



**UNICEF**  
**Social Accountability:**  
**Case Studies**

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# Case study 1: Burkina Faso

## Abstract

Two social accountability initiatives were undertaken in Burkina Faso. The first was a Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) in the education sector, which was conducted in response to significant shortcomings in education outcomes at the primary school level. This experience then led to the implementation of a wider social accountability initiative that sought to leverage and build upon the lessons learned from the PETS.

## Background

### General

Burkina Faso is a landlocked West African nation with an estimated population of 18.6 million people in 2016.<sup>1</sup> The country ranked 185th out of 188 countries in the 2016 Human Development Index<sup>2</sup> and is categorized as a low-income country by the World Bank.<sup>3</sup> Agriculture is the primary industry and the population is predominately rural – approximately 70 per cent of the total population lives in rural areas.<sup>4</sup> In 2014, 40.1 per cent of the population was living below the monetary poverty line, making Burkina Faso one of the most impoverished countries in the world.<sup>5</sup> There is a statistically significant difference between the proportion of people living below the poverty line in rural and urban areas (47.5 per cent compared to 13.6 per cent).<sup>6</sup> The country also fares poorly on the Child Development Index, ranking 134th out of 137 countries.<sup>7</sup>

### Governance

Burkina Faso has faced years of political turmoil marked by a series of popular uprisings and political transition periods. Since the democratic election of the new president in 2015, however, Burkina Faso represents a new opportunity for democratic governance in the region.

Burkina Faso is a unitary state with a two-tier local government structure.<sup>8</sup> The commune (municipality) is the lowest level of political power and governance: there are 302 rural communes, 47 ordinary status urban communes and 2 special status urban communes.<sup>9</sup> Each commune is administered by an elected commune council led by a council-appointed mayor. Communes are responsible for the delivery of services in the areas of health; education (preschool, primary education); water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); culture; youth; and sports and recreation.<sup>10</sup>

### Education

Various regional education comparisons made in the late 2000s showed that Burkina Faso was lagging behind comparable countries in West Africa in its achievement of educational goals. Burkina Faso was not expected to meet national education targets and it was deemed unlikely to achieve the education targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

A regional comparative analysis of public expenditure reviews conducted in 2009 showed that Burkina Faso's performance in primary education remained below expectations, regional disparities did not seem to have reduced

1 World Bank Open Data, 'Burkina Faso', World Bank Group, <<http://data.worldbank.org/country/burkina-faso>>, accessed 17 August 2017.

2 United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2016, Human Development for Everyone*, UNDP, New York, 2016. Available at <[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016\\_human\\_development\\_report.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf)>, accessed 20 March 2018.

3 World Bank Open Data, 'Burkina Faso'.

4 United Nations Data, 'Burkina Faso', <<http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=burkina%20faso>>, accessed 17 August 2017.

5 World Bank Open Data, 'Burkina Faso'.

6 World Bank Open Data, 'Burkina Faso – Enquête Multisectorielle Continue 2014', World Bank Group, <<http://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/2538/study-description>>, accessed 22 March 2018.

7 UNICEF Burkina Faso, 'Issue Overview: Social and Economic Policy', <[www.unicef.org/bfa/english/policy.html](http://www.unicef.org/bfa/english/policy.html)>, accessed 22 March 2018.

8 United Cities and Local Governments/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 'Burkina Faso, Africa', OECD, October 2016. Available at <[www.oecd.org/regional/regional-policy/profile-Burkina-Faso.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/regional/regional-policy/profile-Burkina-Faso.pdf)>, accessed 20 March 2018.

9 The Hunger Project, Participatory Local Democracy, 'Burkina Faso', <<https://localdemocracy.net/countries/africa/burkina-faso/>>, accessed 22 March 2018.

10 International Monetary Fund, 'Burkina Faso: Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development 2011–2015', IMF Country Report No. 12/123, IMF, Washington, D. C., May 2012. Available at <[www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2012/cr12123.pdf](http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2012/cr12123.pdf)>, accessed 22 March 2018.



and gender disparities – while in decline – remained high.<sup>11</sup> Yet Burkina Faso's unit cost for primary education appears relatively high compared to some other African nations (see *Table 1*).

**Table 1. Comparison of public unit costs for primary education between Burkina Faso and some African countries<sup>12</sup>**

Country	Unit cost (% GDP per capita)
Benin	13.1
Burkina Faso	16.6
Cameroon	7.1
Central African Republic	7.2
Chad	7.0
Côte d'Ivoire	13.0
Guinea	8.7
Madagascar	11.0
Mali	11.1
Mauritania	12.0
Niger	20.0
Senegal	10.7
Togo	11.0
<b>Average of comparator countries</b>	<b>11.0</b>

**Burkina Faso unit cost: average unit cost ratio = 1.51**

## Strategy and implementation

### Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)

In 2011, in response to the shortcomings in primary education outcomes, the Government of Burkina Faso launched a PETS in the education sector. The PETS was a joint initiative by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances; MEF) and the Ministry of National Education and Literacy (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation; MENA), with support from the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Security (Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale, de la Décentralisation et de la Sécurité; MATDS). The PETS was implemented through two international organizations: the International Institute for Educational Planning (part of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and Associés en Management Public et Développement. A national research team led the survey, with the support of an inter-ministerial committee comprising representatives of MEF, MENA and MATDS. UNICEF Burkina Faso provided financial and technical support for the PETS.

### Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)

A PETS tracks the flow of resources through the various layers of government bureaucracy (e.g., from central government to local government) to the service points (e.g., schools) to determine what proportion of the originally allocated resources reaches each level and how long it takes to get there. A PETS can help to identify fund leakages, resource capture or spending bottlenecks, and inform recommendations on how to improve both the efficiency of public spending and the quantity and quality of services.

The main objective of the PETS was to measure the gap between central government primary school allocations and actual allocations received by primary schools as well as their available resources (e.g., textbooks). The subsequent aims were to then identify governance factors (across five dimensions of governance: predictability of rules, institutional capacity, accountability, transparency and participation) to explain the gaps and inequity observed across communes and schools, and to formulate recommendations to improve efficiency and equity in the use of public resources. The PETS looked specifically at the loss from funds transferred to communes for primary education as well as the loss from funds allocated to individual primary schools for the purchase of food and textbooks.

