

Social accountability  
perspectives and practices  
in East Asia and the Pacific

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Philippines

Social  
accountability  
stocktaking  
reports



Affiliated Network for Social Accountability In East Asia and the Pacific  
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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AER	Action for Economic Reforms
ANSA-EAP	Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and the Pacific
ATIN	Access to Information Network
CAC	Coalition Against Corruption
CBCP	Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CCAGG	Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government
CMFR	Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility
CNGG-Negros	Citizens' Network for Good Governance Negros
Code-NGO	Coalition of Development NGOs in the Philippines
CSO	Civil society organization
DepEd	Department of Education
FDC	Freedom from Debt Coalition
G-Watch	Government Watch
GPRA	Government Procurement Review Act
InciteGov	International Center for Innovation, Transformation, and Excellence in Government
IPD	Institute for Popular Democracy
IPER	Institute for Political and Electoral Reform
IRA Watch	Internal Revenue Allotment Watch
LGU	Local government unit
MBC	Makati Business Club
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
NASSA	National Secretariat for Social Action
NGO	Non-government organization
PAJDGG	Provincial Advocates for Justice Development and Good Government
PCIJ	Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
PDAFWatch	Priority Development Assistance Fund Watch
TAN	Transparency and Accountability Network
WAND	Women's Action Network for Development

## THE GROWING DEMANDS OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

In recent years, the world has witnessed a growing apprehension about the quality of governance and accountability of public officials for their decisions and actions. Public investments have failed to reduce poverty. Lack of transparency, absence of rule of law, and corruption continue to beleaguer developing countries, revealing the inability of existing accountability mechanisms to resolve these problems (Paul, 2005). In a 2005 survey for the World Economic Forum to measure citizen trust in government, respondents identified four deficiencies: responsiveness, accountability, transparency, and effectiveness (Ramkumar and Krafchick, 2007).

In the Philippines, democracy is handicapped by the continuing dominance of a political aristocracy whose wealth is derived from their control of the state apparatus. Likewise, by an economic oligarchy whose economic base may be independent of the state apparatus but whose access to the state is, nonetheless, its principal way of accumulating wealth. The result is a situation that has been caricatured over and over again in political commentaries about the Philippines' condition: a small network of families and clans monopolizing power and economic wealth, while the great mass of people live in abject poverty and misery.

A very thin layer of middle class in the pyramidal structure exists but most have staked their meager resources and reluctantly left their families to seek for greener pastures abroad as overseas workers toiling to earn a decent living in unfamiliar cultures. Over the years, this condition has fostered a culture of political patronage, which breeds and thrives on the



insecurity and helplessness of the poor. The deeper the poverty gets, the greater the dependence of the poor, the more secure the hold of the few over power. One of the persistent problems plaguing the Philippines is this culture of corruption and patronage that permeates its political and governance institutions. The result is a weak state engaged in rent-seeking activities that cause corruption and mismanagement of the Philippine political economy.

Amidst this context, several non-government organizations (NGOs) in the country have initiated various actions to assert their right to participatory governance and to make government account for its policy choices and decisions. This is not surprising since the Philippines is known to have one of the most vibrant, dynamic, and capable civil societies in the world—providing policy inputs, delivering social services, pursuing socioeconomic development and generating accountability. Early on, their interventions may not have been known as social accountability interventions until the World Bank introduced the label (Sirker & Cosic, 2007).

As the sector substantially responsible for the transition from authoritarian rule, the civil society in the Philippines believes that it is still needs to play a critical role in deepening democracy in the country amidst persistent problems of weak political institutions, unabated corruption, and increasing poverty. The invaluable role of civic engagement in development is similarly argued by Reuben as he asserts that the “existence of a healthy and active civil society does not preclude the existence of a robust state, and vice-versa” (Reuben, 2003).

## ACCOUNTABILITY: AT THE HEART OF A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

The virtues of social accountability have been extolled in various good governance literature. Most recently, it has been a favorite buzzword. If social accountability is to be regarded as something more essential and lasting than a fad, conceptual and analytical clarity is necessary.

In clarifying the concept, it is hoped that the fundamentals are laid out to ensure that social accountability adds enduring value to anti-poverty work and sustainable development outcomes.



## Power Relationship Between State and Citizen

Accountability is about how to control the exercise of power. How to restrain power, prevent abuses, and keep it in line with established rules—this is the question that has preoccupied political thinkers since the time of ancient philosophers (Newell & Bellour, 2002). Today, the notion of accountability continues to reflect the same concern: how to apply checks, oversight, and institutional constraints on the exercise of power.

Accountability implies both an obligation of public officials and a right of people or citizens. It means “being held to account” (compliance) as well as “giving an account” (transparency) of one’s performance while “taking account of” (responsiveness) the needs and aspirations of constituents. It also implies both answerability and enforceability. The very function of accountability is to ensure that those who wield power on behalf of others are answers for their conduct. Political and bureaucratic officials have the obligation to inform citizens and explain to them what they are doing. They are morally and legally bound to account for their conduct or adherence to rules; and the performance of their responsibilities and mandates to the citizens who, in turn, have the right to demand accountability from them (Singh, 2004).

This obligation of public officials to report their actions to their citizens can be traced back to the Roman period when public examination of accounts was done. These were verified through reference to witnesses and vouchers called *auditus* or “hearings” that were conducted. The *auditus*, however, was presented orally because of the parties were illiterate.<sup>1</sup>

Accountability involves the construction of a “grammar of conduct and performance as well as the standards” used to assess the performance of public sector actors, which then defines expectations and orders social relationships (Paul, 2005).

There are two universal expectations. First, public sector actors are expected to obey the law and not abuse their powers. Second, they should serve the public interest in an efficient, effective, and fair manner. To enforce this code of conduct and standards of performance, there must also be the capacity to sanction—capacity on the part of the accounting agencies to impose sanctions on power holders who have violated the code of conduct



and standards of performance. This is to provide incentives so that public officials become strongly motivated to perform at their maximum capacity and not to break the rules. For example, this may take the form of voting a scoundrel out of office or imposing a penalty or issuing an indictment.

The principle of accountability lies at the heart of a democratically governed society. How it is articulated and implemented determines the manner in which the social contract between state and society is enforced. In a democracy, the state performs many essential functions for the welfare and development of its citizens and provides essential services many of which are “public goods”. It collects taxes from the people to discharge its functions and is accountable to society for proper use of the resources entrusted to it.

Precisely because citizens have delegated certain responsibilities to individuals in public office to carry out specific tasks in their behalf, citizens have the right to hold those in power answerable for their decisions. Those holding positions of power have the obligation to listen and respond to the views of the citizens. A system of sanctions should be in place to enforce these rights and obligations. It is this understanding of accountability in which rulers explain and justify actions to the ruled, which traditionally distinguishes a democratic society from a tyrannical one (Sollis and Winder, 2005).

### Horizontal and vertical accountability

Traditional mechanisms to enforce accountability can be both horizontal and vertical. Horizontal accountability is the most direct form of accountability. It refers to the formal power of state institutions to monitor one another. Horizontal accountability systems include the following: (1) political mechanisms (constitutional constraints to power, separation of powers, legislative oversight, investigative bodies); (2) fiscal mechanisms (formal systems of auditing and financial accounting); (3) administrative mechanisms (hierarchical reporting, norms of public sector probity, public oversight); and (4) legal mechanisms (corruption-control agencies, judiciary, and ombudsman).

The vitality of the horizontal accountability hinges on strong and capable institutions that are able to check and monitor one another while protecting their independence, rising above patronage or partisanship. The separation



of powers, the recognition of fundamental rights, and the system of checks and balances are all aimed at curbing the arbitrariness of power (Diamond & Morlino, 2005). For mechanisms of legal accountability to function effectively, the legal system must be capable of enforcing the law and to make the rulers obey the law (March & Olsen, 1995).

