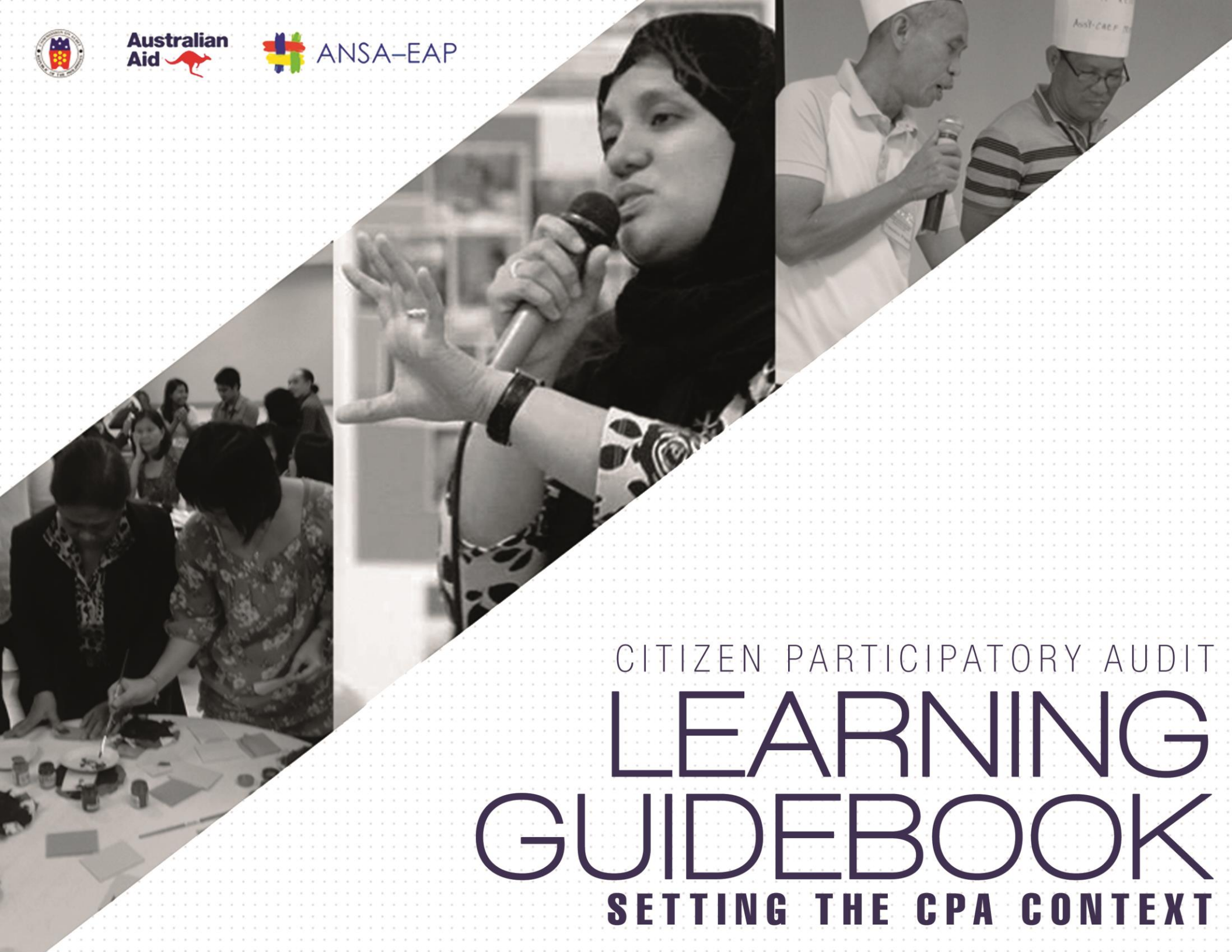ANSA–EAP

CITIZEN PARTICIPATORY AUDIT

LEARNING GUIDEBOOK

SETTING THE CPA CONTEXT

SETTING THE CPA CONTEXT

Social Accountability
As An Approach to Good Governance

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session introduces the reader to the various concepts, principles, approaches, and tools of good governance and social accountability. It aims to provide an overview of constructive engagement and citizen monitoring. Specifically, this session offers the student a framework for good governance, an appreciation of the competencies required of social accountability, and the governance arena where social accountability is practiced. Finally, it discusses the conditions and parameters under which social accountability can be effective.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

• Explain social accountability as an approach to enhancing citizen engagement for good governance

• Identify strategies and activities by which social accountability can improve public service delivery, protect rights, and enhance community welfare

• Articulate the issues and challenges faced by both government and citizens/citizen groups in implementing social accountability programs and activities in their areas of concern

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

- Metacards
- Marking pens (broad-tipped)
- Masking tape (1" wide)
- Easel sheets/manila paper
- Multimedia projector
- Powerpoint and video files
    - ANSA-EAP's Tales, Tools, and Techniques (6 mins. and 23 secs.)
    - Subay Kahimsog of G-Watch (6 mins. and 35 secs)
    - Introduction to PFM (5 mins. and 50 secs.)