### Results

The PETS found particularly large gaps along the textbooks and school materials supply chain. The gap between the allocated and actual funding for school supplies, for instance, averaged 26.2 per cent points. Along the supply chain, the PETS identified a gap of 1.4 percentage points in what was allocated by central government and received by communes; a gap of 10.5 percentage points between what was allocated by communes and received by warehouses; a gap of 2.4 percentage points in the allocation received by warehouses and the actual value of supplies; a gap of 7.7 percentage points between supplies provided by warehouses and received by schools; and a gap of 7 percentage points in actual supplies available at schools. The estimated monetary value of total leakages for school supplies in Burkina Faso for the 2010/11 academic year was US\$2,893,000.<sup>13</sup> Gaps were generally more significant in rural areas than in urban areas.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of the governance dimensions examined, the most significant bottlenecks identified at the commune level related to institutional capacity, accountability and transparency. For instance, half of the communes demonstrated little knowledge of the appropriate legal and regulatory frame-

11 La Banque Mondiale, *Burkina Faso: Revue des dépenses publiques – au delà du paradoxe burkinabè; Feuille de route pour une dépense publique plus efficace, équitable et meilleure qualité*, PREM4 Africa région, Ouagadougou, September 2009.

12 World Bank, 'La Revue des Dépenses Publique dans le secteur de l'éducation' (Public expenditure review in the education sector), relating to Burkina Faso, World Bank, 2009.

13 Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances (Burkina Faso), 'Étude de traçabilité des dépenses publiques dans le secteur Education primaire au Burkina Faso: Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)', December 2012.

14 Ibid.

work for allocations, which includes, for example, the budget circular. The majority of communes scored low on accountability, with half of them scoring only 0 to 2 (on a scale of 0 to 5). Those communes that scored low on accountability also scored low on transparency.<sup>15</sup>

The PETS recommended a series of actions at various levels, from communes and schools to the national level. In particular, it recommended actions to improve management at the local level and to address the low policy and financial literacy of public officials in charge of managing school resources, including those working in the commune councils that administer communes. It was suggested that such efforts should involve capacity development in areas like budget management and reporting, procurement, and communication with local communities to strengthen transparency. The PETS also recommended the strengthening of accountability mechanisms at the commune level.<sup>16</sup>

### Social accountability

Building on the PETS experience and recommendations, the UNICEF Burkina Faso Country Office developed *Projet Redevabilité Sociale et Contrôle Citoyen*, a project around social accountability and citizen control. The project was implemented in two phases: the first, which ran from May 2013 until September 2014, concerned only the education sector and covered 49 communes; the second, which operated

throughout June 2015, was extended to include the health and WASH sectors and to cover an additional 21 communes, bringing its total coverage to 70 communes.

Project activities were undertaken by two implementing partners: Centre d'Information, de Formation et d'Etudes sur le Budget (CIFOEB) and Laboratoire Citoyennetés, each of which worked with a different range of communes. Although both partners conducted the same types of activities, each took a slightly different approach that reflected the organization's experience – that is, working with public servants at the institutional level in one case and with local civil society organizations in the other.

The primary objective of the social accountability initiative was to build multi-stakeholder engagement in the education sector to improve governance and educational outcomes in Burkina Faso (see *Table 2*). The project was initiated based on a theory of change suggesting that: (i) greater governmental transparency will allow citizens to determine where the political and administrative responses to their needs are well targeted and where they are not, so that they can be remedied as required; and (ii) increased public participation in governance processes at the local level will provide institutions with direct feedback from citizens on how best to respond to their needs and bring to decision-making processes additional information about blockages and inefficiencies.

**Table 2. Stakeholders**

	Organization	Role in the project
<b>Technical and financial partner</b>	UNICEF	Financing and management of the project
<b>Implementing partners</b>	Centre d'Information, de Formation et d'Etudes sur le Budget Laboratoire Citoyennetés	Implementation of the project
<b>Actors at the central level</b>	Ministry of Economy and Finance Ministry of National Education and Literacy	Supervision and monitoring of the project
<b>Actors at the sub-national level</b>	Communes (elected officials as well as commune public servants) Decentralized departments	Participation in training and reporting activities (actors to be held accountable)
<b>Civil society</b>	Parents' associations Mothers' associations School management committees Local civil society organizations	Participation in training and reporting activities (actors who hold others to account)
<b>Other actors</b>	Media organizations	Inform the public about project activities and implementation

15 Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances (Burkina Faso), 'Etude de traçabilité des dépenses publiques dans le secteur Education primaire au Burkina Faso: Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) – Annexes au Rapport Définitif', December 2012. Available at <[www.unicef.org/bfa/french/etude\\_de\\_tracabilite\\_des\\_depenses\\_publiques\\_dans\\_le\\_secteur\\_education\\_primaire\\_au\\_burkina\\_faso\\_Annexes\\_2012.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/bfa/french/etude_de_tracabilite_des_depenses_publiques_dans_le_secteur_education_primaire_au_burkina_faso_Annexes_2012.pdf)>, accessed 20 March 2018.

16 Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances (Burkina Faso), 'Etude de traçabilité des dépenses publiques dans le secteur Education primaire au Burkina Faso: Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)', December 2012.

Objectives of the project included:

- making citizens and communes accountable for tracking the budgets of their schools via ongoing budget monitoring
- promoting participatory budgeting and public financial management transparency through multi-stakeholder committees composed of local civil society organizations, commune authorities and decentralized service providers
- advocating for evidence-based, child-focused budgeting in the education sector and for improved efficiency and effectiveness in relation to budget allocations.

Project implementation was based on three main strategies: (i) capacity building of communities to enable their effective participation in budgeting processes and public financial management, and capacity building of communes around budgeting and procurement; (ii) the creation of a platform for dialogue between communes and communities for social accountability purposes in the targeted sectors and to allow the public to question commune officials about their actions; and (iii) national-level communication and advocacy activities around issues and concerns raised in the course of the project that cannot be resolved at the local level, to draw the attention of policymakers to needs and constraints in the field, and to raise awareness more widely about progress.

## Results

The initial phase of the social accountability initiative was evaluated in 2016. The evaluation pointed to both strengths and weaknesses in project design, implementation and outcomes. The results were generally very positive, but the evaluation also highlighted some of the challenges encountered.

The evaluation found that the project:

- generated positive results in terms of the strengthening of local authority capacities and citizen participation
- showed promising results in terms of expected effects on the quality of public financial management and supplies, materials and infrastructure for the primary education sector
- was crucial for better performance in the education sector with regard to education monitoring indicators
- is “a powerful driver of positive change that can contribute to the realization of the development goals.”<sup>17</sup>

In terms of challenges, citizens identified priority needs that differed from those around which the project had been conceived and designed – both in regard to the choice of sector and to specific aspects of public service delivery. For example, while improving the delivery of school supplies was recognized as important for the quality of education, parents pointed out that recruitment and retention of teachers was often difficult and, as such, more critical to address as an overriding priority. In other instances, communities con-

sidered aspects of public services such as public security, management and maintenance of public infrastructure, and hygiene and sanitation to be more of a priority than those relating to school supplies.

