Enabling environment for social accountability

Enhancing Local Plan-Budget Link Through Social Accountability

Leyte, 15 April 2009

Accountability is about **power** – about people having not just **a say in official decisions** but also the **right to hold their rulers to account**.

Human Development Report, UNDP 2002

Accountability is the **ability** to call public officials, private employers, or service providers to account, requiring that they be answerable for their policies, actions, and use of funds.

Empowerment and Poverty Reduction Sourcebook, World Bank 2002

Social accountability and power relationships:

We need to be aware that there are **power differences** between government officials and citizen groups:

- Authority and rights

- Capacities to articulate and engage

- Available resources

- Set of **inter-related conditions** that impact on the **capacity of citizens and CSOs** to engage

- Include legal or policy frameworks, and political, economic, and socio-cultural factors.

- Include factors that are internal to civil society

Jeff Thindwa, Enabling Environment for Participation and Accountability

Why assess the environment?

- **Role and effectiveness** of citizens to exact accountability depend on right set of conditions

- **Understanding these conditions** is thus important in governance reform efforts

How?

Citizens **Government**
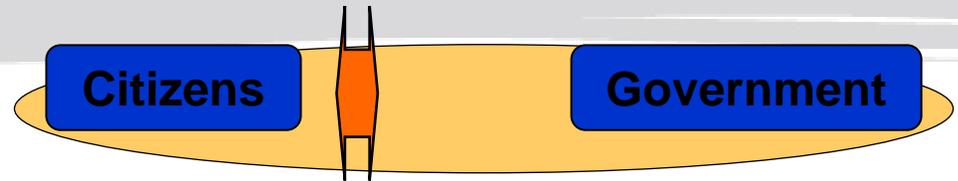
SAc environment

Guiding principles in assessing the SAc environment:

- **participatory, inclusive** process

- **action-oriented**: address issues

- involves **adaptation** and **customization**

- use of analytical **framework** **or** **tool**

Key steps:

- **Planning** the scanning process

- Participatory **data collection**

- **Data analysis** and **identification of focus areas**

- **Public dissemination**, advocacy, and learning

The Public Financial Management cycle:
- Budget formulation
- Budget review and analysis
- Expenditure-tracking
- Performance monitoring
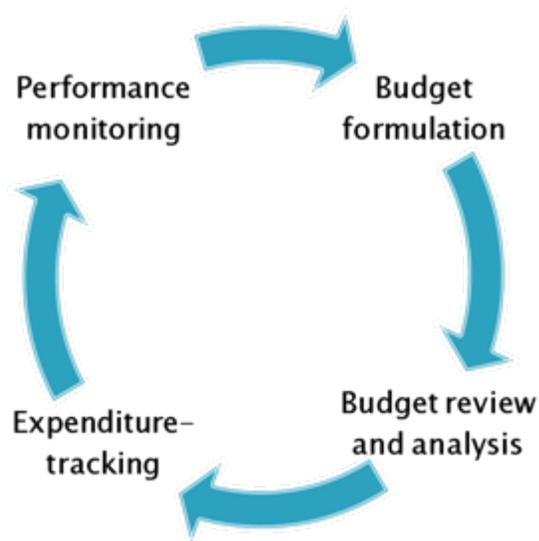
- Availability of budget forecasts

- Are policy statements published?

- Information on actual spending

- Reliable information on costs of new policies, programs, projects
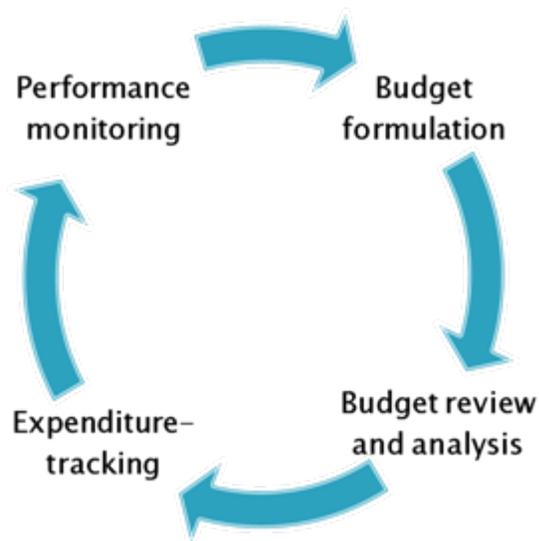
- Language of financial information

