. These subcommittees can work independently and report back to the leadership committee.

Step (2). analyze the context

The leadership committee and the organizers, in general, should be aware of the unique characteristics of the targeted social group. This would include the community's demographics (class and gender), cultural aspects, political associations and environment, and history of problems, with a specific focus on the problem the coalition seeks to discuss. This will give the leadership committee an idea about the challenges and opportunities in discussing the issues and provide ideas and solutions.

Step (3). determine your objectives

The leadership committee should identify the objectives of discussing a specific issue in the public hearing session with the relevant officials. Some public hearings aim to generate discussion about matters affecting the daily life of the targeted group. Others aim at pressuring the officials to take concrete actions to solve specific problems or seek to form relationships with officials and agencies to collaborate on tackling social problems.

Stage (2) meeting logistics

Step (1). Selecting the place, date, and time

The place of the public hearing could lend it some credibility and importance. Holding a meeting at the municipality hall might have good resonance for people compared to holding it in a private hall. Also, the date and time should be convenient for the majority of the targeted citizens, therefore, it is essential to announce the place, date and time as early as possible so citizens can organize their schedules.

Step (2). identify and invite key speakers

It is essential to identify the key speakers, i.e. those speakers who will form a panel to speak for or against the topic under discussion. They should have high profiles and have relevant stakes in the subject under discussion. The speakers will help draw citizens' and media's attention, and will be able to talk about the issue in depth. The speakers (panelists) should be able to talk about the relevant issue from different angles and, thus, have a broad range of experience and/or long relationship with the matter under discussion. The speakers should confirm their participation ahead of time in accordance with the selected date and time of event.

Step (3). recruit a moderator or facilitator

The discussion facilitator should be part of the targeted society with good relationships and reputation. They should have in-depth knowledge of the subject and possess facilitation and moderation skills. In addition, they should be aware of the event's objectives and the attendees' diverse opinions. Finally, they should be able to field audience questions to the panelists.

Step (4). Distribute the tasks among the team members

Each member of the public hearing team should know their role so they do not interfere with each other. The most important roles are;

a) Media spokespeople: these people will give comments to the press. They should be aware of the event's objectives and be able to grasp the diversity of opinions and present them. They should have a deep understanding of the subject under discussion and the importance of discussion and providing solutions.

b) The panelist coordinator: They should have an idea of each speaker's background and be able to prepare with each of them their biography.

c) Event administrator: This person will manage the team's work before, during and after the event as they are in charge of the staff, whether they are volunteers or paid workers. They will be in charge of recruiting the team members, preparing them for the work and monitoring it. They could have assistants. The key tasks under the event administrator's responsibility are 1) staff who prepare the hall set-up and assist in ushering the attendees, 2) staff who distribute pamphlets and related materials 3) staff who manage the equipment, 4) staff who record comments and questions from the audience

Step (5). Materials to distribute before, during and after the event

Different types of material that will need to be distributed. These are:

1) Media-related materials, such as press releases, invitations and explanations of why it is important to cover this event. Some materials should be distributed during the event, and others, such as debriefing, highlights and upcoming and following steps,

will be drafted and sent out after the event.

2) Attendee-related materials: The organizers should prepare packs to distribute to attendees when they arrive. These materials inform the attendees about the event, such as its objectives, panelists, and other information related to the issues and organizers.

3) Promotions, invitations and mobilization: the organizer should assign a team to pro-

mote the event using a variety of methods, such as social media. They should prepare a list of people to invite and reach out to people by knocking on doors or by emails. The organizers can also post flyers, posters or banners in visible public places.

Stage (3) Holding the public hearing

During the event, there are three things to focus on

(1) Meeting arrangements: these include a) sign-in and registration, b) handouts, which include the agenda and other documents for the attendees, and press kits for media personnel c) ushering and guiding citizens and media reporters to their places (chairs)

(2) the discussion:

The discussion will start with the organizers introducing the organizations behind the event and the moderator. The moderator will then take over by introducing the speakers. The panel of speakers could be composed of 3–4 individuals who spend around 50 minutes talking about the discussed topic. Then the moderator opens the floor for questions and answers. The moderator will direct questions to each speaker if the question is written on paper or can pick who to answer it, if it is directed through an open microphone. Citizens sometimes do not direct questions, but they tell a personal story and urge the panelists to adopt certain measures or recommendations. Finally, the moderator (facilitator) will wrap up the meeting by thanking everyone for coming. The organizers will also encourage attendees to continue to air their voices and be active. The organizers will invite citizens who would like to take further steps to join civil society efforts to give their contact information to the organizers for follow-up meetings.