Several challenges were identified regarding the effective integration of women and excluded groups into the initiative and particularly into its leadership. Such challenges were notably political and cultural in nature. For example, cultural attitudes concerning appropriate roles for women in society hindered their participation.

## Lessons learned

The UNICEF-supported social accountability project was developed and carried out specifically to improve the efficiency of public expenditure in the education sector. Having been established in response to the PETS in primary education, this education social accountability initiative was later expanded to encompass the health and WASH sectors.

The 2016 evaluation identified the following recommendations and lessons learned:

The design and planning of social accountability initiatives should take into account existing accountability mechanisms, including the status of ongoing and planned social accountability activities supported by donors as well as formal and informal social accountability channels and mechanisms.

Any social accountability initiative should be designed in close collaboration with citizens and consider citizens' perspectives to ensure that it focuses on those services considered most important for the well-being of their community. This builds on the experience that local priorities sometimes differ from what external agencies might perceive or expect. Interventions are more likely to be effective and sustained when they correspond to citizens' priorities and the realities of local communities.

Social accountability initiatives should not necessarily focus on sectors or be designed on a sectoral basis. To ensure long-term and wider impact, it may be better to design broader projects that can weave accountability into the fabric of communities and which are able to address citizens' needs and priorities in various contexts and as they change over time.

Contextual differences and the specific requirements of certain groups should be considered in the design and implementation of social accountability initiatives. The implementing partners for the project in focus carried out project activities in communes as intended and in line with their contractual agreements with UNICEF. The evaluation found, however, that the programmes were not sufficiently adapted to the specific requirements of various stakeholder groups in all contexts, and particularly for citizens and public servants with limited formal reading and writing skills. So, while

17 Ian C. Davies Conseil Inc. and Société d'Etudes et de Recherche en Santé Publique, *Projet de redevabilité sociale et de contrôle citoyen: Mis en œuvre dans 49 communes – Evaluation Rapport Final*, UNICEF Burkina Faso, 2016. Available at <[www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Rapport\\_Final\\_UNICEF\\_RSCC\\_BurkinaFaso\\_2016-009.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Rapport_Final_UNICEF_RSCC_BurkinaFaso_2016-009.pdf)>, accessed 17 April 2018.



public servants and other stakeholders with formal literacy skills benefited from the activities, this was less the case for those without such skills. Initiatives should also have a gender-responsive design and enable the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and pursue a specific strategy to engage women and vulnerable groups through outreach and other activities.

Work on social accountability cannot be separated from ongoing processes around decentralization. This includes ensuring opportunities for social accountability and citizen control in the decentralization framework; addressing spatial differences regarding the capacity of local government staff; and strengthening the capacity of commune officials to manage budgets and complex procedures for the award of public contracts.

The sustainability of social accountability projects depends on whether they can be institutionalized. The potential for sustainable benefits depends on the extent to which social accountability processes and citizen control are systematized and gradually integrated into the fabric of the relationships between citizens and commune governments via civil society organizations.



# Case study 2: Data Must Speak

## Abstract

Data Must Speak (DMS) is a multi-country UNICEF initiative designed to enhance education management systems, stimulate social accountability and citizen engagement in schools, and generate knowledge about the linkages between parental/community participation and school performance. DMS combines technical support for government ministries to make education systems more equitable and support for civil society (parents and communities) to use comparative data effectively. Social accountability is at the core of this demand-driven initiative particularly through the direct technical support it provides at school and community level and through its component on research and knowledge generation for assessing the impact of community participation on school performance.

The initiative focuses on displaying existing data in user-friendly 'profile cards' that compare how schools and districts are resourced and how they are performing. To date, DMS has helped to: improve equity in decision-making within ministries of education; hold stakeholders to account for the performance of schools; and equip communities with information that empowers them to engage in dialogue with school managers.

## Background

In recent years, many countries have made impressive gains in improving access to education. But although access has improved for many children, it remains elusive for vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially those living in fragile contexts. Moreover, while a higher proportion of children now attend school, improved access has not necessarily led to improved learning outcomes.

To ensure equal access to education for all, school data must be made easily accessible, including for the purpose of comparing schools. Fostering accountability requires greater visibility, use and understanding of the data currently collected from all schools on an annual basis by education management information systems. When made freely available – and used to make comparisons – data can play a critical role in informing families and communities, teachers and unions, and civil society organizations and government officials about schools' performance and/or progress. Being aware of the data, and able to use and interpret that data enables citizens to engage in relevant and informed discussions at the school level to push for improved learning outcomes and ensure that school managers are held to account.

Various country assessments have shown that inequitable resource distribution across schools serves as one of the primary obstacles to equitable access and learning out-

comes. This obstacle is a product of the combination of low technical capacity, lack of data about education systems and their performance, and the absence of accountability mechanisms.

## Strategy and implementation

The ultimate goals of DMS are to increase equity in access to education, and improve learning outcomes. To achieve these goals, DMS ensures the following:

- **Data drive policy decisions:** Government education officials at national and sub-national levels analyse, compare and use the currently available sources of education data to ensure that an equity perspective informs resource allocation decisions.
- **Communities are empowered:** The community, parents and students are aware of how their school is resourced and how it is performing in comparison to other schools, and can put pressure on school managers to take action to improve the school's performance. This is made possible through the development of user-friendly school profile cards that are accessible for low-literacy audiences and which depict a school's current resources and performance.
- **Research generates improved knowledge of what works:** Rigorous evaluations are undertaken to learn about what works and what does not work when making data 'public' at the school level. Research so far has included a randomized controlled trial of DMS in Zambia, which tested the impact of training for schools on the use of the school profile cards. The initiative also produces country studies that explore the impact on school performance of community participation at the school level.

On the ground, DMS has already supported countries to build more equitable education systems. In Nepal, to reduce inequalities in educational opportunities, DMS supported the development of an equity index to help target more support towards schools that are lagging behind. The index can be used to inform planning and budgeting, and is an incentive to not only improve outcomes but also to reduce disparities.

DMS also developed district and school profile cards to share comprehensive data and comparisons with policymakers, school management and low-literacy communities, to enable them to identify their priority needs and provide feedback on school performance. Thus, community members can see how schools across a district have been resourced and are performing, and become more involved in parent-teacher associations and school committees with the goal of improving both access to education and the quality of learning. Officials can compare districts, get a snapshot of where



strengths and weaknesses lie, and define a more equitable allocation of resources. Such profile cards were developed in Madagascar, Togo and Zambia (for examples, see *Graphics 1 and 2*).

