

CITIZEN VOICE AND ACTION



GUIDANCE NOTES

**Prepared by Keren Winterford
January 2009**

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This publication has received funding from the Department for International Development, although the views expressed within do not necessarily reflect official policy.

Acknowledgements

The Guidance Notes build on a series of documents prepared previously. These include:

- Operational Manual for Community Based Performance Monitoring, December 2006, Jamie Edgerton, from a draft prepared by Janmejay Singh & Parmesh Shah (Participation and Civic Engagement Team of Social Development Department of The World Bank¹) in collaboration with the Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Coordination Office (SPACO) of the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA), Banjul, The Gambia
- World Vision Brazil, Community Based Monitoring of Public Policies and Services, Hand Book 1 'Preparing the Community to Intervene in public policies and services and Hand Book 2, 'Monitoring Public Policies and Services in the Community.'

The content of the Guidance Notes was informed by Angela Esteves, Artur Martirosyan, Betty Wamala, Elizabeth Mavoa, Godfred Victor Singh, Judith Nakamanya, Khristine Mikhailidi, Maria Carolina, Marlene Arroyo, Newton Isaac, Obed Muvumu, and Yadira Pacheco during a Learning Event held in March 2008. Their continued leadership and support is highly valued.

Earlier drafts of this document were reviewed by Amboka Wameyo, Betty Wamala, Bill Walker, Camilla Symes, Charles Odhiambo, Ephraim Naik, Jeff Hall, Joachim Cuthbert Mumba, Michael Mata, Michelle Thomas, Mike O'Brien and Thurza Sullivan, their contributions, words of wisdom and encouragement are greatly appreciated.

Special thanks go to Julie Smith for creating the cartoons and diagrams which bring life to these Guidance Notes. Finally we are indebted and thankful to Isabel Carter for her final edit of the document.

This is a living Document

The Guidance Notes are intended to be a 'living' series. As the practice continues to emerge they will be revised and updated.

Suggestions for revisions or additions are welcomed. They should be provided to keren.winterford@worldvision.com.au

¹ Acknowledgement is gratefully given to the World Bank for making available the material on which this manual is based.

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Introduction

OVERVIEW

1.1

Citizen Voice and Action

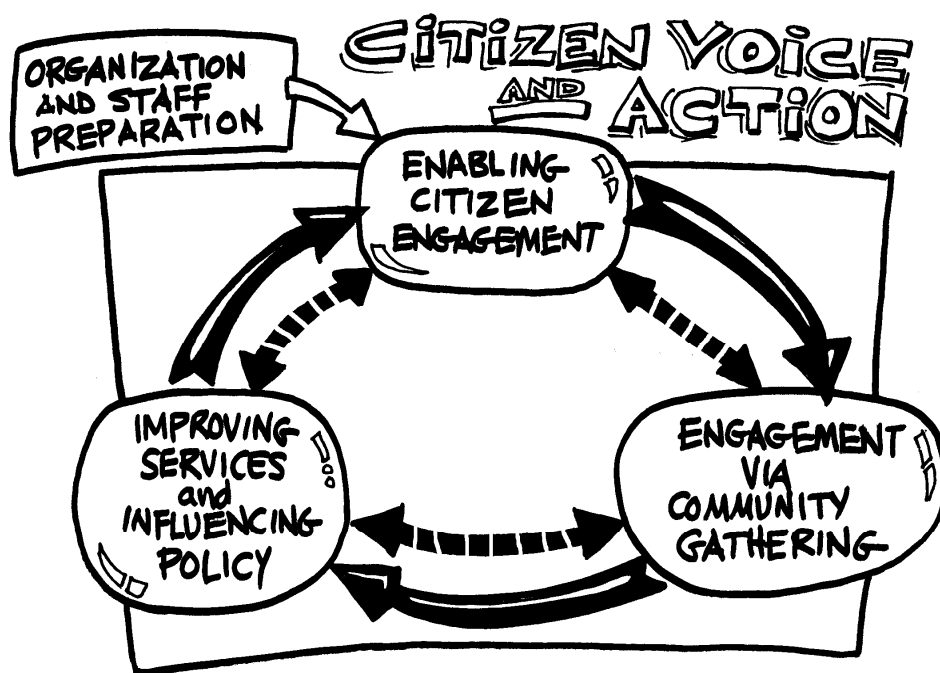
Citizen Voice and Action is an approach that aims to increase dialogue between ordinary citizens and organisations that provide services to the public. It also aims to improve accountability from the administrative and political sections of government (both national and local) in order to improve the delivery of public services.

The approach aims to empower communities to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability of public services.

Educated, empowered and mobilised citizens are encouraged to assess the performance of public services which are provided in their communities. They are encouraged to compare actual services with the standards of service that their government has committed themselves to providing. Citizens, together with those providing services (service providers), government and local partners identify action to take to improve public services.

This approach is based on the view that individuals and ‘the community’ are citizens of nation states. Each citizen has the right to communicate with, and have a relationship with, their government. Active citizenship and engagement with government, helps governments to work effectively and to provide quality services.

The aim of Citizen Voice and Action is to strengthen this relationship between citizens and government, by educating and empowering communities to talk and work with government service providers and government officials about the performance of basic services.



Citizen Voice and Action includes three phases shown in the diagram above. Before each of these phases can take place, there is a need to prepare organisations and staff.

Organisation and staff preparation (See Section 3 for more details)

ORGANIZATION AND STAFF PREPARATION

World Vision office, staff and partners need to prepare themselves before beginning Citizen Voice and Action. Such preparations will include:

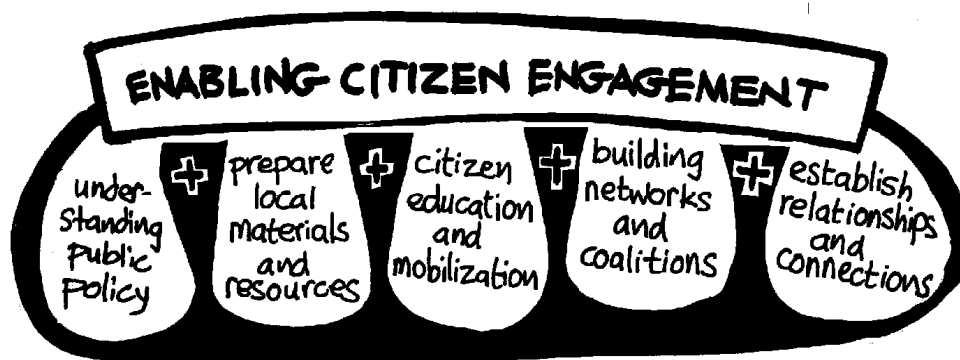
- Understanding the particular situation within each country in relation to citizen and governance issues
- Training staff, partners and stakeholders to facilitate Citizen Voice and Action within communities, recognising the broader issues that relate to citizenship and governance within their country.

It is vital at this stage to adapt the approach of Citizen Voice and Action so that it will be appropriate to the local and national situation. Adapting the process to the local and national situation should continue throughout the whole process.

The three phases of Citizen Voice and Action are described below.

Enabling citizen engagement (See Section 4 for more details)

Enabling citizens to engage with issues of governance provides the foundation for the Community Gathering as a means for citizens to influence policies and improve the delivery of public services. We know that for citizens to engage effectively with governments around service delivery they need support and awareness to enable them to act.



This stage involves a series of processes. These are listed separately within these Guidance Notes, but as they are put into practice, they may well merge together, depending on the local situation.

Engagement via Community Gathering (See Section 5 for more details)

Community Gathering describes a series of linked participatory processes that focus on assessing the quality of public services and identifying ways to improve their delivery. Community members who use the service (service users), service providers (government staff) and government officials (both administrative and political), who have responsibility for, or can influence, decisions that affect the quality of service delivery are all invited to participate.

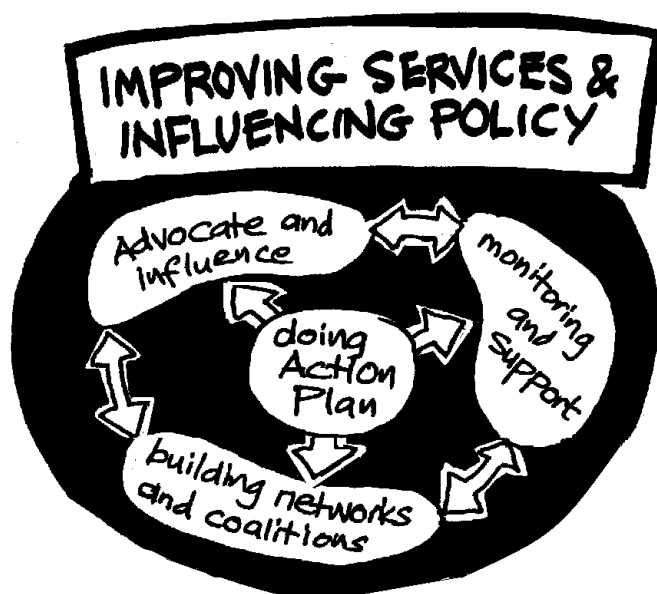
Four types of sessions should be held as part of the Community Gathering:



Improving services and influencing policy (See Sections 6 and 7 for more details)

An Action plan is prepared as a result of the Community Gathering. Putting this plan into action to improve service delivery will involve collective action at community level as well as through influencing policy. Citizens and other stakeholders can act together to influence policy at both local and higher levels.

Action by citizens at the local level can be complemented by action at higher levels of government, either state or national level.



Citizenship and good governance (See Section 2 for more details)

The main focus of Citizen Voice and Action is to improve public services, but in the process it also seeks to facilitate the empowerment of citizens to engage more broadly with governance processes.

Broader objectives include:

- Empowered and mobilised citizens
- Local democracy and political participation of individuals and community groups
- Good governance through the demands of communities for action
- The improvement of service delivery through influencing policy.

Guidance Notes

These Guidance Notes provide a general description of this approach. The notes should be adapted so they are appropriate for the needs of the local situation. The Guidance Notes are intended to offer opportunities for reflection, analysis and new ways of practice.

They are based on practical experiences and learning within WV practice to date. Input from pilot programs in Armenia, Brazil, India, Peru, and Uganda has influenced their development.

The Guidance Notes build on a series of documents prepared previously. These include:

- Operational Manual for Community Based Performance Monitoring, December 2006, Jamie Edgerton, from a draft prepared by Janmejay Singh & Parmesh Shah (Participation and Civic Engagement Team of Social Development Department of The World Bank²) in collaboration with the Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Coordination Office (SPACO) of the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA), Banjul, The Gambia
- World Vision Brazil, Community Based Monitoring of Public Policies and Services, Hand Book 1 'Preparing the Community to Intervene in public policies and services and Hand Book 2, 'Monitoring Public Policies and Services in the Community.'

The Guidance Notes aim to:

1. Explain how Citizen Voice and Action links to broader WV practice
2. Explain the advocacy framework on which Citizen Voice and Action is based
3. Explain the phases of Citizen Voice and Action
4. Provide guidance on the practical implementation.

Sections of the Guidance Notes describe what Citizen Voice and Action is, why it is important, as well as how to do it.

- Section 1: provides an overview of the approach
- Section 2: provides an explanation of the conceptual framework or background
- Sections 3-6: provide guidance on how to carry out the practical phases
- Section 5: provides a step-by-step guide facilitating the four sessions of the Community Gathering
- Section 7: provides an explanation of how local level and national level advocacy can be linked.

Guidance Notes and Capacity Building

The Citizen Voice and Action Guidance Notes are intended for use by World Vision staff and partners. They should be introduced to staff and partners during Facilitation Training Workshops.

² Acknowledgement is gratefully given to the World Bank for making available the material on which this manual is based.

Materials to support the Facilitation Training can be found within the *Citizen Voice and Action – Facilitation Workshop, Facilitation Notes*.

Localised context and citizen ownership

World Vision staff and partners can adapt these Guidance Notes when appropriate, to support local capacity building programs and implementation. This adaptation may include translation, simplification or the inclusion of information on local governance structures and processes where Citizen Voice and Action is linked to national country processes.

Citizen Voice and Action is planned and initiated within the local situation. Citizens take the lead, with World Vision acting in a facilitative role. Because of this approach, it is hard to provide specific actions since we don't always know how citizens and others will respond to these processes. World Vision needs to understand the local and national situation and respond to the initiatives of citizens and local partners. These Guidance Notes can therefore provide only limited guidance. You will need to develop your own practice based on the local situation and initiative of others.

Practical use

It is expected that staff and partners will regularly refer to these Guidance Notes as they begin to carry out various activities to support Citizen Voice and Action. Section 5 in particular, provides practical step-by-step guidance on facilitating the sessions of the Community Gathering.

Citizen Voice and Action Objectives

The primary objective of Citizen Voice and Action is to increase dialogue and accountability between three groups; ordinary citizens, public service providers and government officials (political and administration) to improve the delivery of public services.

Broader objectives of Citizen Voice and Action include:

- Empowered and mobilised citizens
- Individuals and community groups engaged in local democracy and political participation
- Communities demanding action which results in good governance
- Citizens influencing policies for improved service delivery.

Core elements

Citizen Voice and Action emphasizes community development practices such as participation, inclusion, ownership and sustainability. The practical implementation of Citizen Voice and Action must be flexible and respond to local situations so it will look different in different situations. However, through practical experience in the pilot programs, we have found a number of linked core elements which should be included in all situations. These are; information, voice, dialogue and accountability.

- **Information**
 - Increased access to, and use of, government information to inform citizens' choice and action.
 - Increased opportunity to share information and generate knowledge within the community about the performance and reform of public services.
- **Voice**
 - Increased opportunity for citizens to actively engage in and influence decisions that affect their lives. Increased capacity to engage in advocacy to demand answers from those in power.
- **Dialogue**
 - Increased dialogue; talking and listening with a view to reaching shared understanding, repairing and strengthening relationships and creating understanding and collaborative partnerships, particularly with those in power.
- **Accountability**
 - An increase in responsibility and responsiveness of power holders and duty bearers to those they serve, so they carry out and fulfil their roles and responsibilities to citizens.

These core elements are described in detail in Section I.5

Advocacy

Advocacy seeks to change the systems and structures that cause poverty. Citizen Voice and Action is based within an advocacy framework, focusing on local level advocacy. Through advocacy, World Vision works with partners to address the causes of poverty, and vulnerability by changing policies, systems, practices and attitudes that maintain inequality and deny justice and human rights.

Citizen Voice and Action provides a sound theoretical framework to put into practice World Vision's understanding of advocacy.

Advocacy is described in detail within Section 2.1.

The role of advocacy when partnering with local government is discussed in Section 2.2.

Social Accountability

Social accountability is an approach that builds accountability based on the participation of ordinary citizens and/or civil society organisations in ensuring the accountability of those with power.

Citizen Voice and Action includes a number of aspects of social accountability bringing together a number of complementary and world recognised practices.

Social Accountability is described in detail within Section 2.10.

Origins

CBPM (Community Based Performance Monitoring) was first piloted by CARE Malawi and then developed further by the World Bank in the Gambia. World Vision initiated pilot programs in 2005. These pilots have influenced both the theoretical framework and practice of CBPM, and the development of these Guidance Notes. These Guidance Notes will continue to be reviewed and revised based on continual learning and experience.

The name was changed from Community Based Performance Monitoring (CBPM) to Citizen Voice and Action in 2008. We believe that this name provides a better description of the intended outcomes of the approach.

Introduction

LINKS WITH WV STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 1.4

Model of Ministry

World Vision has defined a 'Model of Ministry' that is used to inform strategic choices. Within this model are several aspects that are very relevant to Citizen Voice and Action.

The Model of Ministry has an integrated focus which is Christian, community based and promotes child well-being (within families and communities). Citizen Voice and Action is also integrated:

- It focuses on child well-being – aiming to improve the delivery of basic services such as health and education that are essential for children.
- It is community based - directly focusing public services at the local level. Often the lowest level of government structures is used as a basis to facilitate activities.
- It is Christian - drawing on the biblical context of working with the poor. Justice is central to the Bible, Jesus' ministry and God's reign. Seeking justice is a central element of WV's mission. Indeed one of the main reasons why WV exists is to seek justice for the poor. Citizen Voice and Action seeks justice for the communities with which we work.

World Vision's way of working is to:

Tackle the causes of poverty: in all situations we will address the root causes of poverty; we will challenge unjust systems and structures and we will work with communities towards achieving sustainable change, through building local capacity.

Encourage empowerment: our work will recognize and build on the social capital of communities which includes networks, trusting relationships, shared values and access to resources and institutions. We will not impose solutions, resources, interventions and values on communities, but will share ideas as appropriate to encourage and support local development processes and initiatives. These will require the active participation and ownership of community members to develop open relationships, joint accountability, shared decision making, positive values and the development of capacity, critical awareness and community based organizations (CBOs).

Emphasise multiple ministries: in support of our goal to tackle the causes of poverty and promote empowerment, advocacy becomes an integrated part of our ministry. In both relief and development work, we will actively facilitate opportunities that allow communities to monitor policies, access justice, and hold local government accountable.

Source:

Our Future: Focusing our work to realise our goals. OSM - Model of Ministry, 23 March 2007

Citizen Voice and Action provides a practical means to achieve these World Vision's primary aims through:

- tackling the root causes of poverty - working with and aiming to improve existing systems and structures that provide basic services.
- empowering citizens - to take action themselves and to take responsibility and ownership for improved service delivery.
- integrating advocacy - within local level programming by increasing community engagement in "monitoring policies, accessing justice, and holding local government accountable."

The Transformational Development Domains of Change provide for World Vision a description of our Ministry's objectives;

1. Families and communities work together with churches, governments, businesses and civil society organisations to improve the well being of children and the progressive realisation of their rights.
2. Communities able to offset risks, mitigate against shocks, and decrease the vulnerabilities and injustice that they and their children face.
3. Children promote change and participate in shaping decisions that positively affect the lives of their families, communities and nations.
4. Families and communities enjoy equitable, just and peaceful relationships that enable children to realise their identity and vocation as children of God.
5. Supporters, staff and the public tackle poverty and injustice through prayer, action, changed values and lifestyles.
6. Governments and the private sector, together with civil society and the church, implement policies and practices that address the structural causes of poverty at local, national and global levels.

Citizen Voice and Action offers a means to meet these objectives. This approach, with its advocacy base, is particularly appropriate for tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice. It can also meet the requirements of other Domains of Change through;

- Improved child well-being
- Decrease in vulnerability and injustice
- Strengthened partnership and collaboration
- Active child participation and empowerment
- Restored and strengthened relationships
- Addressing injustice
- Influencing policy.

IPM Process

The Integrated Programming Model (IPM) is World Vision's new approach to development work at local level. The model equips World Vision's local-level staff to work effectively with partners towards the sustained well-being of children within families and communities – especially the most vulnerable. The critical path is the process through which the integrated programming model is put into action. It is a step-by-step approach that enables World Vision

staff to develop a shared vision and priorities for sustained child well-being and then work together to achieve these priorities.

Both IPM and Citizen Voice and Action are still very new approaches, but initial evidence indicates their principles and approaches work well together. It is expected that Citizen Voice and Action will offer useful considerations at each step of the critical path and for IPM more generally.

Citizen Voice and Action and Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning (LEAP)

“LEAP (Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning) describes programme or project cycle management through six components: assessment, design, monitoring, evaluation, reflection and transition”. (LEAP Edition 2, page 17).

As described further in LEAP Edition 2, p10, “In summary LEAP provides a framework for building quality programmes that align with strategy and that generate good practices as they are implemented”.

LEAP has now replaced all design, monitoring and evaluation frameworks and standards previously used by World Vision.

Citizen Voice and Action describes an approach to, and practice of, advocacy.

The link between Citizen Voice and Action and LEAP, is like that of many between DME frameworks and programming approaches.

LEAP should be applied to Citizen Voice and Action as part of its programme or project cycle. However, Citizen Voice and Action should not be viewed as a tool in which to carry out LEAP.

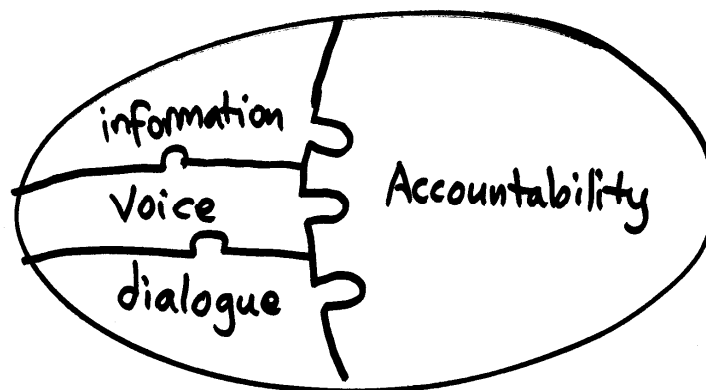
LEAP Edition 2 emphasizes the importance of learning; “LEAP is a learning framework with a set of learning tools”, (LEAP Edition 2, p10). Current pilots of Citizen Voice and Action also place a strong emphasis on learning.

Within LEAP, (Chapter 6 – Reflection) Action Learning is recommended as a way for staff at all levels to facilitate learning. We also encourage this practice for learning within Citizen and Voice practice, not only for World Vision staff, but for the other participants involved.

Core elements

The practice of Citizen Voice and Action must be responsive and flexible to the local situation. It may look different in each situation and country.

However, all Citizen Voice and Action practice should include the following core elements.



What is the connection between these four core elements?

Access of citizens to **information** about the delivery of public services provides the basis for them to **voice** their views and opinions on these services. Their views and opinions will be expressed as individuals, as a community, as well as in **dialogue** with those in power (service providers and government officials) in order to demand and obtain **accountability** from them.