(3) coordinate media work

The organizers should provide the media with their briefings, arrange for some speakers to talk to the press, and prepare some attendees to speak to the media outlets and make their voice clear.

Stage (4) evaluate and strategize

After the public hearing event, the following steps can be taken;

1. Evaluation of the event

   The leading committee will conduct an evaluation to gauge whether the event achieved its declared objectives. Citizens, speakers, and organizers will participate in this evaluation.

2. Strategize and plan

   The organizers should develop a full report on the event's discussions. This report will include the discussion, suggestions, the citizens, and panelists attitudes and lessons learned. Based on this report, a strategy for tackling the issue under discussion would be developed, and an action plan to carry out activities to achieve the stated goal.

3. Community outreach and mobilization

   The report should be summarized and used to raise awareness among the community's members. Therefore, it should be disseminated and discussed with people from the subaltern classes to mobilize them for further work to improve their living conditions.

Citizen's Charter

Introduction

The Citizen's Charter is a public written text addressed to citizens by the government or agency, which uses public funds to provide public services, that commits to providing specific public services and goods in line with certain standards according to the official regulations. These public services and goods are provided under the mandate of the agency. Such declared commitments are legally binding on the service delivery agency as they represent an agreement even though they are not signed directly between the citizens and the public agency but are regulated by the law.

The Citizen's Charter has two dimensions that empower citizens. Firstly, one dimension is operational in that it informs citizens about the services (standards) and the way to obtain them (process). The second relates to governance as it provides an accountability mechanism to hold service delivery managerial staff accountable for their performance. Thus, the citizen, on the basis of the charter, can demand to receive public services and goods from the relevant agency according to the declared quantities and standards of service.

Some essential administrative and legal elements should be available in order to develop a Citizens' Charter. First; the law needs to clearly define the public agency mandate, i.e. mission, vision, purposes and operational mechanisms. Second; the public services and goods to be delivered should have clear standards. Third; the managerial team and staff performance is regulated by a clear code of conduct.

Objectives:

1. To inform citizens about their rights and entitlements.
2. To enable citizens to get their entitled services in a timely way and according to the established standards.
3. To hold public service agencies accountable when they fail to meet the services declared in the citizens' charter.

How to make the Citizen's Charter function:

The Citizen's Charter is an instrument of governance which empowers citizens by creating a citizen-responsive environment for service delivery. The services citizens receive should be delivered according to a specific timetable, respond to a professional standard and be delivered in a citizen-responsive environment. When a public agency declares a commitment, it should increase its operational performance and effectiveness on the one hand and ensure its operations are transparent and free of corruption on the other.

When a public agency develops its charter, it should do so with the participation of the citizens who receive these services, so it not only enforces the agency's mandate mechanically but also sees the citizen as a right-holder and entitled to receive the services. This requires that agency staff be trained to improve their interactions with citizens who request the services. The agency staff should be aware of the Charter's approach and contents. The charter should be subject to a periodic evaluation by the citizens (users) to check its viability and how citizens perceive and utilize it.

It should be written in simple language, using clear standards and avoiding sophisticated and vague wording. It should also be subject to regular updates. Staff should be made aware of charter updates and go through training if necessary to be familiar with the new content and build their capacity and improve their skills.

Citizens should be informed about the agencies' Charters, so they become aware of their rights and entitlements and the duties of service providers. Agencies should educate citizens about their charter and how citizens can use it. Posters, pamphlets and brochures should be available at service facilities. If an agency has a website, it should include training materials and be user-friendly to let citizens navigate it and explore its contents.

The charter should explain the public grievances and complaint system in a simple and practical way. The citizen should be assured that no retaliation or damage will be inflicted on them when lodging a complaint. In addition, the citizen should be aware that they can seek remedy and compensation if they received poor service or damaged in any way. This could happen, for example, when citizens receive inadequate medical treatment. The grievances and complaints system should be time-bound and lead to concrete actions against the wrongdoers as it is an important pillar of the public service providers' accountability.

Public agencies are usually big organizations with many sub-agencies each with their own professional work and with a different group of public services to deliver. In this case, each sub-agency should have its own charter. One uniform charter for all the different sub-agencies forming one organization would make it difficult for citizens to understand and navigate. Therefore, each sub-agency should develop its own transparent charter that clarifies the relevant sub-agency scheme, its standards and rules, citizens' choices and grievances procedure.