### Results

DMS improves the capacity of ministries of education to collect and use data for evidence-based decision-making that improves school performance, and equips a broader range of stakeholders with information that can help to ensure greater accountability in education systems.

For example, in Madagascar, randomized controlled trials showed that the number of children attending school has increased by 5 per cent while the number of students repeating a year has decreased by 5 per cent in schools that have benefited from improved information. Also, as part of reforms that accompanied DMS support to the Ministry of National Education, the government has instructed schools to restructure school management committees to allow for more parental control and community participation in the creation of school improvement plans. School profile cards were distributed in 25,823 schools and all of the relevant teachers and heads of district education offices were trained in how to use information contained in the cards to design school improvement plans. In total, more than 27,500 individuals received this training.

DMS also serves as a catalyst for community action, as demonstrated in Togo and Zambia. In Togo, all schools have received a school profile card, which includes comparative data, and these are shared with school management and low-literacy communities. In Zambia, school profile cards were printed, distributed to, and used in more than 8,900 schools.

In Nepal, the government has approved the equity index developed with DMS support, which was used for the first time in the 2016/17 academic year. The index helped to target the country's five most disadvantaged districts for additional funding, with the goal of reducing the aggregate number of out-of-school children in these districts by 20 per cent.




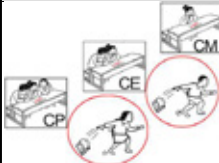








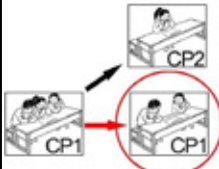





### Lessons learned and next steps

By involving end-users from the outset of the design phase, DMS aims to ensure that the methods and tools developed are adapted to each specific country where they will be used. The tools used and lessons learned in each context become a public good that any other country or interested institution can use. The profile cards have been a source of inspiration for many, even beyond the countries receiving direct technical support through DMS – for example, they have also had an impact in Kenya, Namibia and Uganda.

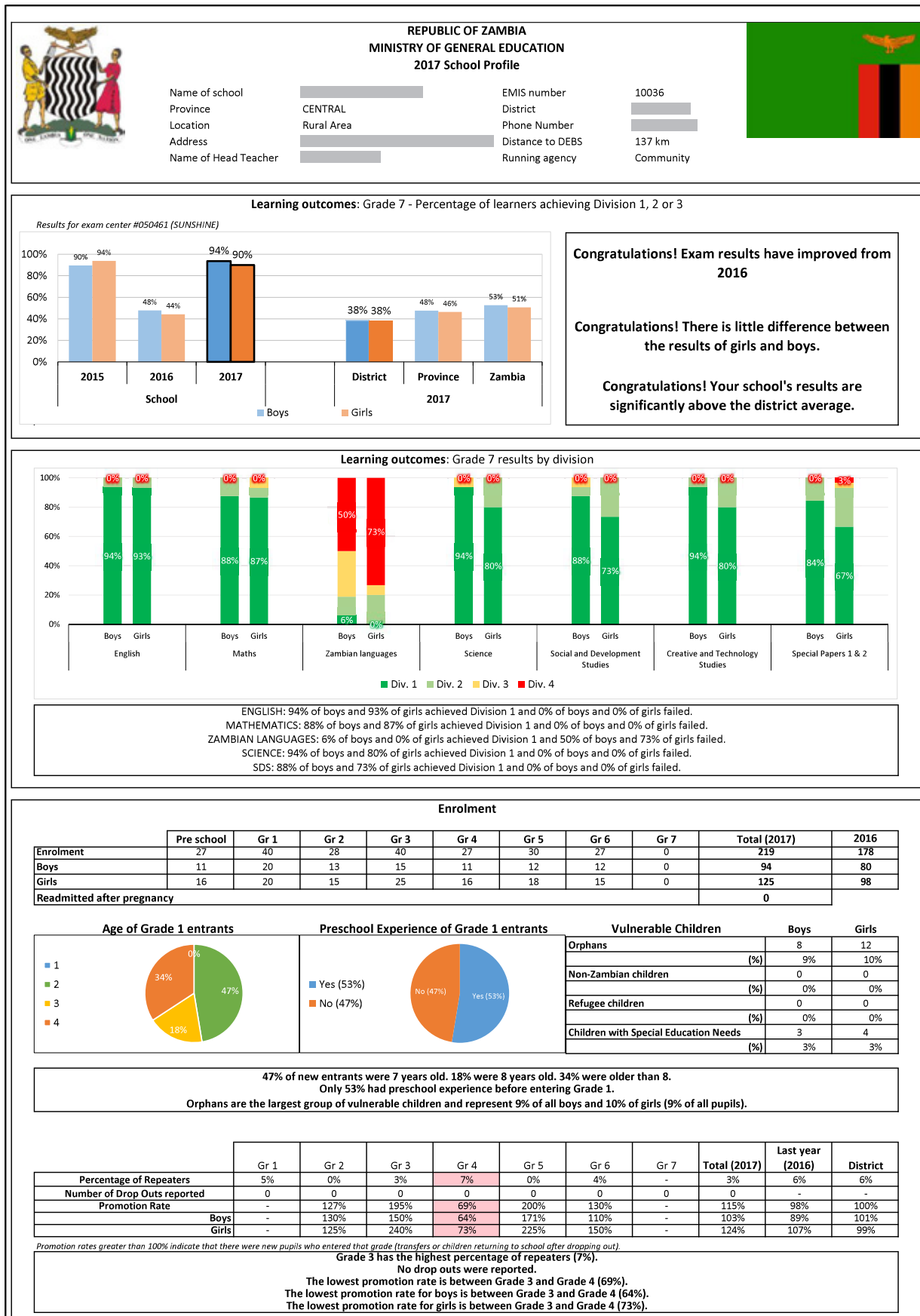
The goal is to continually improve the initiative. An impact evaluation for Zambia is ongoing and a formative evaluation of the DMS initiative as a whole will begin later in 2018. Overall, DMS demonstrates the value of combining support to governments with support to citizens to enhance accountability systems and improve school performance.

Next steps include implementing the evaluations and generating further knowledge about what works and what does not work in terms of parental/community participation in improving school performance.

