

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Sector Accountability and Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services

Report of the Expert Group Meeting

Expert Group Meeting

*Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Sector Accountability and Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of
Public Services*

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DESA

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Contents

Acknowledgments.....	iv
Foreword.....	v
Executive Summary	vi
Part One: Overview of the Expert Group Meeting	1
1. Background.....	1
2. Overall Framework for the Deliberations.....	3
3. Objectives of the Report.....	5
Part Two: EGM Proceedings	7
1. The first session: Enhancing Accountability and Preventing Corruption (EAPC) in.....	7
Public Service Delivery	
1.1. Concepts and Terminology	
1.2. Scope of Analysis and Rationale	
2. The second session: Practices and institutions that engage citizens for EAPC-PSD	13
2.1. Bottom-up initiatives—Citizens and civil society organisations	
2.2. Top-down initiatives--Governments	
2.3. Win-win initiatives—Citizens and governments	
3. The third session: Public policies and strategies for EAPC-PSD.....	22
3.1. Building the capacity	
3.2. Creating an enabling environment	
4. The fourth session: International Cooperation for EAPC-PSD.....	28
Part Three: EGM Conclusions and Recommendations	32

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Foreword

The Development Management Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DMB/DPADM/UNDESA) convened an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on *Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Sector Accountability and to Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services*, held at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, Austria on 7-8 July 2011. This Report describes the EGM background, preparations and objectives. It summarizes the proceedings, outcomes and recommendations.

The EGM was attended by forty experts representing twenty countries (Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Mexico, Netherlands, Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) and several regional and international organizations, including the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the World Bank, among others.

The EGM was the first event in a chain of substantive analysis. It was followed by a first Capacity-building Workshop on *Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Service Delivery and Strengthen Accountability*, which took place in Vienna, Austria on 11-13 July 2011, and which hosted thirty-seven experts, including members of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), and practitioners active in the developmental sectors. A second Capacity-building Workshop on *Engaging Citizens to Counter Corruption for Better Public Service Delivery and Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals* also took place in Marrakesh, Morocco on 26-27 October 2011, and brought seventy-five experts together, including members of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA).

The EGM experts spent two full days discussing and presenting on the participatory approaches, tools and strategies of public administration in their respective countries and areas of specialization. Their contributions concentrated on development management strategies oriented to improve public service delivery via citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD. The overall objective was to contribute to the needed progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the fast approaching deadline of 2015.

Executive Summary

The Development Management Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DMB/DPADM/UNDESA) convened an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Sector Accountability and to Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services, held at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, Austria on 7-8 July 2011. This Report describes the EGM background, preparations and objectives. It summarizes the proceedings, outcomes and recommendations.

The EGM on Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Sector Accountability and to Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services was the first one in a series of substantive undertakings towards two specific outputs planned for DMB's 2010-2011 Work Programme:

(a) A book: It will examine the citizen engagement modalities planned or implemented by governments across the world with the implicit or explicit objectives of enhancing accountability and preventing corruption (EAPC) in public service delivery (PSD). The book, expected to be released in December 2011, will probe the emerging practices, and the established and recent trends of citizen engagement in public service delivery for EAPC. It will be an evidence-based and comparative analysis of citizen engagement institutions, policies, strategies and tools in the following regional clusters: Latin America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Asia, the Pacific, and the Middle East and North Africa.

(b) A global knowledge base: It will compile, inter alia, the multidimensional aspects (systems, institutions, policies, strategies, and tools) of citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD (used henceforth to refer to "Enhancing Accountability and Preventing Corruption in Public Service Delivery"). It will provide users with systematically organized primary and secondary data on all subfields and sectors of public administration for purposes of policy analysis and knowledge-building. It will be built, updated and managed by DPADM with contributions from development practitioners from all corners of the world. It will aim to substantiate and enrich policy dialogue, analysis and decision-making by governments along with the informed participation of non-State actors.

As a building block to these two outputs, the EGM was organized as part of a series of meetings aiming to take stock of the new practices and innovative initiatives of citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD. In addition to the EGM, the series included:

(a) A first Capacity-building Workshop: It was on Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Service Delivery and Strengthen Accountability and took place in Vienna, Austria on 11-13 July 2011, and which hosted thirty-seven experts, including members of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), and practitioners active in the developmental sectors covered by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Workshop sought to complement the EGM by

a targeted practitioner's focus on "what works best under given conditions." It underscored the pressing need to take stock of the established and planned citizen engagement initiatives for EAPC-PSD.

(b) A second Capacity-building Workshop: It was on the same theme and took place in Marrakesh, Morocco on 26-27 October 2011. It hosted seventy-five eminent accountability and corruption prevention experts representing governments, international organizations, academia and research institutions, civil society and the private sector. These experts shared experiences and best practices on promoting accountability and preventing corruption through innovative citizen engagement practices for better public service delivery and the achievement of the MDGs. While the outputs of this Workshop complemented those of the preceding meetings in Vienna, Austria, its comparative advantage was in its stronger focus on the prevention of corruption. Its immediate output consisted of a taxonomy of citizen engagement institutions, policies, strategies and tools that are effective in preventing corruption in the public sector.

The EGM, as the first link in this chain of substantive analysis, brought together experts from the governmental and non-governmental sectors, with rich backgrounds in the topics covered by its agenda. The experts spent two full days discussing and presenting on the participatory approaches, tools and strategies of public administration in their respective countries and areas of specialization. Their contributions concentrated on development management strategies oriented to improve public service delivery via citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD. The overall objective was to contribute to the needed progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the approaching deadline of 2015.

The EGM examined the main topic of Engaging Citizens to Enhance Accountability and Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services through both conceptual and empirical perspectives.

On the conceptual plane, the first session took on the task of creating a definitional map of accountability in various disciplines, sectors and contexts. The scope of analysis and the rationale were laid out in order to demonstrate the possible linkages between EAPC-PSD and the MDGs. The new terminology arising from the innovative applications of joint or shared accountability was acknowledged, particularly vis-à-vis horizontal governance arrangements, and contrasted with the more traditional dimensions of the notion, particularly regarding vertical accountability, which raises diverse issues when several parties are involved in the delivery of public services. Also discussed on the conceptual plane, were performance management and integrity in public service delivery, and concepts adjacent to accountability, such as corruption prevention, social capital, civil society and trust. Special attention was devoted to accountability as a general responsibility of government towards all citizens and based on the principle of equality before the law and accountability to the poor and the marginalized groups more specifically and based on the norms

of equity.

On the empirical plane, the second and third sessions covered respectively the institutions and practices, and the policies and strategies of citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD. This empirical exercise focused both on top-down and bottom-up initiatives as well as the more eclectic forms of accountability. It attempted to model accountability frameworks, policies and strategies from both the supply-driven and demand-led perspectives, and with due attention to the contextual, historical, cultural and circumstantial contingencies. The fourth session covered the international dimension and asked how to best align the mandates and activities of international and multilateral organizations with the diverse needs of development stakeholders and citizens, and ipso facto, how to more effectively serve the Member States of the United Nations.

The outcomes of the EGM can be summarized as follows:

- There is a need to undertake empirically-grounded evaluative research on the modes of citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD with focus on the specific strengths and weaknesses of each given modality.
- Both the soft (relational) and the hard (technical) skills of civil society organizations, citizen groups, public officials and public organizations must be strengthened with focus on the contextual, historical and cultural idiosyncrasies.
- Evidence-based approaches to capacity-building along with the adequate use of technology, particularly the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in public service delivery, can be used to make social accountability stronger and sustainable, and vice-versa.
- Accountability institutions, policies, strategies and tools are more effective when they combine traditional/formal modes of account-giving such as auditing, with the more recent pluralistic/informal modes of shared and social accountability.
- Accountability can be effectively used as a framework of strategies and processes in the fight against corruption, particularly through championing the high-achievers of EAPC-PSD in public administration and civil society.
- International cooperation on strengthening civil society and promoting connectivity between state and non-state actors should be encouraged.