Citizen's Charter format:

a. Agency title and brief introduction
b. Agency mission, vision and purposes
c. Table of services which includes;
   - Type of service
   - Time-frame for delivery of this service
   - Service quality standards
   - Procedure to access services
   - Places to get this service
d. Public grievances and complaints system
   - how to lodge a complaint
   - the time-frame for addressing a complaint
   - how to carry out further steps
e. e. online source of information

Integrity pact

Introduction:

The Integrity Pact is a formal agreement between a government agency and non-state actors regarding the contracting of public projects. States which have liberalized their economy by privatizing the public sector or have outsourced public services, or states which invite the private sector to tender to supply public services, will enter into contracting agreements with non-state actors, whether private and for-profit or not-for-profit organizations. As this process is market-based, it needs to be competitive.

The integrity pact is an agreement between the stakeholders related to public contracting and sets the rules for all parties to ensure fair play. This approach commits a contracting authority and bidders to comply with legal standards and practices and to maintain a high level of transparency. This pact induces public agencies and bidders to work in an honest, cost-effective, professional and ethical manner in respect of a particular project. The role of civil society is critical and decisive as trade unions (syndicates) are an essential part of civil society organizations and are key stakeholders along with the government in terms of monitoring the bidding process and project implementation independently which ensures increased accountability of public resources.

The integrity pact not only obliges the parties not to engage in activities related to paying, offering, demanding or accepting bribes, colluding with competitors to obtain a contract or engaging in such abuses while executing the contract, but also stipulates what sanctions should be imposed when the pact terms are violated. Along with clearly described procedures for the bidding process, the standards and criteria of the implementation are parts of tendering and execution.

The integrity pact will not have a meaningful impact without the ability to enforce the legal part of the agreement, which stipulates the sanctions relevant to each wrongdoing. The penal code regarding bidding corruption starts with public employees who should be subject to criminal or disciplinary action. If discovered to have committed any corrupt activities, the private entity would lose the contract if it had already won it, or it would be denied the contract if it had not yet signed it. It could be excluded from bidding for a period of time or even without time limits. Furthermore, the bidder could lose the performance bond and be liable for damages inflicted on the parties. Also, the bidder could face criminal charges and pay criminal fines for failing to comply with the bidding standards and the integrity pact.

The monitoring component of the integrity pact, an independent body, should be able to report to the public about the achievements or shortcomings of the bidding process in order to maintain the transparency and integrity of its work. The monitoring body should have to the concerns and/or complaints of bidders or any relevant entity, meaning it has the instruments and mechanisms to investigate instances of wrongdoing. Each report has a learning section that talks about the enforced bidding experience and informs the public what preventative measures could be used in the future to oversee and cut out corruption.

The private sector will not engage in corrupt practices if two conditions are met. Firstly, competitors will be assured that other bidders will refrain from corrupt activities, whether direct bribing, commission or indirect actions such as gifting and lobbying. Secondly, it must be clear that officials and decision-makers do not use their power in order to profit from public bidding and public project implementation. The integrity act should provide guarantees to private sector entities that the bidding stakeholders can trust each other and act according to legal standards.

The integrity pact should be subject to revision for two main reasons. Firstly, the codes and standards could be changed, and thus, the revised pact should reflect these changes. Secondly, based on the experience of monitoring projects in a relevant sector, experts might find gaps in the legal code and standards that allow the bidder/contractor to engage in practices that are legal but harmful to the public interest. Thus, the changes in the legal pact become an advocacy instrument to close any gaps that cause harm to the public interest and close off avenues for illicit gain.

The pact is a collaborative agreement between the stakeholders, which requires all parties to oversee its implementation. All the parties should have a mutual interest in a corruption-free environment, so the parties sign this pact voluntarily. In a corrupt environment, a heavy price is paid by citizens, in general, and in particular citizens from the subaltern classes (which contribute most of the taxes), as corruption leads to increases in the cost of goods and services, delays in service delivery and project implementation and inefficient use of taxpayers' money. In a corrupt environment, the quality of goods and services tends to dwindle, affecting the standard of living of most people i.e. subaltern classes. Such an environment will increase the cost of work carried out by the private sector and/or make private businesses engage in risky illegal activities that could put the business in jeopardy. In terms of the government, pervasive corrupt behavior could profit some officials in the short run, but it will place the whole system in a situation where it becomes unstable, and thus would only threaten its future.