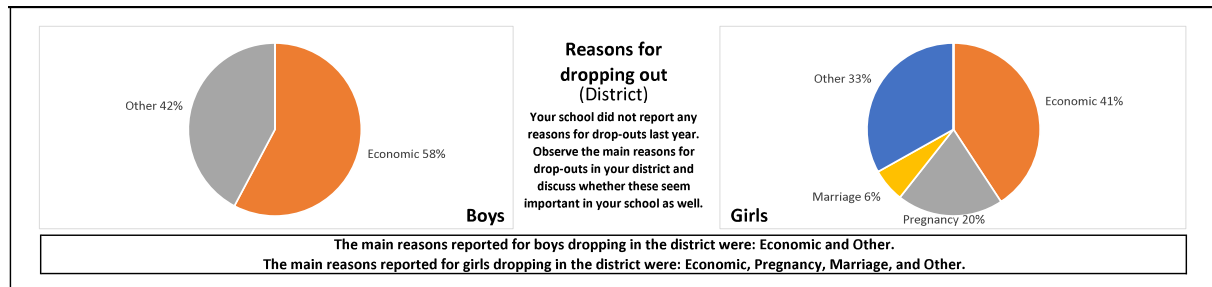
Graphic 1. School profile card for communities in Madagascar (Extract)

		DREN:		CISCO:		ZAP:		SEKOLY:		MARIPANGO:	
SEHOZOTRA:		FOTOANA nanaovana angon'isa		SEKOLY		SEKOLY	ZAP	SEKOLY	CISCO		
TONDRO		LAHY	VAVY	TOTALINY	Fampitahana ny zavamisy mihoatra ny tamin'ny taon-dasa	TOTALINY	TOTALINY	TOTALINY	TOTALINY		
											
 <p>Isan'ny zaza tsy tafiditra an-isekoly</p>											
 <p>Tahan'ny ankizy nitsoaka an-daharana</p>		26%	33%		29%		10%		22%		
 <p>Taham-pahombiazana</p>		53%	61%		56%		81%		53%		
 <p>Isan-janton'ny mamerin-taona</p>		23%	21%		22%		21%		26%		
											

Graphic 2. School profile card used in Zambia (Extract)







**Teachers and Physical Facilities**

The number of teachers and the pupil-teacher ratio relate to all 9 grades.

	Unqualified		Pre-School Certificate		Primary Certificate		Diploma and above		Total		2016
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Number of teachers	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	2
	0		0		1		2		3		

	Pre Prim	Gr 1	Gr 2	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	(2017)	(2016)	Std.
Average class size	-	40	28	40	27	30	27	-	32	31	40
Pupil-Teacher Ratio					73					89	40
District					56						

All teachers in the school are qualified to teach.  
The average class size in the school is 32 and the largest class size is 40 in Gr 1.  
To meet national standards your school requires 6 teachers (for Grades 1-9).

Pupil-Classroom Ratio			Pupil-Desk Ratio			Pupil-Toilet Ratio			
Number of learners per classroom			Number of learners sharing a 2-seater desk			Number of boys and girls per separated toilets			
	School	Std.		School	Std.	Boys	Std.	Girls	Std.
School	219	40	School	7	2	94	25	125	20
District	93		District	7		99		91	

To meet national standards your school requires 5 more classrooms.  
To meet national standards your school requires 80 more double desks.  
To meet national standards your school requires 3 more boys' toilets and 6 more girls' toilets.

Borehole pump

No Power

**Learning Materials**

Number of students sharing a single book for each subject (- indicates that there are no books for this grade and that subject)

Pupil-Textbook Ratio	Gr 1	Gr 2	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Total (2017)	2016	District
English	-	6	8	27	4	27	1	6	6	7
Mathematics	8	6	8	27	4	27	1			
Zambian languages	1	2	-	-	-	-	-			
Science	8	6	8	27	4	27	1			

# of textbooks needed	Gr 1	Gr 2	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Total
English	20	9	15	13	8	13	0	78
Mathematics	15	9	15	13	8	13	0	73
Zambian languages	0	0	20	14	15	14	0	63
Science	15	9	15	13	8	13	0	73
Total	50	27	65	53	39	53	0	287

To meet national standards your school requires 78 additional English textbooks. The greatest need is in Gr 1 where 20 textbooks are required.  
To meet national standards your school requires 73 additional Mathematics textbooks. The greatest need is in Gr 1 where 15 textbooks are required.  
To meet national standards your school requires 63 additional Zambian languages textbooks. The greatest need is in Gr 3 where 20 textbooks are required.  
To meet national standards your school requires 73 additional Science textbooks. The greatest need is in Gr 1 where 15 textbooks are required.

**Summary and Areas needing attention**

Congratulations! Exam results have improved from 2016  
Girls' Grade 7 exam results are much lower than those of boys.  
Your school's Grade 7 exam results are significantly above the district average.  
Subjects needing particular improvement include Zambian languages.

A very large proportion of children (53%) are overage when starting Grade 1: 34% are older than 8.  
The percentage of repeaters is relatively high (3%), especially in Grade 3 (7%).  
The promotion rate is very low from Grade 3 to Grade 4 (69%).  
The pupil-teacher ratio is relatively high, and much higher than the district's.  
Your school needs many additional classrooms, many additional desks, many additional boys' toilets, many additional girls' toilets.  
Your school needs many additional textbooks (287), especially in and for Gr 3.



# Case study 3: Zambia

## Abstract

The Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) is a Zambian civil society network that advocates for pro-poor development policies. Since 2000, the local non-governmental organization (NGO) has worked to ensure that government policies respond to the needs of Zambia's poor people. Overall, CSPR has found that poor people's well-being is negatively affected by a combination of the erratic funding of services and the poor implementation of policies to address certain aspects of poverty. Two streams of CSPR work in the area of social accountability have helped to tackle this negative combination.

The Deepening Accountability in Budget Execution project uses a scorecard tool to provide local communities with the means to monitor at the local level the delivery of pro-poor services in agriculture, education, health, social protection, and water and sanitation. This local-level monitoring aims to address the limited implementation of existing policies and provide citizens with the resources to engage with government officials at service points in their communities on the subject of budget releases from the Ministry of Finance. At the same time, CSPR supports the Service Delivery through Active Citizens and Responsive Leaders project, which provides expert analysis of government budgets across sectors and supports citizen engagement with different levels of government.

CSPR seeks to address the inequitable distribution of services in Zambia by connecting local-level monitoring and policy-level analyses to influence Ministry of Finance decisions on the timing and sequencing of funds as well as the actions of development committees at the local, district and provincial levels. Such an approach is sometimes called a 'sandwich strategy'.<sup>18</sup> The combined streams of work have allowed citizens to track budgets in different sectors, influence local service delivery and, along with other actors, help to shape policy.