Anonymous evaluations by participants were generally very positive, with especially high ratings for the relevance and value-added of the EGM. There was strong consensus that the EGM objectives had been met. Suggestions for improvements included allowing more time for experts and countries to share experiences, particularly with respect to the specific challenges raised during the presentatio

Part One: Overview of the Expert Group Meeting

1. Background

Over the past decade, discussions on the emerging term and concept of citizen engagement have been unsystematic, particularly vis-à-vis corruption prevention. The modicum of incipient analysis has not gone beyond single case- and small-N studies documenting success stories and lesson-learned. Relevant accounts of improved public service delivery through the effective use of citizen engagement policies and strategies by governments and other governance actors can be found in Australia, Brazil, Chile, India, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, to mention a few.

These experiences have been quite diverse, encompassing a range of instruments, methods, procedures, legal and administrative frameworks with different schemes and degrees of enforcement. They have also faced dissimilar but functionally comparable challenges along the way. Together, they point to the need to answer the following key questions regarding citizen engagement in EAPC-PSD:

- What are some of the common difficulties faced by governments in envisaging and undertaking citizen engagement initiatives in EAPC-PSD?
- How can some governments surmount the obstacles while others are able to turn them into opportunities to leapfrog?
- Where do the fault lines lie between lack of accountability, ramping corruption and stalled development?
- Why should policy-makers pay attention, now more than ever, to the dyad of social accountability-corruption prevention in public service delivery?

These issues, although far from being exhaustive, are highly relevant within the context of the United Nations' international development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This relevancy is also obvious in the following conclusion of the Member States at the United Nations Global Summit on the MDGs, which took place in New York in September 2010:

“We take note of the lessons learned and successful policies and approaches in the implementation and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and recognize that with increased political commitment, these could be replicated and scaled up for accelerating progress, including by:

(...)

- (e) supporting participatory, community-led strategies aligned with national development priorities and strategies;
- (f) promoting universal access to public and social services and providing social protection floors;
- (g) improving capacity to deliver quality services equitably;
- (h) implementing social policies and programmes, including appropriate conditional cash-transfer programmes, and investing in basic services for health, education, water and sanitation;
- (i) ensuring the full participation of all segments of society, including the poor and the disadvantaged, in decision-making processes;

(...)

- (l) enhancing opportunities for women and girls and advancing the economic, legal and political empowerment of women;
- (n) working towards transparent and accountable systems of governance at the national and international levels;

Ensuring accountability and preventing corruption are of paramount importance when it comes to improving public services that are directly related to the achievement of the MDGs in the targeted areas of healthcare, education, employment, environment and development cooperation. The necessity to empower the poor, women and children, the marginalized and the vulnerable is a crosscutting challenge. Guided by this rationale and committed to serving the Member States, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), through the Development Management Branch of its Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DMB/DPADM), organized the Expert Group Meeting on Engaging Citizens to Enhance Public Sector Accountability and Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services in Vienna, Austria on 7-8 July 2011.

2. Overall Framework of the Deliberations

Prior to the EGM, preparations in the form of substantive analysis of the concept of accountability were carried out by the DMB/DPADM/UNDESA. A Background Paper on Accountability in the Public Sector: A Multidisciplinary Review of the Concept was drafted and posted on the EGM website. The paper seeks to offer a comprehensive analysis of the definitions and practices of accountability in the public sector and raises questions vis-à-vis the implementation of accountability paradigms in diverse settings siding with a continuous, as opposed to a dichotomous, understanding of accountability.

To prepare for the EGM, the DMB/DPADM/UNDESA also compiled and posted online extensive research undertaken previously by the branch, specifically on the topics of auditing, including social audit tools and mechanisms, and participatory and transparent governance. Illustrative frameworks, sets of questions and discussion points were prepared to guide the thematic discussions. A detailed annotated agenda was distributed in advance and uploaded to the EGM website, offering all experts a list of common key questions to ponder. Finally, several other external reading materials pertinent to the subject were assembled and posted online.

The EGM consisted of four topics and seven sub-topics, each organized around separate sessions and sub-sessions. Each session, chaired by a developmental expert, started with three or four presentations followed by interactive discussions among the participating experts who brought their first-hand experiences and up-to-date information from the field on citizen engagement initiatives for EAPC-PSD.¹ The EGM took place over a period of two days in the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna on 7-8 July 2011. All presentations are available on the EGM website at <http://www.unpan.org/2011EGM-CE>.

Briefly, the four session and the seven sub-session themes are:

¹ All presentations and background documentation including the programme and the concept note can be found at www.unpan.org/2011EGM-CE

Session I: Enhancing Accountability and Preventing Corruption (EAPC) in Public Service Delivery (PSD):

- (i) Concepts and Terminology, and
- (ii) Scope of Analysis and Rationale

Session II: Practices and Institutions that engage citizens for EAPC-PSD:

- (i) Bottom-up Initiatives from Citizens and Civil Society Organizations;
- (ii) Top-down Initiatives from Governments; and
- (iii) Win-Win Initiatives from both Citizens and Governments

Session III: Public Policies and Strategies for EAPC-PSD:

- (i) Building the Capacity;
- (ii) Creating an Enabling Environment

Session IV: International Cooperation for EAPC-PSD

Following the final session on International Cooperation for EAPC-PSD, a Rapporteur from the DMB/DPADM/UNDESA summarized the main points of the discussions inviting all participants to contribute to the drafting of the EGM Report.

3. Objectives of the Report

The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) had the following four immediate objectives:

- showcase relevant experiences and policy initiatives and trends of EAPC-PSD towards sharing and enhancing knowledge in public administration and development management;
- forge partnerships in the areas relevant to EAPC-PSD towards improving collaboration for sustainable development; and
- collect primary information on the current local, national and regional accountability and anti-corruption initiatives
- feed the resulting synthesis into a comprehensive analysis of EAPC-PSD towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The EGM had the following three ultimate objectives:

- provide creative ideas, fresh perspectives and new avenues of cooperation to the Member States on the design, implementation and evaluation of citizen engagement initiatives for EAPC-PSD towards the achievement of the MDGs;
- assist the Member States regarding the effective adaptation and adoption of citizen engagement initiatives for EAPC-PSD, particularly in the specific developmental areas covered by the MDGs; and
- support pro-poor development through a multidimensional approach based on harnessing citizen engagement initiatives for EAPC-PSD by government, civil society, private sector, academia, multilateral lending institutions, and regional and international development organizations.

With these objectives, the Report is an analytical summary of the deliberations with a focus on the general trends, points of emphasis, common concerns and repeated questions expressed by the participating Experts representing a rich array of:

- disciplinary backgrounds (inter alia history, political science, sociology, international law, security studies, economics, statistics, public administration, public management and public policy);
- theoretical perspectives (inter alia theory of change, complex adaptive systems, governance, participation, democratization, equity, public choice, social justice); and
- methodological tools (single case studies, regional foci, cross-cultural comparative analyses, personal experiences, analytical narratives).

The analytical approach adopted in this report is different from a chronologically-organized enumerative method. Accordingly, the aim is not to present a verbatim transcript or a descriptive output of “who said what.” Instead, the focus is on the main pillars of the discussions with preference given to revisited concepts. While this approach comes at the expense of nuances and details, much is gained in terms of clarity vis-à-vis the actual and possible linkages among the concepts, their background conditions, possible causes, implicit and explicit symptoms, and implications.

Part Two: EGM Proceedings

The EGM started with a short introduction on procedural matters from the UNDESA staff. The results-oriented focus of the proceedings along with the threefold emphasis on citizen engagement concepts, institutions and policies for EAPC-PSD were stressed. The experts were urged to adhere to the ultimate objective of linking theory and practice directly and explicitly with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) while staying confined to the realm of public service delivery.

An introductory speech by Jo Dedeysne-Amann of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) started the discussions by situating EAPC-PSD at the centre of sustainable development. Referring to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), UNODC praised the effective interagency cooperation with UNDESA on fighting corruption exemplified, among other things, by the newly established United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) category of Preventing and combating corruption in public service. UNPSA organized annually by the DPADM/UNDESA awards the achievements of public service institutions that lead to a more effective and responsive public administration.

UNODC underscored several elements in fighting corruption in public service delivery through assisting governments with the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. These elements included:

- reliable, valid and robust data to detect the vulnerable points to corruption, and to devise customized, as opposed to generic, solutions;
- capacity-building for the effective implementation of the legal principles and regulatory measures;
- open and easy access to quality information by non-state actors in compliance with the Article 13 of the Convention; and
- international development cooperation and exchange of experiences and good practices in preventing and countering corruption.