Vertical accountability, on the other hand, is the obligation of electoral political leaders to answer for their political decisions demanded by citizens and civil society groups.<sup>2</sup> The ballot is the classic formal mechanism of vertical accountability that allows citizens to hold the government accountable for its rule. Political competition and informed participation are crucial conditions for strong vertical accountability. For citizens to effectively use the ballot to hold public officials and political parties accountable through elections, they must be engaged and knowledgeable about the issues and performance of those in power and turn out to vote in large numbers (Diamond & Morlino, 2005).

To be effective, good governance accountability discourse emphasizes that horizontal accountability should be reinforced by strong vertical accountability in which citizens, mass media, and civil society organizations have the right to scrutinize public officials and government practice. But it is also important that public officials are not simply open to criticism but must proactively work with society to improve honesty and performance of government. They need to engage in dialogue to explain and justify their plans of action, behavior, and the results of these actions. Consequently, they gain the approval and trust of the public. Hence, accountability by itself is a process (Ackerman, 2005).

### FACTORS FOR STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

The following factors help in building capable political accountability mechanisms:

- Established rights for civil society groups to function competently and independently, such as freedom of association, right to information and a rule of law to protect them from intimidation and retribution;
- Political competition, fair distribution of power and informed participation to enable voters to hold their public officials and ruling parties accountable through elections; and
- Legal system with the capability to enforce the law and to make the rulers obey the law.





## Claiming the People's Right to Development

There is widespread perception that traditional forms of accountability—vertical mechanism such as elections and horizontal mechanisms such as institutional checks and balances fail to ensure an effective watch on the use of public authority (Joshi, 2008). This perception is created by evidence of corruption and poor decision-making by public authorities in most governments. In response to this “crisis in accountability” civil society organizations (CSOs) began to engage in different forms of collective action demanding accountability from government.

Social accountability does not replace traditional institutions of accountability. This is because social accountability includes a broad range of actions and mechanisms that rely on civil engagement to hold the state to account for its decisions, policies, programs, and actions (Malena, 2004). In effect, social accountability complements and strengthens horizontal and vertical accountability mechanisms.

At the core of social accountability are the principles of citizen's rights, inclusion, empowerment, and social justice. It involves informed action based on rigorous analysis of data, where citizens use their rights responsibly to put an end to abuse and misuse of public power. Since social accountability is anchored on rights, it does not merely focus on asserting interests and concerns of the poor. More importantly, it includes developing people's abilities to influence and negotiate directly with official decision-makers (Fischer, n.d.).

In their most promising forms, “social accountability” innovations offer disadvantaged people opportunities to operationalize rights and to shift the terrain of governance from technical solutions to social justice issues (Mangahas, 2007).<sup>3</sup> In other words, accountability systems are expected to, not just satisfy concerns with procedural integrity, but also respond to norms of social justice. In the context of development, this means holding state and non-state actors accountable for their contribution to poor people's opportunities to reach substantive levels of human of human development and to realize substantive freedoms.



Social accountability can be done after the fact or ex post accountability where citizens mobilize and sanction public officials for specific transgressions that had already occurred. It could also be continuous accountability, i.e. citizen groups participate in institutions designed for continuous citizen involvement in policy formulation and implementation to minimize the risk of misuse of public resources.

Accountability has traditionally been based upon an assessment of whether procedures have been followed diligently, not whether a social desirable outcome has been produced. However, Brinkerhoff (2004) asserts that social accountability is not simply concerned with procedures but rather it is concerned with three governance issues. The first issue is how to prevent or control the misuse and abuse of public resources and/or authority. The second is ensuring the citizens that resources are used and authority is exercised according to appropriate and legal structures, professional standards, and societal values. The third is improving service delivery and management through feedback and learning.

Social accountability practice show that citizens' efforts to hold officials responsible for their actions have moved beyond the periodic elections and have also begun to engage in a number of activities aimed at exacting fiscal, administrative, and political or democratic accountability from the government. These actions are concerned with making sure that (1) public resources are used according to the rules—responsibly and efficiently, (2) government agencies perform according to agreed-upon performance standards and targets, (3) government officials (both elective and appointive) are true to their oath of office, and (4) public institutions are governed by the rule of law in carrying out their functions.

#### DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Social accountability is a set of principles with a range of tools and activities—that includes the perspectives of those who are traditionally and structurally disadvantaged and, with rigorous analysis of information and evidence, seeks to hold public sector actors responsible for the performance of their functions (Clark: 2007). Social accountability initiatives and practices are based on principles of citizen's rights, inclusion, empowerment and social justice.



Social accountability strategies simultaneously focus on citizen participation, enforcement of the rules, and improving performance. The standard is no longer mere adherence to procedure but the achievement of outcomes assessed in terms of improving the lives of the poor and vulnerable groups.

## SOWING THE SEEDS OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The emergence of social accountability in the country was brought about by political and constitutional reforms that created spaces for CSO involvement and participation in deliberation processes and service delivery. However, sustaining these reforms to further deepen democracy and improve the lives of the poor remains to be a gargantuan challenge.

### An Accountability Deficit?

Institutions, whether formal or informal, are the means through which authority is exercised in the management of resources of the state. The most significant contributions of the 1987 Constitution to democratization are the provisions for direct participation such as people's initiatives to recall officials and propose laws and charter amendments, question the sufficiency of the factual basis of the declaration of martial law or the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, and form party-list groups to run for Congress in the case of sectoral groups (Pangalanan, 2002; Sison, 2002).

The enactment of the Local Government Code (LGC) in 1991 devolved powers from the central government to the local government units (LGUs).<sup>4</sup> The Code aimed to bring the government closer to the people, with LGUs bearing the responsibility for providing services to meet the development needs of the people. Shift from the center to the local also provided opportunities to practice participatory governance as enshrined in the 1987 Constitution.<sup>5</sup>

Public office is a public trust and public officials and employees must at all times be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency, act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives. (Art. XI, 1987 Constitution)



This provision in the Constitution sets the standard as to how public sector actors should behave. The Constitution not only provided in detail the obligations and the available mechanisms that provide checks to the exercise of authority; it also provided, in detail, an impeachment procedure and the creation of an independent Ombudsman<sup>6</sup> and a special anti-graft court called Sandiganbayan as the mechanisms to sanction erring officials.

The accountability deficit in the Philippines, therefore, refers not so much to the absence of laws and regulations and formal institutions aimed at providing for accountability in governance, but to the lack of enforcement and actual application of accountability. While there is no dearth of laws and institutions, there has been a marked relegation of these to mere formalities. Clientelism and bureaucratic capture continue to characterize governance institutions in the country. They are not driven by public interest but are, in fact, captured by economic and political interests.

Bureaucratic capture and corruption has resulted, not only in monetary costs, but also in weakened trust relationships between government and citizens that constitute the basis of all social interaction. Getting information from the government is difficult. It does not easily release information despite Section 5 of Republic Act 6713, or the “Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards”, which provides that “all public documents must be made accessible to and readily made available for inspection by the public within reasonable working hours.”<sup>7</sup>

There is also no viable Freedom of Information Act in the country. Without this piece of legislation, citizens and CSOs find it difficult to access important documents and records for monitoring and scrutinizing public affairs. This limits the opportunities for public oversight and renders the policy decisions and public actions vulnerable to the discretion of those who are in positions of authority. When politicians and public officials are not required to disclose information regarding their actions and transactions, the administration of public funds is susceptible to the prerogatives of individuals in power rather than dictated by public interest, for their actions and decisions need not be justified to an affected public.<sup>8</sup> (Grimes, 2008)

According to the Access for Information Network (ATIN), the government resists full transparency because of the following reasons:<sup>9</sup> (1) providing access is seen not as a part of the regular duties of government, but as a



favor that can be dispensed subject to the custodian's discretion and convenience; and (2) vested interest in the non-disclosure of information—especially if the information is controversial and may open an agency to questions and criticisms or if the information is related to some anomaly or irregularity in the official transaction of an office.