## Background

Zambia has an estimated population of just over 16.8 million people.<sup>19</sup> The World Bank classifies Zambia as a lower-middle-income country.<sup>20</sup> Growth depends largely upon the export of copper and on agricultural production, but regrettably, recent economic growth has not translated into a reduced poverty rate. Fifty-four per cent of Zambians live in poverty, and the number of Zambians living in absolute poverty continues to rise as the population has grown at a faster rate than poverty has declined.<sup>21</sup> This apparent disparity between national economic growth and widespread poverty is at least partially the result of the relatively small gains made from mining exports, high inequality and specific policies that have failed to serve poor people, particularly in rural areas. Ultimately, policies and budgets that fail to provide timely and adequate resources lead to services that underperform. Poor services undermine the health, education and livelihoods of Zambians and contribute to sustained poverty, especially among children.

In response to these disparities and service failures, CSPR initiated the two projects: Deepening Accountability in Budget Execution, and Service Delivery through Active Citizens and Responsive Leaders. Together, the projects seek to equip 20 rural communities in 10 districts with the tools needed to successfully advocate for improved budget execution and service delivery in their communities. CSPR pursues these objectives through a mixture of traditional social accountability approaches, such as community scorecards at the local level, and policy and budget influence at the provincial and national levels, thus addressing the multi-level governance factors at play in Zambia's administrative systems. These approaches are linked through CSPR efforts to connect the various levels of initiatives.

The Ministry of Local Government and Housing has oversight of local governance. Local governments in Zambia include city councils, municipal councils and district councils. Local governments are elected and their funding comes primarily from local taxation, with only 3 per cent provided by

18 Fox, Jonathan, 'Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?', *World Development*, vol. 72, August 2015, pp. 346–361.

19 The Republic of Zambia Central Statistical Office, *Population and Demographic Projections 2011–2035*, CSO, Lusaka, July 2013. Available at <[www.zamstats.gov.zm/phocadownload/Zambia Census Projection 2011 - 2035.pdf](http://www.zamstats.gov.zm/phocadownload/Zambia%20Census%20Projection%202011-2035.pdf)>, accessed 23 April 2018.

20 World Bank Open Data, 'Zambia', World Bank Group, <<https://data.worldbank.org/country/zambia?view=chart>>, accessed 23 April 2018.

21 The Republic of Zambia Central Statistical Office, *2015 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey Report*, CSO, Lusaka, 2016. Available at <[www.zamstats.gov.zm/index.php/publications/category/27-living-conditions](http://www.zamstats.gov.zm/index.php/publications/category/27-living-conditions)>, accessed 20 March 2018.



central government.<sup>22</sup> As such, local governments are limited in their capacity to raise funds and do not receive sufficient sums from central government to adequately support local services and responsibilities.

Local government performance and service delivery have improved in many communities as a result of the CSPR social accountability work. In addition, the evidence generated by local participation in decision-making through the projects has helped to provide information on the impacts of funding flows, which can be used to influence policy at the district, provincial and national levels. This advocacy work has begun to contribute to changes in some areas by linking local accountability initiatives with national policies in ways that have had a positive impact on poor people in Zambia, and it is helping in a small way to redress the gap between economic growth and poverty reduction.

### Strategy and implementation

For more than 15 years, CSPR has led a network of dozens of civil society organizations to influence policy and budget priorities at the national level. The organization's overall objective is to ensure that the government of Zambia's policies, and its poverty reduction strategies in particular, effectively contribute to a substantial reduction in poverty. This extensive background in policy-level budget work prepared CSPR to move on to the next phase in its evolution, which focuses on the local-level monitoring of policies and budgets.

To support policy implementation, CSPR has developed a set of social accountability tools that measure service delivery inputs and performance in five sectors: agriculture, education, health, social protection, and water and sanitation. Twenty community facilitators drawn from established local groups (e.g., parent-teacher associations, neighbourhood watch committees, water and sanitation committees) then apply these tools.

Facilitators largely depend on two tools in particular. First, facilitators use the 'budget-tracking scorecard' to measure the degree to which government commitments to provide inputs, infrastructure, budgets or other entitlements have actually been delivered at the local level. CSPR is particularly well placed to support this type of monitoring because of its long history of tracking budgets from the national level to the provincial and district levels. Existing CSPR data provide a starting point for communities to monitor actual delivery at the local level.

The budget-tracking component tends to reveal local inefficiencies and possible leakages such as the misallocation or diversion of funds. Facilitators work closely with service providers and undertake on-site inspections of the services (or facilities) in question. Together, facilitators and service providers seek to verify service delivery inputs with concrete evidence such as account statements, receipts, and photographs of infrastructure. Information from this service assessment is recorded in the budget-tracking scorecard

– which lists a number of categories, from coverage of the service to maintenance of the service – to give a holistic view of the service under investigation (see *Graphic 1*).

Second, in addition to this more technical assessment, facilitators seek feedback and opinions about the quality of service delivery in each community via 'community scorecards'. Community members provide their feedback via focus groups, which are composed to reflect key socio-demographic criteria. Importantly, these groups help to ensure that the experience of traditionally marginalized groups is represented in the service assessment. Focus groups score the performance of key services and facilities based on criteria that they themselves generate. The discussion and debate that surrounds the generation of the community scorecard becomes the basis for inviting suggestions from the community on what reforms can be made to improve the service delivery situation. Community members provide concrete examples to illustrate their assessments of performance. Next, facilitators solicit suggestions of how to improve each service. Scores from a variety of focus groups are then collated and aggregated. (For an example of the service delivery scorecard, see *Graphic 2*.)

The experience of CSPR since it commenced its social accountability work in 2009 has shown that the community scorecard provides a critical mechanism for poor people to participate in processes that are inherently political in nature, like service monitoring. Establishing focus groups has helped to promote greater inclusion by bringing together women, men, youth, people with disabilities, and people living with HIV to exercise agency that would otherwise have been denied them.

Some of the problems identified through the social accountability processes can be solved at the local level. For example, communities and service providers themselves can often address teacher or nurse absenteeism, minor defects in public property and other aspects of service delivery quality. The combined use of the budget-tracking and community scorecards provides the basis for structured dialogue in meetings among community members, traditional leaders, service providers, and ministry and local government officials. Even when problems are well known, the structured, evidence-based methodology of the scorecard helps to promote and support constructive dialogue on the subject. These meetings offer service providers and government officials an opportunity to respond to community concerns and to elaborate a plan to improve service delivery quality.