Following this introduction, the thematic sessions began.

1. First Session: Enhancing Accountability and Preventing Corruption (EAPC) in Public Service Delivery (PSD)

The first thematic session aimed at (i) establishing a common vocabulary for the meeting, and (ii) demonstrating the conceptual linkages between accountability and corruption prevention. The driving questions were:

- Why is EAPC-PSD intrinsically important and where does it stand compared to other PSD notions such as efficiency, equity, coverage and reliability, among others?
- Does it make sense to address jointly accountability and corruption from the perspective of public policy-making?
- How may public strategies for EAPC-PSD be interrelated, and what are their relationship with access to information and transparency?
- Should upstream/long-route (e.g., procurement) or downstream/short-route (e.g., street-level bureaucrat-citizen) PSD be the primary focus in examining citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD?
- What may be the advantages and the disadvantages of engaging citizens in public services for EAPC?

The Session consisted of two sub-sessions: (i) Concepts and Terminology; and (ii) Scope of Analysis and Rationale.

1.1. Concepts and Terminology

This first sub-session was chaired by Jalal Abdel-Latif of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the initial presentations were made by Enrique Peruzzotti (Argentina), CEPA Member Meredith Edwards (Australia), and Tero Erkkila (Finland).

Presentations

The presentations underlined the increasingly complex nature of accountability in service delivery arrangements. The standard understanding of democratic accountability as being based primarily on elections was questioned, as was the unilateral use of the conventional state-led accountability mechanisms. Two new and mutually inclusive developments in the field of accountability were underlined: (i) the new types of shared accountability mechanisms, and other forms of accountability as complements to vertical accountability to citizens through parliaments and elections; and (ii) the emerging accountability forms and understandings under the rubric of articulated oversight, and through collaboration among state and non-state actors.

Regarding shared accountability, three possible paths were outlined: (i) more than one government agency partnering together, and several ministers becoming jointly responsible for results; (ii) two or more levels of government (for example, national, state and local) cooperating to deliver services; and (iii) non-state parties collaborating with the government to

deliver services.

Regarding articulated oversight, three consecutive steps of social accountability were enumerated: (i) transparency and access to information; (ii) collective organization and empowerment; and (iii) activation of horizontal accountability mechanisms, including reputation-related sanctions.

Policy councils, as examples of hybrid formations between vertical and horizontal accountability, were praised for their instrumentality in (i) increasing the inclusiveness of participation and empowering the marginalized segments of populations; (ii) replacing patron-client linkages with more open and deliberative channels of state-society engagement; and (iii) culminating in more effective public policies and egalitarian distribution of public goods and services.

Finally, the positive impact of the new accountability tools notwithstanding, the viability of the traditional accountability mechanisms was affirmed, participation and deliberation underscored as being parts rather than independent of them. In this respect, the need to establish the actual mechanisms for holding public officials accountable was emphasized.

Discussion

The first sub-session on concepts and terminology set the stage towards a common denominator of accountability in public service delivery. First, the new reality of complex, multi-layered and multi-scalar dimensions of accountability frameworks, actors and mechanisms was introduced. Particularly stressed were the need for discerning the different modes of public administration and mapping the new models of collaborative action and networks onto the new policy environment, and vice-versa. Second, stress was put on quality information, both in specialized and non-specialized forms, as the core of accountability initiatives. Specifically, the need for objective, reliable and empirical research and evaluations on citizen engagement and service delivery was stressed. Third, citizen engagement initiatives, and their pros and cons were discussed.

On the first topic of the changing meanings and forms of accountability, the polycentric engagement practices consisted, inter alia, of interagency cooperation, federal-local government collaboration and state-society partnerships. Born as result of the complexities spurred by globalization, technology and interdependency, the new policy environment characterized by shared accountabilities and articulated oversight meant a proliferation of new social accountability mechanisms and strategies. This did not equate to the end of the conventional hierarchy-based accountability, but it did implicate the necessity to give new accountability definitions, recognize the new accountability actors, and to meaningfully and effectively blend the new with the traditional. Caution was advised, in this respect, against designing one-sided accountability systems that encompass one or the other type of

accountability mechanisms rather than integrating both types while heeding the context and the specific issues at hand.

On the second topic of information-related challenges, proper measurement and adequate use of information by citizens for appropriate action were stressed. Measurement dilemmas included (i) the divide between the quantitative and qualitative methodologies used to collect evidence-based information; (ii) the legitimacy and transparency of the criteria-setter; (iii) potential collusion between these criteria and internal performance evaluation standards; (iv) the objectivity of data collection and compilation processes; as well as (v) the procedural limitations on activities that are not easily quantifiable by their very nature.

Following measurement, information needs to be accessed, organized, used, adequately framed and acted upon in order to trigger the most appropriate accountability processes. Therefore, also underlined were capacity building, awareness-raising and collective-action enabling for citizens' effective use of information.

Thirdly, a discussion about the relative advantages and the less obvious disadvantages of citizen engagement in public service provision and delivery took place. The advantages consisted of increased inclusiveness, and the ownership and legitimacy of governance processes and policies. The less obvious disadvantages ranged from capacity building and cost of engagement to concerns about adequate representation of all groups and the reluctance of governments to shed power, hence the lingering accountability question: are governments genuinely committed to citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD?

While the different levels, types and layers of accountability were delineated, it was also underlined that the reality of lack of accountability in the field is far from research-driven typologies. Governance and Social Accountability are not simply theory versus practice. They are life or death issues to the poorest.

1.2. Scope of Analysis and Rationale

This sub-session was chaired by Angela Capati-Carusso of the DMB/DPADM/UNDESA, and the presentations were made by the following experts: Oluajo Babatunde (Nigeria), Krista Nadakavukaren (Switzerland), Robert Sattler of INTOSAI, Karen Sirker of the World Bank, and Ria Brouwers (Netherlands).

Presentations

The presentations first triangulated accountability deficits, corruption vulnerabilities and governance loopholes. Corruption was often considered as one likely outcome of governance processes devoid of transparency and citizen engagement. In this understanding, two issues seemed critical: (i) public servants and citizens seeing accountability as part of their

professional and civic duties; and (ii) the attributes of the organizational framework being more or less amenable to EAPC-PSD. Constructive engagement between governments and civil society/citizen groups as an intrinsic feature of good and effective governance was based, inter alia, on the principles of (i) citizen monitoring of government services; (ii) government protection of citizen rights; and (iii) government-citizen espousal of community welfare.

The presentations then twinned the concepts of transparency and accountability, and contrasted with actions to prevent and fight corruption. With regard to transparency and accountability, the importance of access to open and reliable information as a prerequisite was stressed, while acknowledging that information per se is insufficient in fighting corruption. The significance of quality information as a pillar of effective performance audits and accountable systems was underscored on several occasions. Not only the basic content of information, but also its framing and the effective use of the right communication channels to deliver it were tackled as important components of the overall efforts towards EAPC-PSD.

Thirdly, with regard to preventing and fighting corruption, accountability was deemed to subsume anticorruption activities, due largely to its more encompassing meaning centred on integrity on the one hand, and its competency concerns on the other. Social accountability together with transparency and effective service delivery were indicated to be amongst the necessary conditions to prevent and fight corruption. With regard to translating transparency and accountability into effective corruption prevention, the need to map out the steps and the right mechanisms was highlighted on more than one occasion.

Also emphasized in this sub-session was the necessity to pay due attention to the contextual, historical and cultural, or “adaptive” factors grounded in political economy and that affect the outcome of anti-corruption activities in addition to the part played by technical solutions, including the myriad tools and methods of performance management. The lack of empirical analysis and context-based evaluations based on these adaptive factors, as opposed to the building of universal indicators, and the shortcomings in establishing effective communication channels between citizens and the governments, were fleshed out as areas that necessitate due attention from both scholars and policy-makers. It was also advised that while doing that, one should not lose sight of the objective of making social accountability sustainable, particularly through a targeted behavioural change in public officials and an adequate institutional design that systematically encompasses all relevant accountability mechanisms.

In conclusion, it was underlined that transparency fights corruption through what can be likened to the impact of light on a dark and enclosed space. Accordingly, the Sunshine Principle was evoked to mean that if you light up one part of the room, some bacteria scare up. That is what happens to corruption when faced with information and transparency.