Objectives:

1. To enable the government and non-state actors to create a corruption-free environment by increasing the level of transparency and integrity in public contracting and implementation.
2. To enhance the accountability mechanisms based on mutual enforcement of anti- corruption activities.

How to establish and enforce integrity pact:

1. Preparatory work

The civil society organization which takes the initiative reaches an understanding with the relevant government ministry or a public agency. They both sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that determines what type of project the initiative targets. The MOU sets out the initiative's objectives and geographic and operational scope. This will allow for determining which stakeholders from the private sector and which trade union should be involved. Then, the plan of work will be developed to distribute the roles between the public agency and the civil society organization.

2. The government agency will take steps to ensure a high level of transparency in the bidding process. This needs to include easy access to different types of information relevant to any bidding process, such as assessment, design, bidding procedures, tender and proposal requests, pre-selection and selection criteria, bid evaluation reports, contract terms and conditions, contract implementation and supervision.

3. Developing the integrity pact

   The government agency and the civil society organization taking the initiative in coordinating with the relevant trade union will develop the integrity pact applicable to the targeted projects. This pact will become part of the documentation for tenders and the awarding of contracts, and thus it becomes legally binding on the contractor and the public agency. It will stipulate what activities are considered corrupt and illegal, the sanctions corresponding to each wrongful action and a commitment not to be involved in any of these actions.

4. Monitoring mechanism

   A supplement to the integrity pact is a document that sets out the monitoring mechanism. Monitoring is given over to an independent monitoring unit with access to all the tendering and implementation reports and documents. This unit has the competence and the power to investigate any incident and hold those responsible for wrongdoing accountable for their actions.

Chapter 4:

Challenges, Lessons and Recommendations

Challenges and Lessons

I- Political aspect:

1. Political context:

The political context in general, i.e. Palestine being under prolonged colonization and the fact that the Palestinian Authority does not have sovereign control over its territories, complicates the sociopolitical governance context in Palestine. Civil society initiative leaders should be aware of this complexity rather than implementing the initiative activities according to one size fit all standards and perfunctorily. Each Palestinian governate, especially Jerusalem, has its own political situation and social characteristics that should be taken into consideration at the implementation stage.

Proper training, capacity building and planning are essential before conducting any activity. Mapping the special characteristics of each community will facilitate the implementation of the activity and generate the intended result and outcome with effective community participation.

2. Political will and commitments:

By promulgating statements and declarations, the government could pretend that it abides by transparency and anti-corruption, when in reality it has not. Thus, the government's declared commitments should be followed up by mechanisms that allow civil society organizations to monitor government compliance.

3. Democracy and openness

Many of the social accountability tools need a socio-political context that is relatively democratic, and open to civil society initiatives and citizen participation. In such societies, state agencies are responsive to civil society's demands. But this does not mean that the bureaucrats do not feel pressure when social accountability activities are implemented. The Palestinian Authority gives opportunity for NGOs, both local and international, to implement their governance projects as long as the projects' activities are related to local activities and capacity building. However, the PA limits freedom of speech and access to information when the activities of these projects have political implications and threaten the rights of top officials.

It is important to maintain a constructive attitude and a solution-oriented approach, even in low-level activities. This requires not only that people call for changes but also that employees seek positive changes in service delivery and their work milieu.

4. Paradox of Palestinian civil society work:

The disbanding of the Palestinian parliament, i.e. the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), has negatively affected the development bills that respond to the people's demands. Many civil society organizations, in their efforts to play their role in trying to fill the gaps created by disbanding the PLC, advocated and lobbied for the Palestinian President to pass laws by issuing presidential decrees. By doing this, these organizations technically enabled the executive power to overcome the disbanding of the PLC.

Integrity pacts and codes of conduct could play an essential role in regulating the public space (public activities) and holding accountable those responsible accountable for their actions. The latest presidential decrees regarding new regulations for the judicial system led to a wide protest by the Palestinian Bar association.

II- Citizens

1. Fear and apprehensions

Citizens look for methods to obtain the services they are entitled to in good time and at low expenses. When citizens receive poor treatment, low-quality services or no services at all, they hardly ever take the lead in protesting against this situation. They avoid speaking out against injustice and oppression or express dissatisfaction and make complaints as per the law either because the law is vague or because they do not know what the law states. They fear retribution if they speak out against powerful people who may have either family connections or simply because officials hold the power of their office. Citizens generally want to see their concerns addressed without taking a risk that could put them in jeopardy because they have "stuck their necks out".