It is difficult to have a credible **voice** about the performance of a basic service if you do not have **information** about what you should expect.

It is also difficult to have an informed **dialogue** with others about the quality of services without such **information**.

It can be hard to get **accountability** at the best of times and much more so if you lack relevant **information** and a way to **voice** your views.

Without effective and open **dialogue** to share views, change can often not happen. **Dialogue** and mutual understanding are important to improve performance.

Information

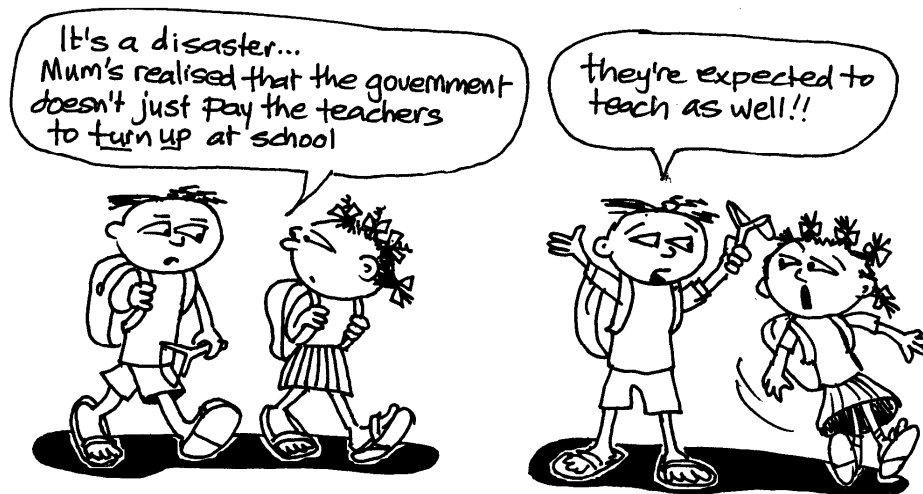
Information is a critical element of Citizen Voice and Action.

Firstly, the right to information is an essential first step to engage citizens. Effective access to information requires that it should be clear and easily understood (transparent) as well as freely available to the public by the authorities.

Citizen Voice and Action aims to increase both the transparency and accessibility of information for use by citizens. It seeks to provide opportunities for citizens to use such information to inform action about improving basic services.

Empowered citizens are able to use information to seek improvements to service delivery.

Secondly, through this approach, citizens also bring together and produce their own information about the delivery of basic services, based on their experiences. This information is shared with all relevant stakeholders involved with a particular service.



Voice

Voice can be defined as the capacity of all people, including the poor and most marginalised, to express their views and interests, and demand action from those in power who have a duty to provide public services.

Citizen Voice and Action aims to facilitate the education and empowerment of ordinary citizens to look critically at the performance of their public services, check that the standards of service their government has pledged are being provided and to seek reforms, whenever necessary, to improve the service.

Through the process of education and empowerment, citizens' voices will be strengthened and increased.

Citizen Voice and Action aims to increase the opportunity and capacity of citizens to share their voices to influence government processes and services. It aims to increase citizens' capacity to hold power holders accountable.



Dialogue

Citizen Voice and Action aims to provide opportunity for different stakeholders, especially service users and service providers, to share their views about the delivery of basic services.

Through dialogue, mutual understanding between stakeholders should be gained and effective partnerships should be established. Relationships within the community are both repaired and strengthened.

Through dialogue, it is hoped that citizens, together with service providers and other stakeholders, can identify ways to improve service delivery.



Accountability

Citizen Voice and Action aims to increase the accountability of service providers and those in power, as well as the accountability of ordinary citizens around the delivery of basic services.

Accountability focuses on the need for those in power to take responsibility for their actions. People may hold different types of power - political, financial, and military or other forms of power, but all are required to use power well and show good governance.

Accountability is essentially about taking responsibility and building relationships in ways that challenge and benefit all those involved. Citizen Voice and Action aims to increase and strengthen these relationships. It involves reciprocal relationships.

Through effective accountability, a number of different relationships are strengthened:

- accountability of government to citizens
- accountability of citizens to government
- accountability of citizens to themselves.

Strengthened accountability supports trust, cooperation, coordination and working together. Responsible citizenship and good governance play an important contribution in providing quality public services.

Accountability also concerns the process of communication between power holders and citizens.

- power holders need to **be answerable** - they must give answers
- power holders need to **be responsible** – they must do what they have agreed or promised to do;
- power holders need to **remedy** – they must put right anything they did wrong and restore any human rights which have been ignored.

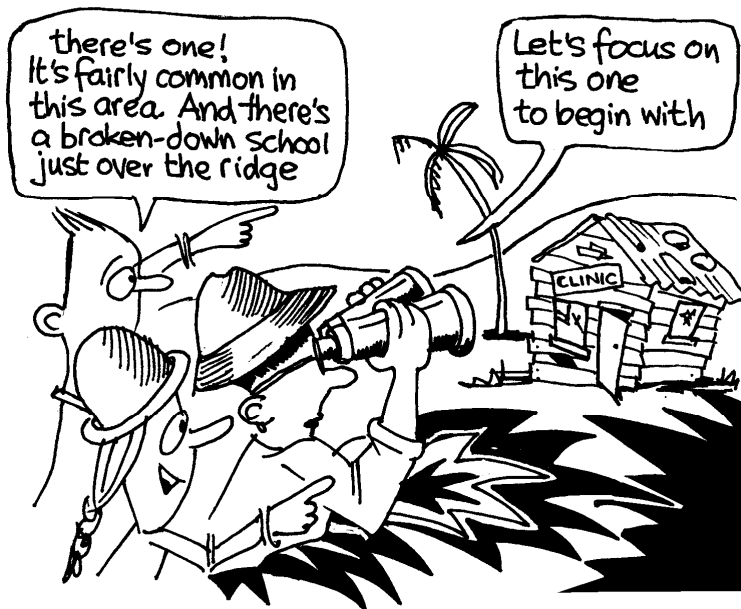


Public services

Citizen Voice and Action focuses on basic public services and the quality, efficiency and accountability by which these are delivered to communities. It aims to improve service delivery.

At the centre of Citizen Voice and Action is the Community Gathering. This enables community members to assess together the quality of the public services they receive, and identify possible ways to improve their delivery. Stakeholders are invited to participate, including community members who use the services (service users), service providers (government staff) and government officials (both administrative and political), who have responsibility for, or can influence, decisions that affect the quality of service delivery.

Citizen Voice and Action can focus on public services that have a physical structure such as health centres or schools, but also on social services which don't, such as agricultural extension work or policing.



Core Principles

Citizen Voice and Action offers an opportunity to integrate advocacy principles and practice within local level programming. There are a number of important principles around which this way of working is based, which are important to prioritise.

Policy focus (NOT project/program focus):

Government (public) policies and strategies that define basic service delivery provide the framework for Citizen Voice and Action. Activities are planned and focused on ensuring there are effective policies in place, and that quality services are provided to communities.

Social accountability focus (NOT project/program focus)

Citizen Voice and Action seeks to strengthen existing systems and structures to address poverty and ensure child well-being. Strengthening citizens' engagement in policies and practices of government aims to improve service delivery. Strengthening systems, structures and relationships promotes long-term sustainable change.

Citizen focus (NOT beneficiary focus)

The approach regards ordinary individuals, often described as 'the community', as citizens of nation states. Citizens have a primary relationship to their governments. They have a right to access quality services. This is not welfare, nor a handout but a right. Active citizenship and engagement with government, encourages governments to work effectively and to provide quality services.

Facilitation focus (NOT implementation focus)

World Visions' role and that of her partners is one of facilitation. Citizen Voice and Action describes a process of facilitation in which educated, mobilised and empowered citizens take action themselves, together with other stakeholders in the community including service providers and government staff.

Citizen led advocacy focus (NOT directive focus)

Citizens themselves decide what action they want, and need to take, based on their own experiences, information and hopes for the future. Advocacy responses are not directed by external organisations or 'experts'.

Local information ownership focus (NOT extractive focus)

Citizens generate the information themselves. Together they analyze this information and use it to improve the delivery of government services. They maintain ownership of the information. Permission to use this information for higher levels of advocacy action can be requested.

Introduction

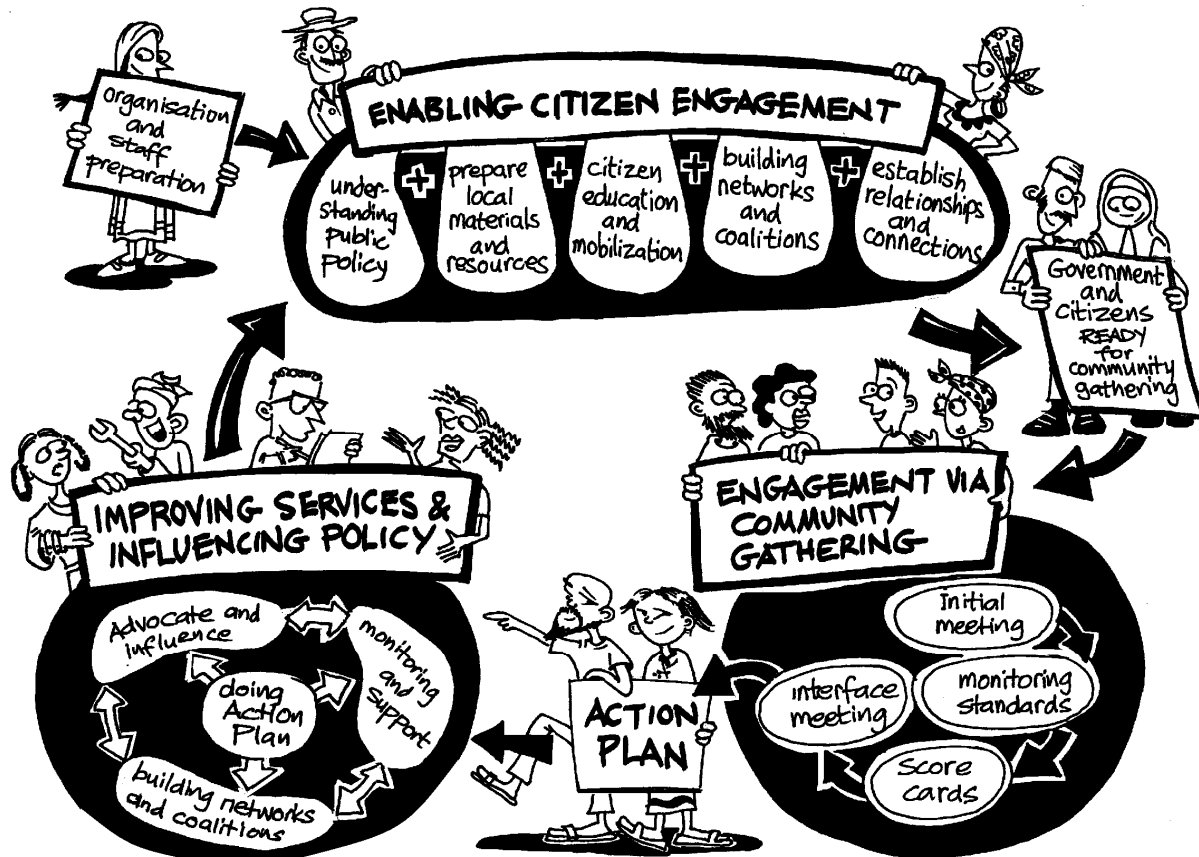
CORE PRACTICE

1.7

Overview

Based on experience from current pilot programs, we can broadly define the practice of Citizen Voice and Action within three phases:

1. Enabling citizen engagement
2. Engagement via Community Gathering
3. Improving services and influencing policy



Before these three phases begin, the organisation and staff are prepared. This is led by the National Office and includes both national level analysis and planning, together with initial support to local level programming.

The core practice of Citizen Voice and Action is described in detail in Sections 4 – 6. Organisation and staff preparation is described in Section 3.

National Office interest and commitment

Before starting Citizen Voice and Action, you will need in-principle National Office commitment. As the process continues and before you start activities in community, you will need to ensure that interest is expressed from ADP staff, together with Partners and stakeholders at the programming level.

Conceptual Framework

ADVOCACY

2.1

Citizen Voice and Action and advocacy

Citizen Voice and Action is founded within an advocacy framework, focusing particularly on local level advocacy approaches.

Advocacy is a primary way of working towards improving the well being of children within families and communities. Through advocacy, World Vision works with partners to address the structural and underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability, by changing policies, systems, practices and attitudes that maintain inequalities and deny justice and human rights.

World Vision believes that empowering ordinary citizens to take action to influence policy is central to achieving this change. Influencing policy makers (in both formal and informal ways) to change laws and policies, or to ensure that laws and policies are actually implemented, is an essential part of advocacy. Educating and empowering citizens and groups to press for such changes is essential.

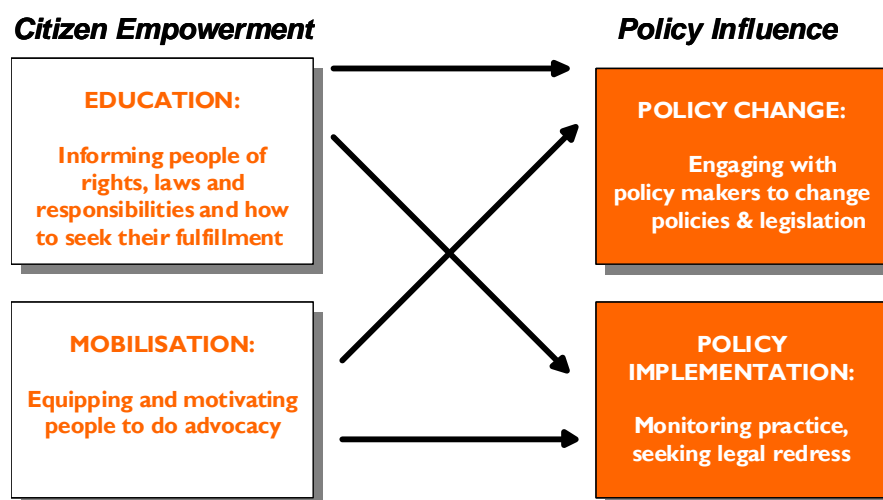
World Visions' understanding of advocacy³

Four kinds of action are seen as critical for this change process to occur:

1. Education: informing people of their rights, laws and responsibilities and how to ensure these are fulfilled
2. Mobilisation: equipping and motivating people to do advocacy
3. Policy change: engaging with policy makers to change policies and laws
4. Policy implementation: monitoring practice and seeking legal action if laws are not upheld.

These points of advocacy action, lead to two complementary outcomes;

1. Citizen empowerment
2. Policy influence.



The arrows indicate the purpose of Education & Mobilisation activities
to prompt Policy Change and Policy Implementation activities.

³ World Vision Partnership, *The Art of Advocacy Training Material*, 2003 ongoing revisions

World Vision's definition of advocacy⁴

A project, program or programmatic approach which seeks to **address the structural and systemic causes of poverty** by changing policies, systems, practices and attitudes that perpetuate inequality and deny human rights.

Influencing policy makers (formal and informal) to change laws/policy or ensure implementation of laws/policy is an essential part of advocacy but so too is **educating and empowering citizens** and groups to press for change as part of a functioning civil society.

Local level advocacy

WVs' understanding of advocacy provides a framework from a global, national and local perspective. Citizen Voice and Action describes local level advocacy. Characteristics of local level advocacy include:

- Empowering ordinary individual citizens as well as partners (groups), such as Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), through education about their rights, laws and responsibilities and their implementation, to mobilize for change.
- Influencing policy by equipping citizens to engage with government structures (political, administrative and traditional), which are accessible to ordinary citizens and local community groups, in order to create change.
- Advocacy work that is community initiated, community driven, and community owned.
- Advocacy issues being defined by the community.

Local or community level advocacy can be defined as that which has the active participation of citizens and members of a community.

Types of advocacy

There are several different approaches to advocacy, depending on who leads the action.

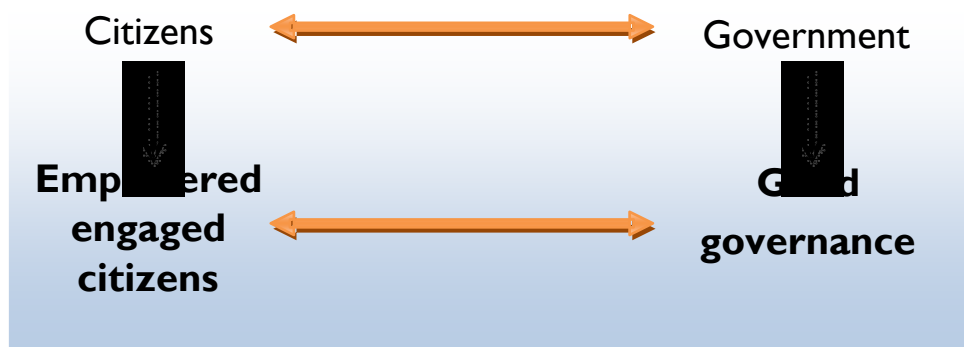
Advocacy “for” the poor: representative	Advocacy “with” the poor: accompanying	Advocacy “by” the poor: transformational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - speaking on behalf of the poor - beneficiaries are passive - little to no participation - power is obtained for them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organizing the poor to speak for themselves - role more active, but who takes the lead is still blurred - more active participation - power is obtained together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitating and empowering the poor to initiate themselves - citizens participate and take the lead - leadership of advocacy - power is obtained by citizens themselves

⁴ World Vision Partnership, *The Art of Advocacy*, 2003, ongoing revisions

These types of advocacy can be seen as a spectrum. They are all valuable in addressing the structural and systemic causes of poverty. World Vision has made a choice to emphasize empowerment in the strategy development process. In choosing empowerment as the preferred approach, advocacy “**by**” the poor at the local level becomes the desired outcome. Empowered citizens are able to initiate and lead their own advocacy. Citizen Voice and Action offers a practical means to facilitate local level advocacy by the poor.

Empowered citizenship

Local level advocacy which prioritizes empowerment, such as the Citizen Voice and Action approach, seeks to strengthen relationships within the community; such as the relationship between citizens and their governments. The relationship becomes mutually reinforcing as active and empowered citizenship strengthens the accountability of government and its responsiveness to citizens.



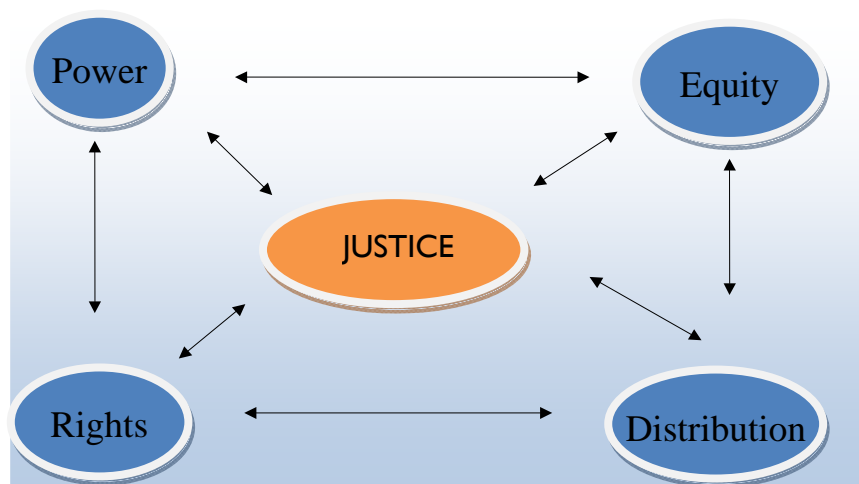
Further information on citizenship and governance can be found in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.

Advocacy for justice

Advocacy aims to address the structural and underlying causes of poverty. It aims to address issues of injustice in the community.

When we talk about justice what does this really mean?

The different aspects of justice are closely related. We find that justice – as power, distribution, equity and rights - is critically important to address all the underlying causes of poverty.



- Justice** refers to the distribution of resources, wealth and relationships of power between people within society. It is closely linked to fairness. Views of what justice means vary from society to society (and person to person), but the basic concept of justice is one of the key features of social organisation. It also refers to how the law is administered within a society.
- Power** refers to the influence or control that some groups or individuals hold. They can 'hold power over others': for justice, or for injustice. The poor often define poverty as powerlessness. By understanding power, we can also appreciate the link between justice and seeking power for the poor.
- Equity** refers to the state, goal, or ideal of being fair.
- Distribution** refers to the access, allocation and use of resources within a society.
- Rights** refers to people's legal or moral entitlement. Justice is being done, in an important sense, when resources and power are distributed equitably.

Government as local partners

In every situation where World Vision works, the local government is a key actor. In many situations it is a potential partner. However, the nature of WV's relationship with local government is different to that with other potential partners.

Government is the legal and formal authority that oversees the development process within any geographical region. As such, it has the right and duty to guide, but also the responsibility to deliver on the policies and services that impact its citizens. In any partnership with government, there will be a significant power difference, which makes it more difficult to achieve an equal partner relationship. Partnership with government is therefore more likely to be based around active advocacy.