Discussion

Taking up the thread of the discussions from the first sub-session on concepts and terminology, this second sub-session on the scope of analysis and rationale delved in more depth into the question of whether governments are genuinely committed to citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD. It emphasized that citizens should not be an afterthought to engagement policies and strategies, but integral parts of processes from the get-go.

Potential solutions were provided to the problematic of an increasingly complex policy environment and the subsequent need for new understandings and definitions of accountability, and in particular social accountability. One such solution was the formulation and analysis of collaboration models, in addition to the models of outputs and outcomes. It was maintained that while good practices to measure and assess the outputs and outcomes of policies exist, there is a dearth of those that do the same vis-à-vis engagement processes, including collaboration amongst citizens, and between them and the rest of the governance actors—government, private sector, academia and research institutes, civil society organizations at the local, national, regional and transnational levels of governance, regional and international organizations and multilateral development agencies.

Potential answers were also provided to the setback regarding the lack of reliable, valid, robust and quality information on accountability. One solution proposed was the strengthening of independent entities in the formulation, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of policies, including the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) in line with the recent Economic and Social Council Resolution of 26 April 2011 and the declarations adopted in Lima (October 1977) and Mexico (November 2007) by the International Association of Supreme Auditing Institutions (INTOSAI) members. Regarding the SAIs, essential accountability challenges included restrictions on their access to information in certain areas such as privatized public services, and the access of citizens to SAI audit reports.

Corruption was approached from several aspects. In addition to its conventional depiction as the misuse or abuse of public office for private and/or illicit gain, it was attributed in part to blurred rationalities between the public and the private rationale and spheres of action. Its explanation as an outcome of insufficient income of public officials in the developing world was both acknowledged and questioned, depending on conceiving corruption as mainly a distributional as opposed to a cultural phenomenon. In this regard, the necessity to envisage distinct anticorruption strategies against petty versus grand, sporadic versus systemic, and upstream versus downstream corruption was also visited.

Linkages were drawn between levels of accountability and corruption, and between them and regime type, democratic governance, participation, taxation and development. Doing that, the complexities involved in determining the direction of correlations at any given area or time was recognized. The still prevalent insufficient sensitivity to corruption,

including apathy and indifference; dearth of relevant information and power to contest corrupt dealings; lack of association between poor service delivery and corruption; the relatively large vulnerability of the poor and the disadvantaged, being comparatively less prepared and equipped to defend themselves against corruption; and endemic corruption amidst security forces and the justice system, particularly in developing country settings, were underscored as pressing problems.

The importance of implementing the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and particularly its Article 32 on the protection of witnesses, experts and victims, and its Article 33 on the protection of persons reporting corruption (whistleblowers) was stressed. The EGM participants noted that while considerable progress has been made in these areas, much remains to be done in translating the text of the Convention into practice on the ground.

2. Second Session: Practices and Institutions that Engage Citizens for EAPC-PSD

The second session aimed at unearthing the EAPC-PSD initiatives in different countries with specific focus on (i) the aims of the leading actors; (ii) the ways and stages in which these initiatives were put into practice; (iii) the most common challenges and opportunities encountered along the way; (iv) the most salient catalysts for success and failure; and (v) the likelihood and trajectories of positive and negative outcomes.

It consisted of three sub-sessions: (i) Bottom-up Initiatives--Citizens and Civil Society Organizations; (ii) Top-down Initiatives--Governments; and (iii) Win-win Initiatives--Citizens, Civil Society and Governments. The driving questions were:

- What are the most common challenges experienced by citizens, civil society organizations, policy-makers and governments regarding EAPC-PSD?
- What are the most common institutions of EAPC-PSD, their modalities of citizen engagement, the associated strengths and weaknesses, and their collaborative methods and practices towards the building of national integrity systems around EAPC-PSD?
- From a longitudinal perspective, what are some of the specific reforms undertaken for institutionalizing EAPC-PSD, and what is the track record in given countries and regions?
- How are Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) used to strengthen citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD, and what are some of the

most salient limitations faced?

- What are some of the success and failure triggers, critical junctures and contextual determinants for the institutionalization of citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD?

2.1. Bottom-up Initiatives--Citizens and Civil Society Organizations

This sub-session was chaired by Jalal Abdel-Latif (UNECA) and the presenting experts were: Mario Claasen (South Africa), Angelita Gregorio-Medel (ANSA-EAP), Melissa Lawson (UK), Colin Adams (UK), Mr. Angelos Giannakopoulos (Germany).

Presentations

Social Accountability was put to a closer scrutiny in this sub-session. It was defined as the intersecting area between constructive citizen engagement and effective citizen monitoring supported by an assertive ethos, i.e., a predisposition to stand up for one's claims and propositions so as to create a level playing field for citizens to get access to public services. Both constructive citizen engagement and effective citizen monitoring require a continuous and healthy state-society dialogue; collaborative problem-solving; and effective and legitimate data accumulation and analysis.

In addition to these building-blocks, Social Accountability Competency Frameworks (SACFs) require: (i) targeted capabilities (sectoral and technical knowledge, skills and attitude); (ii) experience with effective monitoring and evaluation performance; (iii) insight and experience to detect skill gaps effectively; (iv) strategic vision and results-based analysis; (v) deliberation skills and the aptitude to implement the right steps at the right time.

One model proposed for generating information on existing social accountability initiatives was the 3Ts Model: Tales, Tools, Techniques. The model revolves around the following key ingredients: improving the quality of social accountability resources, especially in articulating whether the enabling conditions for social accountability are present; deepening the information and knowledge about the situation and the stakeholders; and exploring the issues and experiences of practitioners in their social accountability work and practices. The emphasis is on developing a historically-grounded and shared understanding of social accountability. History is important for devising and implementing effective citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD and would benefit from inclusion into public administration systems, processes and perspectives.

The biggest challenge in institutionalizing citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD was indicated to be the building of the capacities of those who want to explore and use social accountability as a path to effective and legitimate governance, i.e., "social accountability

workers.” Examples of capacity building for social accountability were given from around the world, including accountability monitoring committees trained in budget issues in Zimbabwe and Brazil; social auditing experiences in Kenya and in rural India; children’s participation in budgeting and school administration monitoring in Uganda and Malawi; system-wide reforms for enhanced accountability across the entire public administration in Chile and Mexico; and the awareness-raising role and impact of *Infomediaries*, i.e., Information Technology specialists trained in issues of social accountability in the Philippines.

Corruption was also considered in this sub-session as the blurring of the public and private realms in people’s minds and actions. Since this blurring of the boundaries is often culture-driven, it was asserted that corruption may be seen in some cultures as the “solution to the problem” rather than the “problem” itself, particularly from the perspective of the corrupt actor in an actual situation where payments are made to obtain easier access to the urgently needed basic services. Different approaches to act on these notions were commented on, including public advertising campaigns against corruption in the public and social media. Special attention was put on ALACs (Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres) launched by Transparency International to provide legal advice to citizens on corruption and related matters, and working to translate, through case and public advocacy, citizen concerns into structural changes at local-administrative and national-legislative levels worldwide.

Discussion

Before tackling the specific issue of civil society’s role in citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD, the discussions centred on the two facets of corruption: interest-driven corruption that is distributional in nature, and value-based corruption that is cultural in essence. Those who emphasized the first facet referred to (i) the under-remuneration of public officials; (ii) the difficulties for some population groups, including the poor and the disadvantaged, to get access to public services; (iii) the beneficiary exchanges of patron-client nature; (iv) an informal system of allocation of resources based on rent-seeking parallel to a formal one based on legal-rational rules; and (v) the possible venues for normalizing corrupt behaviour via activities of non-monetary nature valued by society, such as upholding and publicly practicing the traditionally venerated values of family, religion, etc. In contrast, those who subscribed to the second understanding of corruption reaffirmed (i) the implicit convergences between private and public mentalities; and (ii) the higher degrees of tolerance or outright apathy towards corrupt behaviour in some cultural settings.