While community-level meetings are essential, some problems cannot be resolved locally: these problems require the attention of higher-level officials. To link local- and higher-level mechanisms, CSPR helps to convene biannual 'interface meetings' among communities, ministries and elected officials. These meetings can improve coordination among stakeholders and enhance outcomes by ensuring greater coherence across different initiatives. Communities from

22 The Hunger Project, Participatory Local Democracy, 'Zambia', <<https://localdemocracy.net/countries/afri-ca-southern/zambia/>>, accessed 20 March 2018.

various geographical regions join in coalition to address common problems. To present a more statistically significant picture, facilitators aggregate scorecard evidence from several communities. Representatives from these communities then convene with representatives from the relevant ministries to discuss the findings.

CSPR works to ensure that the main content of community advocacy efforts is targeted at the specific individuals and ministries who have the authority to make the decisions that can improve services – and, in turn, community well-being. Meetings are designed and structured so that communities can present evidence and government can respond. At the conclusion of a meeting, the participants elaborate an action plan to which all stakeholders commit.

### **Collective action and coalition building: Combining local monitoring with budget tracking and policy influence**

CSPR balances its local monitoring with budget tracking and policy influence at the district, provincial and national levels, again adopting a sandwich approach. The combination of monitoring and policy influence can create a virtuous cycle, whereby policy influence benefits from the civic activism of communities, and communities benefit from the support of like-minded government officials involved in policy reform.

For example, through a series of round-table events, community members and CSPR representatives target budget planning and allocation committees at a variety of administrative levels. At the district level, CSPR helps communities to target the district development coordinating committees, while provincial-level matters are directed to the provincial development coordinating committees. Issues of national concern are directed to the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of National Development Planning or other relevant line ministry. All of these entities have some authority to correct systemic problems that emerge at the local level.

At the round-table events, community members and CSPR representatives depend on both local monitoring data and the annual CSPR *Budget Execution and Service Delivery Barometer* as the basis for their presentations and for outlining the key issues. The *Barometer* is the organization's three-part flagship report. In its first part, CSPR quantitatively assesses ministerial requests, allocations, disbursements, and spending in real time. Part two provides a qualitative assessment of government performance and budgetary efficiency, drawing on the evidence provided via interface meetings and focus group discussions at the local level. In the third part of the *Barometer*, CSPR summarizes the findings and makes recommendations to policymakers.

The *Barometer* report also provides an additional lever that can be used to steer decisions about local issues. For example, CSPR convened a round-table meeting with government officials in Senanga district in Western Province to discuss the *Barometer* findings. Representatives from the ministries of agriculture, education, health, infrastructure, water and sanitation, and social protection attended and engaged with members of the local community.

As well as proving useful at local meetings, *Barometer* recommendations also serve as the basis for a strong and sustained advocacy campaign in parliament. This is led by a core of 12 parliamentarians who represent the 10 communities that undertake local monitoring work. All 12 of them have been trained by CSPR in pro-poor budgeting and serve as official 'champions of poverty reduction'.

These parliamentarians also benefit from the 'civic muscle' provided by CSPR and the communities actively engaged in monitoring. Together, the citizens and their representatives serve as an 'insider/outsider' coalition (a different type of sandwich), which has helped to advance the interests of communities and create unity. For example, a champion of poverty reduction from Kasenengwa personally accompanied CSPR community members to the events that launched a campaign against extreme hunger and poverty. During the launch, she urged councillors and traditional leaders to put aside their perceived differences and unite to fight poverty and hunger. The visibility of high-level officials at such local events helps to increase the credibility of local monitoring groups and discourages local officials who complain that 'audits' go beyond the remit of civil society.

CSPR has also successfully cultivated support from the executive branch, which further enhances the legitimacy of local monitoring processes. In particular, the explicit support of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of National Development Planning has been critical to the success of local monitoring, because the influential ministries directly instruct other departments to participate in the exercise. Facilitators deliver a ministerial letter to government officials and service providers to encourage their participation. Moreover, CSPR depends upon a strong relationship with the Office of the Auditor General, which can investigate any serious misappropriation. This sandwich strategy – combining bottom-up community action with top-down bureaucratic pressure – has succeeded in persuading many government officials and service providers to participate.

### **Results**

In sum, CSPR has depended upon the combination of the two projects, which instil rigorous policy and budget analysis on the one hand and local monitoring with communities on the other. These strategies have been enriched by insider/outsider coalitions between civil society and parliamentarians, and strong relationships with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of National Development Planning, which have supplied top-down authority to complement the bottom-up community activity. Ultimately, this mix of monitoring and advocacy has led to important improvements in service delivery as well as to policies and budgets that better represent the interests of the poor.

At the local level, action plans have resulted in improved services, especially for vulnerable groups (see *Table 1*). For example, scorecards have helped to engage young people to focus on issues related to access to education and to define specific problems in their communities. More than 1,300 youth have newly enrolled in secondary school in Chipata and Jumbo, after the government built and opened two

new schools in response to young people's demands that it address the problem of long distances between their communities and existing schools. In Site, one of the poorest communities included in the project area, community members successfully advocated for two additional teachers to work in the local primary schools, in response to scorecards that revealed non-compliant pupil-teacher ratios.

Scorecards have also helped to highlight issues that affect women's access to health care. Similarly, the scorecard process helped to reveal, and promote public discussion about, staff shortages at the rural health centres in Kaumba and Mawawa. Other encouraging results have begun to emerge as details of the issues discussed at interface meetings have been collected. These types of benefits have also extended to particularly marginalized groups that depend upon direct support for their well-being. Infrastructure has improved too as result of the monitoring process. Similarly positive results have occurred when the issues raised at interface meetings have been gathered, aggregated and presented at higher levels of government, which serves to illustrate the potential multi-level governance aspects of the accountability approach (see *Table 2*).

In addition, the local monitoring data have helped to influence national policies and budgets. For example, pre-budget submissions by CSPR to the Ministry of Finance, which included evidence from local monitoring processes, influenced the allocation of funds for pro-poor government projects in a variety of sectors. The submissions also persuaded the government to set up a special audit department for extractives within the Zambia Revenue Authority to better monitor tax compliance by mining companies. It was, in part, pressure from local communities concerned that local services were not benefiting from the revenue generated by mining activities that led to the establishment of this crucial check on the power of extractives companies.

### Lessons learned

Central to the success of social accountability approaches are local-level relationships and, often, as illustrated in Zambia, a strong linkage with higher-level initiatives. Social accountability processes tend to flow much more smoothly when a certain degree of trust exists between CSPR, local communities, service providers, sector departments and local government. Trust takes a long time to build, which

can frustrate development partners and other stakeholders, and obstacles such as limited data sharing cannot always be overcome. The success of processes such as interface meetings depends largely upon community dynamics, which can either facilitate or obstruct a community's ability to act collectively.