TIMEFRAME

Two (2) hours minimum

SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Option 1: Modified Open Space Activity

- Briefly discuss with the participants the principles and mechanics of the modified Open Space Activity. Use the Open Space Activity Powerpoint Presentation file.
- Facilitate the participants' "newsbreak" or presentation activity.
- Capture the highlights of the participants' "newsbreak" on metacards.
- Present a synthesis of the participants' overall output by briefly discussing with them the highlights as captured on metacards.
- The synthesis will serve as the facilitator's segue to the topic on Good Governance.

Option 2: Buzz Session

- Present the opening question to the participants.
- In 5 minutes, groups of 3 to 5 come with answers.
- The resource person/facilitator writes the answers on the board.

METHODOLOGY

- Interactive discussion

- Small group discussion (Open Space activity)

- Video presentations

- Short lectures/powerpoint presentation

CONTENT

PART 1. UNDERSTANDING GOOD GOVERNANCE

Definition

Good governance is "a way of decision-making and implementation that aims to achieve desirable and beneficial results for both those who govern and are being governed".

Principles of Good Governance

"Good governance" has common characteristics. These characteristics make up the three (3) basic principles of good governance.

1. TRANSPARENCY	Transparent
2. ACCOUNTABILITY	Accountable Follows the rule of law Effective and efficient Responsive
3. PARTICIPATION	Participatory Consensus-oriented Equitable and inclusive

Transparency

Definition

TRANSPARENCY refers to making PUBLIC INFORMATION Accessible, Available, and Accurate; it also refers to information that is Understandable, Usable, and Updated.

- Accessibility is the degree to which public information is made available to all citizens. It allows people to access and benefit from the information provided

• <u>Availability</u> refers to public information that is present and ready for use

• <u>Accurate</u>, or accuracy, refers to the extent by which public information is correct or precise, and reflects reality

• <u>Understandable</u> means public information is clear especially to the ordinary citizen

• <u>Usable</u> means public information can be used by users effectively and efficiently

• <u>Updated</u> means it is recent and relevant public information

How transparency contributes to good governance

• It creates an informed citizenry, and an informed citizenry has the ability to participate in governance decision-making.

Accountability

Definition

Accountability means government officials and people in authority answer for their decisions and actions and are responsive to the needs of the citizens. It also means that they subject themselves to monitoring.

Features of accountability

Accountability means that the following systems and mechanisms are in place and functioning:

• performance measurement
• feedback
• grievance and redress

How accountability contributes to good governance

When government officials are accountable, they perform to their full potential, provide value for money in the provision of public services, and are responsive to the needs of the community. [1]

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[1] A good description of "accountability" is available online: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/AccountabilityGovernance.pdf

Participation

Definition

PARTICIPATION is a PROCESS, not an event, wherein stakeholders influence and take part in priority setting, policymaking, resource allocations, and/or program implementation. 2 The participation process allows the VOICES of different stakeholders to be heard and included in decision-making.

Forms of participation

There are various levels or degrees of participation:

  a. PASSIVE – people are told what will happen

  b. INFORMATION – people answer survey questions, but no follow up

  c. CONSULTATION – people answer questions but outsiders define design

  d. INCENTIVES – people work for cash, for food, etc.

  e. FUNCTIONAL – decisions by outsiders, but local groups form to meet and word to meet objectives

  f. INTERACTIVE - joint analysis and decisions for actions, monitoring, etc.

  g. SELF-MOBILIZATION – initiatives taken independently from official institution

A Good Governance Framework

Figure 1 is the Ateneo School of Government's Good Governance Framework. This framework was the result of a study conducted by ASoG in partnership with the League of Cities in the mid-2000s to determine local government officials' perception of good governance as well as the various elements and factors that make up or contribute to it.