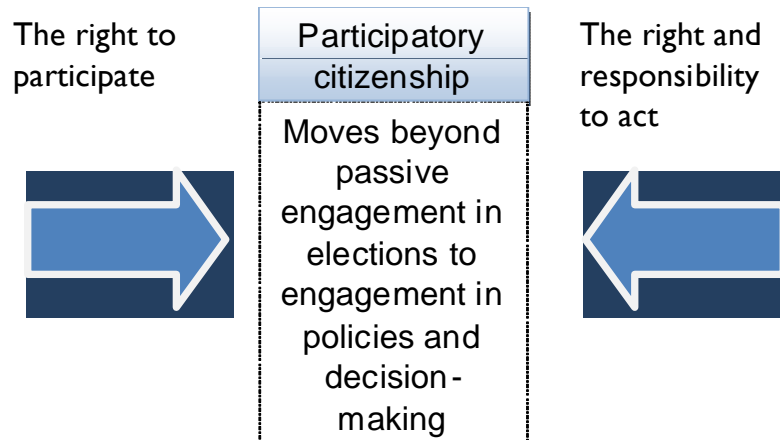
Citizen Voice and Action requires a major shift in thinking and programming approaches to work for some WV offices. The poor must be recognized as citizens of nation states, with a primary relationship to their governments, who bear responsibility for the protection and provision of rights, ensuring child well-being, and well-being for all citizens. Working with other partners, WV seeks to strengthen the relationships, work opportunities and partnerships between government, local organisations and communities in order to promote child well-being.

World Visions' contribution to empowering citizens and equipping them to engage in government decisions (policy) and delivery of services (implementation), aims to ensure the accountability of duty bearers to serve their citizens and ensure child well-being outcomes.

Through facilitating the Citizen Voice and Action approach, World Vision seeks to increase partnership and cooperation between citizens, stakeholders and their governments, to bring about sustained change and well being of children.

Citizenship

Citizenship is an important concept within the Citizen Voice and Action approach. World Vision no longer views the poor simply as beneficiaries. Instead it recognises them as citizens of nation states, with a primary relationship to their governments who bear responsibility for the protection and provision of rights.



Citizenship describes the relationship between individuals and national states (countries to which people belong). Citizenship refers both to the right to participate and the responsibility to act.

Citizen empowerment

One way to act as a citizen is to vote. This opportunity usually only comes around every few years (and in some countries very rarely indeed). However, citizenship is much more than a one-day experience every few years! Citizens can engage in policies and decisions that affect their lives on an ongoing basis.

Citizenship is not only about the right to vote, but also about the very important responsibility of participation.

Section 2.1 noted that within World Visions' understanding of advocacy there are two areas of empowered citizenship:

1. Education - to know ones' rights and responsibilities
2. Mobilisation - to act and engage in the decisions that affect someone's' life.

Through Citizen Voice and Action we seek both to empower citizens to act through education, as well as offering space and opportunity for citizens to individually and collectively mobilize and engage with government.

Community understandings of citizenship

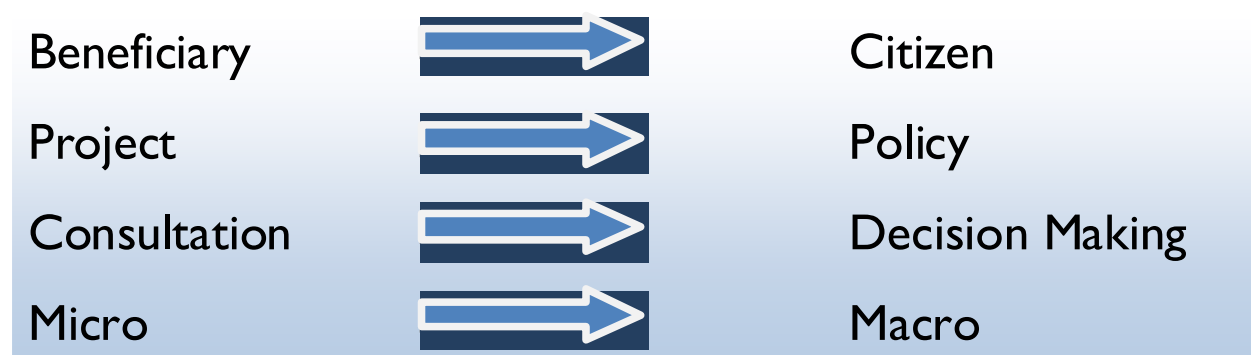
International studies have shown that marginalized communities throughout the world have similar definitions of what good citizenship should consist of:

- Exercising fairness towards each group
- Recognising the worth of all human beings, but also of their differences
- Self-determination through taking control over their lives
- Solidarity through identifying with others and acting together: locally, nationally and globally

These understandings are important to keep in mind in seeking to increase active and empowered citizenship.

From beneficiaries to empowered citizens⁵

For World Vision staff, thinking of the children, families and communities we work with as citizens, changes our thinking and the way we work in key ways.



This different approach to thinking and working allows us to address the root causes of poverty and to recognize the potential for communities as citizens to engage in addressing these themselves.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Citizen | - to engage purposefully as individuals and with each other, and act knowing both rights and responsibilities |
| Policy | - citizens focus attention on policies that affect their lives |
| Decision Making | - citizens participate actively in various decision making process (with governments and other partners) |

⁵ Gaventa, J. and C. Valderrama (1999). Participation, Citizenship and Local Governance: Background note prepared for workshop on "Strengthening participation in local governance". Sussex, Institute of Development Studies: 16.

Macro - citizens influence local forums and processes, but because much decision-making power is at higher levels, they move towards influencing these also.

Strengthening empowered citizenship

There are some important lessons to learn in order to strengthen and empower citizens. These are important to keep in mind as we start to plan, facilitate and initiate the Citizen Voice and Action approach.

- Start with the participation of socially excluded groups and build their awareness, power and capacities
- Build organisations and networks led by those groups directly affected by exclusion and inequality
- Promote alliances and create spaces for interaction with allies
- Provide support and accompaniment over time
- Pilot new approaches and then spread those that work.

Conceptual Framework

GOVERNANCE

2.4

Defining Governance

Governance is a central concept within the Citizen Voice and Action approach.

Governance can be defined as the way in which power is used to manage a country's economic and social resources

Governance is political. It involves political processes; rules by which a society decides how resources should be distributed.

These rules, traditions, practices and processes:

- define who the decision-makers are
- how they get to be decision-makers in the first place
- what decisions they can make
- the purpose they're supposed to be serving
- to whom they have to listen when they make decisions
- where their money comes from
- to whom they're accountable for their actions.

Governance is more than 'government'. It includes the relations between the state and society. It covers the process of *how things are done*, not just *what* is done.

Governance and poverty

There is compelling evidence that failures in governance hurt the poor more than any other single factor. Indeed on average, countries with better governance grow faster than others.

“Without progress in governance, all other reforms will have limited impact.”
Africa Commission, 2005

“Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development.” *Kofi Annan, 1998*

“Of all the ills that kill the poor, none is as lethal as bad government.” *The Economist, 12 August 1999*

Failures in government include:

- Corruption
- Incompetent public administration
- Low education and health
- Stifling regulations
- Slow, costly justice
- Weak state accountability systems.

Citizen Voice and Action seeks to challenge weak state accountability by empowering citizens to engage with governments and to demand accountability.

Systems of governance⁶

A number of arenas can be identified which together form the basis of governance:

Civil Society:	ways in which citizens raise issues and become aware of political processes
Political Society:	how interests within society come together in the political process
Executive:	stewardship of the system as a whole (by government)
Bureaucracy:	the way policies are implemented
Economic Society:	the relationship between the state and the market economy
Judiciary:	the legal process in which disputes are settled.

Citizen Voice and Action works across a number of these arenas of governance, most particularly civil society, political society, executive and bureaucracy.

Good Governance

Good governance can be described as sound development management

We can identify a number of important principles of good governance⁷:

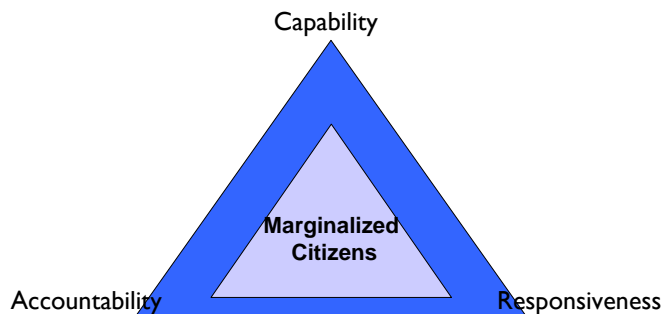
1. Participation: involvement and ownership by stakeholders
2. Fairness: rules should apply equally to everyone in society
3. Decency: rules are implemented without harming people
4. Accountability: people with political power are responsible for their actions
5. Transparency: clarity and openness of decision-making
6. Efficiency: use of limited resources for greatest outputs.

If these principles are followed, this leads to state legitimacy and effectiveness.

Good Governance is influenced by how **capable, accountable and responsive** governments are to their citizens, especially to the poorest and the weakest in the community.

Capability + responsiveness +
accountability = good governance

Good governance should focus on
marginalized communities to ensure
both their protection and increased
well-being.



⁶ From presentation, *Governance and Development*, Julius Court, ODI, QEH, University of Oxford, May 2006

⁷ From presentation, *Governance and Development*, Julius Court, ODI, QEH, University of Oxford, May 2006

These terms may have differing meanings, but within Citizen Voice and Action they are defined in the following ways:

Capability:

- *organizational attributes*
- the ability to get things done: capable governments carefully work out effective policies and then put them into practice.

Accountability:

- *institutionalized relationships*
- the obligation of power holders to account for, or take responsibility for, their actions
- an established relationship between power holders and those who hold them to account for their actions.

Responsiveness:

- *behavior*
- the efforts of government or public authorities to identify and then meet the needs or wants of the people, in particular the poorest in society.

Demand for Good Governance

There are many ways in which citizens can act to ensure good governance:

- through using social accountability approaches
- through citizen advocacy such as campaigns, movements, pro-poor alliances
- through local governance institutions, such as school or health management committees
- through participatory planning or budgeting processes at both national and local levels
- through the influence of community leaders
- through their own, creative actions together – to meet the needs of specific situations.

Citizen Voice and Action provides a process through which citizens can demand good governance. It offers a way to strengthen existing accountability approaches, and for citizens to engage in social accountability, as well as to participate more widely in activities that hold power holders accountable.

More information on accountability can be found in Section 2.10.

Demand for good governance should also be linked to the other side of the equation; with efforts to improve the supply of good governance, such as government reforms, internal accountabilities and improved skill levels of government representatives and staff.

Rights based approaches

Citizen Voice and Action works from a rights-based perspective. A rights-based approach focuses on those who are most excluded, and measures success on how effectively the rights of the most marginalised people have been upheld. It is based firmly in the belief that poor and marginalised people everywhere have rights and responsibilities.

The importance of a rights-based approach is that it empowers citizens, including children, with the skills not only to gain access to resources and information that enable them to move their development plans forward, but also with skills that enable them to address the violations of human rights and injustices that lie at the root of poverty.

Many economic, social, cultural and political rights have been signed by nation states through UN conventions and procedures. These provide a set of guiding principles or pillars of dignity, regarding equality, non-discrimination, participation and protection. Rights-based approaches understand all these rights to apply to all citizens irrespective of their situation.

A rights based approach is really one of political justice. It takes into consideration power, marginalisation and violation of rights. Often only through struggle can we seek a vision of a better society and understand this as a key factor in development.

Rights based approaches and Citizen Voice and Action

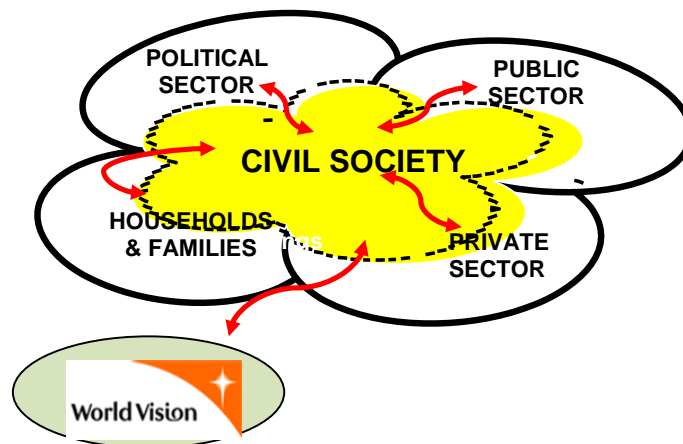
Citizen Voice and Action emphasizes a rights based approach as it seeks to ensure the quality of basic public services, ensuring that governments are held accountable and that the rights of citizens are protected.



Civil Society⁸

Civil society is an important framework for development practitioners, donors, and academics to make better sense of their work. Most descriptions of civil society include three aspects of society; the government, the market and citizens, (in other words, the public sector, private sector and civil society).

World Vision's approach is shown in the diagram below. Here we see that civil society provides a 'meeting place' between the public sector, the private sector and the family or household. This space is where society debates and negotiates matters of common concern, builds better provision for those most at risk and organises to regulate and influence public affairs and the public good.



Civil society organisations (CSOs) include a wide range of formal and informal groups, with an equally wide range of types and capacities, from CBOs and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), to trade unions, business associations and cooperatives. Individual groups also may work cooperatively through associations, social movements and networks.

There is a strong connection between civil society and the concepts of citizenship, governance, advocacy and rights based approaches. These connections are recognised within the Citizen Voice and Action approach, particularly through the engagement via the Community Gathering, where the public sector (service providers) engages with family and householders (service users). The approach seeks to strengthen opportunities for information sharing, expressing voices and views, dialogue and accountability of power holders.

Partnering with civil society

WV staff and stakeholders have considerable experience, energy and interests in developing partnerships within civil society, which can bring many potential benefits, and help ensure sustainable impacts. .

⁸ IPM Technical Description, Version 3.1 September 2008

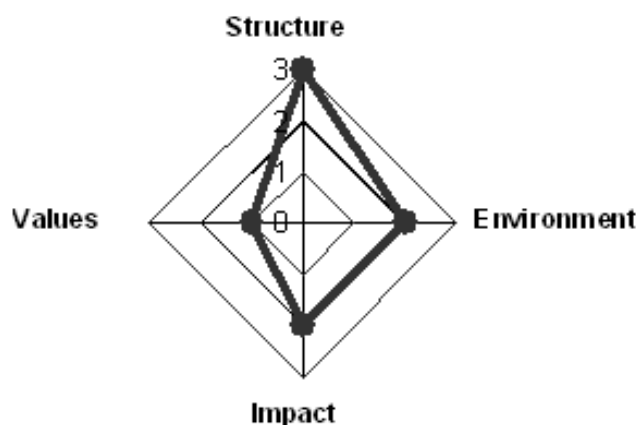
Working with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) is not a simple option. Research highlights numerous challenges:

- Existing inequalities within communities may be mirrored in CSOs.
- Communities may have developed dependency mindsets.
- Volunteers may have little time due to the challenges of earning a living.
- Some CSOs' lack of legal identity can prevent them from obtaining external funds.
- Various political situations may restrict work with CSOs.
- International NGOs may overwhelm CSOs with their own resources, objectives and energy.

There are some situations where civil society is fragmented or very weak. This may be the case for the whole programme area or among certain marginalised groups, especially in post-conflict or fragile states. In such situations it may be necessary to first identify all elements of social capital, and then mobilise or even encourage the formation of local CSOs, carefully observing identified principles and practices.

Mapping, assessing, building and partnering with local organisations in civil society, government and the private sector are essential skills and work priorities for WV staff. A primary resource for this is the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI). World Vision has selected the CSI for use at national and programme levels.⁹

The Civil Society index contributes toward building the strength and sustainability of civil society to increase its contribution to positive social change. The CSI indicators measure four aspects of civil society at national level. CIVICUS is a global alliance that maintains a growing database of CSI reports on countries with WV national offices. The Civil Society Index uses a simple score of 0, 1, 2 or 3 (low to high), and produces a four-cornered 'diamond' to rate the four kinds of civil society indicators.



⁹ WV IPM Team, *An Index for Civil Society & Governance: within the IPM Assessment Tool*, 2008

The CSI tool measures four aspects of civil society which include:

Civil Society STRUCTURE	Civil Society ENVIRONMENT	Civil Society VALUES	Civil Society IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadth of citizen participation • Depth of citizen participation • Diversity of civil society participants • Level of organisation • Inter-relations • Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political situation • Basic freedoms and rights • Socio-economic situation • Socio-cultural situation • Legal environment • State-civil society relations • Private sector-civil society relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democracy • Transparency • Tolerance • Non-violence • Gender equity • Poverty eradication • Environmental sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencing public policy • Holding state and private corporations accountable • Responding to social interests • Empowering citizens • Meeting needs of society

Understanding power

Ways of understanding power can often be seen as negative. Yet power also offers opportunity for action. Power is not static, but rather constantly shifting and changing.

Power:

- is based on human relationships and interaction
- works at many different levels
- is everywhere - in public and private, in professional and individual relationships.

The dynamics of power needs to be defined within every situation and within each relationship: who has power *over* others? who can build power *with*? who can exercise their power *to*? who can feel powerful *within* a given situation? .

For example, a landless labourer is vulnerable to the power of landowners and agribusiness. At the same time he may have autocratic and violent relationships with the women of his household.

Not everyone has power. In understanding power we should seek to identify individuals or groups in the community who are marginalized, have their human rights ignored or who have no power. All people should be encouraged to participate in decision making, transforming how power is shared and understood.

Different ways of understanding power

Power over other people: using persuasion or force to control resources and decision-making processes.

There are other more positive ways of viewing power, which affirms peoples' capacity to use power well.

Power to act: the potential of each individual to share their lives and their world.

Power within ourselves: peoples' sense of self-worth, values and self knowledge, central to individual and group understanding of being citizens with rights and responsibilities

Power with others: finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength to challenge injustice

Power relations are not always evident at first sight. They can be:

- Visible: the most well known and obvious: observable decision making processes and structures, both formal and informal, such as legislatures, parliaments, or councils of elders or village chiefs.
- Hidden: the behind-the-scenes dynamics that influence **who participates** in the visible decision-making processes and **whose voices** are heard, as well as **what issues** are deemed legitimate for consideration as part of the political agenda
- Invisible: the socio-cultural systems and related values that shape people's consciousness – their beliefs about the world and themselves, and their beliefs about their own capacity

Many strategies will be needed to enable equitable access and opportunities to use power, in order to contribute to child-well being. These strategies need to tap into different sources of power – power *with* others, power *within* self and power to act *individually* and *collectively*, as a way to counteract different forms of power over.

Understanding power for Citizen Voice and Action

Understanding power is an essential part of Citizen Voice and Action. Completing some type of analysis of power is critical and assists with planning and implementing the approach.

It is important to understand power both at national and local levels.

There are a number of points in the Citizen Voice and Action where it is valuable to undertake an analysis of understanding power. These include:

- Organisation and staff preparation
- Enabling citizen engagement
- Improving services and influencing policy.

You can stop to reflect and think about power whenever you feel it necessary. It helps to inform Citizen Voice and Action.

Tools for understanding power

Some tools are suggested here to help understand power.

1. Mapping the actors, structures and processes of power
Expected outcomes: Increased understanding of existing power holders, people with influence, structures, processes and relationships which may contribute towards child-well being.
2. Identifying opportunities for individuals and groups to participate in citizen action
Expected outcomes: Increased understanding of areas where citizens can engage in various levels of governance structures, and of the opportunities and barriers for participation.

Before using these suggested tools, it is useful to first conduct an orientation session on understanding power.

Orientation session

Introduction and awareness raising - understanding power

- Facilitate a session on the importance of understanding power
- Use the information included above as part of the presentation. Present it using PowerPoint, flip charts or hand outs
- Understand power within the local situation
- Encourage discussion and facilitate discussion within the group

- **Tip 1:** Use the reflection questions first to help the group begin thinking and discussing. Then introduce the material on understanding power as background information.
- **Tip 2:** Understand the background of participants and ensure that discussion on understanding power connects rather than divides participants. Emphasise the importance of valuing everyone's contribution (and power).

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR GROUP FACILITATION

Rather than simply providing all the information to the workshop participants, why not facilitate a discussion about 'understanding power within the community'? This encourages participants to think about and discuss the issues for themselves. They will all have real life experience and understanding about power in the community.

Some reflections questions that might be useful:

What is power?

Where do you see power in your community?

Does everyone have equal access to power?

Does everyone have equal opportunity to use their power?

What are the forums for people to exercise their power?

What are the different types of power relations that you see?

How have you seen power relations change in your community over time?

The facilitator of the session can emphasise points raised, correct inaccuracies in understanding power and introduce key concepts and terminology for understanding power.

1. Power mapping¹⁰

An exercise to map the stakeholders, structures and processes which contribute, or have the potential to contribute, to child-well being

- a) Consider the topic of 'understanding responsibility for child-well being within the community'. You might focus from national or regional level to local community level.
- b) List stakeholders with involvement, participation or responsibility in this topic. Write the name of each stakeholder onto a separate piece of card or post it note. Stakeholders with similar characteristics (eg. from government, community or other) can be grouped together. If there are many stakeholders identified within one group, consider ways of sub-dividing this group.
- c) Use a big flip chart (tape 2 - 4 sheets together) to draw concentric circles that match the government governance structures within the country. Place the child in the centre, households and then the governance structures at the lowest level next, such as ward or village, moving out with all the levels of government to the national level. Each circle represents a level of government.