CSPR invests significant time in efforts to better understand government responsibilities for services and to foster a productive rapport with communities. This respectful relationship puts communities in the driver's seat as principals as opposed to NGO agents. Sometimes this calls for adjustment in how communities perceive NGOs, as communities have typically looked to NGOs for resources and not for support for accountability processes. CSPR wants to illustrate the practical, long-term benefits to service delivery quality for communities that engage in such processes, and often points to the successes enjoyed by those communities involved. CSPR also encourages community participation by sourcing facilitators from within the actual communities themselves. This reliance on local capacity and ownership helps to ensure contextually driven processes that respond to the interests of service users.

Beyond the local level, CSPR has learned about some of the challenges and potential linkages in bringing together local-level processes with national-level advocacy and campaigning. 'Vertical integration' – the movement of accountability lessons from the local to the regional or national level – is currently one of the key challenges in the world of social accountability. In practice, such integration poses serious organizational challenges in terms of both the quantity and quality of data available. Local monitoring data from 20 communities are clearly not representative of the thousands of communities in Zambia. Statistically significant samples will probably never exist, but CSPR is nevertheless integrating information and communications technology and mobilizing resources to improve the timeliness of monitoring and reporting. With more resources in place, the local monitoring project will be gradually scaled up as demand for it grows among communities not already involved. Whatever the level of action involved, the core goal of engaging communities to strengthen service delivery remains the key task. This means that maintaining relationships and building trust – at local, regional and national levels – is central to the sustainability of social accountability initiatives.

**Table 1. Examples of local service improvements**

Community	Example of service improvement as a result of community monitoring
Kamlaza and Kalaba	New agricultural extension officer posted
Kamlaza, Jumbe and Singani	New storage sheds built for agricultural products
Kamlaza, Jumbe, Mawawa and Site	Improved transparency of, and participation by beneficiaries in, the Farmer Input Support Programme
Site	New primary school teachers posted, bringing total to four
Mawawa	Two borehole wells sunk
Mansa and Nchelenge	Teacher housing constructed and health care worker housing renovated
Mujika and Mawawa	Improved transparency in the collection of voluntary contributions to parent-teacher associations
Mujika	Two new nurses deployed
Mujika	Three new nurses deployed
Singani	New nurse deployed
Mawawa	New clinical officer and midwife deployed
Mutono	Reduced absenteeism among health care staff
Mutono	New midwife deployed
Site	Health care facility renovated
Mutono	Renovated examination room
Chipata	Installation of solar panel and refrigerator for medicines
Site	Renovated health facility
Kamlaza, Jumbe, Mujika and Site	Water pump installed



Table 2. Examples of policy-level results

Policy-level recommendations from the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) to government	Outcomes
<b>Agriculture</b>	
Delays in implementation were undermining the delivery of farming inputs and ultimately harming productivity. CSPR recommended the creation of an e-voucher system to accelerate delivery.	The government launched the Farmer Input Support Programme e-voucher system in October 2015. It targeted 241,000 small-scale farmers in 13 selected districts during the 2015/16 agricultural season. The government intended to include more districts from the start of the 2016/17 farming season.
<b>Education</b>	
Schools struggle to attract teachers because of the poor housing provided for them. CSPR recommended budget allocations for the rehabilitation of existing school infrastructure. CSPR also recommended an increase in the overall education budget, with a focus on recruiting special education teachers.	Budget allocations increased from ZK8.61 billion in 2014 to ZK9.4 billion in 2015 (20.2% of the national budget) but then reduced to ZK9.1 billion in 2016 (17.2% of the budget) as inflation rose to more than 20%.
<b>Health</b>	
In addition to recommending an overall increase in the health budget, CSPR recommended investment in the rehabilitation of existing health care facilities, in housing for health care workers and in the purchase of basic diagnostic equipment. CSPR specifically recommended budget allocations to train health care workers in addressing gender-based violence.	Although the overall health budget has decreased, the budget for the construction and rehabilitation of health care facilities increased from ZK268 million in 2015 to ZK340.7 million in 2016. There have been no budget line items to support training on gender-based violence, however.
<b>Social protection</b>	
CSPR recommended the expansion of cash transfers.	By 2015, Zambia's social cash transfer scheme had been expanded to 50 districts – covering 145,000 households – but had not yet reached all districts.
<b>Transparency</b>	
CSPR recommended the publication of budget receipts at all levels of government.	Ministries, provinces and spending agencies do not publish disbursement information, but it can be obtained upon request from the Ministry of Finance or from provincial and district offices.

## Graphic 1 Budget tracking scorecard

DATE:  
DISTRICT:  
COMMUNITY:  
SERVICE DELIVERY POINT:

### Budget Tracking Score cards

#### Budget Tracking Score card for Water and Sanitation Sector

INPUT INDICATOR (per quarter)	PLANNED OR BUDGETED		ACTUAL		REMARKS/COMMENTS/ EVIDENCE
	Entitlement	Amount	Entitlement	Amount	
<b>A. Coverage or Distribution</b>					
A.1 Expenditure on domestic piped supply					
A.2 Number of public taps					
A.3 Number of hand-pumps					
A.4 Number of protected wells					
<b>B. Equipment</b>					
B.1 Expenditure on pipes, tubes, valves, water meters					
B.2 Inventory of Tools & Machinery					
<b>C. Labour</b>					
C.1 Provision for construction labour					
C.2 Provision for maintenance labour					
<b>D. Maintenance</b>					
D.1 Water quality testing frequency					
D.2 Water table monitoring frequency					
D.3 Overhead Reservoir cleaning frequency					
<b>E. Sanitation Inputs</b>					
F.1 Number of Sewer Connections provided					
F.2 Number of Soak-pits provided					
F.3 Number of Public Latrines provided					

## Graphic 2 Service delivery scorecard

DATE:  
DISTRICT:  
COMMUNITY:  
GROUP:

### Service delivery Scorecards Infrastructure Community Scorecard: Feeder Road and Bridges

Standard Performance Indicators	Score (0-5)	Reasons/Remarks
<b>1. Quality of Road and Bridge</b>		
1.1 Absence of Cracks and holes		
1.2 Presence of curvdets		
1.3 No Flooding of Bridge		
<b>2. Access and Use</b>		
2.1 Lack of Congestion		
2.2 Link to highway		
2.3 Close to Households		
<b>3. Transparency and Efficiency of Contruccion</b>		
3.1 Size and Width of road		
3.2 Transparent contract procedure		
3.3 Timeliness of construction		
<b>4. Maintenance</b>		
4.1 Maintenance of feeder roads used to reach the community		
4.2 Maintenance of Bridge used to reach the community		
4.3 Maintenance frequently done		
4.4 Kilometres of feeder road maintained		