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[2] Ondrik, R.S. (1999). Participatory approaches to national development planning. Technical Assistance for Facilitating Capacity-Building and Participatory Activities II. Manila: Asian Development Bank. Available online: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEASTASIAPACIFIC/Resources/226262-1143156545724/Brief_ADB.pdf
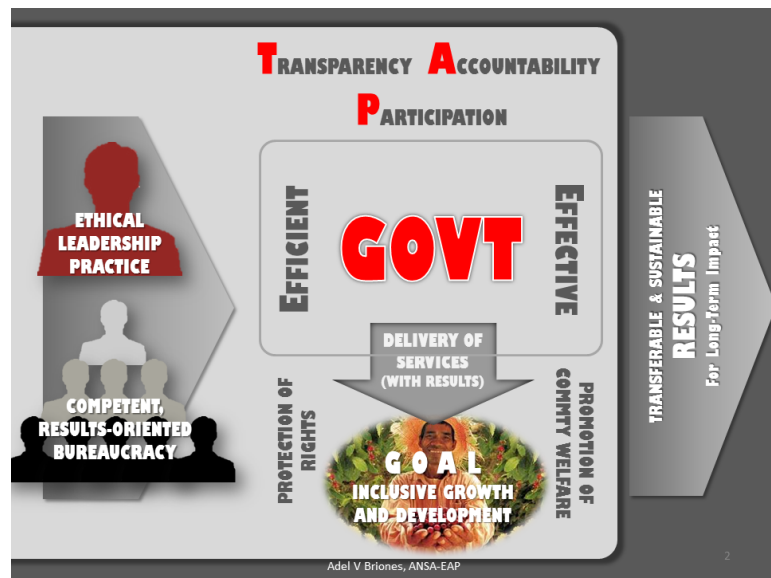
Figure 1. A Good Governance Framework

The requirements and/or conditions to achieve the goal of the national government, expressed as "INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT", are EFFICIENT and EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES, PROTECTION OF RIGHTS, and the PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY WELFARE. The key actor here is GOVERNMENT at the national, district, or local levels. The various strategies, programs, projects, and activities to achieve the goal of inclusive growth and development are anchored on the democratic and good governance ideals/principles of TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, and PARTICIPATION.

Drivers of good governance:

To achieve good governance two drivers are essential:

(a) an ETHICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

• "It highlights accountability, legality, integrity, and responsiveness.

(b) a COMPETENT AND RESULTS-ORIENTED BUREAUCRACY

• A bureaucracy is knowledgeable and skilled in order to deliver its constituents' needs.

Understanding the process of good governance:

• It is not a one-time, big-time event, but a process that needs to be sustained

• It is not dependent on the intent and actions of a specific, but temporary, political administration.

• It is not the monopoly of an expert group

• It needs to be transferable from one political administration to the next, and from one level of government to the other. This means that good governance only happens if there is deliberate and facilitated institutional learning among key actors.
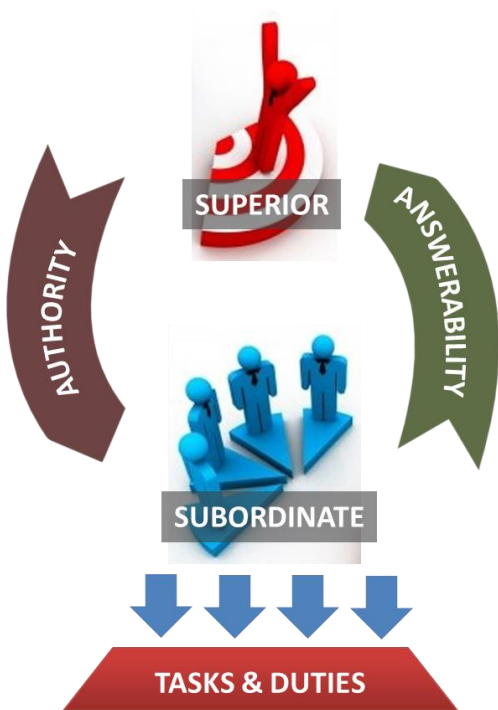
Figure 2. A simple way of understanding accountability

Adelfo v. Briones, ANSA-EAP

Figure 3. Internal and external accountability in governance

PART 2. AN APPRECIATION OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Figure 2 is a simple way of looking at ACCOUNTABILITY.