¹⁰ World Vision Partnership, *The Art of Advocacy Training Material*, 2003 ongoing revisions

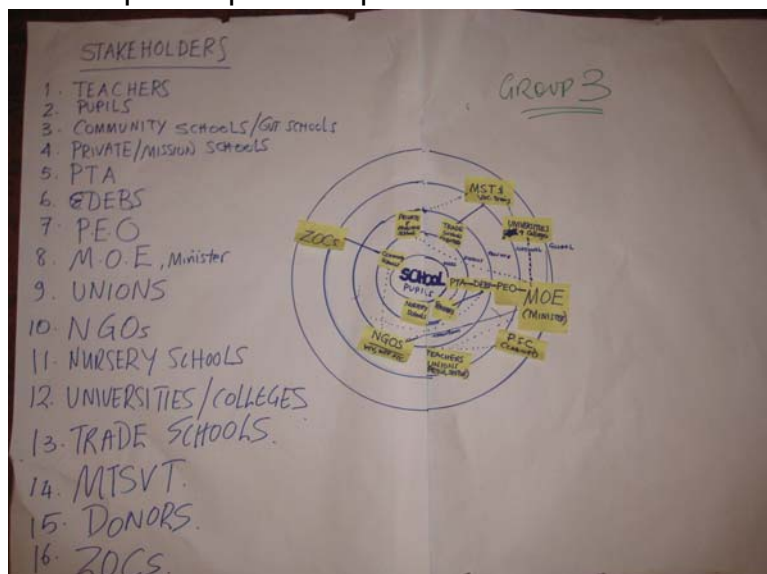
- d) Place the names of stakeholders identified wherever they relate to on the concentric circles. For example, parents would be placed within the household level, a primary school in the parish level, a doctor at the district level and the Ministry for youth affairs at the national level.
- e) Draw lines of relationships between the stakeholders: the lines will indicate power relations and the type and size of the lines can indicate difference between control and influence. For example use dotted lines to indicate the power of influence, (the ability to influence actual power holders) and straight lines to indicate the power of control (authority and responsibility). Thicker lines could indicate strong control and thinner lines could indicate weaker power of control.

Knowledge gained about power can be used to ensure the effective participation of stakeholders, especially those who do have control (power) and can influence positive change within the community as part of the engagement processes in Steps 3 and 4 of the Critical Path.

Additional notes and tips for facilitators

- The exercises can be led as one process (with all workshop participants working together). However it is suggested that the exercises are best facilitated in small groups of 4-5 people (either mixed or similar groups) with the results then brought together for discussion.
- Alternatively the facilitator can lead a process with a larger group to prepare the power map and then lead discussion.
- When facilitating small group work, it is useful to demonstrate the exercise first.

An example of a power map



2. Identifying opportunities for citizen action¹¹

This exercise helps to identify the various opportunities there are for individuals and groups to participate in citizen action. It looks at where such action can take place, at what level, and what are the types of power that support or hinder this action.

As we start to explore ‘what is already being done’ (Step 3) and ‘what more can be done’ (Step 4), the information from this exercise helps us to build on existing structures and processes in the community for citizen action, as well as identify opportunities for future participation. The exercise also identifies barriers or constraints for individuals or groups from participating.

The exercise helps us understand the local situation, and the opportunities that exist within the community. Over time this information can be put into practice, as WV together with its partners, seeks to increase opportunity for citizen engagement, reduce barriers to participation or raising issues, and increase awareness and power to speak out.

The exercise involves a series of questions related to three areas:

(1) available spaces for participation (2) levels of participation and (3) power to participate.

QUESTION 1: Where are the spaces for participation?

ARE THERE...Closed or uninvited spaces: *Do bureaucrats, experts or elected representatives make decisions with little or no broad consultation or involvement?*

ARE THERE...Invited Spaces: *Are people invited to participate by various kinds of authorities?*

ARE THERE... Claimed/Created Spaces: *Are spaces claimed by less powerful actors from or against the power holders, or created independently by them?*

LIST the spaces for citizen participation under these three headings (closed, invited, claimed).

Some spaces may have more than one heading. For example, a local health council might have meetings to which only a few citizens are invited (thus a closed space for most citizens). Therefore whichever heading you place the space under, you may want to add a note to qualify the ‘space.’ It is also a good idea to discuss the quality of participation in the space.

SPACES

Closed/ uninvited	Invited	Claimed / Created
eg Cabinet meetings	eg Community consultations	Various types of citizen-created spaces

¹¹ John Gaventa, (2007). *Participation and Citizenship: Exploring Power for Change*, IDS.

QUESTION 2: What levels of participation exist?

Categorize the ‘spaces for participation’ already identified, against the levels of available participation (local, national, global). You will need to define the levels, eg, district or municipal or province depending on the local governance structures. You will probably need to sub-divide these at local level.

Focus your attention first at the local level, and then at higher levels that will have power and influence over the local levels.

LEVELS	SPACES		
	Closed/ uninvited	Invited	Claimed / Created
Global			
National			
Local: 1			
Local: 2			
Local: 3			
Local: ?			

QUESTION 3: What are the dimensions of power?

Power is not always visible; sometimes it is hidden or invisible. This exercise helps to identify different types of power.

List each space identified above (from Question 1) with the relevant level of participation (from Question 2). Take one ‘space’ at a time and look at it in relation to the different types of power.

Visible power: Are issues and interests within this space open and visible in public?

Hidden power: Are there barriers that stop citizens participating or raising issues within this space?

Invisible power: How much are issues and citizens’ views hidden due to lack of awareness or the powerlessness of citizens?

Write your responses in the columns identifying dimensions or types of power.

LEVELS	SPACES	DIMENSIONS OF POWER		
		Visible	Hidden	Invisible
Global				
National				
Local 1:				
Local 2:				
Local 3:				
Local ?:				

Through this exercise three types of information are gathered. Information on:
(1) available spaces for participation (2) levels of participation and (3) power to participate.

These three types of information can be used to view power through different viewpoints;

- the spaces for power
- the levels in which they are placed
- the dimensions of power within these spaces.

Additional notes and tips for facilitators

- The exercises can be led as one process (with all workshop participants working together). However it is suggested the exercises are best facilitated in small groups of 4-5 people (either diverse or similar groups) with the results then shared and used for discussion.
- Alternatively the facilitator can lead a process with a larger group to prepare the power map and then lead discussion.
- When facilitating small group work, it is useful to demonstrate the exercise first.

Understanding the local situation and the existing opportunities and power of ordinary citizens to engage are essential. The information will be important as we start to consider 'what is already being done' and 'what more can be done'. We will need to build on these existing relationships and spaces for partnership rather than creating parallel structures or processes.

This exercise is extremely helpful as we start to consider partnering for child well-being, especially the partnership between governments and citizens for child well-being. This exercise helps us to identify existing relationships between government and ordinary citizens and ways in which citizens engage with governments. Increasing citizen engagement (spaces and levels of

participation) with government around the issues of children will be a significant contributor to increasing their well-being.

Preparation needed for exercises on understanding power

Prepare for introductory session on understanding power:

- Prepare room, ensure availability of equipment and obtain resources
- Organize facilitation team
- Prepare presentation material (power point, flip charts and hand outs).

Prepare for exercises:

- Organize facilitation team
- Prepare flip charts, marker pens, and post-it notes
- Organize participants either as one large mixed group of participants, or as smaller groups, ensuring there is opportunity for small groups to share their work.

Who should participate?

It is useful to engage with a broad range of stakeholders and social groups to ensure that many views are heard. Government officials, staff (both political and administrative), community representatives (CBOs) as well as community representatives, including youth and children should all participate.

Time allocation

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Introductory session on understanding power and its importance | 45 minutes – 1 hour |
| 2. Exercise to map the actors, structures and processes which contribute, or have the potential to contribute to child-well being | 1 – 3 hours |
| 3. Exercise to identify opportunity for individuals and groups to participate and contribute to child-well being | 1 – 3 hours |

Active participation

Participation is a word that is used often and with many different meanings. These can range from people participating simply as informants to people being actual decision makers in agendas that they lead.

Participation that builds empowerment involves expanding the power and voice of those that are poor or marginalised so that as they become critical thinkers within their own situation, they can make decisions and act as leaders of change.

Participation is central to Citizen Voice and Action. There are a number of important ways to ensure effective participation of citizens:

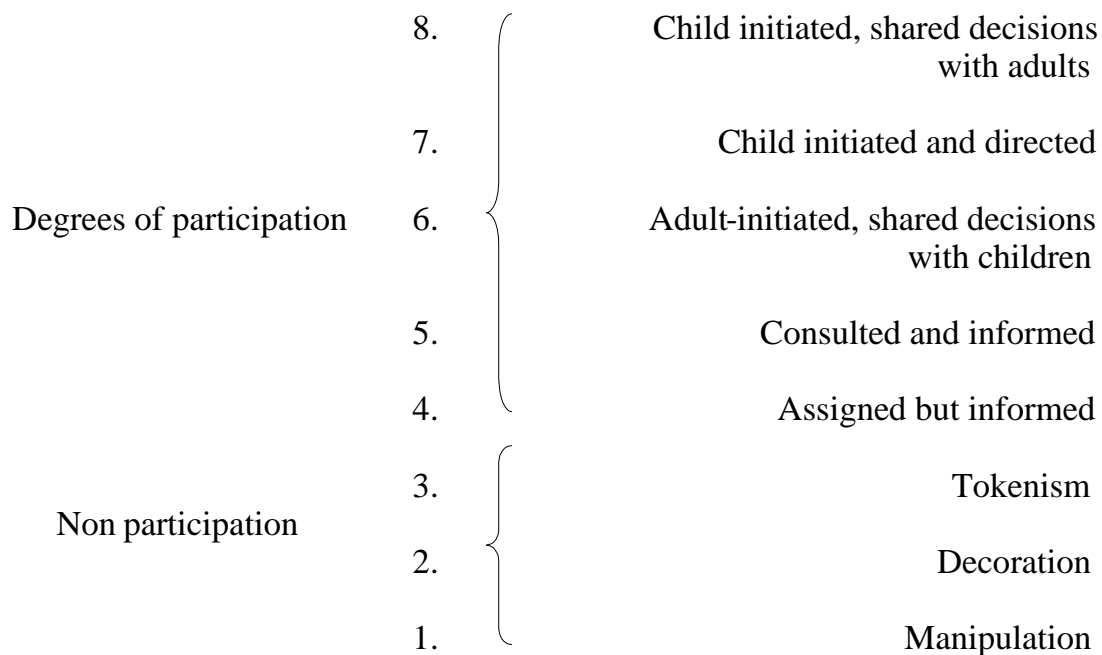
- **Time and place of meetings**
 - should be appropriate to allow all citizens to attend
 - recognise barriers or constraints to participation, especially for marginalised groups such as women, children, people with disability, and arrange meetings to ensure their active participation.
- **Language used**
 - it is critical that sessions of Citizen Voice and Action are conducted in the language which will give citizens most confidence.
- **Facilitation**
 - how a meeting is conducted will greatly affect how comfortable people feel and how likely they are to actively participate.
- **Monitor quality of participation**
 - during the sessions monitor the quality of participation. Recognise the power relations and how they might affect the participation of different groups
 - encourage quieter members to participate
- **Be clear about the level of participation and decision making on offer**
 - Recognise that there will be different types of participation and not everyone will participate equally in every decision. For example the working group or facilitation team will make some decisions on behalf of the community and then opportunity will be provided for more general participation.

Child participation

Child participation is an essential component of Citizen Voice and Action. Children are often direct users of basic services. It is essential that their voices are heard as part of the performance assessment and that they are part of the continued dialogue and action to improve delivery of public services.

We can think of participation in terms of a ladder of participation¹². This is relevant for both adults and children. Through Citizen Voice and Action we aim to strengthen opportunity for children with adults to move higher on the ladder of participation.

¹² Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. Innocenti Essay N o. 4. Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Center.



Child participation should be included through all phases of the Citizen Voice and Action approach. Our pilot programs have shown how activities can be planned to actively support and encourage child participation as part of citizen education and mobilisation. Children have participated as part of the engagement processes of the Community Gathering. In Brazil Citizen Voice and Action activities are being led by youth leaders and a coordinated youth group in the community. It is through their action that broader community participation is being facilitated!

There are a number of important factors to support effective child participation:

- Children's participation requires sufficient time, funding and planning if it is to be meaningful and good quality.
- 'Child friendly' information is essential in order to give children the same access to information as adults.

Although participation differs from the very young child to young adult, there is a range of evolving capacities. It is important to use 'child friendly' information and processes:

- use of simple language
- use of pictures, photographs, drawings
- 'child friendly' processes and structure
- clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

An enabling environment is key to whether or not children can participate effectively in decisions that affect their lives. This often requires a shift in adult thinking!! Participation will depend on:

- the child's capabilities (depending on age)
- the use of effective participation tools (age appropriate)

- the openness of adults to engage and listen to children
- provision of safe places in the family, community and society to support engagement
- the socio-cultural, economic and political situation.

There are a number of important issues to consider when planning and implementing child participation:

- Children are not a homogeneous group (children have many different experiences and views)
- Child representation (who chooses?)
- Child protection (to ensure adequate supervision and protection)
- Adult facilitation (roles and actions)
- Child owned space (a place to call home)
- Child owned processes (do they run the show?)
- Time and resources are needed.

Conceptual Framework

EMPOWERMENT

2.9

A definition of empowerment

A central aim of Citizen Voice and Action is citizen empowerment. It aims to empower citizens to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are provided at the local level.

World Vision has made a choice to emphasise *empowerment* over *service delivery* in the strategy development process¹³. Of course there are hundreds if not thousands of definitions of empowerment!

Empowerment can describe an expansion of assets and capabilities, spaces and opportunities for individuals to exercise real choice over, and influence on, the issues that affect their lives.

Empowerment means providing space and opportunities for people to gain greater control over their lives. Empowerment is multi-dimensional; it happens in the economic, social, political, spiritual and psychological domains. Empowerment always happens in relation to others.

At its core, empowerment is about people and power. The main form of transformation is the action of people themselves who are most affected by poverty and injustice.

Dimensions of empowerment

Different situations will influence where you start with empowerment. For some places it might be building collective action to influence public policy, in others it might be building individual consciousness.

It is vital that individual empowerment (conscientisation) is translated into collective action, which can challenge inequitable or unjust situations.

Empowerment is about power and the transforming of inequitable and unjust power relations.

‘Agency and opportunity’

A useful framework to consider when thinking about empowerment is the World Bank’s analytical framework¹⁴. They see empowerment as part of the relationship between agency and opportunity.

Agency is defined as an individual stakeholder or group’s ability to make purposeful choices. But agency is not equivalent to empowerment. Even when people have the capacity to choose

¹³ World Vision Partnership. *The role and purpose of our Principle Level Choices Our Future – Partnership Strategy* Team, September 2006

¹⁴ Alsop, R., Frost, M., and Bertelsen, J. (2006). *Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation*, World Bank, Washington DC.

options, they may not be able to use those choices effectively. They are limited by their opportunity structure. This is the institutional or structural environment in which citizens live.

The institutions established or 'rules of the game' determine how citizens engage in decisions that affect their lives.

A persons' agency can be largely determined by their resources or assets. The World Bank considers assets such as psychological, informational, organisational, material, social, financial and human assets.

Citizen Voice and Action and empowerment

At its heart, Citizen Voice and Action seeks the empowerment of citizens. An important point to remember is that it also offers empowerment for other stakeholders such as service providers, who often lack opportunity to share their concerns about service delivery and their desire for change.

Accountability

Accountability can be described as the obligation of power holders to account for, or to take responsibility for, their actions.

Accountability establishes a relationship between power holders and those who hold them to account for their actions. It describes responsibility, reciprocity and relationships among different stakeholders.

Accountability focuses on governance issues around how decisions are made and who controls resources. It also focuses on how resources and actions are monitored, accounted for and judged to be effective or not.

Power holders are those who hold political, financial or other forms of power.

Social Accountability

Social accountability can be described as the engagement of citizens or civil society organizations to hold power holders to account for the social benefit of all.

Social Accountability mechanisms refer to a broad range of actions (beyond voting) that citizens, communities and civil society organizations can use to hold government officials and bureaucrats accountable. These include citizen participation in public policy making, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizen monitoring of public service delivery, citizen advisory boards, lobbying and advocacy campaigns.

Citizen Voice and Action is a social accountability approach that focuses primarily on monitoring the performance of public service delivery. It also has a wider focus in encouraging opportunities for citizens to engage in public policy and advocacy campaigns.

Through their engagement citizens can:

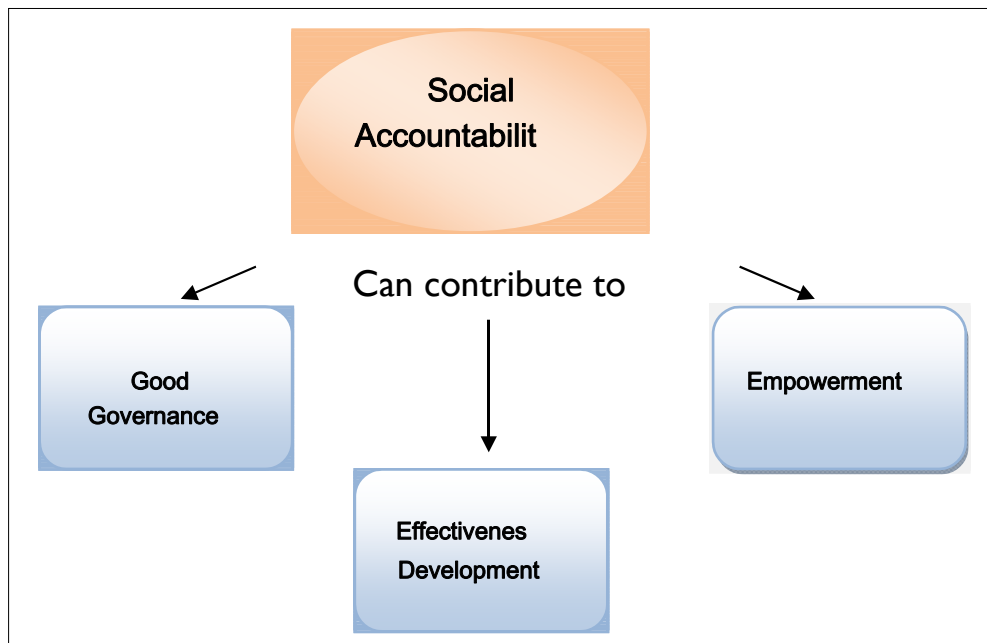
- express demand for public services (through their voices)
- demand accountability from local service providers
- improve service quality.

Social accountability and development outcomes

Social Accountability has become an important approach for improving governance processes, improved service delivery, decision-making about resources allocation and an effective empowerment tool.

- **Good governance:** The social accountability of public officials is the basis of good government and essential for effective democracy.

The benefits of social accountability¹⁵



- **Development effectiveness:** Social accountability contributes to increased development effectiveness through improved service delivery and more informed policy design, as a result of direct participation by citizens.
- **Empowerment:** Social accountability initiatives can lead to the empowerment of citizens, particularly the poor, as they start to engage with power holders.

Citizen Voice and Action as a social accountability approach, contributes to increased development effectiveness through improved public service delivery and more informed policy design as a result of the direct participation of citizens.

Effective social accountability:

- Creates direct accountability relationships between citizens and power holders
- Involves a broad range of actions and mechanisms beyond voting that citizens can use to hold power holders to account
- Involves actions on the part of government, media, and other society organisations (civil society) that promote or facilitate accountability efforts.

¹⁵ Parmesh Shah (2007) *Social Accountability in Practice: From Tools to Outcomes*, South Asia Sustainable Development Department

Good social accountability practice

There are a number of characteristics that can be used to describe good practice. These include:

- Citizen *monitoring* of government actions: this requires and generates publicly held information,
- Citizen *feedback on*, and *advocacy for*, specific government actions
- Opportunities to discuss and negotiate the issues
- Citizen avenues for sanction/enforcement.



**SUMMARY:**

1. Conduct reviews, assessments and analysis
 - National Office Strategy Review
 - Staff Capacity Assessment
 - Country Context Assessment
2. Hold Orientation Workshop for Citizen Voice and Action
3. Hold Facilitation Workshop for Citizen Voice and Action

National Office commitment and interest

Before starting the Citizen Voice and Action approach, commitment in principle is required from the National Office. As the process continues, and before you start activities in the community, you will need to make sure that interest is expressed from ADP staff, together with partners and stakeholders at the local level.

Organization and staff preparation

A series of preparation activities have been designed to begin the planning for Citizen Voice and Action planning, staff development and program design in both National Offices and at the local level.

Working through an advocacy framework requires World Vision to work in a way that facilitates citizen empowerment. From initial pilot programs we have found that for many offices, including Citizen Voice and Action into their programs requires organizational change and a different way of working for local staff.

Within this section we outline recommended processes or activities for National Offices so their staff can take the lead in preparation for planning, initiation and facilitation of Citizen Voice and Action at the local level.

First, we recommend that National Offices conduct a number of reviews, assessments and analysis looking both at the internal World Vision perspective, and at the external situation regarding governance and citizenship. This analysis focuses on three areas:

1. National Office Strategy Review
2. Staff Capacity Assessment
3. Country Context Assessment

The second area focuses on building the capacity of staff. A staff capacity building program has been prepared within these Guidance Notes. More detailed resources are available from World Vision International.

The first step in building staff capacity is an Orientation Workshop. The goal of this workshop is to build understanding of citizenship and governance. It looks at the approach of Citizen Voice and Action approach within the specific country situation, and the implications for World Vision's future work.

The second step is a Facilitation Workshop. This aims to equip participants (local level staff and partners) with knowledge, skills and capacity to facilitate the Citizen Voice and Action approach within communities, recognising the broader citizenship and governance country context.

OUTCOME:

1. Country situation is understood in relation to citizen and governance issues
2. Increased understanding by National Office staff of citizenship and governance issues and how the Citizen Voice and Action approach fits within their country situation
3. Staff, partners and stakeholders trained to facilitate the Citizen Voice and Action approach within communities, recognising the broader citizenship and governance issues

SUMMARY:

1. Form an internal team to conduct review
2. Conduct national office strategy review
3. Prepare a report before the Orientation workshop

It is recommended that National Office staff take the lead to review existing reports and plans to identify how the Citizen Voice and Action approach will fit within current and/or future strategies. The review will also identify the implications of starting the Citizen Voice and Action approach within the existing organisational framework.