Diamond and Morlino (2005) assert that political competition and the distribution of power must be fair and robust enough to allow for genuine alternatives at the various levels of government. It is necessary to produce some electoral alternatives over time, so that incumbents face a credible threat of electoral punishment. Robust political competition does not only affect the responsiveness of political leaders but also strengthens the capability of citizens and organizations for social accountability work. The existence of public officials who are sincerely supportive of and sympathetic to the cause of social accountability, whether they are in institutions of public oversight or in political office, affects the feasibility of civic action to hold public officials accountable.

In the Philippines, however, strong and healthy political competition does not exist. Rocamora and Hutchcroft (2003), in analyzing political institutions in the country, lament that “political parties and the electoral process in the country remain dominated by personalities rather than programs; legislative institutions continue to be the domain of many of the same old political clans and *trapos* (traditional politicians); and the legislative process is still driven by the politics of pork and patronage.”

Adequate freedom and pluralism in media, likewise, strengthen the ability of media to take up a cause and assist in mobilizing a broader segment of the population for social accountability causes. Media should be protected from intimidation and retribution. There should be freedom of speech, information, and assembly.<sup>10</sup>

In recent years, Philippine media have been subjected to legal harassment in the form of libel suits and continuing murders of journalists. According to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) in its report entitled “The State of Press Freedom Report 2007”, 71 journalists were killed in the line of duty since democracy was restored in the country in 1986. Of these, 54 were killed during the term of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. CMFR also noted in its report that 90% of those killed



had exposed corruption in government (Inquirer.net, 2008). Freedom House classified the country since 2005 until the present as “partly free” noting many freedom indicators for the Philippines have declined since 2005 with press freedom being undermined by killings of journalists and gravely threatened by a poor record of prosecuting those responsible for media killings. (Freedom House Report, 2008)

*Table 1. Freedom House Scores, Philippines.\**

SCORES	2005	2006
Accountability and Public Voice	4.46	4.16
Civil Liberties	3.92	3.85
Rule of Law	3.30	3.29
Anti-corruption and Transparency	3.50	3.38

*\*Scores are based on a scale of 0 to 7, with 0 representing weakest and 7 representing strongest performance.*

To date, the persistent problem that continues to plague the country is how to build institutions for democratic and accountable governance. As most reform advocates realize, good governance does not simply happen. Definitely, it requires a particular kind of politics and leadership (Leftwich, 1993).

### Pervasive Corruption

Another reality that continues to impair the government’s consistency, effectiveness and efficiency is the presence of rent-seeking agents in government. Corruption minimizes the gains of democratization, stunts productivity, makes prompt response difficult, and strains and obstructs state-society interaction (Magadia, 2003). CSOs responded to this problem through various methods and approaches—from confrontation to constructive engagements with government (Arugay, 2005).

According to a World Bank study released in June 2008, corruption in the Philippines is perceived to be the worst among East Asia’s leasing economies. The ranking of the Philippines on corruption control has worsened over the past 11 years, from 45.1% in 1996 to 22.0% in 2007 (World Bank, 2007). Transparency International gave the country a score of 2.5, on a scale of 10,



with 10 as the cleanest. The Philippines ranked 117<sup>th</sup> among 159 countries, indicating that the country has a “severe” corruption problem (PCIJ, 2005).

In September 2006, a World Bank Report on World Wide Governance Indicators showed a sharp decline in the Philippines’ ranking in the control of corruption, from 50.5% in 1998 to 37.4% in 2005 (World Bank, 2007). The Philippines was perceived as the most corrupt in the 2008 survey of the Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy. Based on a grading system with 10 as the worst possible score, the Philippines got 9.4, worsening from its grade of 7.8 in 2006.

## MAPPING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICE: MAIN FINDINGS

Despite this indication, social accountability initiatives in the country continue to emerge and take on the difficult tasks of scrutinizing government performance, as well as addressing the weak public accountability prevailing in the country. Intermediary CSOs have also played critical roles in enhancing poor people’s capabilities, assisting them to access and understand information and use that information to demand from government responsive and efficient delivery of services.

The proliferation of social accountability projects is related to the increasing interest of the international donor community in good governance plus the mounting desire of ordinary citizens to hold public sector actors accountable.

Social accountability work of CSOs in the Philippines is a response to the need to deepen democratic politics and good governance, specifically to monitor and assess performance of government, as well as to curb corruption that seems to be endemic to and embedded in the culture of government. While a good number of organizations seeking to exercise social accountability are anti-corruption organizations, there are also those seeking to secure entitlements for their own community or for marginalized communities.

Most of the social accountability practices were initiated by the CSOs themselves as a response to the weak accountability institutions of the state.



These are supported by multilateral and bilateral funding agencies. There are 34 practices included in the scoping exercise.<sup>11</sup> Through their social accountability initiatives, CSOs are gaining access to arenas of public account and procurement processes, as well as performance monitoring of public sector actors. Citizens are beginning to assert their citizenship by demanding answers directly from power-holders—auditing local spending, observing public bidding, and demanding to know the whereabouts of funds that are missing. These are relatively new arenas for most CSOs.

### What Drives Social Accountability Practice

While there may be different initiatives, there are common aspirations and objectives that unify the different initiatives. These are the following: (1) put an end to pervasive corruption and arrest further weakening of institutions by pushing for institutional transparency and responsible leadership from public sector actors; (2) exercise of the people’s right to influence the public choices that shape their lives; (3) show that democracy works by pushing anti-poverty agenda and better service delivery through community-driven development strategies; and (4) actualize participatory citizenship through inclusion and empowerment in social accountability work.

Table 2 summarizes trends in the Philippines based on five fundamental questions that should be asked to enable people to understand social accountability relationships. (A more detailed matrix is presented in Annex A.)<sup>12</sup>

## VARIOUS SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY APPROACHES

Classifying social accountability initiatives in categories that would capture the full range of experiences as well as distinctly differentiate one initiative

### DRIVING FORCES FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICE

- Put an end to pervasive corruption.
- Exercise of the people’s right to influence the public choices that shape their lives.
- Demonstrate that democracy works for the poor.
- Actualize participatory citizenship through inclusion and empowerment.





Table 2. Five fundamental questions for social accountability.

QUESTIONS	TRENDS IN THE PHILIPPINES
Who is seeking accountability ?	Civil society organizations (coalitions and networks) mobilizing ordinary citizens to directly engage power-holders to answer for their decisions and actions as state actors.
From whom?	Bureaucrats and elected officials of national government agencies and local government units; Members of Congress
Where?	There are more avenues for social accountability: Local and sub-national government National government
How?	Diverse set of approaches and tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy advocacy</li> <li>• Self-awareness workshops</li> <li>• Information dissemination</li> <li>• Participatory budgeting</li> <li>• Budget analysis</li> <li>• Expenditure tracking</li> <li>• Monitoring of government procurement process</li> <li>• Monitoring of government infrastructure projects</li> <li>• Report cards</li> <li>• Opinion polls</li> </ul>
For what?	Strengthen transparency, responsiveness, and accessibility of government

from the other was difficult. This stocktaking study classified initiatives according to objectives, using the three categories of Brinkerhoff (2004): political or democratic accountability, financial accountability, and accountability performance. Table 2 summarizes this typology of social accountability practices.

### Political and Democratic Accountability

Essentially, political/democratic accountability involves actions that create and strengthen the societal institutions to actualize social accountability and, in the process, increase citizens’ trust in government and enhance its legitimacy. It includes defining and enforcing the standards and code of conduct and ethics for assessing government performance. In the Philippines, this includes campaigning for a Freedom of Information Act,<sup>13</sup> lobbying for electoral reforms,<sup>14</sup> facilitating the creation of a “graft intolerant culture”<sup>15</sup>, or ensuring that appointees of the President of the Philippines are persons of integrity and competence.<sup>16</sup>



### Financial Accountability

According to Brinkerhoff (2004), financial accountability is concerned with how government “allocates, disburses and utilizes financial resources”. Social accountability practices under this category can be further differentiated into the following sub-categories: (1) informed budget advocacy, (2) public expenditure tracking, and (3) participatory budgeting.

Table 3. Types of accountability based on objective, tool/technique, and outcome.