The government has several internal check-and-balance mechanisms among its various units and agencies. For
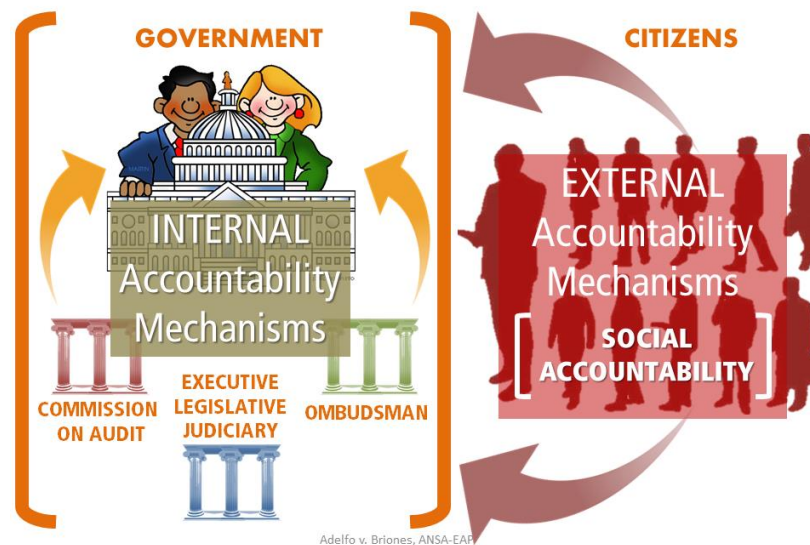
example, the three main branches of government, i.e. executive, legislative, and judiciary, are by their nature check-and-balance mechanisms. Other agencies that serve as internal government accountability mechanisms are the Commission on Audit, the Sandiganbayan, the Ombudsman, etc. Figure 3 illustrates a simple way of understanding "internal accountability" and "external accountability".

But there are situations when internal government accountability mechanisms are not enough, or fail to function as they should. Situations like this call for an EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM to make government answerable for its decisions and actions. This is the role of social accountability

Social Accountability

Definition

ANSA-EAP defines SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY as the "constructive engagement between citizens and government in monitoring government's use of public resources to improve service delivery, protect rights, and promote community welfare".

Goals of social accountability

This definition also identifies the goals of social accountability:

(a) improvement of service delivery

(b) protection of rights of citizens

(c) promotion of community welfare

The Social Accountability Competency Framework

The Social Accountability Competency Framework shows the role of and dynamics between the two key actors of social accountability, the government and citizens/citizen groups.

Drivers of social accountability:

- Constructive engagement

- Citizen monitoring

- Assertiveness

Defining the drivers of social accountability

Constructive Engagement

The process of constructive engagement

Building a mature relationship is characterized by the following:

a. It involves trust-building between the two parties, i.e. there are incentives for the parties involved to strengthen the partnership

b. It is evidence-based, i.e. involves collection and use of data and information

c. It is results- or solution-oriented, i.e. with concrete outcomes benefiting the people

d. It is a sustained and sustainable kind of engagement, i.e. towards developing mature partnerships

In social accountability, Citizen groups and governments veer away from an adversarial or confrontational stance when they engage each other. Rather, they focus on CONTINUING DIALOGUE and COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING.

Continuing dialogue and collaborative problem solving can be achieved through:

- communication (listening, feedback-giving and – receiving, information sharing);
- involving people (in planning, in doing, and in checking and monitoring);
- building relationships (improving, correcting, making amends, recognizing and rewarding, and celebrating)

TRUST IS THE FOUNDATION OF CONTINUING DIALOGUE AND PROBLEM SOLVING

While social accountability emphasizes constructive engagement, it does not preclude being adversarial or confrontational when necessary, such as when fighting corruption.

CITIZEN MONITORING involves the systematic and collection of data so that citizens keep track of and, where appropriate, actively participate in decision-making processes such as:

- Generation
- Allocation
- Use of public resources

These are all part of the Public Finance Management (PFM) cycle.

Systematic collection or gathering of data includes determining levels of data accessibility, availability, and integrity.

Assertiveness

Most people are not assertive for fear of displeasing others and of not being liked. However, one could also jeopardize the relationship in the long run if he or she refuses to assert him/herself and then feel taken advantage of over and over again.