1. Process for conducting assessment

Form a team of WV staff to conduct the review. A consultant should not be required, as the main purpose is to draw out and build as far as possible on the existing knowledge, skills and networks of staff. It is expected that those involved in this process and in the preparation of the report will be participants of the Orientation Workshop.

Section I of the Guidance Notes, which outlines the key concepts, principles and practice of Citizen Voice and Action, can be used as a resource to guide this assessment together with this Section.

It is expected that the content of the review will be used during the Orientation Workshop. The National Office strategy review is simply a preliminary exercise. Following the Orientation Workshop, it is expected that a more detailed review and assessment will be undertaken in the light of increased understanding and plans resulting from the workshop.

The country strategy and advocacy strategy should be reviewed with other relevant WV strategies from the perspective of a citizenship and advocacy agenda. The review should identify how a citizen led local level advocacy approach will fit within current and/or future strategies. The questions below should be used as a guide only. Where appropriate, country specific topics and issues should also be considered.

The strategy review helps staff begin to engage in the issues of the Citizen Voice and Action approach. The results of their review will enable the facilitators of the Orientation Workshop to make the content of the workshop relevant to the local situation, while also linking the new approach to the National Office context.

2. Conduct strategy review

Country strategy

To what extent does the strategy include:

- a) Plans for local level advocacy? If so, describe the approach and priorities for advocacy.
- b) Plans for national level advocacy? If so describe the approach, and issues/sectors targeted?
- c) Partnerships and alliances for advocacy work and influencing policies? If so, describe these.
- d) Engagement with civil society and the strengthening of civil society for advocacy?
- e) Integration of advocacy within current programming strategies?
- f) An appreciation and use of the core principles and themes of Citizen Voice and Action? If so, describe how.

Advocacy strategy

Repeat the questions asked above of Country strategy together with those below.

How, or in what ways, does the strategy include:

- a) Plans for citizen education?
- b) Plans for citizen mobilisation?
- c) Plans for monitoring the implementation of government policy?
- d) Plans for influencing policy?
- e) Plans for monitoring the response from advocacy work for government basic services
- f) Plans for increasing the accountability of government in relation to their delivery of basic services?
- g) Plans for strengthening citizen voice, dialogue and relations between community and government.

Other relevant WV strategies, such as a programming strategy should also be reviewed in line with these questions.

3. Reporting

An initial review and assessment report should bring together existing work from the national office, advocacy and other relevant strategies that demonstrate local level advocacy work. The report should provide responses to the questions above, together with evidence to justify each response. The report can pose questions, raise issues or identify further action required for discussion during the Orientation Workshop. The report should provide a summary analysis and also provide recommendations for future action.

OUTCOMES:

1. Strategy review conducted and a preliminary report prepared showing possible links between existing and future strategy and the Citizen Voice and Action approach.
2. Increased understanding of key staff about the Citizen Voice and Action approach, potential links with National Office strategies and organisational implications.
3. Orientation workshop facilitators provided with helpful background information about National Office strategies and their links with Citizen Voice and Action.
4. Facilitators equipped to adapt the Orientation Workshop process and content to the National Office context.

SUMMARY:

1. Form team to conduct assessment
2. Conduct staff capacity assessment
3. Prepare report before Orientation workshop

The staff capacity assessment should be based on current knowledge and understanding within WV. A detailed capacity assessment process, collecting primary data is not expected. However where required a preliminary assessment can be conducted. The questions below should be used as a guide only. Where appropriate, country specific topics and issues should also be considered.

1. Form team to carry out assessment

A team of WV staff should be formed to conduct this review. A consultant should not be required as the main purpose is to draw out and build, as far as possible, on existing staff knowledge, skills and networks. It is expected that those involved in this process and in the preparation of the report will be participants in the Orientation Workshop.

Section I of the Guidance Notes, which outlines the key concepts, principles and practice of Citizen Voice and Action, can be used as a resource to guide this assessment together with this Section.

The staff capacity assessment is simply a preliminary exercise. Following the Orientation Workshop a more detailed staff review and assessment will be undertaken in light of the increased understanding and plans resulting from the workshop.

2. Process for conducting assessment

This assessment helps staff engage in the issues of the Citizen Voice and Action approach. The results of the review will help facilitators of the Orientation Workshop and the Facilitation Workshop adapt the workshop materials and process, and link them to the National Office context.

Resources

1. Describe the current staffing and structure of existing advocacy departments or units at national, zonal or local levels - who are the staff, what do they do, how much time do they give to advocacy issues.
2. Describe other staff (if any) who conduct advocacy work, at national, zonal or local levels.

Staff experience, skills and capacity

Assess the current experience, skills and capacity of staff in:

- a) community focused facilitation

- b) citizen education
- c) citizen mobilisation
- d) local, regional and national level advocacy
- e) policy analysis, policy influence and monitoring the implementation of policies
- f) networking, partnering and coalition building for advocacy.

Within each existing area of work, provide examples of current work that demonstrates staff skill level and capacity.



A simple matrix might be useful to manage the information, such as the one suggested below. A separate matrix could be prepared for each level of staffing.

Staff capacity assessment

	Community focused	Citizen education	Citizen mobilisation	Local, regional and national level advocacy	Policy analysis, policy influence and monitoring implementation	Networking, partnering and coalition building for advocacy
Experience						
Skills						
Capacity						

Partners

It is important to consider the existing role of partners as part of this capacity assessment. In many situations, partners and their staff carry out work in the community. If this is the situation within your national office, then you should also include an assessment of partner experience, skills and capacity.

3. Reporting

An initial assessment report should be prepared before the Orientation workshop. The report should provide responses to the questions above, together with evidence to justify each response. The report can pose questions, raise issues or identify further action required for discussion during the Orientation Workshop. The report should provide a summary analysis and also provide recommendations for future action.

OUTCOMES:

1. Capacity assessment conducted and a preliminary report prepared.
2. Increased understanding of key staff about the Citizen Voice and Action approach and their capacity to facilitate the approach.
3. Orientation Workshop facilitators provided with background information about the capacity of National Office, zonal and local staff
4. Facilitators equipped to ensure the Orientation and Facilitation Workshop process and content is appropriate to the National Office situation.

SUMMARY:

1. Form team to conduct review
2. Conduct country context assessment
3. Prepare report before the Orientation workshop

The Country context assessment is an essential part of organisation and staff preparation. It is critical that World Vision together with its partners understands the local situation so that all plans and work that is initiated and facilitated by WV is based on that local context. All work must be relevant and responsive to the local situation and environment.

Section I outlines the basic concepts, principles and practice of Citizen Voice and Action. It would be useful to review this section as part of the country context assessment.

This exercise is an initial exercise only. Following the Orientation Workshop, a more in-depth round of review and assessment of the country context is likely to be done in the light of increased understanding and plans resulting from the workshop.

I. Process for conducting assessment

Form a team of WV staff to conduct the review. A consultant should not be required as the main purpose is to draw out and build on existing knowledge, skills and networks of staff. Those involved in the process and preparation of the report are usually expected to be participants of the Orientation Workshop.

The assessment enables staff to begin engaging in the Citizen Voice and Action approach. The results of this assessment will enable the facilitators of the Orientation and Facilitation Workshops to adapt the process and material of these workshops to the local country context. This assessment will also be valuable to program staff as they start to plan and facilitate local programs.



Why not use existing material to support the country context assessment? National Offices should have completed National Landscapes that might include relevant information to support the Country Context Assessment.

Use material produced by other groups that provides an analysis of issues discussed within this Section. Take the opportunity to start a dialogue with groups already working in this area to learn from their experience.

You don't have to reinvent the wheel! Build on work already done within World Vision and within other organisations.

2. Conduct the assessment

Governance and Politics

- Give an overview of the structure of government and politics from national to local level.
- Discuss and assess the implications of decentralisation (government funding, administrative, democratic), particularly in relation to local service delivery
- How significant is this decentralisation for child well-being?
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses, potential opportunities and obstacles of the governance structure, concentrating on relevant parts such as the health or education sector and relevant policy-making areas.

Policy development, implementation and budgeting

- Describe government processes and systems in relation to policy development and budgeting for basic services. Who makes the policy decisions and who influences them?
 - briefly describe any relevant decentralisation policies
 - focus on health and education initially.
- Describe the key levels of government responsible for basic service delivery and why? What are the implications for WV's structure and strategy?
- Which are the key relevant government departments and other organisations for communities to influence? Are these at national, state or lower level?
- Describe the priorities and processes for engaging in and monitoring Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSP) and briefly comment on WV or civil society's role in this.
- Refer to any independent assessments of the PRSP processes.

Citizen participation

- Describe opportunities for citizen engagement.
- Include participatory governance structures such as committees or participatory budgeting meetings or any other ways in which citizens can engage in public decision-making.

You can use the exercise in Understanding power (Section 2.7) to identify opportunities for individuals and groups to participate. The exercise seeks to understand the opportunities for citizen action. It identifies how such action can take place, at what level and what types of power support or hinder such action.

Public and Social accountability

- List the most common existing local accountability mechanisms that are relevant to the chosen sectors (such as school management committees or health management committees).
- Briefly assess how well they function and their potential for social accountability.
- List any social accountability initiatives already in use (or planned) such as participatory planning, Public Expenditure Tracking Systems (PETS) or participatory budgeting.

- Describe any government accountability and monitoring mechanisms relevant to the chosen sectors, such as school or health inspectors. Mention any which act as public champions urging greater government accountability.

Sector analysis

Select one or more sectors, such as health and education, to use in responding to these questions

- Identify relevant policies, strategies and planning documentation in relation to the chosen sector
- Identify government standards or entitlements in relation to local service delivery for the chosen sector
- Focus on child well-being, such as health and education.
- Align the chosen sector with key priorities within country strategies.

Civil society

- How much does the government regulate NGOs? Does this affect their ability to criticise and carry out advocacy work relating to government policy?
- Does civil society or the media raise issues of good governance and ensure accountability of government to its citizens?
- What are the main coalitions or social movements working in the area of social accountability, and supporting local level advocacy work?
- Identify any other agencies, organisations, think tanks or academic institutions that have expertise in social accountability, demand led governance and local level advocacy work. Identify the approaches they use, their strengths and weaknesses. What links or partnerships does WV have with any of these organisations? What opportunities are there for partnership in the future?
- Identify opportunities and capacity of the community to engage in local level advocacy..
- Assess the experience of communities in leading local level advocacy efforts.
- Assess the willingness and interest of communities to engage in local level advocacy.
- Identify regions or areas with the greatest potential to engage with Citizen Voice and Action.

A response to the questions above should be complemented by the completion of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI). The CSI may already have been completed for the country context in which case this should simply be added to the country context assessment report. If it has not been completed, a simplified version should be conducted and the results included in the report.

3. Reporting

An initial assessment report should be prepared before the Orientation workshop. The report should provide responses to the questions above, together with evidence to justify each response. The report can pose questions, raise issues or identify further action required for discussion during the Orientation Workshop. The report can provide a summary analysis and also provide recommendations for future action.

OUTCOMES:

1. Country context assessment conducted and preliminary report prepared.
2. Increased understanding of key staff in the Citizen Voice and Action approach and the local country context and the implications to potential programming options.
3. Preliminary identification of existing systems, structure and processes and potential to connect with as part of Citizen Voice and Action facilitation.
4. Orientation Workshop facilitators provided background country context.
5. Facilitators equipped to contextualise Orientation Workshop and Facilitation Workshop process and content to the country context.

SUMMARY:

1. Form facilitation team
2. Prepare for workshop
3. Conduct workshop
4. Prepare recommendations for the future

Make sure that there is commitment in principle from the National Office to use Citizen Voice and Action. Funding may be sought from Support Offices or external agencies to carry out activities.

Following completion of the reviews and assessments, the first step in capacity building for Citizen Voice and Action is an Orientation Workshop.

This section provides only a brief introduction to the workshop. More detailed information can be found in:

- Participant material - Orientation workshop
- Facilitation Notes – Orientation workshop.

1. Form Facilitation team

It is expected that a team of Core Facilitators, at least two, will lead the workshop. Core facilitators should already have attended Citizen Voice and Action Orientation Workshops, and WV will have identified them as both knowledgeable in the workshop material and competent in facilitation skills. In special circumstances, technical staff or consultants who have not attended Citizen Voice and Action workshops, may lead the workshop with guidance and support.

2. Preparations; Workshop Goal, Objectives and Content

Goal To enhance understanding of citizenship and governance issues and the CVA approach to citizen driven advocacy within the country context, World Vision's work and future programming opportunities.

Content

- a) Principles and practice of advocacy, with an emphasis on local level advocacy
- b) Empowerment and programming to facilitate empowerment outcomes
- c) Citizenship and governance issues
- d) Social accountability
- e) Understanding power
- f) Understanding of WV's organisational situation, National Office strategic frameworks and staff capacity
- g) Relating citizenship, governance and local advocacy agendas to the specific country context

- h) CVA core principles and elements
- i) CVA national and local level practice
- j) Preparation and planning for CVA programming
- k) Action Learning

Duration

The workshop should be held over four days.

3. Conduct Workshop

Workshop approach

The workshop takes the theme of empowerment to raise critical issues related to how World Vision programs operate within the country context. A participatory approach is used to facilitate participants in exploring key concepts and conceptual frameworks related to their own situation and to explore opportunities for future empowerment opportunities. Local experts and practitioners already working within this field should be invited to attend, both as key speakers and as participants to facilitate learning and local level partnerships. The workshop draws on local knowledge and experience, with an emphasis on joint learning and sharing.

Preparation work

Before the workshop, National Offices are expected to complete the series of preparation work for the workshop (review and analysis of internal strategy, capacity assessment and country context assessment).

Participants

It is expected that senior National Office staff will attend the workshop. Staff should include both managerial and strategic staff together with senior programming, Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs (HEA) and advocacy staff. Other staff such as appropriate zonal and local level staff may attend, if they meet the workshop selection criteria. These should be a maximum of 30 participants.

OUTCOMES:

1. Increased awareness and understanding of the country context in relation to citizenship and governance issues.
2. Increased understanding of key concepts and conceptual frameworks for local level advocacy as defined by WVI.
3. Appreciation of how programs can support the process of empowerment and the design of future strategies.
4. Increased understanding of Citizen Voice and Action, its core principles and elements, community and national level practice.
5. Increased understanding of how to plan and take action towards using Citizen Voice and Action.

SUMMARY:

1. Form facilitation team
2. Prepare for workshop
3. Conduct workshop
4. Prepare recommendations for the future

Make sure that there is commitment in principle from the National Office to use Citizen Voice and Action. Funding may be sought from Support Offices or external agencies to begin activities.

This section provides only a brief introduction to the Facilitation workshop. Detailed information on the workshop can be found in:

- Facilitation Notes – Citizen Voice and Action Facilitation workshop.

The Facilitation workshop follows on from the Orientation workshop and is the next phase in organization and staff preparation for Citizen Voice and Action. It builds on work begun at the Orientation Workshop, but focuses more on building capacity for planning and facilitating the CVA approach.

1. Form Facilitation team

It is expected that the workshop facilitators will be World Vision staff, drawn from local, regional and international groups. There is no dedicated training program for workshop facilitation. However it is expected that core facilitators will have participated in previous Citizen Voice and Action Facilitation Workshops and will have been mentored by current facilitators in order to lead their own workshops.

2. Preparation for workshop

As some participants may have attended the Orientation Workshop, this workshop will reinforce their learning, and enable them to share their knowledge of Citizen Voice and Action with other participants. It will help participants to plan practical local strategies to use Citizen Voice and Action. Participants will be responsible for their own learning, creating their own manual, which will be supported by the Citizen Voice and Action Guidance Notes.

Workshop Goal To equip participants with the knowledge, skills and capacity to facilitate the Citizen Voice and Action approach within communities, recognising the broader citizenship and governance country context.

Content

- a) Core elements and principles of Citizen Voice and Action
- b) Local and national level practices for Citizen Voice and Action
- c) Community Gathering process

- d) Facilitation skills
- e) Principles and practice of advocacy, with emphasis on local level advocacy
- f) Citizenship, governance and social accountability issues
- g) Planning, programming and integration of Citizen Voice and Action within WV approach
- h) Action learning

3. Conduct workshop

Duration The workshop should be held over 6.5 days (allowing for 1½ days break between days 3 and 4). This program allows participants to rest, digest and reflect on the new material. A 5-day program can also be prepared. This requires an increased pace and reduces the content on improving facilitation skills.

Workshop approach Participants drive their own learning by drawing on the knowledge and experience of all participants, in order to build local strategies for facilitating Citizen Voice and Action. There is a key emphasis on practical skill development (in planning, facilitation and learning) but a broader understanding of the conceptual framework within the local context is also built.

Participants develop their own individual manuals during the workshop which are supplemented by the Citizen Voice and Action Guidance Notes.

Preparation work The Orientation workshop should be conducted at National level before this workshop. Preparatory work including an internal review of WV, an analysis of strategy and directions together with a capacity assessment should be completed and complemented by a national level contextual assessment and mapping exercise. Some initial planning will be done before identifying potential programs, staff and partners to participate in the workshop.

Participants The workshop is aimed at local level program staff, together with operational support staff. It is recommended that other community level stakeholders including CBO representatives, civil society members and local government officials also attend. Priority should be given to people who will be expected to lead facilitation processes in the community.

OUTCOMES:

1. Increased understanding of the core elements and principles of Citizen Voice and Action, and community and national level practice
2. Capacity development to plan, facilitate and initiate the CVA approach
3. Practical skills development to plan, facilitate and review the Community Gathering
4. Increased understanding of the key concepts of local level advocacy
5. Increased awareness and understanding of country context relating to a citizenship and governance (advocacy) agendas
6. Increased understanding of the opportunities to integrate Citizen Voice and Action within WV programs.

SUMMARY:

1. Prepare program and/or project designs
2. Form a facilitation team or working group at the local level
3. Conduct local capacity building as required

1. Action planning leading to program and/or project designs

Through the workshops and as part of the learning approach, participants identify how they would facilitate the various phases of Citizen Voice and Action. This thinking becomes part of very early planning. The facilitation workshop ends with participants preparing an action plan to initiate and facilitate Citizen Voice and Action in their community. This provides early planning for the design process.

A design workshop can follow the facilitation workshop for key participants from the workshop, together with other key stakeholders to begin the planning process.



Use the information already gained through the country context assessment and other resources and information gathered at the national level to inform your design.

It is important that existing structures, systems and processes at the local level are employed. Avoid creating parallel structures, systems or processes as part of the program or project design.

To support sustainability it's easier to build on what already exists, rather than starting from scratch.

2. Facilitation team or working group

At local level it is expected that a facilitation team or working group is now formed to lead Citizen Voice and Action. Members will include those trained through the Facilitation Workshop together with other key stakeholders as appropriate.

It is suggested that a working group is also formed at the National Office level to support CVA implementation. This working group would consist of staff with differing roles to support broader integration within the organization.

3. Local capacity building

Further training in the approach at the local level may be required. This may include other community members who are interested in being involved, or other CBO staff or representatives. Localized material or resources could be prepared to assist this training.

OUTCOME:

1. Program and/or project design document
2. Facilitation team or working group formed at both local and national level
3. Local capacity building built as required

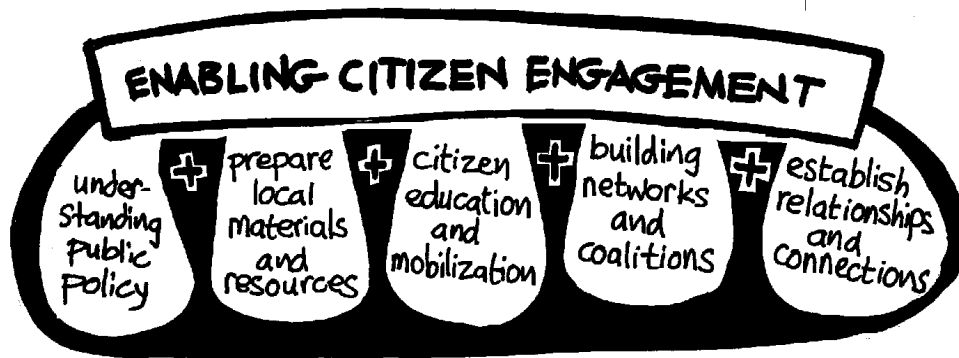
Enabling citizen engagement

OVERVIEW

4.1

Overview

Enabling citizen engagement provides the critical first phase as a foundation for Citizen Voice and Action. It aims to create a positive situation and environment where citizens can discuss issues openly together and seek accountability for improved service delivery.



Enabling citizen engagement involves a series of activities. These Guidance Notes describe them separately but often their implementation will merge together. In addition the activities may also continue beyond a definite end point. One activity or step does not have to finish before the next can begin. For example, citizen education and mobilization will continue throughout the whole of the enabling citizen engagement phase, and beyond.

The activities are also interconnected. Outcomes in one area will then reinforce outcomes in other areas. For example, relationships and connections are important in their own right, but also offer opportunity for strengthening networks and coalitions. Both can add support to the preparation of local materials and resources.

The activities listed are based on the practical experience of pilot programs in planning, initiating and facilitating Citizen Voice and Action. It makes sense to start by identifying and understanding public policies which will be the basis for assessing the performance of public services, and then to continue from there.

The 'Enabling citizen engagement' phase may take between 6 months to a year. Sometimes longer; sometimes much shorter. You need to use your own judgment. The process should not end until citizens (and government) are equipped to effectively engage in the Community Gathering. You need to understand the local context, the citizens and be responsive. The primary issue is to ensure that you have enabled citizens to engage, so that together with government representatives, they are ready for the Community Gathering.