TYPE	OBJECTIVE	TOOL/TECHNIQUE	OUTCOME
Political/ Democratic Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that government delivers on electoral promises, fulfils the public trust, and responds to ongoing and emerging societal needs and concerns.</li> <li>Effective political accountability enhances the legitimacy of government in the eyes of citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency and openness of government records and transactions</li> <li>Policy advocacy and lobbying</li> <li>Public discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased levels of citizens’ trust in government</li> <li>Clear agreed-upon standards of probity, ethics, integrity, and professional responsibility</li> <li>Enhanced legitimacy of government</li> </ul>
Financial Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracking and reporting on allocation, disbursement, and utilization of financial resources, including procurement and contracting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tools of auditing, budgeting, and accounting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proper financial management</li> <li>Reduced opportunities for graft and corruption</li> </ul>
Performance Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrating and accounting for performance based on agreed-upon targets</li> <li>Focus is on the services, outputs, and results of public agencies and programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance measurement and evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies, projects, and programs are responsive to the needs of the poor</li> <li>Achievement of service delivery targets</li> <li>Service delivery improvement</li> <li>Public sector management reform</li> </ul>



### **Informed budget advocacy**

Budgets are the basic instrument of governments to mobilize, allocate, and monitor scarce resources.

Thoughtful and methodical scrutiny of the public budget enables citizens and civil society groups to raise important governance and policy issues and advocate reforms—on public expenditure priorities, distribution of benefits to different groups of people, and revenue-raising schemes.

Informed budget advocacy focuses on the impact of the budget on transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to development needs of the country, especially the needs of the poor. It involves solid fiscal research; production and dissemination of timely, accessible and useful information to a wide range of stakeholders; and mobilization of people to influence budget processes and outcomes.

### **Public expenditure tracking**

The primary objectives of this practice are to identify leakages and to improve efficiency in the delivery of public goods and services. This involves scrutinizing how specific government agencies actually spend the money appropriated to them.

### **Participatory budgeting**

Participatory budgeting is related to the involvement and consultation of citizens in the budgeting cycle. Citizens participate in the different phases of budget formulation, decision-making, and monitoring of budget execution. Social accountability practitioners hope to increase government responsiveness to the needs of the poor and at the same time increase transparency to allow citizens and officials to understand and commit themselves to difficult trade-offs inherent in budgeting processes. Social accountability practices such as Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) Watch and Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) Watch introduced the social justice element in the accountability discourse. These practices recognize the imperative of addressing the pressing needs of the poor as well as actualizing their right to hold government officials accountable. After all, the poor are the group most affected by corruption.



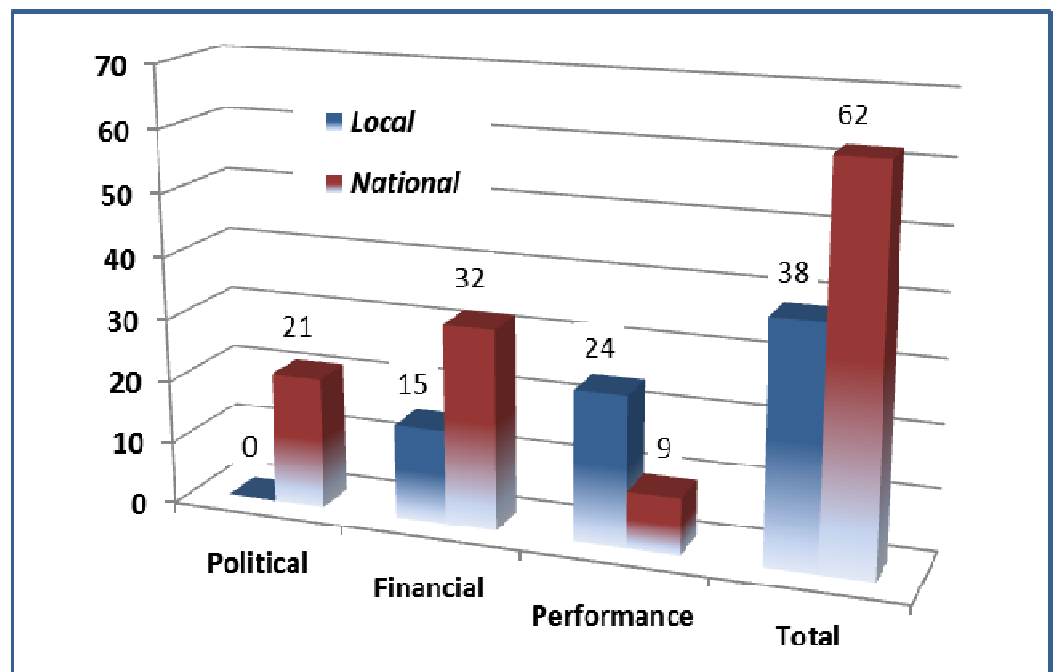
### Accountability for Performance

The principal focus of social accountability practices under this category is the delivery of public goods and services and how public sector actors fulfil their roles and responsibilities. The main strategy in this type of social accountability practice is monitoring by citizens through the use of report cards, citizen feedback through opinion polls, and participatory audits. The principal motivation is to ensure relevance, responsiveness, and sustainability of local development programs and services.

### SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES IN THE PHILIPPINES

Figure 1 shows that 47% of the social accountability practices scoped in this study were focused on financial accountability. Thirty-three percent of scoped practices centered on accountability for performance with 24% of the initiatives implemented at the LGU level while 21% were aimed at enabling and strengthening political/democratic accountability.

Figure 1. Social accountability practices, according to type.





Sixty-two percent of the social accountability practices were being done at the national level with 32% of these practices focused on financial accountability. Twenty-one percent centered on political/democratic accountability and 9% on performance.

Thirty-eight percent of the practices were being implemented at the local level with 24% of these practices concerned about holding local governments accountable for their performance and 15% focused on financial accountability.

*Table 4. Clustering of social accountability practices by objective.*

TYPE BY OBJECTIVE	SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICE	IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION
Political/ Democratic Accountability	Freedom of Information Act Campaign	ATIN
	Lifestyle Check	PCIJ
	Citizens’ Participation in Lifestyle Check	TAN
	Electoral Reform	Consortium for Electoral Reform, IPER
	Pera’t Pulitika (monitoring of campaign funds)	TAN, Libertas, ATIN
	Ehem! (anti-corruption)	Society of Jesus (Philippine Province)
	Appointment Watch	TAN
	Co-Financing and Co-Production of Basic Services	IPD
Financial Accountability	Department of Agriculture Budget Analysis	Code-NGO
	Education Watch	AER
	Philippine National Budget Monitoring Project	InciteGov, The Budget Network
	PDAF-Watch	Code-NGO
	ODA Watch	MODE
	Debt and Public Finance Campaign	FDC
	Local Gender Budgeting	WAND
	IRA Watch	CBCP-NASSA
	CSO Participation in Monitoring	Procurement Watch
	Alternative Budget Initiative	Social Watch Philippines
	Textbook Count and Textbook Walk	G-Watch (Ateneo School of Government)



Table 4. Clustering of social accountability practices by objective (cont'd.)

TYPE BY OBJECTIVE	SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICE	IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION
Financial Accountability (cont'd.)	Building Bridges Towards Good Governance with LGUs and Other Agencies	CNGG-Negros
	Participatory Local Governance	La Salle Institute of Governance
	Counter Corruption in Procurement and Delivery of Services	CAC-MBC
	Capacity-Building for BAC Observers	MSAC and EBJF
Performance Accountability	Participatory Planning and Budgeting	Naga People's Council and City Government
	Report Card Survey	Development Academy of the Philippines
	Monitoring Infrastructure Projects for Good Governance	CCAGG
	Localized Anti-Poverty Program 2	Code-NGO
	Road Watch	TAN
	SWS Surveys	Social Weather Station
	Transparent and Accountable Governance	Iloilo-CODE
	Participatory Monitoring of Barangay Infrastructure Projects and Procurement of Medicines in the Province of Isabela	PAJDGG

Social accountability work, both at the local and national levels, is undertaken predominantly by coalitions rather than individual organizations. Although there is a wide breadth of social accountability practices, there is a narrow spectrum of groups and organizations involved in such practices. There is an overlap of membership in the various networks and coalitions involved.