To assert is to state an opinion, claim a right, or establish authority. If one asserts one's self, one behaves in a way that expresses one's confidence, importance or power and earns that person respect from others. Assertiveness is standing up for one's right to be treated fairly. It is expressing one's opinions, needs, and feelings, without ignoring or hurting the opinions, needs, and feelings of others (Mountain State, n.d.)[3]

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[3] Mountain State Centers for Independent Living. (N.d.). Assertiveness. Available online: http://www.mtstcil.org/skills/assert-2.html

Being assertive is different from being aggressive. Being aggressive is standing up for one's self in ways that violate the rights of others. Aggressive behavior is typically punishing, hostile, blaming, and demanding. It can involve threats, name-calling, and even actual physical contact. It can also involve sarcasm, catty comments, gossip and "slips of the tongue". Social accountability purposely and deliberately refrains from any aggressive behavior; it strictly follows ethical standards and does not compromise governance principles.

Public Finance Management: The Arena of Social Accountability

The Public Finance Management is defined as the administration of funds used to deliver public services as effectively and efficiently as possible to maximize benefits to citizens. It is where social accountability happens.

Phases of the PFM cycle

Social accountability activities can be undertaken in any of these phases of the PFM cycle

- Development planning

- Budgeting

- Expenditure management (including public procurement)
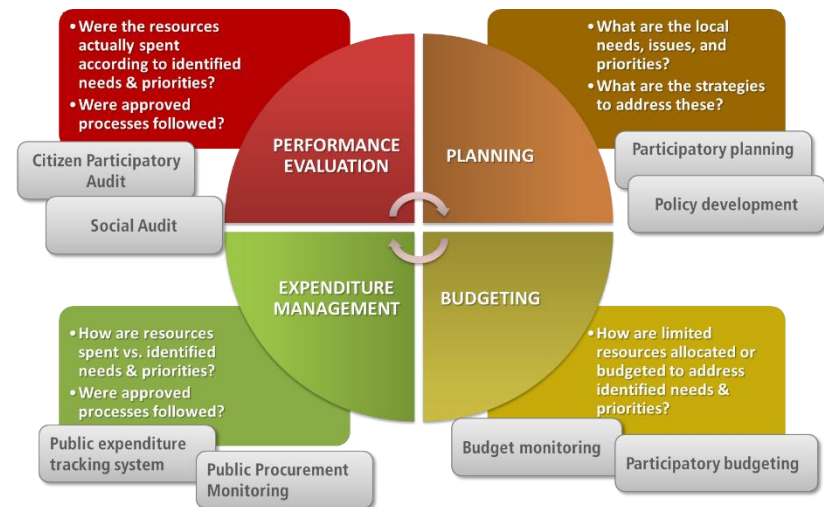- Performance evaluation

Figure 4. The Public Finance Management cycle with some of the tools used for social accountability. Note that the Citizen Participatory Audit is under the performance evaluation phase.

Who are citizens/citizen groups?

- mothers' clubs
- Scouts
- citizens' road watch efforts,
- academe the youth
- Political advocates
- Development groups
- others

> **The goal of constructive engagement is honest, involved, and sustained partnerships that create space for continuing dialogue and negotiation.**

> **For social accountability to happen, an enabling environment should be established through the four pillars.**

Enabling Conditions: The Pillars of Social Accountability

Two forces drive social accountability:

- • citizen groups, who are direct beneficiaries of public services,
- • government, which provides the space for citizen participation in governance

> **Citizens have a direct stake in the allocation and use of public resources.**

Four Pillars of Social Accountability:

1) organized and capable citizen groups

2) government champions who are willing to engage

3) context and cultural appropriateness

(4) access to information

Organized and capable citizen groups. They should have the capacity, should be organized, and have the skills to mobilize

resources, effectively use media, and ensure the quality of their conduct and actions including their internal accountability practices.

Open and responsive government. Government's willingness to accept citizens' participation can be through a set of laws, rules, and practices that recognize these groups' efforts. Having a reform champion/s in government can also help in pushing constructive engagement.

Context and cultural appropriateness. Social accountability initiatives should take into consideration the cultural and environmental context of the parties involved. Legal, institutional, and socio-cultural factors also need to be considered because they can influence the success of SAc activities. In East Asia-Pacific, for instance, the "face" is very important so there should be an effort not to embarrass people. Another example are the so-called "backdoor channels" which are important to policy-making. To ignore context and culture is to risk alienating local stakeholders.

Access to information. Essential to SAc practice is the availability and reliability of public data. Such data, analyzed and correctly interpreted by competent citizen groups, allows for meaningful constructive engagement. Social accountability fails when data and information is either absent or wilfully denied. Access to information can mean two things: physical access to source documents; and their availability in a format that is understandable to users. It also means access to people who have the information (such as officials) and know where the information is lodged. Easy retrieval and proper processing are also important considerations so that the information can be used appropriately.

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