SUMMARY:

1. Learn what public policies are
2. Decide on which public service to focus on
3. Understand public policy in detail
4. Raise the awareness of the working group / facilitation team in public policy
5. Identify public service standards
6. Network with expert agencies and institutions



1. What are Public Policies?

Public policies describe the work of governments. Public policies relate to the basic needs of all peoples. They make happen in practice, the basic rights of citizens, which are usually stated in national constitutions or the bill of rights. Governments are responsible for ensuring these basic rights. They meet these through providing basic services.

Public policies are usually prepared by national governments, whilst local governments closer to the people, are responsible for their implementation.



Public policies are statements of intent and deliberate plans of action to guide decisions on issues in the public interest, and to achieve desired outcomes, especially in relation to the delivery of goods and services.

Public policies are created by governments. They cover education, health, housing, security, food security, labor, leisure, children and adolescents, youths, elderly, women and all other areas of our lives! Public policies relate to the needs of all people in areas such as:

- Health
- Education
- Water
- Sanitation
- Agricultural services.

Each service or work provided by the government is described within a policy.

2. Decide which public policy to focus on

An important decision at the start of the Citizen Voice and Action process is to decide on which public service to focus on. This can be decided in a number of ways:

- Decided by World Vision, based on strategy priorities
- Decided by community members, or
- Decided jointly in dialogue between World Vision and the community.

Consultations should also be made with government staff to obtain their views before making a final decision on the area of inquiry.

There are a number of pros and cons as to which of these ways is best:

	Community decides public policy focus	World Vision decides public policy focus
Pro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decisions owned by community - an important principle in community development practice ▪ Community focuses on what is important to them and leads the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technical expertise can be gained working in a limited number of policy areas ▪ Information from multiple communities can be added together to inform national level advocacy ▪ In piloting activities it is helpful to start small and focused.
Con	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each community may choose a different public service to focus on. It may be difficult to add information from multiple communities together to inform national level advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The process is WV driven, rather than being community led.

3. Understand Public Policy in detail

Understanding public policy is essential for Citizens Voice and Action. Work already done during the Country Context Assessment (see Section 3.4), can be used to strengthen local understanding.

At this stage only the facilitation team or working group are involved (in understanding public policy). Their knowledge and capacity needs to be built so that they are equipped to extend to the general community.

The Citizen Voice and Action facilitation team or working group should be informed about:

- Governance structures, systems and processes relating to the public policy decided on.
- Relevant details of the public policy decided on.

Understanding public policies is very important as you start to develop strategies and plans for citizen education and mobilisation. A suggested process is:

- a) Access relevant policies

- b) Make sure that you have the most current and relevant documents
- c) Cross check and confirm with relevant stakeholders that these documents are definitely those used by relevant stakeholders, especially the line Ministry and service providers.
- d) Verify from different sources you have the right documents!

Whilst policy documents provide the basis for government provided services such as health or education, there are other documents as well, which are useful to understand. Strategy documents, planning documents and budgets are useful to access and understand, especially those that are prepared by local governments close to the community.

Look for relevant strategies, policies and plans. Strategies or plans that cover a number of different sectors such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Reduction Papers (PRSPs) may also be important. Focus on policies that are backed by budgets.



It is good for the community members themselves within the working group, to take the lead in accessing public policies (with WV support only). Taking responsibility themselves for this reinforces learning and citizen education.

This action will:

- help them realise the challenges involved in citizen engagement in public processes
- create relationships and connections with government officials and other stakeholders
- help them see that accessing policies is an act of citizen education and citizen mobilisation in itself!

4. Raise the awareness of the working group / facilitation team in public policy

A workshop or seminar could be planned to inform key members of the working group and/or facilitation team about public policies, structures, systems and processes which are relevant to the public service in question.

However, this understanding will require much more than one event. Continuing and deepening understanding about public policies is an ongoing process. 😊

- Line Ministries (i.e. health or education) provide policy documents or strategies which include standards for the delivery of basic services.
- National Government documents are usually the primary resource. However depending on your local governance structures, State, Municipal, or District government might instead set the standards for the delivery of services. You need to find the level of government which defines the standards of service delivery.
- Different types of facility or public service will have different standards. It is important that you define which standards are in line with the service that is to be monitored as

part of the Community Gathering process. For example a hospital provides different services to a health post, so would have different standards of inputs!

- Governments are increasingly making this information available on the web; you may find all the information there.
- Go and speak to the Line Ministries and department staff, tell them what you are doing and ask for the information.
- Make sure the documents you obtain are the most recent and are relevant to the selected facility (eg Health centre 2)
- Where standards are not available from strategy documents or line ministries, then it is fine to use planned standards, which should be available from Government departments. If these are also not available, then a consensus can be gained through a working group of what is desirable. Comparing actual against 'desirable standards' can then be done. The use of either planned or desirable standards should be indicated on the chart and communicated to the community.

5. Identify government standards in relation to local service delivery

Once you have accessed and confirmed the public policies, pick out the standards or entitlements described for the type of service that will be the focus of the Community Gathering.

It is useful to describe these standards in a simple document or flyer to use within the citizen education and mobilisation processes.



Different types of facility or public service will have different standards. It is important that you define the standards that are in line with the service to be monitored.

For example a hospital provides different services to a health post, so would have very different standards of inputs!

6. Networks and coalitions

You may already have organisations and experts in the country who are working in the sector you have decided to focus on (such as health or education).

Get out there and network! These organisations or individuals may have already undertaken analysis of the policies; they may have prepared simple policy descriptions. Use the experience and expertise of others as you prepare yourselves.

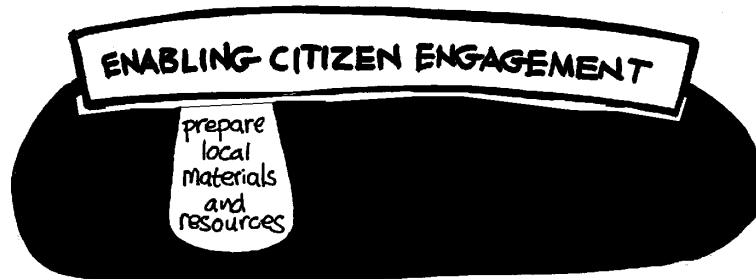
You could ask National Office staff to tell you about what other organisations or institutions are doing in the area of interest.

OUTCOME:

1. Awareness raised generally about public policy structures, systems and processes
2. Public service (sector) decided
3. Awareness about specific public policy raised within working group or facilitation team
4. Type of service decided
5. Standards for service identified
6. Networks established with other agencies working in the same sector.

SUMMARY:

1. Decide what local materials and resources are needed
2. Translate key terms and phrases from the general Guidance Notes
3. Encourage local participation and ownership of development .



Experience of Citizen Voice and Action pilot programs tells us that preparing local materials and resources for orientation, training and facilitation within communities is essential.

Materials and resources

These Guidance Notes form a good foundation for Citizen Voice and Action practice. However, they have been prepared to cover all general situations. Localised materials need to be prepared that refer to the local situation, and that recognise the local audience groups.

Types of resources that might be considered include:

- Training and orientation material
- Comprehensive manual for Citizens Voice and Action
- Community Gathering facilitator manual
- Citizen education and mobilisation material
- Translation and simplification of policy documents
- Advocacy and influence material
- Linking of Citizen Voices Action approach with local government processes.

Translation

The Citizens Voice and Action approach must of course be facilitated in the local language! There are some key terms and phrases, which are a part of the approach, especially within the Community Gathering. These need to be translated into the local language first, before other activities are started, to ensure there is consistency of expression and understanding.

It is helpful to form a working group to decide on translations, as sometimes there are many meanings and interpretations (and potential disagreements!). The working group should include members of the community or other relevant stakeholders. The translations need to be documented and will form part of a local version of Citizen Voice and Action.

Should you orientate and train community based facilitators in English, if they are then going to facilitate the process with other community members in another language (not English)? It is recommended to translate core elements and practice of Citizen Voice and Action into the local language before any training. If possible, train in the local language!

Otherwise facilitators will have to improvise as they go along – and you haven't necessarily provided effective orientation or training 😊

Local ownership

Include local stakeholders in the preparation of local materials. Preparing their own manual, for example, increases local understanding and ownership. The people themselves will know how best to describe CBPM in their local situation!

The group that is actually going to use the resources should take the leadership in preparing materials. This preparation is an important principle for facilitation. Participating in the preparation of the material will make sure they are understood by the people, owned by the people and hopefully well used by the local facilitation team. Once the facilitation team or working group is formed, they can be encouraged to take the lead in preparing local materials and resources.



In Brazil, the preparation of local materials has been used as part of the citizen education and mobilisation process.

Following initial orientation, WV staff provided support and mentoring to local facilitators in the preparation of their own Citizens Voice and Action manual. WV provided technical as well as financial resources in producing materials and resources, including paper manuals and videos.

Use simple language when preparing local materials. Use traditions and local customs as a way of connecting Citizens Voice and Action to local understanding and practice. The use of metaphors and examples is very helpful!

Be creative! Use pictures, symbols, poems, dance and drama; what ever you feel will work to engage people in raising citizen voice and action!

Remember that materials and resources can be prepared throughout the whole process, not just at this initial stage. Regularly view and revise the materials. As your knowledge and experience grows, you are likely to improve them.

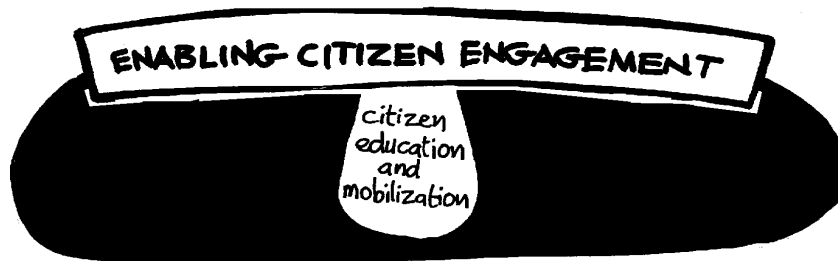
OUTCOME:

1. Preparation of local materials and resources that are appropriately translated for local contexts and audiences.



SUMMARY:

1. Conduct assessment of the situation
2. Plan and initiate citizen education
3. Plan and initiate citizen mobilisation



1. Understanding the situation

The Citizen Voice and Action process must start with the reality of the community - their history, identity, roles and responsibilities. Existing knowledge and practices must be understood, and should be built on as part of the process.

Conducting an assessment of the situation is critical before you begin to plan and initiate education and mobilisation activities. It is also an important exercise as part of LEAP. You can do this in many ways; it can be formal or as informal as you like. The most important thing that you can do is listen!

Listen to what community members already know
 Listen and understand what community members already do
 Listen to how groups and individuals are already acting
 Listen to what community members think is important
 Listen to their needs, hopes and dreams for the future

A number of different methodologies can be used to conduct an assessment of the situation:

- Surveys
- Focus group discussions
- Community meetings
- Formal or informal interviews with key informants (people who know what is going on!)
- Casual conversations in bars and restaurants!

It's up to you to decide what is best. You could choose one methodology or combine a few. Consider existing relationships, the resources available (in terms of people, time and money) as well as what you need to know.

You can consider a number of areas as part of the assessment include such as:

- Awareness of policies (focusing on the public service chosen)
- Awareness of rights and responsibilities in relation to basic service delivery
- Awareness of opportunities for citizen participation.

A situational assessment tool used by pilot programs is available from World Vision International.

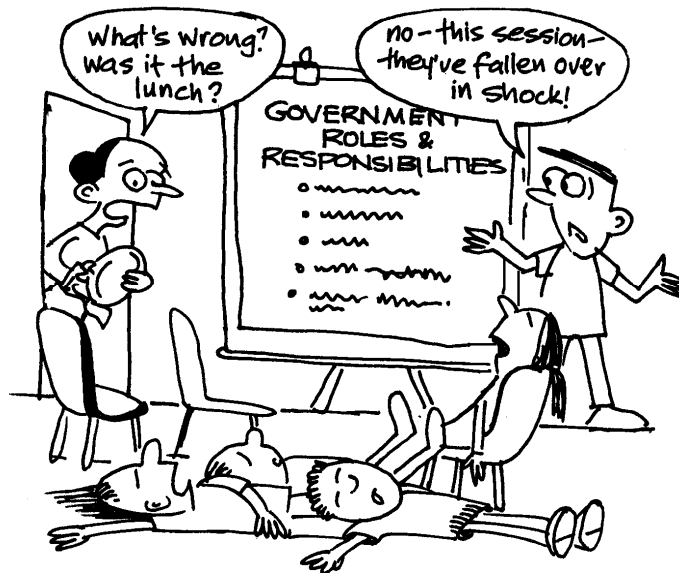
The information generated from this assessment can provide an important baseline. The knowledge gained from the assessment should inform your strategies and plans for citizen education and mobilisation.

Local partners / facilitators can lead the assessment process with support from WV staff.

It's important to recognize the foundations that both citizen education and mobilisation create for the whole Citizen Voice and Action approach. It is only through the process of educating citizens about their rights and responsibilities that they are able to engage meaningfully.

Citizen education and mobilisation should not be rushed. The speed of the process should be determined by the community themselves.

2. Citizen Education



Citizen education means raising awareness and increasing the understanding of citizens about their rights and responsibilities and opportunities to participate in governance.

There are a number of areas to consider as part of citizen education:

- Civic education
 - government structure, systems of government and processes
 - authority, power holders, duty bearers and decision making processes
 - accountability and good governance
 - citizen rights, and collective responsibilities
 - opportunities and responsibility for citizen participation.
- Public policies
 - that they exist!
 - the standards for basic service provision
 - decision making processes
 - opportunity for citizen engagement.
- Citizen Voice and Action
 - the process involved
 - the objectives
 - the Community Gathering and monitoring of public services
 - collective action and responsibility.

Citizen education can be done through workshops, meetings, forums or informal processes. It should not be seen as one activity, but rather as a long-term process. Though citizen education begins at this time, it continues throughout the whole of the Citizens Voice and Action process.

Citizen education is seen as a first step in engaging citizens as part of the Citizen Voice and Action process. However, it is also an important outcome in itself.

Consider the process of citizen education with various political and administrative staff including councillors, local politicians, as well as government staff. They also may need help to fully understand government and citizen rights and responsibilities.

3. Citizen mobilisation

Citizen mobilisation within the context of Citizen Voice and Action means active engagement (participation) of citizens with government structures, systems and processes.

It involves individual action, but more importantly the collective action of citizens through shared understanding and agreement. Joint action in solidarity with others, provides the basis for effective dialogue with the government and other power holders.



The Community Gathering is the main form of community mobilisation within the Citizens Voice and Action approach, but more general mobilisation is required to begin this process. There are a number of key areas related to citizen mobilisation;

- mobilize the working group
- mobilize the facilitation team
- mobilize community leaders and key stakeholders to take on leadership roles
- mobilize for citizen education activities
- mobilize participants for the Community Gathering.

It is through citizen education that citizen mobilisation is possible. As citizens become aware about their rights and responsibilities, they are also informed about opportunities to engage in public policies.

Though the Community Gathering is the main space for citizen mobilisation within Citizen Voice and Action, it is both likely and expected that mobilisation and active participation will benefit many other areas and opportunities such as participatory governance processes and development activities.

Mobilisation for seminars, workshops or meetings and also the Community Gathering can be done in creative ways, using various tools. These include invitations made at existing meetings, personal invitation, posters around the community, through word-of-mouth, using a car with loudspeakers, fliers, street theater – whatever you think will be most appropriate.

Inclusion

It is important to make sure that all citizens who are users of the service (which is the focus of the Community Gathering) are included in citizen education and mobilisation activities. You are creating conditions to enable citizens to engage in the Community Gathering, increasing their

understanding about public policies, rights and responsibilities. It is particularly important to recognise how important these opportunities are particularly for people who are usually excluded from these events.

When planning education and mobilisation activities, it is very important to make sure that marginalised and vulnerable groups have every opportunity to participate. Recognise that there will be barriers and constraints to their participation and make special efforts to reduce these. Women, ethnic groups and people living with disability should all be included.

Think about it! It's the people who don't normally participate, who are not aware of citizen rights and responsibilities or of opportunities to participate, who will most need citizen education and citizen mobilisation. Make sure that you reach these people. 😊

Children and youth must not only participate in citizen education and mobilisation activities, but in all aspects of Citizen Voice and Action. Appropriate strategies to encourage different age groups to participate should be used. Messages should be tailored to different audience groups. Provide appropriate resources to support child participation.

Ongoing process

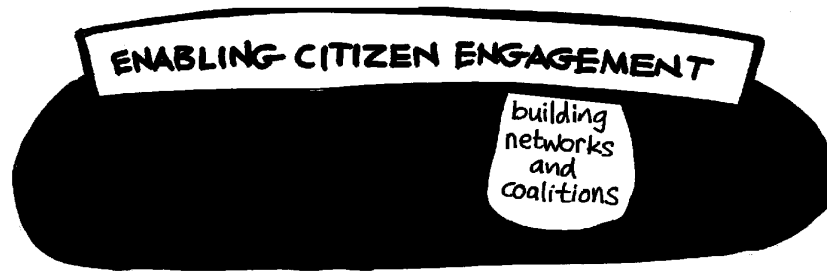
Citizen education and mobilisation is an ongoing process throughout the whole Citizen Voice and Action approach. It starts now, but it never ends! You need to make a decision, to say when you have done enough to start the Community Gathering process, but recognise that you may need to continue supporting activities which support citizen education and mobilisation long term.

OUTCOMES:

1. Assessment of situation conducted and used to inform strategy and planning
2. Citizens educated
3. Citizen groups and individuals mobilized for engagement in public processes.

SUMMARY:

1. Identify other agencies or organizations doing similar work
2. Identify complementary processes or systems that are in line with Citizen Voice and Action
3. Identify groups or organizations that may take the lead in facilitating Citizen Voice and Action, especially the Community Gathering.



1. Context

It is important to recognize the local situation in which Citizen Voice and Action is being used and the potential to partner with others in the work.

At both the national, regional or local level, there may be existing groups undertaking similar work or work in line with the aims of Citizen Voice and Action. At this early stage, efforts should be made to reach out to these groups or individuals with the desire of building networks or coalitions around Citizen Voice and Action.

2. Shared interests

Networks and coalitions can be built in a number of areas:

- Identify other agencies or organizations doing similar work
- Identify similar processes or systems that are in line with Citizen Voice and Action
- Identify groups or organizations that may take the lead in facilitating Citizen Voice and Action, especially the Community Gathering.

3. Partnering and Capacity Building

The need to build networks and coalitions recognises that active and potentially active groups and organisations will exist in every situation where WV works. These may include a range of civil society organisations (CSOs) including churches and other FBOs, CBOs, and other NGOs as well as traditional authorities and a range of other stakeholders (both formal and informal).

As most of these have been present in the community long before World Vision arrived, and will remain long after World Vision moves on, it is essential that World Vision adopts a partnering approach to work positively with these other key players, supporting and strengthening them rather than replicating or replacing their roles.

As World Vision initiates Citizen Voice and Action, potential partners should be identified and included in the process. The types of relationships and partnerships may vary depending on the situation, from active members of a working group, to actual facilitation of Community Gathering Sessions, to key partners in advocacy and policy influence. When required, capacity building initiatives to support the engagement of these groups should be carried out.

OUTCOME:

I. Networks and coalitions established to support Citizen and Voice processes and objectives.

SUMMARY:

1. Meetings with service providers, relationships formed
2. Meetings with other key stakeholders including local government officials and district sector staff, relationships formed
3. Interest expressed and commitments made to participate in the Community Gathering by both government and community



1. Forming relationships

Creating relationships and connections builds on a number of layers within Citizen Voice and Action.

- Before starting Citizen Voice and Action, relationships, connections, partnerships and trust should have been established (as part of programming activities)
- As you start Citizen Voice and Action within the community, relationships and connections will need to be strengthened between citizens and their government and included as part of citizen education and mobilization
- In preparation for the Community Gathering, relationships and connections need to be deepened further with stakeholders that are connected to the public service to be assessed.

Strengthening relationships between government and citizens is critical. Seeking the willingness of both government and citizens to participate in the Community Gathering process is essential.

2. Meetings with Key Stakeholders

Once the public service, and in particular the site for the Community Gathering is decided, meetings should be held with the service providers concerned, to explain the process and what will happen as part of the Community Gathering exercise. Topics could cover:

Citizen Voice and Action

- the process involved
- the objectives
- the Community Gathering process
- collective action and responsibility.

The success of the Community Gathering depends on the voluntary involvement of the service providers. Therefore it is very important to explain the process to them in advance and to answer any of their questions or concerns. Since the service providers will normally be busy with their duties, it is important to plan times of future meetings with them for completing the focus group exercise, so that as many staff as possible can participate.

It is also important that you get interest and commitment for involvement from local government staff, both administrative and political. You need their approval to start the process in the first place.

3. Commitments made to participate

Interest from users of the public service (to be the focus of the Community Gathering) needs to be gained for the Community Gathering. This should be sought following citizen education and mobilization activities. It is critical that commitments are made to participate in the Community Gathering from the various user groups, service providers and government officials.

Special attention should be made to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups are included.

Safe environment

Creating a safe environment for the Community Gathering is very important. In discussing the Community Gathering process with both government and citizen groups, it is important to stress the opportunity for dialogue (sharing and talking together), increased understanding of different viewpoints and strengthened relationships. The process aims to increase relationships, commitment and responsibility by both citizens and government together.

The principles of 'Do No Harm' are critical to this process. We are aiming to increase connections within the community, **not** to create division. It is important that the Community Gathering establishes opportunities for sharing and dialogue, mutual understanding and stronger connections in the community.