2. Tactics and coping mechanisms:

When citizens face problems receiving their entitlements, they have developed multiple tactics and coping mechanisms to overcome this issue. These tactics and coping mechanisms are of two types; formal and informal. Citizens who encounter a problem usually resort to informal traditional methods. The most used method is what is called in Arabic "Wasta" which means middleman. This middleman has connections, clout and/or influence. This person could be a friend or a relative and a local traditional leader in the local community. This middleman would mediate between the citizen and the public agency as a favor that would be repaid to him or her in the future in the form of political and social support or through providing "gifts". Citizens resort to gifting public servants either directly or mainly through the middleman "Wasta". All of this happens with the citizen's perseverance and tenacity because they need the relevant services, otherwise, they would shun the official or the agency.

Citizens sometimes resort to formal tactics although it is a secondary option for most of them. They could complain about the delay in receiving services orally at the frontline service provider's facility. When officials do not take citizens' complaints seriously or procrastinate or stonewall demands (entitlements), some may lodge complaints directly to the top management of the facility or at the governate level. Some citizens take their complaints further and submit them to the anti-corruption commission. When a number of citizens receive the same maltreatment over time, it builds up pressure and can lead to some of them resorting to direct protest. However, citizens generally prefer to maneuver instead of directly demanding their rights as this is less socially and politically costly for them.

3. Hopes and great expectations:

   When civil society organizations start an initiative with subaltern social group/s in the local communities, it is important to explain the initiative's objectives clearly and not to make promises that are unrealistic or false. Encouraging citizens to participate in an initiative by giving them unrealistic hopes will backfire on the organization itself and endanger future initiatives as citizens will lose trust in such initiatives. When the activity is related to improving governance, some citizens might take bold steps in disclosing corrupt practices thinking that the community and the NGO will back them. This might put them in danger and make them feel abandoned. Therefore, it is important to be truthful with people and keep their hopes realistic.

III- Method and approach

1. Catalyst vs civic engagement

   NGOs usually see their role as being a catalyst, i.e. to initiate civil activity and accelerate change, whilst socio-political movement actors engage directly with the community and mainly the subaltern classes by organizing them to work together. NGOs are providers in terms of financial resources, mainly from external sources and technical professionals. The socio-political movement generates primary resources from within. Sustainability and follow-up activities are integral parts of the socio-political movement as they give it momentum while NGOs work within project limits and depend on the local society (target group) to follow up as it assumes the community is empowered to depend on itself.

2. Conflict management skills:

   In conducting many of the social accountability initiatives, the civil society team/s should foresee any potential flare-up of the conflict. Some municipality employees and decision-makers (municipal council) may feel they are under threat by social accountability initiatives such as Community Score cards (CSC).

   It is highly possible that some employees or decision-makers that were exposed as a result of one of the activities may try to retaliate, which could lead to open conflict. To avoid these potential conflicts, the civil society team, in any social accountability activity, should focus on the main goal of the intended outcome, avoid any direct personal blame aimed at any individual employees and assure facility staff that the main interest is bringing about improvements.

3. Facilitation skills:

   Meetings (focus group discussions and informants interviews) must avoid personal attacks and interactions. Meeting facilitators should be able to manage discussions in order to come up with concrete recommendations.

Some officials hesitate to participate in public hearings sessions, fearing they may receive negative comments and face a lack of respect. Therefore, it is important for the facilitator to allay any apprehensions by keeping the discussion calm and conducive.

The facilitator should have good facilitation skills and apply ground rules. These ground rules are intended to make the meetings inclusive and foster participation from different cultural, gender and social classes. The facilitator should be solution-oriented, stress the need to be positive and assume the positive intent of participants with the ability to prevent any negative atmosphere.

4. Stakeholders balancing:

Civil society organizations, in general, and activity coordinators and facilitators, in particular, should be aware that some stakeholders can dominate the activity and skew it to serve their interests. Elites, tribe leaders and middle-class actors have the skills and the social position to be heard and be more persuasive, while subaltern classes can be marginalized due to a lack of skills and the lower social status of their members. This can be clear when it comes to contracting, revenue and expenses auditing.

Soliciting community financial support could put the subaltern classes under pressure as it increases their economic burden and leads to the marginalization of their role.

5. The funding dilemma and one-off projects

Most of the social accountability initiatives are open-ended within a limited timeframe, and are one-off projects which limits the type of mobilization and organizing to meet the initiative's limited objectives. Also, most of these initiatives are financed by foreign assistance, which makes them donor-driven initiatives. External funding is a valuable financial source for hiring experts to conduct sophisticated work, but this money comes with political conditions and time limits. Time limits and financial constraints make the implementing of social accountability initiatives limited while holding power accountable is a process that requires long-term activities.