In terms of offering solutions to corruption, the first group of Distributional Corruption Experts (DCE) proposed the antidote of institutional anticorruption mechanisms in addition to the adequate implementation of basic anticorruption laws. They underlined the need to demonstrate the linkages between poor service delivery and corruption, and to build the easy,

open and accessible channels, particularly for the poorest, to report corruption with confidence. The second group of Cultural Corruption Experts (CCE) suggested returning back to the ethical values of honesty and integrity to tackle the culture of corruption. They favoured social 'sensitisation' and awareness-raising, and particularly the building and strengthening of societies' confidence regarding their capacity and tenacity to fight corruption. Trust was, thus, highlighted as a quintessential ingredient in tackling corruption. The type of trust that is powerful enough to curb corruption, in turn, was thought to emanate from civil society rather than law per se.

Overall, both the DCE and the CCE groups coincided in that (i) top-down anticorruption strategies are less successful than bottom-up initiatives of promoting transparency and accountability, if and when used alone; (ii) simplifying the rules applicable to public service delivery to decrease the vulnerabilities to corruption is fundamental; and (iii) improving public services can have exponential effects on preventing and mitigating corruption. An example of a wholesale initiative of administrative simplification, El Trámite más Inútil, undertaken by the Mexican government in 2008 and awarded by the United Nations Public Service Awards in 2011, was provided as an innovative approach to decrease corruption and make public services more efficient through citizen engagement.

Both the DCE and CCE groups also converged on the enabling power of technology in fighting corruption. One example offered was the Indian website Ipaidabribe.com, and how the weakest points of administrative procedures most prone to corruption as well as innovative ways to tackle them effectively could be detected and compiled through ICT initiatives.

Regarding the role of civil society organizations and citizens in EAPC-PSD, caution was advised against taking their strictly pro-accountability nature as granted. Possible differences in the abilities of civil society organizations in attacking different shades and types of corruption were underlined. For instance, non-governmental organizations with more funds, resources and networks might be better equipped to tackle systemic corruption while smaller civil society organizations or grassroots movements at the local level can more effectively address petty corruption. Other points emphasized regarding civil society's role in citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD consisted of the need for:

- redefining the role of formal institutions of corporatist nature, such as the trade unions; and bringing them back into participatory governance;
- re-examining the changing nature of civil society and civil society politics, particularly as citizen engagement moves from the phases of information and consultation to collaborative action and its institutionalization;
- concentrating on the soft negotiation skills of larger civil society organizations (CSOs) in addition to concerns over access to information, and the hard skills of

smaller CSOs, such as financial management knowledge and practice;

- strengthening the coalition-building, partnership-forging and networking capacities of CSOs amongst themselves and with other governance actors, such as the grassroots, government, private sector, and the academia;
- training grassroots and civil society organizations on their specific comparative advantages in fighting corruption.

2.2. Top-down Initiatives—Governments

This sub-session was chaired by Angela Capati-Caruso (UNDESA) and the presenting experts were Mario Vinicius Claussen (Brazil), Pamela Niilus (Argentina), Alberto Precht (Chile), Emmanuel Lubembe (Kenya), Joel Salas (Mexico), and Angel Saz-Carranza (Spain).

Presentations

Four different, yet non-exhaustive categories of corrupt acts and actions were enumerated:

- those that do not involve financial transactions yet do purport unaccountable and consistently negligent behaviour with poor quality services as the outcome;
- those that consist of bribery which might involve the redirecting of resources to a specific individual or his/her organization;
- those that purport to favouring some public projects or expenditure programs that communities do not want or need; and
- those that lead to the illegitimate exclusion of non-state producers in procurement and concessions.

These categories came in addition to the more straightforward appearances of corruption in the form of monetary subtraction in public incomes and expenditures. Incompetence, malpractice, unethical behaviour were all referred to as different facets of both lack of accountability and of corruption. The need to use different and specific accountability and anti-corruption tools for different forms of corruption was evoked and discussed through the case-studies of government innovations in engaging citizens for EAPC-PSD. Some of these case studies were:

- Brazil, where initiatives included in-class and virtual education offerings, distribution of educational pamphlets, civic education programmes and activities targeting youngsters, training of public agents and public council members, and national conferences, including Brazil's first National Conference on Transparency and Public Oversight to constitute the basis for the creation of a National Plan on Transparency and Public Oversight.

- Argentina, where the implementation of citizen audits in more than 50 municipalities from 2003 to 2009 covered over ten million inhabitants. Periodic citizen assemblies in the Santa Fe province and elsewhere have enhanced the vibrancy of citizen-public official dialogues and co-policy planning, making, monitoring and evaluating of public services.
- Mexico, where a shift in public administration mentality targeted putting the government into the shoes of the citizens. New models of auditing and public procurement as well as new corruption fighting mechanisms were adopted along with the organization of national contests such as the “most honest bureaucratic department” scored and selected by citizens, and “Adiós a las Trampas,” which solicited fresh ideas from the youth on the creative ways to fight corruption.
- Chile, where the right to access information and the constitutional principle that state administration agencies must disclose their acts have culminated in the establishment of a Transparency Council with regulatory and supervisory powers and enforcement mechanisms to ensure the promotion of transparency. The Transparent Government website also created to strengthen accountability and anti-corruption initiatives has standardized information with a one-stop-shop processing of citizen feedback (request, input, complaint, etc.) through the request management system. The Presidential Commission for the Protection of People’s Rights, and the Information, Complaints and Suggestions Office, were also established as advisory bodies to the President and the citizens, respectively. The first entity professes to protect citizen rights in case of infringement by the State; the second supports citizens through processes of feedback loops with the State. Chile has also been at the forefront of using social media to enhance the quantity and the quality of citizen engagement to EAPC-PSD.
- Kenya, where four layers of public service transformation as part of the country's new Constitution and Vision 2030, were targeted: (i) policy and strategy, (ii) service delivery, (iii) individual competencies, and (iv) leadership. In each layer, the focus was on execution and the delivery of targeted results; enhanced processes and mechanisms of service delivery; accountability for results; and improved government and governance as a whole. Among activities undertaken towards these goals were public administration ethics workshops; surveys on public officials’ adherence to accountability standards; Prime Minister’s Round Tables with the private sector, youth, civil society and other local, national and regional groups of action; public sector stakeholder partnerships and structured stakeholder input into policy formulation. Although these initiatives were able to achieve some measure of results regarding street hawking, challenges still

remained with respect to (i) the low citizen awareness of the new engagement channels; (ii) resource capacity gaps; and (iii) the overall skill-set as well as the mind-set over accountability.

- South Africa, where the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) initiated by the Centre for Social Accountability (CSA) at Rhodes University in 1999, has since then aimed to improve public service delivery and the progressive realisation of constitutional rights to healthcare, education, social security and housing by using various social accountability monitoring tools. These tools have centred on citizen engagement in areas as diverse as resource allocation, strategic planning, performance monitoring, expenditure management, integrity and oversight processes. They have been developed in order for citizens to systematically monitor the public resource management through holding government officials accountable for the delivery of services and the performance of their functions.

Discussion

The discussions concentrated on the appropriate and innovative ways in which governments use accountability, and particularly social accountability, as viable mechanisms and tools to fight corruption. Both general and specific modalities were covered:

Generally, simplification of administrative rules and the need for a stronger emphasis on evaluation were underlined repeatedly as areas of concern that governments should heed to effectively engage citizens for EAPC-PSD. There was consensus that citizens' participation in councils or other social accountability processes is important, but more significant is their constant watchdog role over public decisions. In this respect, the building of capacities for citizens to engage in such actions becomes crucial.

Specifically, participatory budgeting at regional and local levels, periodic citizen assemblies where citizens interact with public officials on a range of issues, and national conferences as institutions of participative democracy were praised while other accountability tools such as scorecards and advisory committees, given their lack of sanctioning authority, were advised to be employed in tandem with more broad-based participatory initiatives. Regarding the local councils, some of the persistent shortcomings were indicated to be (i) the lack of motivation to participate; (ii) manipulation by stronger civil society representatives or public officials; and (iii) a general ignorance of the law.

The gaps between formal rules and actual institutions, and between them and their practices, were also points that received constant attention from the experts. For instance, it was questioned whether the creation of numerous social accountability mechanisms and tools were being adequately institutionalized and mainstreamed into the larger governance systems,

or whether they constituted an additional stand-alone layer. In this respect, the steps of the accountability ladder moving from static information and consultation to interactive engagement and active collaborative models were emphasized. The distinction between measuring accountability based on outcomes versus assessing it based on the processes of collaboration was made, leading the experts to conclude once more that there is a need to evaluate and improve these newly emerging collaborative processes and arrangements.