- Supportive information on budget

- Reliability of budget information compared to actual spending

- Availability of detailed in-year spending information

- Government systems/procedures for processing requests for access to expenditure information

Performance monitoring

Budget formulation

Budget review and analysis

Expenditure-tracking
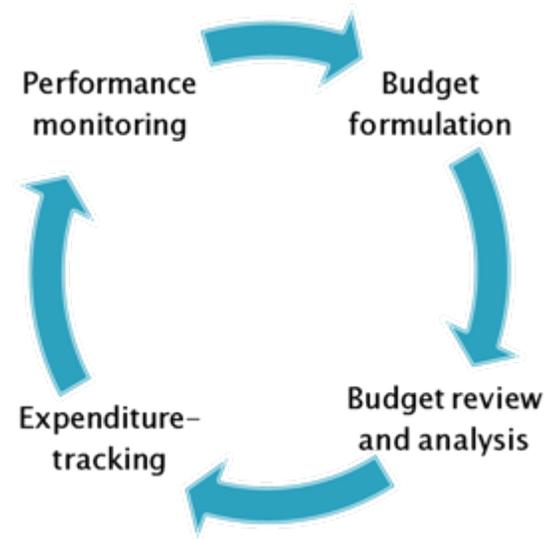
- Availability of timely annual performance reports

- Citizens' access to audited financial statements/reports

Performance monitoring

Budget formulation

Budget review and analysis

Expenditure-tracking

Are there spaces, structures, systems for citizen engagement?
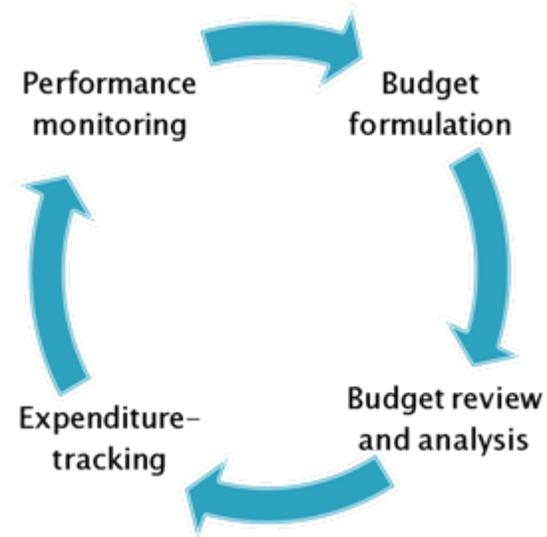
Are there available information? How useful are these information? Are these information accessible/open to citizens' groups?
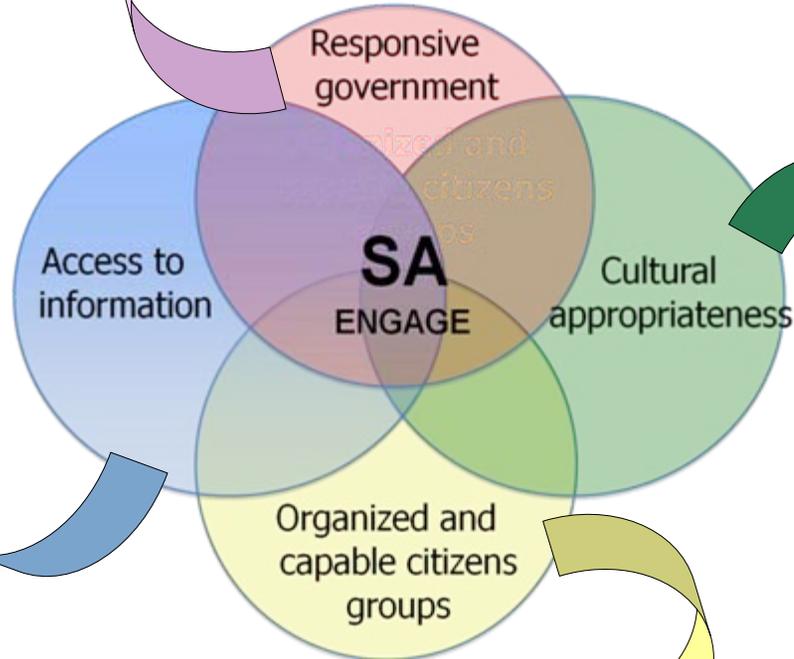
What social and cultural factors facilitate or hinder social accountability?

Are there organized citizens who are capable of articulation and negotiation?