IV- Public servants attitudes

1. Enhance public servants' and public officials' responsiveness

It is possible that municipality employees and decision-makers, for a number of reasons, are not responsive to the demands and proposals made by citizens. There may be a lack of receptiveness or lukewarm responses to the problems identified by citizens; therefore, the social accountability team should devise strategies to change the attitudes of those either by raising awareness, lobbying, campaigning and media pressure.

Some activities are viewed by senior officials as part of their prerogatives and power, especially when it comes to accountability. Even some bureaucrats see some social accountability activities, such as procurement monitoring by civil society organizations, as something beyond the role of civil society and consider it as an encroachment on the state's work and power. Some senior public officials see some social accountability initiatives as time-wasting. This is when it comes to technical issues where it becomes obvious that civil society organizations, in general, lack expertise.

It is crucial to raise awareness among municipality employees and decision-makers about the right of citizens to participate in service delivery assessments. Sensitizing them to democratic values and benefits will relieve their stress and counter their feelings of being threatened. Even more so, it is important for them to participate in training sessions to learn about social accountability initiatives and better understand their purpose, scope and benefits. Some conflict management facilitation skills would mitigate confrontational attitudes and stress that the focus is not only on problems but also on solutions and proposals and highlight both strengths and weaknesses of any proposal.

2. Manipulation and whitewashing:

   At the ministry level, officials could invite representatives from civil society to join committees. The mandate of these committees could be plan formulation, implementation of projects, endorsing policies, and evaluation of projects and policies performance. But these committees could be formulated either to give the impression that the government/ministry uses the participatory approach in governance or because it is a condition of receiving money from foreign agencies (donors) that obliges government agencies to enter into consultation with civil society actors and local communities.

   Officials may invite citizens and civil society actors to participate but manage their participation to serve their interests. This could be through manipulation, such as; asking specific questions that lead to specific answers or hinting towards specific answers. In both cases, this could make the citizens and the CSOs agree with and endorse matters that suit government officials.

3. Tripartite corruption risk:

   Corrupt government employees, municipality council members and contractors can exploit development projects. It is important to take into consideration that when corrupt practices are related to contracting and project implementation, citizens lack the skills or technical knowledge of corrupt officials and contractors.

   Such people are very knowledgeable and experienced about how public resources, assets and budgets can be exploited. Therefore, they may keep people ignorant of the true situation by creating confusion about various unnecessary work and complications. Citizens' involvement in any kind of project bidding and implementation will be a failure if they do not understand the situation. Established transparent bidding procedures, clear standards and the involvement of independent experts are important to overcome this issue.

V- Technical aspects

1. Realistic demands

There is a risk when civil society initiatives do not generate the expected results or fall short of achieving the stated objectives. This creates disappointment and disillusionment among civil society members and local communities as the social accountability initiative does not bring about the expected positive change.

2. Dealing with constraints

Frontline employees and even municipality decision-makers sometimes lack the legal and mandate leverage to make a decision or implement a proposed change. Therefore it is important to have a strategy to engage higher bureaucratic levels and senior decision-makers to lobby and pressure them to take decisions that facilitate change.

Citizens and civil society initiatives should be aware of the constraints the municipalities and the Ministry of Local Government encounter. These constraints are of a legal and mandate nature, limited financial resources and time constraints. Thus civil society initiates leaders should keep their expectations realistic and set achievable targets within a specific timeframe.

3. Information and Data: access, accuracy and comprehensiveness

It is not easy to get data that is accurate and comprehensible. There is no law that obliges the government to provide detailed data to civil society actors to conduct auditing, revision or monitoring of public sector services and operations. Obtaining data depends on the discretionary power of senior public servants and the type of relationship between the civil society organizations i.e. NGOs, and the relevant ministry. Thus it could be difficult to conduct some initiatives, such as budget and revenue auditing, on the national level. However, it is possible to conduct these initiatives at the frontline service and municipality levels.

Even when civil organizations get data, it is difficult to crunch and articulate it due to the lack of detailed information, as some agencies collect bulk numbers about their activities. Or it could be due to the complexity of the data that requires experts to handle it. Budget data is bulk numbers from the expenses side and complex sophisticated data from its revenue side.