Majority of the social accountability practices reviewed at the national level were being implemented independently from the government and were primarily driven by the desire to curb corruption and promote transparency and accountability within the framework of participatory governance. It is interesting to note that at the local level, the social accountability practices reviewed by the study were implemented in partnership with the local government.



Table 6. Social accountability practices, according to type of engagement with government.

TYPE OF PRACTICE	LOCAL		NATIONAL		TOTAL
	Coalition	Single Org.	Coalition	Single Org.	
Political	-	-	15%	6%	21%
Financial	6%	9%	32%	-	47%
Performance	15%	9%	3%	6%	32%
Total	21%	18%	50%	12%	100%

Partnership with the government was covered by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that defined roles and responsibilities of the various parties involved in the partnership. Working with government was largely driven by the need to have access to reliable and relevant data. Again, without a Freedom of Information Act, such access was difficult to gain. However, CSOs also expressed that even with a MOA, access to relevant data remains to be challenge.

### Social Accountability Tools and Approaches<sup>17</sup>

Social accountability work challenged CSOs to venture in unfamiliar terrain, such as budget processes, government accounting, public procurement, and public sector oversight. The practices reviewed in this study showed a variety of tools and approaches: (1) policy advocacy, (2) corruption sensitivity seminars, (3) budget advocacy and analysis, (4) observing procurement procedures, (5) field monitoring of government service delivery, (6) social covenants, (7) Report Card Surveys, (8) opinion polls and surveys, (9) networking with media, and (10) use of the internet.

#### Policy advocacy

The principal focus of policy advocacy in social accountability is to strengthen the accountability mechanisms of the government, as well as to create the enabling environment in holding public leaders accountable. Among the social accountability approaches reviewed in this study were: campaigns launched to enact important legislations (e.g. freedom of information act), electoral reforms, and effective enforcement of anti-corruption laws.



At the local level, policy advocacy takes on a different form through the co-financing and co-production approach of the Institute for Popular Democracy (IPD) where communities identify projects or services that they need and raise funds, which they use as leverage with the LGU for additional funding.

### Corruption sensitivity seminars

Unlike other anti-corruption campaigns and programs that are exclusively oriented towards exposing wrongdoings in government, the Ehem! Self-Awareness Workshops aim to sensitize people to their own involvement in dishonest and corrupt practices. It is premised on the behavioral principal that sustained action in combating corruption emanates from self-aware individuals. The focus is value transformation. It is introspective and aimed at individual and personal change.

Corruption sensitivity workshops are conducted to facilitate the individual's self-examination of his/her role in perpetuating corruption in Philippine society and, likewise, to assist participants in crafting their own individual action plans.

### Budget advocacy and analysis

Fifty-six percent (56%) of the financial accountability- social accountability practices center on budget advocacy and analysis. Recognizing that the budget is the most important public policy produced by the government every year, there is an increasing number of initiatives aimed at making public sector budgets—local and national—transparent, accountable and responsive. The practices using this approach utilized a number of methods including: formulation of alternative budgets, fiscal research for sectoral and national budget analysis, website-maintenance, and networking with media to provide timely and reliable information on the budget.

### Guarding procurement as observers

The enactment of the Government Procurement Reform Act provided CSOs an avenue to engage government as observers in the public procurement process. A number of CSOs got initiated in SAC, primarily





through their involvement in improving the transparency, efficiency and accountability of government procurement processes. When the policy reforms were put into place through the enactment of the Government Procurement Review Act (GPRA), CSOs also re-tooled themselves to make sure that the law was properly implemented. Procurement Watch, G-Watch, Transparency and Accountability Network (TAN), and Multi-Sectoral Coalition Against Corruption (MSAC), and the Coalition Against Corruption have partnered with government agencies—playing the role of independent observers aimed at curtailing corruption that is widely perceived to be prevalent in most bidding activities of the government.

### Field monitoring of government projects and service delivery

A number of CSOs focused on scrutinizing government transactions as citizen watchdogs engaged in field monitoring of government projects and delivery of services. Infrastructure for transport, such as roads and bridges; public education, such as textbook delivery and construction of school buildings; and delivery of health services, such as procurement of medicines were the areas covered by the SAC practices reviewed in this study. One of the more outstanding CSOs in this field is Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government (CCAGG), a pioneer in the area of monitoring public projects. Using community organizing to mobilize the people, on-sight monitoring to collect facts, and public meetings to analyze findings, they have inspired the spirit of volunteerism for social accountability.

### Social covenants

This is a performance evaluation and public disclosure/feedbacking mechanism through active citizens' query in the form of public meetings and forums. The process begins during the electoral campaign period. Political candidates are asked to sign "covenants for clean and honest elections, with the winners committing to hold themselves accountable to the people through performance evaluation undertaken by constituents". The basis for such evaluation would be the promises made by the winning candidates during the election campaign, as reflected in the "platforms" or agenda. Iloilo -CODE created this innovation and has been implementing it to monitor the City Government of Iloilo.



Table 7. Summary of social accountability practices in the Philippines

OBJECTIVE	PUBLIC SECTOR FUNCTION	SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICE	METHODS AND TOOLS
Political/ Democratic Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and plans that build or strengthen the enabling environment for democratic practice and accountable institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political and electoral reforms</li> <li>• Campaign for a graft-sensitive culture</li> <li>• Participatory policy-making and planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy advocacy</li> <li>• Self-awareness workshops</li> <li>• Engaging and empowering communities for service improvement</li> </ul>
Financial Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revenue, appropriations, allocations, expenditures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed budget advocacy</li> <li>• Tracking public expenditure</li> <li>• Participatory budgeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget advocacy and budget analysis</li> <li>• Training workshops</li> </ul>
Accountability for Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of goods and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public monitoring and oversight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring by public watchdogs</li> <li>• Citizens' Charter</li> <li>• Social covenants</li> <li>• Report cards</li> <li>• Opinion polls</li> </ul>

### Report Card Survey (RCS)

In a Report Card Survey, the idea is to establish what the local residents think about the quality of selected services provided by the local government units. These services include garbage collection, traffic management, public (neighborhood) safety; public market management, and permit issuance/licensing (Development Academy of the Philippines, 2002).

The findings, as well as the experiences in implementing the RCS, demonstrated the tool's ability to empower citizens to provide feedback on public services, even for those who were not members of organized groups. RCS implementation efforts, however, were not sustained.

### Opinion polls/surveys

Scientific surveys of the general public and of various stakeholder-groups to monitor the quality of governance are useful approaches in evaluating the performance of government. Among the social accountability practices reviewed was the regular survey conducted by the Social Weather Survey (SWS) on corruption, which was part of the Transparent and Accountable



## Example of an Innovative Practice

### COVENANT FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY: BEYOND LIP SERVICE (The Philippine Experience)

Concrete practices of social contracts or covenant-types of agreement between the citizen-electorates, politicians and bureaucrats, pro-actively promoted a performance-based, platform-oriented politics and good citizenship. In the late 1990's, with graft and corruption issues reaching the heights of unabated notoriety, innovations for Transparent Accountable Governance that took the form of Social Contracts were introduced by Iloilo-CODE. The key model was the *Kwentahan Hindi Kwentuhan*, (literally: Accountability Not Lip Service), a performance evaluation and public disclosure/feedbacking mechanism through Citizens' Query.

Politicians have the penchant for talking and making empty promises in order to win the people's votes. Adopting the principle that elected officials have social contract with the electorate, Philippine CSOs have introduced innovative modes of citizens' engagement with politicians to open up opportunities to be heard. At the same, it was an attempt to minimize the vulnerability of the electorate to money politics and empty promises. The key is the participation of a critical mass... since a politician's fear is always the greater numbers.