Also stressed was the fact that much work remains to be done regarding the effective implementation of anticorruption legislation and policies, including aspects of criminalization of corrupt acts and behaviour in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

2.3. Win-Win Initiatives--Citizens and Governments

This third sub-session was chaired by Anisuzzaman Chowdury (UNDESA) and the presenting experts were Fletcher Tembo (Malawi), Taryn Vian (United States), Mike Rowe (UK) and Marco Daglio (OECD).

Presentations

On citizen engagement and accountability, the notion of co-production was introduced. Defined as “a way of planning, designing and delivering public services drawing directly on inputs of citizens, service-users and civil society organizations,” co-production was differentiated from both contractual arrangements and joint service delivery by state-society partnerships. Co-production also differed from simple citizen participation schemes by its focus on incremental as opposed to radical change in service delivery outcomes, and by the prevalence of service modifications as opposed to service additions or subtractions. End results of co-production were cost reduction, quality increase and/or higher user satisfaction.

Common concerns for EAPC-PSD were determined as (i) institutional overload, stickiness of institutions and bureaucratic bottlenecks giving way to the divide between “lack of institutionalization” versus “deinstitutionalization” as alternative policy options in different contexts; and (ii) the need to combine formal and informal methods of accountability to effectively combat corruption. A comparative analysis of participatory approaches, with or without the sanctioning power that comes with hierarchical authority, showed that citizen engagement improved service delivery outcomes, and was effective in decreasing corruption, when participatory approaches were combined with the legal-rational enforcement mechanisms while effectively harnessing the enabling power of technology.

Some of the examples given to substantiate these findings came from:

- Bolivia where the active collaboration of users and providers in health boards

translated in decreased solicitation of bribes for services;

- Kenya where the same participatory approaches were combined with the hierarchical autonomy of the board to easily remove the staff who resisted change, also culminating in substantial increases in revenues without decreasing per patient spending;
- Indonesia where government auditing complemented participatory approaches in infrastructure projects at the local level to effectively control elite capture and free-rider problems; and
- India where community monitoring was able to manage staff absenteeism in service delivery in the public health sector when social accountability tools were coupled with the appropriate formal sanctioning mechanisms.

As apparent in the above case studies, obstacles to the success of participatory approaches included, inter alia, (i) elite capture; (ii) power differentials; (iii) asymmetries of information between citizens and the public officials that they are supposed to monitor; and (iv) free-rider problems, which hampered the individual motivation to get involved in community monitoring.

Discussion

Complementarity rather than competition was emphasized with regard to top-down/supply-sided and bottom-up/demand-driven initiatives of citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD. Levels and types of corruption were associated with a variety of societal actors, citizen groups and a mix of associated anticorruption strategies. For example, it was stated that petty corruption mostly affects the poor while grand corruption impacts everyone.

Corruption and accountability were linked through yet another innovative characterization of corruption as a parallel system of illegitimate acts and actions to the procedurally legitimate system of rules and regulations, which encompasses different modalities:

- illegitimate exclusion of non-state producers or illegitimate exclusivity rights granted through corrupt privatization processes or the granting of government contracts, concessions, permits, and licenses;
- illegitimate taxation, as when payment for a public services is substituted by or coupled with bribes, an extreme case consisting of systemic bribery by para-state organizations that extract rents from street vendors, small family businesses, applicants to public jobs, etc.; and
- illegitimate control, where public managers ignore the established rules and procedures of public administration for the sake of benefiting determined groups.

Examples from the public sector reform experiences of Kenya, Uganda, Indonesia and Bolivia demonstrated that participatory approaches are most effective in terms of outcomes when coupled with the traditional mechanisms of hierarchy and sanctions (such as government audits) as well as when clearly supported by the top management (such as the managing board of the public institution). The relative failure of bottom-up initiatives when employed alone was attributed especially to elite capture within society and the free rider problem intrinsic to all collective action. The power of technology in leading to exponential increases in transparency, and from there to enhanced accountability and alleviated corruption was also underlined, particularly in the example of the use of electronic cash register system in public hospitals in Kenya.

It was concluded that citizen engagement is not a magic bullet, and must thus be ingeniously combined with formal structures and accountability mechanisms for a greater and sustainable impact. The co-production concept and applications, in this regard, were upheld as both service enhancers and governance amplifiers.

3. Third Session: Public Policies and Strategies for EAPC-PSD

The third session aimed at identifying the individual and institutional competencies and capacity sought in human resources in government, civil society and grassroots organizations, and probing the conditions that are conducive to the creation of enabling environments for EAPC-PSD.

It consisted of two sub-sessions: (i) Building the Capacity, (ii) Creating an Enabling Environment. The driving questions were:

- What are the best strategies for capacity-building in human resource development in public administration towards EAPC-PSD?
- How can citizens organize themselves to effectively engage in service delivery for EAPC while devising effective strategies against capture by specific interests?
- What is the impact of legislation and legal enforcement on fostering the enabling conditions for citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD?
- How can media and the new social media contribute to EAPC-PSD through citizen engagement?

3.1. Building the Capacity

This sub-session was chaired by the CEPA Member, Meredith Edwards (Australia) and the presenting experts were Pamela Niilus (Argentina), Mario Claasen (South Africa), Susanne

Schwartz (INTOSAI), and Angelita Gregorio-Medel (Philippines).

Presentations

Soft and hard skills development was emphasized within the framework of capacity-building for both governments and non-government actors. The main accountability skills for public officials and civil society including citizens were enumerated to be soft skills such as:

- empathy and dialoguing skills for consensus-building;
- negotiation and conflict-solving skills, especially among public officials;
- leadership and managerial capacity; and
- competencies regarding commitment to continuous learning.

Hard skills, such as knowledge of applicable laws and regulations in specific public services, knowledge of legal and administrative procedures in public procurement, finance management, budgeting and information management were also emphasized, particularly in the African context where decentralization reforms in the last decade have taken many decision-making prerogatives down to the local level. Other hard skills underlined were:

- project and organizational development;
- knowledge management;
- technical aspects of anticorruption mechanisms and strategies; and
- data use and analysis.

Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) were described as both formal organizations of accountability and the natural partners of citizens. They were classified as formal because they are usually rooted in constitutional law and embody procedural principles in holding governments to account for their management of the public funds with the ultimate aim of improving service delivery. They were portrayed as natural partners of citizens because they are impartial, independent, and strive to provide consumer-oriented audit services.

Recently, innovative capacity-building reforms towards enhanced social accountability have taken place in SAIs. These reforms have included: (i) public dialogue of auditors with citizens, such as speaking in universities or participating in public interviews, and the effective use of the new social media outlets; and (ii) citizen participation in audit planning and implementation—The Board of Audit and Inspection (BAI) of the Republic of Korea recently introduced the Citizen Audit Request System, which allows citizens to group and request certain public services to be audited. The BAI also has a policy advisory committee, which serves as an advisory body for its chairman. The committee comprises experts drawn from civic groups, among others. Capacity development efforts are continuing in this sphere as citizen participation in audit must not jeopardize the independence of SAIs.

It was concluded that capacity-building for both governments and citizens towards EAPC-PSD is undertaken to reach the meta-goals of ensuring effective and legitimate governance with particular attention to the marginalized sectors of societies and the vulnerable populations. It was emphasized that it is imperative but not sufficient to raise the awareness of the marginalized vis-à-vis enhancing corruption and preventing corruption. The real challenge was indicated to be the leap to transform them into proactive entrepreneurs of social accountability.

Discussion

To capacitate government/public officials, the importance of soft skills, such as management and communication strategies, in addition to technical capabilities, such as literacy in information communication technologies (ICTs), was re-emphasized. Special attention was devoted to those civil servants, regardless of rank, avid to make a difference and to be recognized as drivers of change.

To capacitate the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and citizens, the strengthening of access to information and awareness-raising; the relative strengths of positive and negative incentive mechanisms; and the practical issues of reconciling time, knowledge and resources vis-à-vis the perceived benefits of voice and citizen engagement, particularly for the marginalized segments of society, were highlighted.