4. Standards:

As much of the work of local government is related to services and infrastructure, a clear standard for services and projects should be available to the public. Without these standards, citizens and civil society organizations cannot participate in the monitoring and evaluation of projects and municipality performance. In order for citizens to give a fair and objective evaluation, these standards should be available.

Service delivery standards are poorly defined, and when they are, the agency does not publish these standards for ordinary citizens. Different kinds of methods could be used to enable this, e.g. charters, bulletins or billboards.

This would facilitate the work of CSC and CRC, for example.

5. Records availability:

Some municipalities do not have systematic and daily citizens (clients) records. Thus, conducting Quantitative Service Delivery Survey (QSDS) or Community Score Card (CSC) and even social auditing will depend on user feedback. The frontline employees who provide direct services at the municipalities may feel threatened by implementing any tools related to service delivery surveys and scoring. It might be better to engage those employees constructively from the very outset and to attempt to direct criticism at institutions rather than individuals.

6. Limited technical expertise:

There will be limited technical expertise within civil society organizations on the sector or issue of public interest. Most budget-related issues, such as social auditing, or Participatory Budget Formulation, require substantial technical support, particularly in obtaining and analyzing the data.

In this case, partnerships with experts from academic institutions or private firms could provide great help. Policy institutes, academic institutions, specialist survey and polling firms have the technical capacity to undertake/assist with many technical issues related to social accountability initiatives. However, civil society organizations should take the lead in terms of management, coordination and mass mobilization.

7. Role of the media

Media can play multiple roles. Firstly it can provide publicity for social accountability initiatives. Secondly, it can disseminate information that raises awareness among people. Thirdly, it can create pressure on decision-makers to engage in the targeted change.

It could play an essential role in exposing cases of corruption. However, it requires a specific type of journalism, i.e. investigative journalism, to cover social accountability activities related to revenue monitoring or public service quality.

It is not easy to get the mass media's attention when launching a civil society initiative, but social media nowadays is a useful instrument that can arouse people's interest and government attention. Savvy social media individuals cansignificantly help promote and publicize social accountability activities.

Recommendations:

Building and enhancing social accountability requires active public participation and civic engagement. These recommendations intend to directly engage the citizens in decision-making and encourage the MoLG and municipalities to give the highest consideration to the citizens' inputs when making decisions. Firstly, civic engagement and public participation in social accountability is a continuous process with systematic input in decision-making. Secondly, it consists of formal and informal structures and activities that aim to inform the municipalities about what citizens want and need. Thirdly, its purpose is to inform citizens of the available options and methods to carry out certain projects and service delivery.

While developing a civic engagement and social accountability project/program with the municipalities, it is important to enable citizens to make decisions.

The following ladder of participation should be considered to empower citizens in the decision-making process:

- First: Informing citizens by giving them information and data that will assist them in comprehending the relevant discussed matter, the spectrum of options and potential solutions. The information must include facts, values, and a spectrum of perspectives.
- Second: Consulting and deliberating with citizens to acquire their feedback, which would serve to develop a spectrum of alternative options and decisions. While doing this, it is important to consider the needs and interests of different social groups based on gender, age, income, degree of vulnerability and socio-political status.
- Third: Engaging citizens directly and indirectly (by using digital means) to ensure their concerns are considered and processed throughout the decision-making procedure. This includes engaging them in developing decision-making criteria and development of options and in the selection of viable solutions. Engaging citizens by incorporating the opinions and expertise of different social groups will lead to implementable and viable decisions.
- Fourth: At a higher democratic level of civic engagement and social responsibility, empowering citizens means enabling citizens to take the final decisions (have authority control). Reaching this level of participation will lend decisions legitimacy and sustainability.

At the social fabric and grassroots level, the following are required as prior conditions to enable citizens to be civilly engaged in social accountability actions:

- Firstly: As civic engagement and social accountability is a process that delivers decisions regarding social issues, the most important pillar to establish and maintain this process is building the capacity of citizens as communities, social classes and genders.
- Secondly: Building the capacity of citizens' social groups entails improving the relationship and level of trust between the institutions (municipalities in this respect) that formally take the decisions and the general public. Actions should be taken by the municipalities and the MoLG to build trust between the formal institutions and the public.
- Thirdly: Building the capacity of citizens in terms of civic participation and social accountability, in particular, needs to consider the need to build the capacity of different social groups to enable them to collaborate with each other. This involves enabling these groups' representatives to manage conflicts and transform them into positive power. They need to know how to negotiate with each other and build coalitions.