In the course of the election campaign, candidates' forums were organized by multi-sectoral stakeholders (church organizations, peasant/laborer organizations, media, professionals and academe) for platform watch. Political candidates were asked to sign a "Covenant" for clean, honest, and peaceful elections, with the winners holding themselves accountable through performance evaluation.

The CSOs would gather the platform of each candidate, and a body would prepare and keep a documentation of these platforms for future reference. The electorate could use these, later, as tools and solid evidences in exacting social accountability. The politicians have learned the lesson: "Keep your promises... or bust."

*Mr. Emmanuel C. Areño*

*Executive Director, Iloilo-CODE*

Governance Project funded by The Asia Foundation. The survey focused on the perception of the business sector in the prevalence of corruption, as well as the effectiveness of government efforts in curbing corruption.

### Networking with media

An important tool of social accountability practitioners is media. It is through media that information generated and analyzed by social accountability groups reaches the general public. In fact, in a number of



innovations, media people are involved either as observers or initiators of social accountability practices.

### Use of the Internet

The use of the internet is seen as another means of reaching a wider public and making information readily available and easily accessible. It has taken on the form of website maintenance, social networking and electronic exchanges—where documents can be easily uploaded and downloaded.

### Significant Outcomes

The ultimate test of success of social accountability is whether it results in fundamental reforms/changes in how the government does things—promoting the principles of citizens’ rights, inclusion, empowerment, and social justice. Despite the potential power and impact of social accountability work of CSOs, they could not, by themselves, address the accountability deficit. Pressure may make service providers and public agencies more accountable, but they cannot assume the role of the institutions of government that have been assigned the responsibility of making accountability mechanisms work. In the final analysis, it is the government that has the duty to make accountability a reality (Arugay, 2005). Increasingly, the standard is no longer the simple adherence to procedure but the achievement of outcomes, assessed in terms of their value for poor and vulnerable groups.

The scoping study yielded vague answers to the question of impact and outcome of social accountability work. Responses were general and neither measurable nor verifiable. This may be a reflection of the fact that social accountability practice in the Philippines is a work in progress.

### Critical Factors

The study identified two crucial factors of social accountability practice in the Philippines, among others: (1) a professional bureaucracy lodged in credible public institutions, and (2) a responsible and reform-oriented leadership.



## Professional bureaucracy and credibility of public institutions

Framework of social accountability work of CSOs in the Philippines is premised on an analysis that poverty could not be eradicated without the necessary political reforms and that many of the development outcomes cannot be achieved, much more sustained without changes in the way socio-economic and political resources are managed. Good governance, however, requires a capable and more professional state rather than a government mobilized by political patronage. CSOs, through their involvement in social accountability, seek to help in building this capable state, described as “having the required political and institutional capacity to respond to issues of security, entitlements, social justice and social delivery” (Grindle, 1997).

## Responsible and reform-oriented leadership

Experience tells us that leadership matters in the practice of good governance to ensure that development outcomes endure (Leftwich, 1993).

The implication of an “empowered citizenry” includes a healthy attitude and enhanced capacities of CSO actors. Change in the mentality of the people is critical, from one of patronage and mendicancy—i.e. waiting for help from those in power—to one of responsible citizenship. Local grassroots organizations can help the poor assume responsibility, to a certain extent, for their own welfare and that of their communities. These local groups of individuals, asserting not only their rights but also their duties as citizens concerned for the common good, are the building blocks of true democracy. (Carroll, 2006)

## Dilemmas and Challenges

One of the hurdles in the practice of social accountability is the “inability or unwillingness of society to call powerful and prominent people for their wrongdoings”, which Carroll (2006) refers to as the weakest spot in Philippine political culture. In his book *Engaging Society*, he points out stories in Philippine history that reflected the failure of Filipinos to mete out the punishment that wrongdoers rightfully deserved (such as the amnesty granted to the collaborators of Japanese occupation and the easy treatment accorded family members and former allies of President Marcos). These



actions convey the message that the public interest is not that important after all and that a “thick face”—with power and wealth—could violate it with little risk.

The greatest challenge to social accountability advocates and practitioners in the Philippines is the culture of impunity and the policy framework of the Macapagal-Arroyo Administration against information disclosure and transparency, as well as the continuing perception of worsening corruption. How can CSOs engage the government in this environment? How do CSOs guard and preserve their independence and integrity as they partner with government? The answers to these questions continue to elude social accountability practitioners, but one can glean helpful clues and hints from their actual experiences and practices.



## INFORMATION ON THE DIFFERENT SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES IN THE PHILIPPINES

Social Accountability Practice	Who is Seeking Accountability?	From Whom?	Where?	How?	For What?
Campaign for the passage of a Right to Information Act	Access to Information Network	Legislature and Executive branches	Nationwide	Policy advocacy and lobbying Coalition building	Access to information on decisions and actions done by government
IRA Watch	Diocesan social action networks of the Catholic Church	LGU-Barangay officials	144 barangays, 3 dioceses	Monitoring the use of Internal Revenue Allotment of the barangay	Transparent and responsible utilization of the IRA
Monitoring Infrastructure Projects for Good Governance	Citizens of Abra through the Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Governance	LGU	Province of Abra	Field monitoring and evaluation of infrastructure projects	Responsible use of public funds and efficient delivery of services
Ehem!	Society of Jesus in the Philippines Ateneo de Davao University	Government officials General public	Nationwide	Anti-corruption seminars that link anti-corruption work with value formation Publication and dissemination of Ehem!	Build a graft-intolerant culture
PDAF Watch	Code-NGO and the Coalition Against Corruption	Members of the House of Representatives	Legislative districts nationwide	Public expenditure tracking of funds released for legislators' PDAF	Transparent and responsible utilization of the PDAF and CA funds
Dept. of Agriculture Budget Analysis	Code-NGO	Executive Branch, specifically officials of the Dept. of Agriculture	National	Independent budget analysis	Transparency and accountability in the DA budget process—from preparation to execution



## Information on the different SAC practices in the Philippines...2

Social Accountability Practice	Who is Seeking Accountability?	From Whom?	Where?	How?	For What?
Localization Anti-Poverty Program 2	Code-NGO	LGU	9 provinces 100 barangays	Poverty indicator monitoring Participatory budgeting Participatory monitoring & evaluation	Improved responsiveness of local government priorities to poverty situation
Monitoring of Procurement	Citizens of Negros through the Citizens' Network for Good Governance (CNGG) in the Province of Negros	LGU of Negros Occidental and regional offices of DPWH, SSS, PPA, and the DOH-run regional hospital	Province of Negros Oriental	CSO participation (as observers) of the agency procurement process	Transparent, accountable, and professional public procurement process
Debt and Public Finance Campaigns	Freedom from Debt Coalition	Legislature and Executive	Nationwide	Policy advocacy and lobbying Public audit of public debt and contingent liabilities	Public finance policies to address national debt burden
Transparent and Accountable Governance	Caucus of Non-Government Organizations in Iloilo	LGU	Provinces in Region 6	Public feedbacking Performance reporting Participatory monitoring Citizens' service satisfaction index Use of social contracts and covenants Public expenditure management	Utilization of public funds and fulfillment of campaign promises and commitments of public officials





### Information on the different SAC practices in the Philippines...3

Social Accountability Practice	Who is Seeking Accountability?	From Whom?	Where?	How?	For What?
Philippine National Budget Monitoring and Analysis	Network of NGOs Philippine National Budget Monitoring Project	Legislature and Executive	National	Independent budget analysis Mentoring of NGOs in budget analysis and monitoring	National budget process and priorities
Monitoring the procurement of textbooks, medicines, and school buildings	G-Watch-Ateneo School of Government Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of the Philippines NAMFREL Barug! Pilipino Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government Naga City People's Council Social Watch-Visayas Negros Center for People Empowerment and Rural Development Coca-Cola Bottling Philippines, Inc. Kaakbay	Textbook publishers and Department of Education officials (national and local levels)	Districts Nationwide	Monitor textbook delivery Systems improvement	Procurement of textbooks – from procurement to contract implementation