Other issues related to the differentials in the competencies, comparative advantages, niches of specialization, platforms of action, time horizons (short-term, project-driven versus long-term, learning-oriented) of accountability building initiatives, and the internal and external accountability obligations, including to the citizens and donors respectively, of different societal actors were also covered.

On comparative advantages of different actors to extract accountability from public providers, it was stated that the traditional state institutions and larger Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) might be more adept at EAPC in several specific PSD arenas, such as concessions and permits to private providers, the use of budgetary resources, inspections and evaluation of investment projects, and appraisals of administrative performance, while they may be less efficient in monitoring the quality of services, satisfaction of consumers or citizens, and the occurrence of street-level bribery. Reciprocally, it was advanced that local citizens groups and grassroots organizations might be better equipped to monitor the quality of public services, consumer satisfaction and petty corruption as opposed to issues such as budget management, inspection of investment projects, concessions and permits to private providers of public services, and in general, grand corruption. In the same vein, it was argued that the first category of actors might be more inclined to more effectively assess compliance with formal procedures, while the second might be more apt at evaluating results and outcomes in informal

settings.

In summary, it was suggested that both categories of actors could work together to attain better outcomes in EAPC-PSD. The matching of different societal actors with specific types and activities of EAPC-PSD went hand-in-hand with the harmonization of the traditional and the new accountability mechanisms. As such, it was suggested that while the traditional accountability institutions and mechanisms serve the entire population in accordance with the principle of equality before the law, the new social accountability processes might be better able to serve the needs of the poor and marginalized in accordance with the norms and values of equity.

As a final and general note, caution was advised with respect to taking civil society as monolithic entity without differentiating among its varied sectors, between the rural and the urban milieus, and networking versus service-provider CSOs. Size was also a criterion to be taken into account: Bigger and more diversified CSOs were associated with the necessity to work more on their transparency mechanisms vis-à-vis their funders and beneficiaries, while smaller and more unified CSOs were seen as needing continued capacity-building vis-à-vis their financial management systems and resources.

The willingness and the potential of the poor and the marginalized to participate and engage fully in public service delivery processes were also affirmed with evidence from the field. The main challenge of capacity-building for the poor or the marginalized was singled out as one of mentality shift: how to empower them so that they jump from a dependency frame of mind to a civic culture whereby they take initiatives to reform public service delivery rather than being subjected to reform.

More specifically, caution was also advised against (i) lumping together local and national levels of accountability tools and processes; (ii) neglecting the specific conditions and necessities of the poor or marginalized groups vis-à-vis empowerment; (iii) associating lack of information on the values and norms in a given context or culture with bribery outright; (iv) putting smaller and larger-scale non-governmental organizations in the same basket in terms of capacity-building needs; (v) falling prey to the administrative myopia of favouring short-run benefits instead of focusing on the longer-term learning curve.

3.2. Creating an Enabling Environment

This sub-session was chaired by Mario Claassen (South Africa) and the presenting experts were: Enrique Peruzzotti (Argentina), Don Lenihan (Canada), Karen Sirker (World Bank), and Dirk Tänzler (Germany).

Presentations

Among the conditions that are conducive to the creation of an enabling environment for citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD, the following were noted:

- pluralism in networking by actors of accountability;
- independent and active media, which duly recognizes the achievements;
- protection of basic rights, citizens' awareness of them, and their capacity to use these rights effectively;
- legislation on the right to access information;
- strong leadership with programmatic commitment of political parties to accountable government and accountable politics;
- decentralization and local governance;
- public service delivery systems that are designed around regular user feedback;
- easy access to the working institutions of the justice system;
- horizontal accountability institutions such as ombudsman, which can constitute an effective entry point for citizen engagement; and
- flexible institutional design that allows for experimentation, change and adaptation to changing circumstances.

The concept and tools of joining up services also received due attention as a potent enabler. Fragmented services offered by several public agencies, even if efficient and effective by themselves, would not be citizen-centric if not linked together in a way to effectively respond to the specific needs of citizens. For example, it was asserted that an unemployed single mother who plans to go back to school would not only seek education grants but also day care facilities. The best way to find this needed service linkage and others, it was maintained, is to put the users and the providers of these services to the same table so that the right combinations that are in the best interest of all parties can be conjured. Such collaborative arrangements in the beginning of service delivery processes would also make sure that no user needs are left out. The immediate enabling condition question was then advanced as the following: What are the necessary conditions to ensure a fair dialogue at the table? The ultimate enabling condition question was pointed as the following: How to join up services in order to respond to the needs of the end-user?

All levels of government and concerned communities, both users and providers, must engage in interactive discussions to find viable answers to both questions. One dialogue-one action plan is an iterated game. It is an ongoing learning cycle that ultimately gets the community to work together effectively for the foreseeable future. Three ways in which accountability enters into the collaborative model were fleshed out as: (i) traditional compliance or process accountability to one's own organization and rules; (ii) policy

adjustments to ensure accountability to predetermined outcomes; and (iii) shared accountability towards each other—an additional accountability process to establish the balance between the first two.

The experts agreed that the third category of shared accountability is particularly ripe for innovation whereby different sanctioning mechanisms can be created for enforcing these new forms of shared accountability, and subsequently linking them with the prevention and fighting of corruption.

Discussion

On the conditions that promote enabling environments for citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD, the need to complement legalistic perspectives and mechanisms with social capital and content was emphasized. The gist of the discussions emphasized that although the right institutions are necessary to EAPC-PSD, seldom are they enough to guarantee good practices. Some of the key factors that must accompany and embed institutions include trust; the primacy of state capacity and state-society relations; the protection of basic rights; the protection of whistleblowers; the insufficiency of the two-pronged compliance-outcomes models and the arising need to complement them with a third model of active collaboration of all levels of government with citizens; and transparency, albeit with caveats regarding the sensitive nature of confidential state matters.

In systems with endemic corruption, the adoption of standard anticorruption models was deemed problematic and often ineffective. In those instances, solutions must be conjured from the stand-point of the corrupt both looking into the why question, and delineating the corresponding interest matrixes for all relevant parties. Legal mechanisms alone are not going to be sufficient to produce change. Leadership, commitment and trust-engendering politics will also be indispensable, especially because in systems infested with corruption, the latter is often conjured as the solution rather than the problem.

To deal with endemic corruption, several variables of interest were proposed including the political economy context, state-market relations, role of the private sector, and transparency as an anticorruption tool. Particularly the significant role of transparency, defined as the delivery of complete and understandable information to the citizens, was underscored. Also stressed were the starting conditions including the prior regime, historical legacies, and economic development, which impacted the role of civil society in fomenting and exploiting the opportunities for human development while avoiding potential pitfalls in the process of EAPC-PSD.

4. Fourth Session: International Cooperation for EAPC-PSD

The fourth and final substantive session aimed at (i) scrutinizing the modalities for knowledge-sharing, replication and adaptation of good practices, including the preparation and dissemination of guidelines and toolkits; and (ii) probing the innovative ways in which international organizations can assist development stakeholders for EAPC-PSD towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This session did not have sub-sessions.

This sub-session was chaired by Emmanuel Lubembe (Kenya) and the presenting experts were Angelita Gregorio-Medel (ANSA-EAP), Karen Sirker (World Bank), Enrico Bisogno (UNODC), Jeffrey Bawa (UNODC), and Jalal Abdel-Latif (UNECA).

The driving questions were:

- How can international cooperation assist the EAPC-PSD efforts and activities by governments, civil society and other developmental stakeholders at local, national and regional levels of governance?
- What should the specific priorities of international cooperation be in citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD?
- What is the role of inter-regional cooperation institutions and international networks of practitioners in international cooperation towards EAPC-PSD?
- How can multilateral or bilateral financing institutions and other aid organizations contribute to capacity-building and institutional development for EAPC-PSD?
- What can the UN do to better assist the Member States for EAPC-PSD?

Presentations

Challenges of engaging citizens for EAPC-PSD, particularly in the developing world, were revisited and condensed to offer meaningful venues for further assistance to international development actors. Top on the list were activities to foster government-citizen interaction, referring to sheer connectivity as the first step, and the building of a healthy civil society as a

permanent social accountability actor as the next step. Noting that the majority of accountability agencies are still being built and accountability reports are being drafted by governments in developing countries, and particularly in Africa, the need to make civil society into a stronger social accountability actor was emphasized. Furthermore, it was advised that participation surpass the basic level of receiving information and exerting voice, but be made actionable via effective and genuine dialogue and deliberation, mutual decision making and collaboration.