Ensure that you strengthen relationships and connections between citizens and government for the Community Gathering. It's important that a safe and positive environment is created. Stress the Community Gathering is not a place for confrontation and personal attacks



OUTCOMES

1. Willingness of service providers to engage in the Citizen Voice and Action process, and more particularly the Community Gathering
2. Interest expressed and commitments made by government officials, including politicians, local government staff and line ministry
3. Interest and commitment expressed by community members to be involved in the Community Gathering process.
4. Strengthened relationship between citizens and government
5. Government and citizens ready for the Community Gathering.

Community Gathering

OVERVIEW

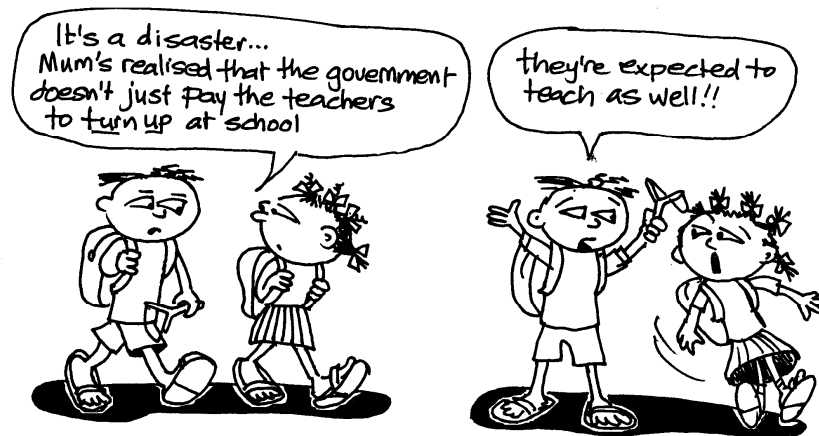
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The Community Gathering is a central part of Citizen Voice and Action. It describes the participatory processes that bring stakeholders together to assess the quality of their public services and to identify ways to improve their delivery. Stakeholders invited to participate will include community members who use the service (service users), service providers (government staff) and government officials (both administrative and political), who have responsibility for, or can influence, decisions that affect the quality of service delivery.

Four participatory processes are involved. These are made up of:

1. **The Initial Meeting:** designed to introduce citizens and government representatives to all the processes and expected outcomes of the Community Gathering.
2. **Monitoring Standards:** providing stakeholders with information on what should be expected as standard inputs and quality for their public services, as defined through government policy. This enables stakeholders to compare these standard inputs with the actual service and situation they experience.
3. **Score Cards:** providing both users and providers of public services with a simple method of assessing the performance of service delivery and providing proposals to improve the quality of service.
4. **Interface Meeting:** enabling stakeholders to bring together and share all the information gathered (such as monitoring standards, user and provider assessments). Based on this information an action plan is prepared which includes the allocation of responsibilities and time lines to enable the work to be taken forward.





The Community Gathering provides a space and opportunity to achieve the core elements of Citizen Voice and Action.

Information:

- The community gains access to **information** which helps them make informed contributions about improving the delivery of basic services.
- **Information** is generated by and shared within the different stakeholder groups invited to take part in the Community Gathering.
- **Information** is generated by and shared between all stakeholders during the Community Gathering.

Voice:

- Individuals are provided a space to **voice** their opinions, views and ideas regarding the service they experience and to identify actions for change.
- **Voices** are heard more effectively when individuals come together in a public meeting.
- Power holders have to listen, in public, to the **voices** and views of community representatives.
- The response of power holders to the **voice** of the community is built into the process.





Dialogue

- Different stakeholders, especially the service users and service providers, are able to share their views with each other.
- Through meeting and working together, real understanding within and between stakeholders is gained and effective partnerships are established.
- Relationships are repaired and strengthened.



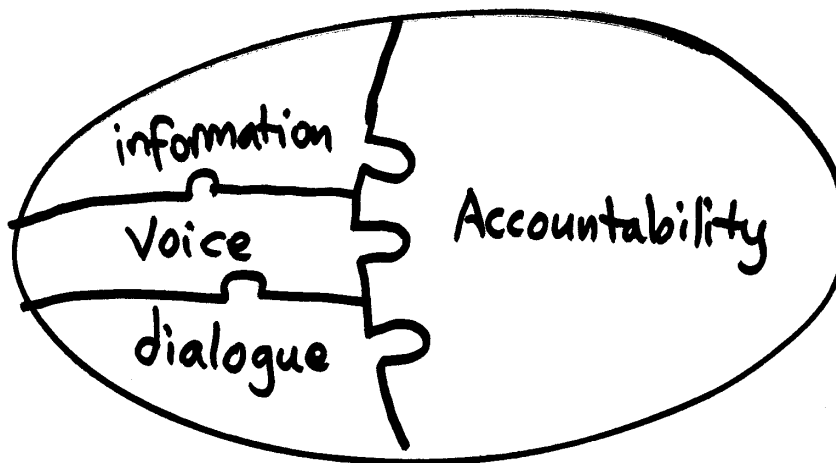
Accountability

- The capacity of the community to identify what is required of power holders and to hold them **accountable**, is increased.
- Power holders are obliged to account for, or to take responsibility for, their actions.



Connections between information – voice – dialogue and accountability...

Information about expected public services enable users to **voice** their opinions about their performance. Their **voice** is expressed in **dialogue** with those in power (service providers and government officials) and as part of a process to ensure **accountability** from them.



It is difficult to speak out with an effective **voice** about the performance of a service without accurate and relevant **information**. It can be hard to get **accountability** at the best of times, but much more so without relevant **information** and the opportunity to **voice** community views through informed **dialogue**.

SUMMARY:

1. Establish a working group
2. Decide the venue
3. Agree on which user and service provider groups to invite
4. Decide the date and times
5. Provide invitations
6. Organize and train the facilitation team
7. Obtain materials

Definition and Purpose

The Community Gathering describes the participatory processes that bring citizens and government representatives together to assess the quality of their public services and to identify ways to improve their delivery.

Four types of processes make up the Community Gathering:

- The Initial Meeting
- Monitoring Standards
- Score Cards
- The Interface Meeting

The overall aim of the Community Gathering is to empower communities to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability of local services.

1. Establish a Working Group

Set up and train a working group to prepare for and carry out the Community Gathering. It should be made up of 5-8 people. Members could include WV staff, representatives from World Vision's partners who are CBOs or groups working in the area, as well as community leaders or skilled individuals.

When selecting people to be included in this group, consider their availability and commitment to work as a motivator and facilitator, their commitment to community work and their skills and knowledge of the local situation.

The group's level of involvement and leadership will depend on local capacity. World Vision should give their support to the group,.

2. Decide the venue

The Community Gathering is always focused on a specific public service and its delivery. This is often a facility such as a health centre or school.

If the specific public service which is the focus of the Community Gathering, has a central location then either use that venue (for example a school) or arrange a nearby venue. If the public service being considered does not have one obvious central location, (for example urban water supply and sanitation), then choose a location within the community for the Community Gathering sessions.



Holding the Community Gathering sessions at or near the actual public service being discussed, helps people to focus on the specific services provided and also means service providers should be available.

3. Agree which user and service provider groups to invite to the sessions.

Consider which representatives of user and provider groups should be invited to the Monitoring Standards. Take time to understand the different types of users of the public service. Then decide which 'user groups' will receive training and form focus groups for the Score Card sessions that gather key information. (See Guidance Note 4.4 for more information). It is likely that you will only have one group of service providers for the Score Card process.

4. Decide dates and times

Allow plenty of time for each session. Make sure that service providers, citizens and government do not find participating in the sessions a burden. There is no need to rush the process in one day. However, the Community Gathering sessions should not be dragged out over many months.



Ensure the dates and times selected are appropriate to enable the key stakeholder groups to attend. Take particular care to make sure that service providers, users and government officials can attend.

5. Provide invitations

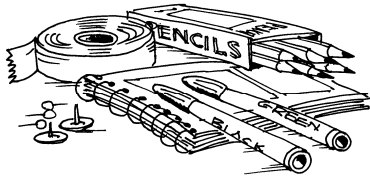
Send invitations to all key stakeholders inviting them to attend the various sessions of the Community Gathering. Invitations should be provided well in advance, especially to government officials.

6. Organize and train the facilitation team

The Working Group members and others (as required) need to be trained to facilitate the Community Gathering sessions. The guidance notes can be adapted for this purpose.



7. Obtain materials and resources



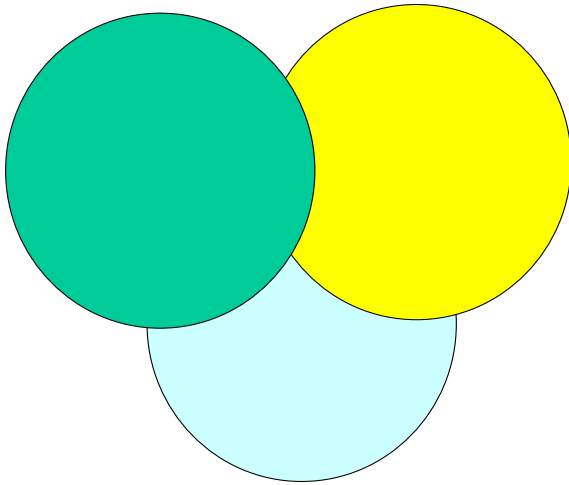
The materials and resources required for each session are listed in the individual guidance notes. For each session you will generally need:

- Flip charts
- Marker Pens
- Masking tape

Translating the materials into the local language is essential for the process. Key terms and phrases should be translated well ahead of time.



Participation



The Community Gathering provides an opportunity for citizens, service providers and government to interact around the specific delivery of a public service.

Community participation for the Community Gathering should be targeted on people and groups who actually use the service and who can contribute their views on the performance and ways to improve it.

Usually there are about 40 community members involved in the Score Cards and Interface Meetings. However, the number of participants may vary, and may be as many as 100 members. More active and mobilised participants, means more Citizen Voice and Action

Examples of community members who should attend include:

- Users of a health centre

- Students of a primary school
- Parents of students
- School management or health management committee members
- Community members who receive a public service such as water or sewerage services.

Anyone who uses the service!!



It is important to make sure that marginalized groups can participate fully in all the sessions.

Sessions such as the Score Cards, could be facilitated specifically for marginalized groups, such as people living with disability, or for ethnic minorities. Encourage children and youth to participate as well; if necessary adapting the sessions and materials for them..

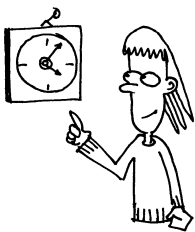
Service Providers

- It is critical that service providers take part in the Community Gathering
- Representatives of service providers and in particular those in charge, should attend the Monitoring Standards session, a Score Card session (which should be facilitated specifically for service providers) and the Interface Meeting (again particularly those with ultimate responsibility).
- Attendance at the Interface meeting is particularly important as this is when reforms and improvements to service delivery are agreed by all stakeholders.

Government

Representatives of both the administrative and political arms of local government should attend. District or municipal level representatives should also be invited to attend the Interface Meeting as well as local political members, and committee members of local government.

Duration



A complete Community Gathering might take a whole day. This is not recommended! It may be better spread over one month, depending on availability of the participants and the capacity of the facilitation team.

Spreading the sessions over a period of one week is generally recommended. See individual Guidance Notes for suggested timing.

Initial Meeting:	1 hour
Monitoring Standards :	between 1 – 2 hours
Score Cards:	between 1 – 3 hours
Interface Meeting:	between 2 hours – 1 day

It is critical to allow enough time for the Interface Meeting. All the other sessions lead to this point. This is when the outcomes of the whole process will be decided. If it is rushed, the other sessions might prove a waste of time, and a wasted opportunity!!

Facilitation of the sessions

Each session of the Community Gathering is facilitated in a different way. The Guidance Notes describe the facilitation process for each session.

As well as the Working Group, make sure a small team or one person takes responsibility for the whole Community Gathering process.

They need to ensure:

- that facilitation teams are working effectively
- the facilitation processes are of good quality and in-line with the Guidance Notes
- the right people are present during the sessions
- active participation of the various stakeholders
- that records are made of information shared
- careful records are kept on commitments made and decisions agreed.

OUTCOME:

1. Working group established
2. Venue for Community Gathering decided
3. User and service provider groups identified
3. Dates and times agreed
4. Invitations sent to participants
5. Facilitation team mobilized and trained
6. Materials obtained

Community Gathering – Summary

<i>Session</i>	Who is needed	Session purpose / outputs	Materials required
Initial Meeting	Community Community leaders Government representatives Service providers Working Group members	Overall introduction to Citizen Voice and Action and the Community Gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen Voice and Action overview diagram ▪ Community Gathering overview diagram
Monitoring Standards	Community leaders Government representatives Service providers Working Group members	Compare standard or recommended inputs with the actual situation of the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen Voice and Action overview diagram ▪ Community Gathering overview diagram ▪ Flip Chart ▪ Marker pens ▪ Tape
Score Cards	Users of the service Providers of the service	<p>Self-assessment of service delivery performance</p> <p>Assessment of service delivery performance</p> <p>Provide proposals to improve the quality of service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen Voice and Action overview diagram ▪ Community Gathering overview diagram ▪ 7 flip charts (per session) ▪ Marker pens ▪ Tape
Interface Meeting	Participants of Score Card processes (users and providers) Community Leaders Government representatives (administrative and political)	Share information (monitoring standards, users and providers assessments) and preparation of an action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen Voice and Action overview diagram ▪ Community Gathering overview diagram ▪ Monitoring Standards flip chart ▪ Score Cards ▪ Comparison score card ▪ Flip charts ▪ Marker pens ▪ Tape

SUMMARY:

1. Obtain materials and resources
2. Prepare flip charts
3. Organise venue
4. Agree participants to invite
5. Mobilise the facilitation team
6. Facilitate the initial meeting session:
 - Step 1: Introductions, purpose and process
 - Step 2: Describe Citizen Voice and Action
 - Step 3: Describe the whole Community Gathering process
 - Step 4: Explain the process, time and venues for the different sessions.



The initial meeting for the Community Gathering is held when citizens and government are ready (following the *Enabling Citizen Engagement* phase)! The timing is decided by the Working Group supported by World Vision. The decision is based on whether the outcomes of Citizen Engagement have largely been achieved.

Outcomes of enabling citizen engagement:

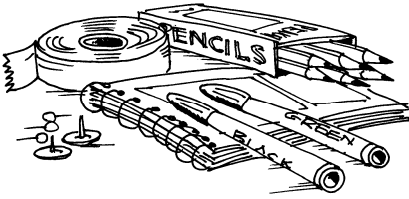
- Organisations and staff prepared
- Public policy understood
- Localized materials developed
- Citizens educated and mobilized
- Networks and coalitions built
- Relationships built and connections established

Definition and Purpose

The Initial Meeting introduces citizens and government representatives to the work that will be carried out as part of the Community Gathering. It prepares the ground for assessing the delivery of a specific service.

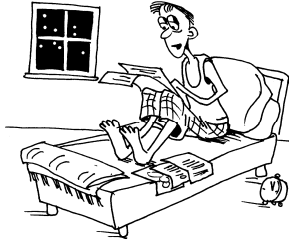
The Initial Meeting builds on the work done during the *Enabling Citizen Engagement* phase, and provides the starting point for the Community Gathering process.

1. Obtain materials and resources



- Flips charts to give:
 - (1) An overview of Citizen Voice and Action
 - (2) An overview of the Community Gathering

2. Prepare flip charts

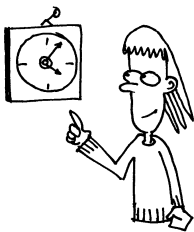


- Flips charts to be prepared:
 - (1) An overview of Citizen Voice and Action
 - (2) An overview of Community Gathering

3. Organise venue

A central venue is needed that is readily accessible for all participants. A time that will be convenient to participants should be agreed.

Duration



The meeting should take no more than one hour.
The meeting builds on the work already conducted as part of the Enabling Citizen Engagement phase. It provides a revision to Citizen Voice and Action and the Community Gathering process.

4. Agree participants to invite

Representatives of key stakeholder groups should attend:

- Community members (users of the service)
- Service providers
- Community leaders
- Government representatives
- Working Group members

5. Mobilise the facilitation team

Make sure that facilitators understand their role and that they help participants to feel welcomed. Their explanations must be clear.

6. Facilitate the Initial Meeting



Welcome participants to the meeting.

STEP 1: INTRODUCTIONS, PURPOSE AND PROCESS

The lead facilitator should start by introducing the facilitation team and the purpose and process of the Initial Meeting to the group. Link this in with the preparatory work that has been going on in the community before this session.

STEP 2: DESCRIBE CITIZEN VOICE AND ACTION

Provide a clear description of the Citizen Voice and Action approach.

It is useful during this meeting to check whether participants understand the links between Citizen Voice and Action, citizen education and their awareness of public policies.

Depending on the general level of understanding following the Enabling Citizen Engagement process, the facilitators might need to cover a number of areas:



- Understanding public policies
- Citizen engagement
- Monitoring of public policy and assessment of service delivery
- Benefits of citizen engagement

STEP 3: DESCRIBE THE COMMUNITY GATHERING

Describe the Community Gathering process, building on information provided to participants during the *Enabling Citizen Engagement* phase. This is a useful summary:

“The Community Gathering describes participatory processes that focus on assessing the quality of government services delivered within a community, in the process identifying ways to improve the service through the shared commitments of local stakeholders.

Following this introductory Initial Meeting, three different types of sessions will be held as part of the Community Gathering

- 1. Monitoring Standards*
- 2. Score cards*
- 3. Interface Meeting*

The Community Gathering aims to empower communities to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are provided at the local level”.

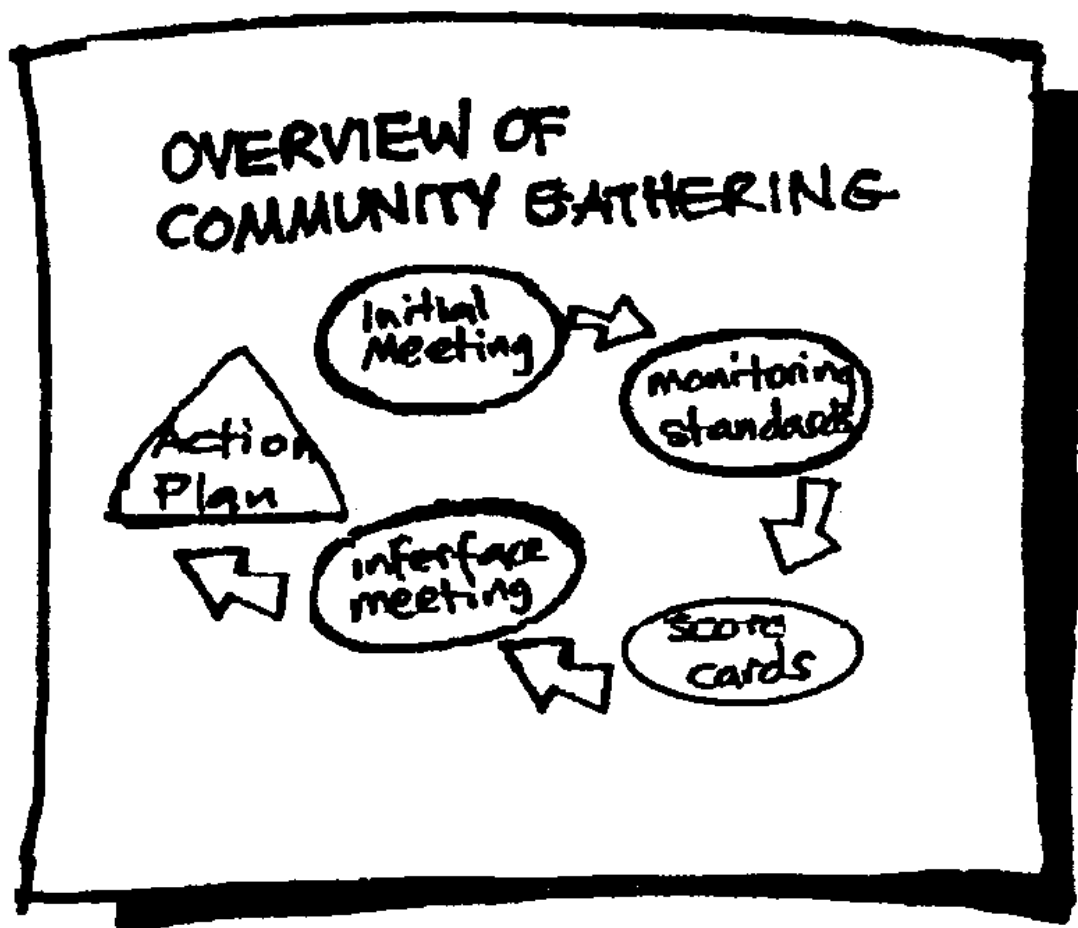
STEP 4: EXPLAIN PROCESS, TIME AND VENUES FOR SESSIONS

Provide details to participants on the different sessions to be held, informing them of the venues, times and expected participants for each session.

OUTCOME:

1. Community Gathering process initiated
2. Venues, times and expected participants confirmed for future sessions

WHAT YOU NEED FOR INITIAL MEETING



SUMMARY:

1. Confirm standard inputs
2. Obtain materials and resources
3. Prepare the flip chart
4. Organize venue location, time and participants
5. Facilitate Monitoring Standards session
 - Step 1: introductions, purpose and process
 - Step 2: introduce flip chart
 - Step 3: confirm standard inputs
 - Step 4: prioritise standards
 - Step 5: complete chart
 - Step 6: closing



Definition and purpose

Monitoring Standards of public service delivery is conducted through a focus group discussion. The main objective of the focus group is to compare the expected standard inputs for public services which have been defined through government policy, with the actual local situation experienced by users of the service.