## Information on the different SAC practices in the Philippines...4

Social Accountability Practice	Who is Seeking Accountability?	From Whom?	Where?	How?	For What?
Participatory Planning and Budgeting	Rural communities	LGU	20 LGUs and 2,000 barangays	Building community capacity for tariff and service delivery designs that includes communities contributing to the financing of services that they need	Delivery of basic local services, particularly water and health
Policy Advocacy – Campaign for Electoral Reform	Members of Consortium of Electoral Reform	Legislature and COMELEC	Nationwide	Campaign and legislative lobbying	Comprehensive reform in the Omnibus Election Code to ensure fair and honest electoral competition Changes in election-related laws such as party list accreditation, automation and campaign finances
Training CSOs for Good Governance	Local CSOs	LGUs	Northern Luzon	Capacity building for CSO members in local special bodies in the arena of local budgeting and project monitoring	Local budgets and development priorities
Coalition Against Corruption	CSOs, business groups, Integrated Bar of the Philippines	Government procurement agencies	Nationwide	Training of BAC observers, procurement monitoring, information dissemination	



### Information on the different SAC practices in the Philippines...5

Social Accountability Practice	Who is Seeking Accountability?	From Whom?	Where?	How?	For What?
Multi-Sectoral Coalition Against Corruption	Network of CSOs participating as observers in the bidding process of government	Procurement entities Ombudsman	Nationwide	Participation of CSOs in bids-and-awards committees	Effective enforcement of GPPRA Abatement of corruption



## SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES: POLITICAL/DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Political/ Democratic Accountability <i>Focus on establishing the fundamentals for political and social accountability to be feasible and effective</i>	Push for the passage of a freedom of information law based on the principles of disclosure and public interest	Information disclosure		Freedom of Information Bill Advocacy	Access to Information Network (ATIN) Secretariat: AER
	Investigate the lifestyle of government officials of the BIR to weed out the corrupt from the bureaucracy	Lifestyle check			Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ)
	Develop a tool that the public can utilize in conducting a citizens' lifestyle check of public officials	Lifestyle check		Citizen's participation in lifestyle checks	Transparency and Accountability Network (TAN)
	Push for reforms in existing electoral laws to ensure clean, honest and fair elections	Electoral reforms		Electoral reform	Institute for Political and Electoral Reform (Secretariat) Consortium for Electoral Reform (40)
	Identify areas where reform on campaign finance can be proposed and considered by policy makers Heighten public awareness of the importance of monitoring campaign expenditures of parties and candidates	Campaign finance reforms		Monitoring of campaign funds "Pera't Pulitika"	TAN (Secretariat) Consortium for Electoral Reforms



## Social accountability practices: Political/democratic accountability (continued)

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Political/ Democratic Accountability <i>Focus on establishing the fundamentals for political and social accountability to be feasible and effective</i>	Sensitize every Filipino about corruption	Value formation		Ehem! Anti-Corruption Movement	Society of Jesus (Philippine Province)
	Facilitate a process for various sectors to understand the culture of corruption and allow serious reflection on societal values that reinforce corruption				Ateneo de Davao University
	Build a graft- intolerant culture			Appointment Watch	TAN
	Encourage civil society participation in the appointment process to ensure transparency and accountability	Credible appointment process of national government officials			
	Cause politicians to respond to real needs of people				Institute for Popular Democracy
	Replace patronage politics with new practices of service delivery		Co-financing and co-production of basic services		



## SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES: FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Financial Accountability	Promote transparency and accountability in the formulation and execution of the budget of the Department of Agriculture	Independent Budget Analysis Public Expenditure Tracking		DA budget analysis	Code-NGO
	Monitor the national budget thoughtfully and systematically to ensure efficient and responsible allocation and utilization of public funds Build interest and capacity of Philippine NGOs and media in national budget monitoring to influence policy and program priorities of the legislative and executive branches of	Independent Budget Analysis Public Expenditure Tracking		Monitoring the national budget	InciteGov
	Influence individual legislators towards a more transparent and responsible utilization of the PDAF and CA funds	Public Expenditure Tracking		PDAF-Watch	Code NGO
	Build broadest unity among CSOs in promoting ODA that serves the people and social accountability in the conduct of ODA projects Create awareness on ODA Engage governments (host and donors) in ODA policy, priority, design and processes	Public Finance Policies		ODA Watch	Management and Organizational Development for Empowerment – Secretariat



**Social accountability practices: Financial accountability (continued)**

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Financial Accountability	Push for specific progressive changes on debt and public finance policies of the government, such as the following:  Comprehensive audit of all public debts and contingent liabilities  Institute a transparent and participatory budget process and progressive spending, revenue generation and borrowing policies	Debt and public finance policies		Debt and Public Finance Campaign	Freedom from Debt Coalition
			WAND Local Level Gender Budgeting		Women in Nation-Building and Development
	Move from quota based budgeting system to a totally gender responsive one; results-oriented and rights-based planning and budgeting  Assess gender impact of local government policies, budgets and expenditures on maternal health and agriculture  Curb corruption at the barangay level  Explore how funds can be used for community	Local Gender Budget		IRA Watch	CBCP-NASSA



**Social accountability practices: Financial accountability (continued)**

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Financial Accountability	Develop a tool that would be easy to use by the procurement observers	Monitoring Procurement		Development of a Diagnostic Reporting Template	Procurement Watch
	Develop a tool/template that would provide reports/feedback to an agency in relation to its			Differential Expenditure Efficiency Measurement Tool	Procurement Watch
	Develop and demonstrate a process of public participatory assessment of government expenditures	Monitoring Procurement		Alternative Budget Initiative	
	Develop a tool that would provide accurate baseline data for future measurement of efficiency/inefficiency in an agency				
	Ensure adequate funding for social services, health, education, environment and agriculture	Informed Budget Advocacy			
	Institutionalize CSO participation in the budget process				
	Broaden CSO participation in the budget process				
	Strengthen CSO capacities for research work on budget analysis. Information and media work, campaigns, lobbying and networking				
	Build awareness and development champions in government				





**Social accountability practices: Financial accountability (continued)**

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Financial Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove corruption in textbook procurement</li> <li>Systematize deliveries of textbooks nationwide</li> <li>Make suppliers more responsive to clients' needs</li> <li>Establish benchmark for Department of Education performance</li> <li>Mobilize citizens for monitoring and inspection for greater transparency</li> </ul>	Guarding Public Procurement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook Count</li> <li>Textbook Walk</li> </ul>	G-Watch – Ateneo School of Government (in partnership with the Boy Scouts of the Philippines, Girls Scouts of the Philippines, NAMFREL)



## SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES: PERFORMANCE PUBLIC OVERSIGHT/ MONITORING

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Performance Public Oversight/Monitoring Citizen groups or communities monitoring and evaluating the execution of plans and programs as well as the performance of roles and functions of public agencies and officials according to indicators they themselves have selected.	Establish what the local residents think about the quality of the following services: garbage collection, traffic management, public safety (within the neighborhood), public market management and permit issuance/licensing Develop a tool to empower citizens to provide feedback on public services	Performance Monitoring	Report Card Survey on Specific Services in NCR - LGUs		Development Academy of the Philippines
			Participatory Monitoring of Infrastructure		Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government
Performance Public Oversight/Monitoring Citizen groups or communities monitoring and evaluating the execution of plans and programs as well as the performance of roles and functions of public agencies and officials according to indicators they themselves have selected.	Create a sense of citizenship and enhance capability of ordinary citizens to be public watchdogs of government infrastructure projects Monitor implementation of government projects to ensure that funds meant for the projects are judiciously used and that project plans and specifications are followed Enforce honesty and integrity in public service	Public Expenditure Tracking			
	Track public satisfaction with performance of key government officials and institutions in general, as well as along specific tasks such as fighting corruption	Public satisfaction on government performance		SWS Surveys	