Also high on the list of gaps to bridge was the lack of financial resources and human capital, even in middle-income countries where stratified structured poverty warrants developmental assistance to ensure that people living right above the poverty line, hence often ineligible for most public assistance programmes, do not fall through the cracks.

Other issue areas that could benefit from international cooperation and support were linked with the following needs for:

- encouraging peer monitoring-peer accountability frameworks;
- strengthening donor cooperation and follow-ups of their independent and interdependent activities;
- supporting local and regional social accountability initiatives and networks, one example being ANSAs (Affiliated Networks on Social Accountability), like the ones existing in East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, Africa, Latin America, and recently in the Middle East and North Africa;
- advancing initiatives to produce reliable and policy-relevant data with robust, valid and replicable measurement methods;
- facilitating the participation of civil society organizations in the relevant international conferences, such as the upcoming UNDESA-UNODC organized Capacity-building Workshop on Corruption in Marrakesh, Morocco on 26-27 October;
- measuring the real impact of participatory approaches in terms of concrete results;
- contextualizing participatory governance and corruption in order to improve state capacity where needed with focus on the selection of the right tools;
- investigating the impact of aid on accountability and corruption in PSD; and
- establishing criteria to differentiate between contractor NGOs and right-based NGOs that voice citizen needs.

On the concept of corruption, operationalisation and measurement drawbacks were tackled. The subjective perception-based composite indices of corruption were pitted against the more objective experience-based sample surveys, which are conducted in targeted sectors, positions and procedures that are most prone to corruption. This more qualitative selection methodology based on the dependent variable (corruption and those who experience it most as opposed to a random selection) coupled with the quantitative survey methodology yield more valid and pertinent outcomes in terms of effective and targeted policy-making. The downsides of this methodology are cost and time in addition to the lack of a unifying methodological framework and guidelines. International cooperation and support was thus sought in developing them.

More specifically on corruption, the International Anticorruption Day of the United Nations, celebrated every year on 9 December, has been instrumental in raising awareness about the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which is internationally recognized as a key instrument in fighting corruption more effectively, increasing technical and capacity-building assistance devoted to the issue; and infusing integrity to public affairs. On a longer-term perspective and as acknowledged by the General Assembly, curbing corruption is also essential to reach the MDGs (Jo Dedeayne-Amann, UNODC).

Discussion

An accountability inventory was introduced, which included information on the following items:

- Existence and enforcement of constitutional precepts and other key legal instruments at local and national levels, with regard to freedom of association and speech
- Presence and impact of a central grievances office, ombudsman, hotlines, etc. including data on received requests and complaints-handling, activities of attorney-general offices, special bureaus for prosecuting corrupt activities by public officers, including data on the number of public officials convicted or accused of unaccountability and corruption, in different sectors and public services
- Official publications on accountability, corruption and adjacent topics, their periodicity and dissemination, by all relevant areas of the public sector, and in particular reports issued by the offices of the Heads of government and/or by SAIs to citizens
- Schools of public administration, and enrolment in fields related to public accountability and adjacent areas such as ethics and performance management in the public sector

The caveats in undertaking research to put together such an accountability inventory were specified as:

- the need to focus on the needed policy change and innovation rather than country rankings alone;
- the need to look at what can not be measured such as leadership and networks that are less amenable to quantification; and
- the need to examine practice rather than the mere rules (e.g., the question of how many accusations actually lead to conviction).

While such inventory could be useful, the real problem was indicated to be the gap between structures and practices. What would benefit international cooperation on EAPC-PSD would be the creation of tools to get a better understanding of what happens in practice. In this regard, it was pointed that accountability and social accountability coalition movements as relatively new formations and distinct from the formal non-governmental organizations could provide useful clues.

Finally, in connection to foreign aid, the issue of the ambivalence of accountability to the donor versus to the citizens given the possible discrepancies between the immediate objectives of ensuring the continued flow of funds and the long-term objective of EAPC-PSD received attention. Warnings were raised in this respect, as fault of concrete advances on accountability and anticorruption fronts, international aid flows could reroute, plummet or come to an end.

Part. Three: EGM Conclusions and Recommendations

Common points of agreement and emphasis regarding citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD included the following:

- reality is complex but decipherable while new challenges are manageable;
- context is crucial but not a reason for relativism;
- history matters but its interpretation is not set in stone;
- culture is important but not impervious to institutional change, and vice-versa;
- leadership and willingness to reform are imperative but must be complemented by the right institutions, and vice-versa;
- capacity-building is necessary but insufficient per se; voice is also paramount;
- participatory governance is fundamental but seldom sufficient if devoid of formal accountability institutions with the associated sanctioning authorities;
- gaps between expectations and reality, policy design and implementation, formal and informal mechanisms; laws and values, (façade) institutions and (actual) practices are glaring but can be breached;
- efforts to examine the effects of citizen engagement for accountability and anticorruption are still at their infancy, hence the need to gather empirical evidence and to undertake evaluations of what works, when and why;
- ICTs, including the new social media outlets, are important technological tools of citizen engagement, but not a panacea.

Differences ranged along the following dimensions in approaching citizen engagement for EAPC-PSD, even though complementarity rather than competition among these points was emphasized:

- (a) *Process-oriented (HOW) versus Results-driven (WHAT) Approaches to Accountability:*
The associated questions are: Tools are there but how do we actually implement them?; and What are the goals that the acts and actions of public officials are measured against?
- (b) *Information-Transparency versus Collective-action as the leitmotif of development:*
Information and transparency are the essential building-blocks of EAPC-PSD but they

are not sufficient to ensure effective and citizen-centric service delivery. They need to be complemented with innovative collective-action politics involving different levels and types of accountability actors.

- (c) *Traditional versus Shared Accountability Frameworks*: On the one hand, there is a need to describe the layers of accountability with different collaboration models among several actors with joint accountability obligations towards one another and to the citizens. On the other hand, there is a need to meaningfully integrate traditional accountability structures with these newly emerging social accountability practices.
- (d) *Output-Outcome Models of Accountability versus Trust-based Collaboration Models*: Accountability based on compliance with rules and predetermined outcomes is useful. It must, nevertheless, be accompanied with collaboration-driven accountability based on genuine dialogue among partners of different backgrounds and united around the same goal of improving service delivery.
- (e) *Distributional versus Cultural Corruption*: Corruption can take place for interest-based reasons and allocation purposes. It can also be ingrained behaviour in the value-sets and cultural templates of societies. Depending on how one perceives corruption, it can be tackled in diverse ways. It can also be distinctly related to development, governance, and regime type and quality.

In light of the above, most salient conclusions reached by the experts included the following:

- (a) One should not lose sight of the twin goals of improving service provision and delivery to citizens (the ‘how’ to achieve) and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in undertaking citizen engagement towards EAPC-PSD (the ‘what’ to achieve).
- (b) There is a need to undertake systematic, comparative and empirical research and evaluation on the steps of transparency and accountability initiatives towards EAPC-PSD.
- (c) The micro- (principal-agent) and the meso-levels (institutions and institutionalization) of analysis are important but do not replace the significance of the macro-level (enabling environment and context) and the meta-level factors of influence (mentalities, rationalities, culture, ethics and values).

Recommendations

- (a) Access to information legislation, principle of voluntary disclosure of information, whistleblower and witness protection clauses must be strengthened, including through effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).
- (b) Capacity development of both government officials and citizens/CSOs and enhancing their connectivity must become priorities for all developmental actors.
- (c) Donors should support evidence-based advocacy, networks of social accountability and the empowerment of marginalized sectors of society, including training and capacity-building in preventing and monitoring corruption.
- (d) Recognizing the ‘champions’ of accountability in civil service through due compensation and publicity is crucial as are human and institutional capacity development to promote accountability and to sustain the fight against corruption.
- (e) New inventories of accountability and anticorruption processes, institutions, policies and strategies based on practice rather than solely on formal rules must be encouraged.
- (f) Research and evaluation on citizen engagement towards enhanced accountability and its relation to corruption prevention must be promoted as should be studies on appropriate corruption measurements heeding citizen engagement in development management.