- Fourth: Building the capacity of different social groups would include building conduits, norms and values of active communication between the different social interests (social groups) to discuss and manage contentious decisions and resolve disputes. It starts with each group being able to formulate its interests and understand other groups' interests regarding the relevant social issue. This communication aims to allow citizens to make thoughtful decisions by weighing the pros and cons of each option.

The instruments and steps that might be taken as a prior condition for building the capacity of ordinary citizens to engage them in social accountability are:

1. Explain to citizens, through multimedia or other means, what civic engagement and social accountability mean. This is an introductory way to familiarize citizens with the issue.
2. Produce research and public guidance that present the concept, the core values and best practices.
3. Conduct training for grassroots leaders and stakeholder representatives about communication skills, social accountability tools and civic engagement methods.
4. Contracting with independent professional facilitators to conduct training for local facilitators, local grassroots leaders and community organizers, who will play active roles with the municipality/s during the planning and implementation of any social project. Those facilitators should provide technical assistance for the local leaders.
5. Recruiting and partnering with grassroots leaders and stakeholder representatives who would facilitate the engagement of local citizens in the planning and implementation of social projects.
6. In order to enhance public ownership and the democratic process, it is important to have two kinds of deliberative meetings: general and mass meetings, such as public hearings and smaller selective meetings.
7. It will sometimes be necessary to provide citizens with technical assistance from experts. These experts should be aware of the social groups' needs and interests in order to provide options that serve these groups' interests.

The following recommendations are specific to each institution:

MoLG

It is recommended that the MoLG develops specific templates that enable the municipalities to summarize information of interest to the public. This could include budget templates such as the citizens' budget. A strategic plan template is another example which could be used.

The MoLG should encourage the municipalities to publish monthly reports about their financial status. This could be done by developing a simple format that all municipalities can use.

It is important that the Ministry builds and fosters a culture of civic engagement in its operations. This requires continuous training and activities that familiarize Ministry staff with the concept of accountability and helps to build values and norms that become integral to the

Ministry's daily work.

Municipalities

The municipalities should conduct performance evaluations for their employees based on established indicators. This will improve the performance and productivity of municipality employees.

It is recommended that municipalities have an electronic (digital) or manual board (price display board) to be used as list prices for their services.

Enhancing the culture of transparency is essential in the work of municipalities. This requires the continuous training of staff.

CSOs

The CSOs can coordinate with the municipalities in their localities in holding public events regarding the work of the municipality or the services provided by public institutions.

The CSOs, in coordination with municipalities and the MOLG, can undertake satisfaction surveys to measure the level of citizen satisfaction in relevant local communities.

The following conditions should be met to provide an environment conducive to civic engagement and social accountability; without them, the process will not be viable and effective:

1. Provide sufficient resources to initiate and continue the civic participatory decision-making process. This entails providing funding and staff to municipalities, MoLG and CSOs. Without these resources these institutions will not be able to systematically reach out to social groups and implement civic engagement activities.
2. Maintain a high level of skills and capacity of those involved, staff, facilitators and grassroots leaders, by providing training in communication, outreach, and collaborative problem-solving skills on a regular basis. Public institutions should be able to engage citizens in decision-making through relevant communication that encourages citizens' input as part of a broader governance process.
3. Establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of trust and integrity between the actors, especially public institutions and citizens. Public institutions and NGOs should not make unrealistic promises to the public, or they risk creating a high level of expectations. It is essential to set a clear purpose for citizen participation and create the relevant structure and regulations to achieve this target. Based on the declared objectives (promises), the citizens

will hold the institution i.e. municipality, MoLG or NGOs, accountable. Fake and unrealistic promises will breach the trust between the actors and damage the climate of cooperation. In order to overcome any misunderstandings, effective communication should be in place to show what is delivered and what objective it is based on.

4. A high level of transparency by disclosing data and information to the public in a timely manner. This information should be relevant, understandable and open to any further investigation and research. By doing this, the public institution i.e. municipality and the MoLG, would demonstrate their willingness to engage citizens in decision-making and make them accountable for their actions.

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This presentation/lecture is part of the lectures organized by The Havens Wright Center for Social Justice- The University of Wisconsin-Madison. The quoted text here represents professor Costas Lapavitsas opinion . This presentation/lecture is available on the David Harvey website: http://davidharvey.org/2021/12/video-david-harvey-and-costas-lapavitsas-after-neoliberalism-covid-crisis-and-the-future-of-capitalism/

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