**Social accountability practices: Performance public oversight/monitoring (continued)**

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Performance Public Oversight/Monitoring Citizen groups or communities monitoring and evaluating the execution of plans and programs as well as the performance of roles and functions of public agencies and officials according to indicators they themselves have selected.	Exercise role of CSOs as watchdogs and hold political leaders accountable for campaign promises Train local CSO/community for better governance responsive to poverty situation Gather poverty data through the use of Poverty Indicator Monitoring Involve community in budget planning to make local budget more responsive and involve them in Project Evaluation and Monitoring Mobilize NGO and private stakeholders and official development assistance partners to work hand-in-hand with the Dept. of Public Works & Highways (DPWH) and other government stakeholder agencies in facilitating the delivery of quality national road services through more responsive, efficient and transparent use of public resources Minimize corruption in DPWH	Performance Monitoring Responsiveness of local budget to poverty alleviation Participatory Monitoring of Road Construction Projects	Transparent and Accountable Governance Localized Anti-Poverty Program 2		Iloilo –CODE  Code-NGO  TAN – Secretariat Members: Roads Users: Alliance of Unified Transport and Telecom Organizations; Automobile Association of the Philippines; Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines; Inter City Bus Operators Association; Provincial Bus Operators Association of the Philippines
				Bantay Lansangan (Road Watch)	



Social accountability practices: Performance public oversight/monitoring (continued)

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
<p>Performance Public Oversight/Monitoring</p> <p>Citizen groups or communities monitoring and evaluating the execution of plans and programs as well as the performance of roles and functions of public agencies and officials according to indicators they themselves have selected.</p>					<p>Good Governance</p> <p>Advocates: Ateneo School of Government-GWatch; Procurement Watch, Inc.; Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government; TAN; Investigative Journalism (observer)</p> <p>Road Service Providers: Confederation of Filipino Consulting Organizations of the Philippines; National Constructor Association of the Philippines; Philippine Constructors Association National</p> <p>Road Asset Managers: DPWH Government Partners; Office of the Ombudsman; PAGC; Regulators and Enforcers; LTO Centers of Expertise; National Center for Transportation Studies; Road Board; Philippine</p>



**Social accountability practices: Performance public oversight/monitoring (continued)**

Classification/Type Based on Objective	Objectives	Focus	Social Accountability Practice		Organization
			Local	National	
Performance Public Oversight/Monitoring Citizen groups or communities monitoring and evaluating the execution of plans and programs as well as the performance of roles and functions of public agencies and officials according to indicators they themselves have selected.	Provide training to volunteer observers and the members of the BAC-Secretariat and TWG members on the GPRA and its IRR to serve as deterrent to collusion, connivance and other acts detrimental and disadvantageous to government Improve transparency in the utilization of provincial funds allotted to barangays under the Ugnayan ng Bayan project of the Governor and health projects Introduce monitoring and evaluation by end users of village level infrastructure Establish standards for transparency in the allocation and utilization of public funds at the local level Build capacity of CSOs in local special bodies, specifically on budgeting, project monitoring and implementation Influence LGUs Upscale capacities of CSO-BAC observers Link BAC observers with their government counterparts Bring to the city government the sectoral agenda of empowering communities	Monitoring of Procurement  Participatory Monitoring	Building Bridges Towards Good Governance with LGUs and Other Government Agencies  Participatory Monitoring of Infrastructure Projects and Drug Procurement in Public Hospitals, Isabela  CSOs on Participatory Local Governance: Participatory Planning and Budgeting		People's Alliance for Justice, Democracy and Good Governance Incite Gov           Multi-Sectoral Coalition Against Corruption  Naga People's Council and City Government



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- <sup>1</sup> The root word of “accountability” is the Latin verb *audire*, which means “to hear”. (Sollis & Winder, 2005).
- <sup>2</sup> Vertical accountability is also referred to as political accountability.
- <sup>3</sup> Former Philippine Senator Jose Diokno’s definition of social justice reflects the connection between governance and development: “Social justice, for us Filipinos, means a coherent intelligible system of law, made known to us and enacted by a legitimate government freely chosen by us and enforced fairly and equitably by a courageous, honest, impartial, and competent police force, legal profession, and judiciary, that:
- 1) Respects our rights and our freedoms both as individuals and as a people;
  - 2) Seeks to repair the injustices that society inflicted on the poor by eliminating poverty as rapidly as our resources and ingenuity permit;
  - 3) Develops a self-directed and self-sustaining economy that distributes its benefits to meet, at first, the basic material needs of all, then to provide an improving standard of living for all, but particularly for the lower income groups, with enough time and space to allow them to take part in and enjoy our culture;
  - 4) Changes our institutions and structures, our ways of doing things and relating to each other, so that whatever inequalities remain are not caused by those institutions or structures, unless inequality is needed temporarily to favor the least favored and its cost is borne by the more favored; and
  - 5) Adopts means and processes that are capable of attaining those objectives.”
- <sup>4</sup> The Local Government Code declared that it is the policy of the state “to ensure the accountability of local government units through the institution of effective mechanisms of recall, initiative, and referendum.” The Code also provided for the following: (1) mobilization of people’s participation in local development efforts, and (2) the preparation of *barangay* [village] development plans based on local requirements.
- <sup>5</sup> The Local Government Code also provided for membership of CSO representatives in Local Special Bodies and a process of consultation through *barangay* assemblies.
- <sup>6</sup> The Office of the Ombudsman is believed to be the most potent institution created by the 1987 Constitution. It is seen as the answer to the clamor of the people for greater public accountability. The mandate of the Ombudsman is to act



promptly on complaints fielded in any form or manner against public officials or employees of the government, or any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, including government-owned or –controlled corporations. (Hilbay, 2002; Gutierrez, 2002)

<sup>7</sup> Advances in technology have been enabling agencies to increase transparency in their dealings and make data available. However, data available online is outdated and is not useful for closer and deeper scrutiny.

<sup>8</sup> Examples would be the following: grave allegations of corruption, such as the NBN-ZTE deal, where the right not to divulge information to the public was rationalized under the so-called “principle of executive privilege”.

<sup>9</sup> Position Paper of ATIN.

<sup>10</sup> The Philippines ranked in the bottom 20 (142<sup>nd</sup> place out of 168 countries surveyed) of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Worldwide Press Freedom Index released by international press freedom watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

<sup>11</sup> Information on two of the 34 practices included in the scoping study was based on write-ups and published reports. These are the Lifestyle Check of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) and the Report Card Survey by the Development Academy of the Philippines.

<sup>12</sup> Social accountability experiences of other countries show that the more varied the methods and tools used to hold state actors accountable for their actions, the higher the number of ordinary people seeking to engage directly in efforts to make power holders answer for their actions, rather than relying upon intermediaries. There is also an emergence of a wider range of accountability jurisdictions intended to expose poor governance or abuses of power—from local governments to national to international public domains (Goetz, 2005). Philippine experience, likewise, is not far behind. Goetz (2005) in her article “Reinventing Accountability: Making Democracy Work for the Poor” enumerates five fundamental questions that should be asked to understand accountability relationship: (1) Who is seeking accountability? (2) From whom? (3) Where? (4) How? (5) For what?

<sup>13</sup> The campaign for a Freedom of Information Act was started by ATIN in 2002. Through a series of consensus-seeking meetings, the network produced a draft bill aimed at compelling disclosure from government through a uniform, simple and speedy procedure (ATIN Position Paper).

<sup>14</sup> Institute for Political and Electoral Reform (IPER).

<sup>15</sup> Ehem! Anti-Corruption Movement.

<sup>16</sup> *Bantay Korte Suprema* (literally: Supreme Court Watch) was one of the activities of Appointments Watch. The objective was to ensure that President Arroyo appointed only those deserving to the upcoming seven vacancies of the Supreme



Court. Involving people with integrity and competence, such as magistrates, former and incumbent legislators and lawyers' associations, law deans and businessmen, *Bantay Korte Suprema* led the public in monitoring the screening process of the Judicial Bar Council that is authorized by law to short-list and nominate candidates for the position. The final decision, however, still rests on the President.

<sup>17</sup> Complete descriptions of practices are in Attachments A and B.





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