The information to be collected should include inputs that can be counted or measured (quantitative data) rather than inputs that are more a matter of opinion (qualitative data).



Standard Inputs

In a school, for example, some standard inputs to be monitored are the number of students per classroom, facilities and rooms, number of text books, type and quality of school meals, professional qualification of the teachers, etc.

For health centers, standard inputs may include the quality and quantity of drugs provided, number of professional qualified staff, medical equipment etc

Standards are different depending on the type of service. Standards will also vary from country to country. It is important to identify the standards which are stated within government policies.

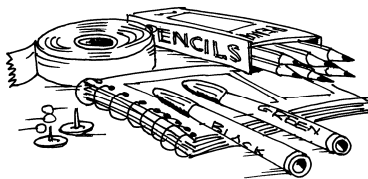


1. Confirm standard inputs

Standard inputs will have been identified as part of *Public Policy Awareness* during the Enabling Citizen Engagement phase.

Confirm with service providers and other key stakeholders including government staff, that you are using the most relevant standard inputs.

2. Obtain materials and resources



The following resources are needed for the Monitoring Standards session.

- Paper for a flip chart which should be prepared in advance (see below)
 - Tape to post the clip chart on the wall
 - Marker pens (at least 5 in different colors)
 - Spare flip charts
-
- The facilitator should ensure they have a copy of the relevant Government policy to access information on standard inputs.
 - The facilitators should also have a simple list of standard inputs relevant to the type of service for easy reference during the session (prepared from the Government document)

3. Prepare the flip chart

A flip chart needs to be prepared before the meeting, which will be completed by the group. It is useful to prepare a “giant” flip chart by taping two (or even four) regular-sized flip charts together and using large sized font or writing. Parts of the chart which need to be prepared before the meeting are:

- The basic border and columns
- Headings



- It is useful to write in the types of standard inputs agreed with the group when completing the chart. This helps the group to agree with the information (particularly important for service providers who should know!)
- Draw the row lines only when you are completing the sheet with the group.

Example : Monitoring Standards Area : _____ Service/Venue: _____			
Type of Input	Standard	Actual	Comment
Teachers	1 teacher to 45 pupils	1 teacher to 64 pupils	
Furniture			
Desks	24 desks	13	
Chairs	24 benches	15	
Learning Materials [core text books]			
English	1 per pupil	1 to 2 pupils	
Mathematics	1 per pupil	1 to 2 pupils	
Science	1 per pupil	1 to 2 pupils	
Toilets	One for girls one for boys	Shared	

4. Organise venue, time and participants

The session should be held at or near the facility of the public service being monitored. Where the public service has no building, a central community location should be found, such as a community hall or government building. A comfortable quiet room should be used to help participants feel relaxed. Provide chairs or seating for all participants, arranging them into a half circle so that all participants are encouraged to contribute.

A schoolroom may be appropriate, (but only if this does not interrupt school classes! ☺ After school might be an appropriate time).

If possible hold the session after working hours to enable service providers to attend. Where that is not possible, some service providers may need to continue providing services, with a number of representatives attending the session.

Ensure the room has adequate wall space to put up the flip chart and record the information on the flip chart in view of the participants.

Invite participants to attend.

Participation

Just a small group is required to complete the Monitoring Standards session, with a maximum of 20 people. The group should include representatives from key stakeholder groups including:

- Service providers, especially those in charge such as a head teacher, manager of the health centre or team leader of the water supply services.
- Representatives of community committees connected to the public service or facility, such as a health committee or school management committee.
- Appropriate government officials, both administrative representatives and politicians (not essential but very helpful!)
- Other community leaders, both formal and informal
- User representatives including women, men, youth and children (as appropriate for active participation)

Ensure a gender balance within the group and encourage active participation by all!

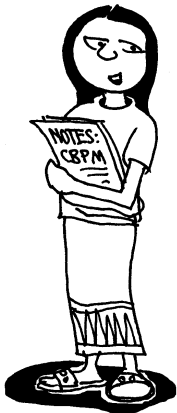
Duration

The session should be completed between 1- 2 hours.

The usual period would be about one hour.



5. Facilitate Monitoring Standards Session



The session should be led by a minimum, of three people to facilitate:

- one to lead the session with the participants
- one to record information on the flip chart
- one to record the information on a record sheet

Step 1; Introductions, purpose and process

The lead facilitator should start by introducing the facilitation team and the purpose and process of the Community Gathering to the group. Remind them of the preparatory work that has been going on in the community before this session.

Explain how the Monitoring Standards session fits within the overall Community Gathering process to the group.

“The main objective is to compare the standard inputs for public services as defined through government policy with the actual situation of the service”.

The Citizen and Voice + Community Gathering diagrams should be used as part of the introduction.

Step 2: Introduce flip chart

Describe the headings of the flip chart to the group and suggest to the group that we are going to complete the chart together based on information they already know.

Step 3: Confirm Standard Inputs

Ask the participants if they are aware of the standards of inputs to be provided by the government to the public service. List these on a spare flip chart. Check these against the information on government standards already obtained. If necessary explain what the government standards should mean in practice.



- The service providers will have the most knowledge about actual inputs. Seek their input and confirmation. They may need to refer to their own documentation. Ensure they bring this documentation to the meeting.
- Make sure you have agreement from the group before recording the actual inputs.
- The working group may already have decided on the inputs and standards to be monitored. If this is the case you do not need to request input from participants to prioritize standards and inputs. The facilitator should simply provide the list to participants to use

Step 4: Prioritise Standards

With the group prioritize the standard inputs that are to be monitored as part of this session. Begin by recording the first one on the Monitoring Standards flip chart, writing first the input (eg number of pupils per teacher) and then the standard input that government policies are committed to.

Step 5: Complete the chart

Based on understanding of the current situation now complete the 'actual column' for the input and standards. Draw a line under the information to form a row.

Complete the process for the remaining inputs and standards: write the input and standard and then the actual situation in the three columns. Draw a line to form a row and repeat until all inputs, standards and actuals are recorded.

Leave the 'comments' column blank. Explain to the group that this will be completed when this information is shared with the main group at the Interface Meeting.

Step 6: Closing

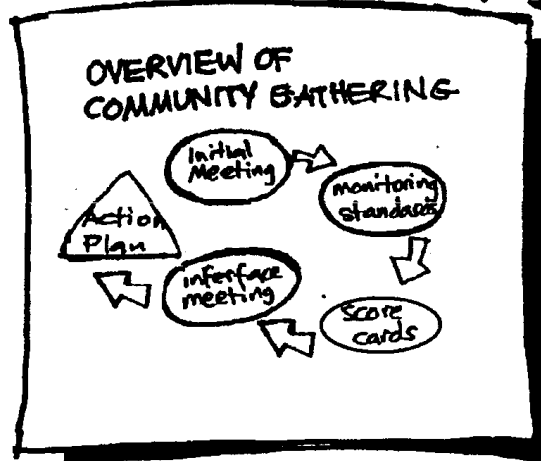
Close the meeting with thanks.

Explain to the group that the Monitoring Standards flip chart will be shared with all participants of the Community Gathering process and key stakeholders during the Interface Meeting.

OUTCOMES:

1. Standard inputs confirmed
2. Actual inputs to service identified and compared against standard inputs as defined through government policy.

OVERVIEW DIAGRAMS



MONITORING STANDARDS

Monitoring Standards .

Area _____ Venue _____

Type	Standard	Actual	Comment
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	

## WHAT YOU NEED FOR MONITORING STANDARDS

**SUMMARY:**

1. Prepare materials and resources
2. Prepare flip charts
3. Organize venues, time and participants from user groups and service providers
4. Mobilise facilitation team
5. Facilitate Score Card sessions
  - Step 1: Introductions, purpose and process
  - Step 2: Introduce smiley scale
  - Step 3: Practice voting
  - Step 4: Performance measures from group
  - Step 5: Score card voting
  - Step 6: Comments and proposals for improvement
  - Step 7: Performance measures from group (standard)
  - Step 8: Closing



**Definition and purpose**

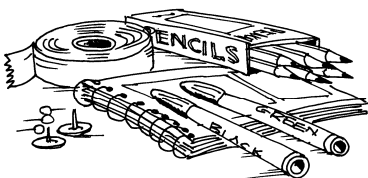
The main objective of the Score Card sessions is to enable both users and providers of a public service to assess how well the service is provided and to provide proposals to improve the quality of service. The session is based on focus group discussions.

Users of the public service are divided into separate user groups. The service providers are asked to conduct their own 'self evaluation' of their service delivery using the Score Card process.

The Score Cards resulting from these focus group discussions are shared during the Interface Meeting, together with proposals suggested from each group.

The information collected is mainly qualitative, requesting people's views and opinions!

**1. Prepare materials and resources**



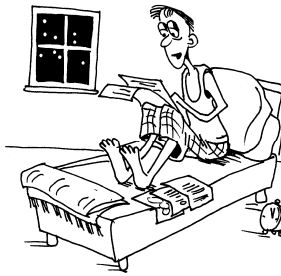
The Score Card session requires lots of paper for flip charts and marker pens 😊

- The flip chart should be prepared in advance (see below)
- Tape to post the flip charts on the wall
- Marker pens (you need as many marker pens as you have participants)
- Spare flip charts
- Record sheets



Flip chart preparation is an important part of the Score Card preparation. Each focus group will need 7 flip charts. Work out the total number of flip charts you will need as there is a lot of preparation required. ☺

For example, if the facilitation team are conducting four Score Card sessions for a primary school, with one group of students, two groups of parents and one group of teachers, you will need to prepare a total of 28 charts (4 groups x 7 flip charts = 28).



## **2. Prepare flip charts**

A series of flip charts need to be prepared before the Score Card focus group discussions.

1. Overview of the Community Gathering process
2. Smiley scale
3. Practice Voting Sheet
4. Building group performance measures
5. Score Card
6. Voting Sheet
7. Comments and Proposals Sheet

The flip charts are all illustrated at the back of this Guidance Note.

## **3. Organise venues, time and participants**

Each group will need a separate place to meet, where they can work comfortably and without noise and distractions. The venue must include a wall large enough to pin the charts up and record the group interactions in front of the group.

The Score Card focus group discussions sessions can take place all on the same day, as part of one big Community Gathering exercise. This is a massive undertaking and you will need a lot of facilitators! This is not recommended.

It is easier to conduct the Score Card sessions over a number of days, as the meetings often take a number of hours and you need to ensure that participants have enough energy to actively participate in the Interface Meeting.



The working group will need to decide how many user groups will participate in the Score Cards sessions and how many facilitators will be required.

## Participation

Agree how many separate focus groups can be facilitated with the available facilitators at the times and venues agreed.

Each group should include 8-15 people with similar characteristics.

In education for instance, the groups could be formed around the following categories:

- a. Pupils
- b. Parents
- c. Teachers
- d. School Management Committee or Parents and Teachers Association
- e. Members of the Teachers' Committee

In health, the groups could be identified by service type, as follows:

- a. Pre-natal service users (women of reproductive age)
- b. Infant and Child welfare service users (nursing mothers)
- c. Outpatient service users (both males and females, young and old).
- d. Health staff

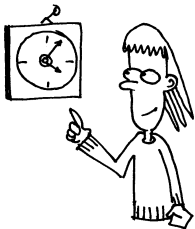
You can also categorize focus groups based on gender or age (womens' and mens' groups, and children and youth groups).

More than one focus group can be formed for any 'user group type'. **One separate Score Card focus group must include service providers.** A second service provider focus group can be formed if required.



You might have too many people for the facilitators available. Thank them for coming, but apologize that you are not able to include them in the Score Card process. However, invite them to the Interface meeting where they can contribute to positive changes to the service then.

## Duration



The Score Card focus groups should take between 1½ - 3 hours. Be careful about taking too long – you don't want to exhaust the participants 😊

## **4. Mobilise Facilitation team to deliver the session**

The session should be led by a minimum of three people to facilitate:

- one to lead the session with the participants
- one to record information on the flip chart
- one to record the information on a record sheet.

## **5. Facilitate Score Card sessions**



There are a series of steps to be followed when conducting the Score Card focus groups. These are outlined below. Facilitators should follow the steps in order but should also use their own skills to respond to the group dynamics and process to ensure an easy flow to discussions.

### **Step 1: Introductions / Purpose / Process**

The lead facilitator should start by introducing the facilitation team and the purpose and process of the Community Gathering to the group. Explain that this is part of the preparatory work that has been going on within the community before this session.

Explain how the Score Card session fits within the whole process of the Community Gathering to the group.

*“The main objective of the Score Card sessions is for both users and providers of a public service to assess the performance of service delivery and to provide proposals to improve the quality of service”*

*The Score Cards resulting from the focus group discussions are shared during the Interface Meeting, together with proposals generated from each group.”*

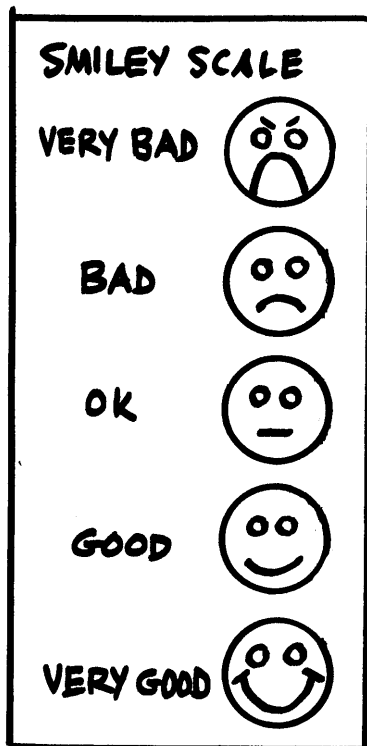
Explain to the group the different focus groups which have been formed for this part of the process, and when they are meeting (if this is on a separate occasion). Help them understand how information from this group will be used with these other groups to form part of the Interface Meeting.



Make sure you have agreement from this group that the information they generate together can be shared at the Interface Meeting.

### **Step 2: Introduce Smiley Scale**

The smiley scale is the rating system used for the Score Card process to enable the group to interact.



The lead Facilitator should present the prepared Smiley Scale flip chart to the group. Pin the chart at the front of the room. Introduce the different faces to the group and their description in words one by one.

Explain to the group that we are going to use the Smiley Scale as a way of expressing how they think or feel about the different aspects of the service and its quality that we are discussing today.

Provide examples to the group, or even better, get the group to provide examples of times when they may have felt very good, good, just ok, bad or very bad.



### STEP 3: PRACTICE VOTING



This is an important first step to make sure participants understand, and are comfortable with the procedure of voting - before real voting starts on the public service.










It is not essential to conduct a practice vote. If you feel group members fully understand the process and what is required you can miss this step.

Move the Smiley Scale sheet to the side of the room. Make sure participants can still see it and that it is accessible to the facilitator to refer to as needed throughout the session. Pin up the practice voting flip chart (already prepared) at the front of the room.

Explain to the group that “we are going to practice voting using the Smiley Scale to make sure that everyone can easily use it when we focus on the performance of the public service”. Pick a practice measure such as the “recent performance of the national (local) football team” or another sporting team in the area.



Choose a measure which relates to the performance of ‘something’. This helps when you start to vote on the ‘performance’ of the public service.

PRACTICE PERFORMANCE MEASURE	SYMBOL	VERY BAD 	BAD 	JUST OK 	GOOD 	VERY GOOD 
National football team's recent performance						

Write the performance measure in the first column under the heading “practice performance measure.” Always use the local language so group members can read. Try and always include a symbol to represent the text for people who cannot read but also as a prompt for all group members.

Ask the group “how could we describe this performance measure using a symbol or a simple drawing? Once there is agreement around one idea, invite a volunteer to draw the symbol in the first column next to the words. Draw a horizontal line under the performance measure description and symbol.

Using symbols for the performance measures helps group members to remember the issues being discussed, especially if they cannot read. Pictures are easier to remember than words 😊

The Facilitator might feel symbols are not necessary or appropriate for a particular group, such as educated doctors. If you feel the group members fully understand the process you can miss out this step. The Facilitator should decide whether to include the symbols or not.

However, remember that the completed Score Card will be shown at the Interface Meeting and the symbol might be useful then.



Provide marker pens to each of the participants. Tell them they can only tick only once in one column. They must always choose just one of either *Very bad*, *Bad*, *OK*, *Good* or *Very good* within each row. Demonstrate with a tick on another sheet if you think it is needed. Ask the group these questions – and encourage a loud response from everyone.

“Do you know where you are going to vote?” _____, then  
 “Are you ready to vote?” _____

Encourage this process by fun through your facilitation 😊😊😊😊😊

Encourage the participants to move to the front of the room, and stand in front of the flip chart. Provide the signal to vote, “*Ok start voting*” and encourage them all to vote at once. Once people have voted ask them to sit down.

Reflect only briefly on the results of the voting. Encourage the group members to reflect on what they see.



The Facilitator provides the signal for participants to vote.

“Do you know where you are going to vote?” _____, then

“Are you ready to vote?” _____

Use these questions each time the group votes.

Make sure that all participants are out of their chairs / seating and crowding near the flip chart.

Provide the signal.

“Ok start voting”

Make this part of the process fun! Get a response from the group, and generate excitement about the voting process.

Asking these questions before the vote also helps to minimise group influence as does all voting at once. Chaos and confusion means that people don’t tend to watch each other!

It may be interesting to separate out the views of men and women. A simple way of doing this is to give all the women the same colour marker pen (eg red). Then give all the men a different colour marker pen (eg blue). You could also do this for youth and older people. You can then see views from different perspectives within the community.



Repeat the practice voting, using another example if you feel that the exercise did not go well. Reinforce the instructions for voting depending whether participants have voted correctly or not.

#### **STEP 4: PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM THE GROUP**

Thank the group for their participation and *hope that the performance of the national football team improves!!! (or continues to be very good!)* Now draw the attention of the participants back to the performance of the public service that is the topic of discussion.

Ask the participants to think about the characteristics of an ideal service (this must be the same as the service being focused on within the Community Gathering). Questions asked of the group could be:



*“How would you describe a perfect .....? (eg school, health service - insert here the public service under focus)*

*“What are the characteristics of this well performing, perfect .....? (public service?)*

*What are the characteristics of a perfect .....(public service) which ensures the best results for the users of the service, such as .....?. (Depending on the public service under question, suggest examples of outcomes provided such as students being well educated, or community being healthy, or community being provided with water supply and sanitation services.*



It must be clear to the participants that they are thinking about an ideal service!!! (They are not discussing the local service yet).

The objective of these questions is to identify indicators that that the group will use to assess the performance of the service delivery under focus.

As one facilitator leads participants in identifying ideal characteristics, another facilitator should write up their responses on the *characteristics of an ideal ...* flip chart (flip chart #4). List up to a maximum of 10 characteristics from the group.

**The characteristics provided by the group should be qualitative in nature.** Often participants come up with quantitative measures, such as number of teachers, classrooms or just simply drugs, teachers or books.

The facilitator may need to encourage the participants to think more about how they would describe the quality of these characteristics, “*what is it about ‘teachers’, ‘classrooms’, ‘drugs’ or ‘nurses’, that ensures a good outcome for the users*” - such as *availability* of drugs, or *punctuality* of teachers. It is important to make sure these agreed characteristics are very clear and that they each include a qualitative characteristic before writing them down on the Group Indicators flip chart.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**  
**Characteristics of an**  
**IDEAL**  
- - - -

Now prioritise with the group the 3 or 4 most important characteristics that the group will use to assess the performance of the public service. Mark on the flip chart these agreed priority characteristics.

There are a number of ways you could agree the priority characteristics with the group. You could seek consensus (where everyone is in agreement) or you could get a show of hands (where you ask for a 'for and against count') Alternatively (particularly if opinions are split) you could seek a majority vote by getting participants to vote on their priority indicators using their marker pens voting first, second, third choice, until you have 3 – 4 group indicators identified.



## STEP 5: SCORE CARD VOTING



Before the session, tape the Score Card and Voting Sheet together. The Score Card flip chart should be on the left and the Voting flip chart on the right. The headings and lines should match horizontally.

Following this session the Score Card flip chart will be separated from the Voting Sheet and taken to the Interface Meeting as a record of the groups' opinion.

Write the first performance measure on the voting sheet. Request ideas for a symbol or simple drawing to represent the performance measure. Seek a volunteer to draw the symbol on the sheet and then draw a horizontal line across the whole flip chart (both Score Card and Voting Sheet) – under the performance measure and symbol.

The facilitator should focus participants' attention on the first performance measure from their chosen list. For example this might be the *"availability of drugs"*. The group is now going to vote on this just as they did in the practice process. Remind participants again of the smiley scale and ask the question of the group members,

*"What do you think about the availability of drugs" Do you think the performance of this has been - Very bad – Bad – ok – Good or Very good"*.

Provide marker pens to each participant and remind them that they should only tick in one column within any one row (either *Very bad – Bad– OK – Good - Very good*). Demonstrate a tick on another sheet if you think this is necessary. Ask the group these questions – and wait to hear a loud response from everyone.

*"Do you know where you are going to vote?"* _____, then  
*"Are you ready to vote?"* _____

Encourage this process by fun through your facilitation 😊 😊 😊 😊 😊

Encourage participants to move to the front of the room and stand in front of the flip chart. Provide the signal to vote, “Ok start voting” and encourage them all to vote at once. Once people have voted ask them to sit down.

The Facilitator provides the signal for participants to vote.  
 “Do you know where you are going to vote?” _____, then  
 “Are you ready to vote?” _____  
 Use these questions each time the group votes.  
 Make sure that all participants are out of their chairs / seating and crowding near the flip chart.  
 Provide the signal.  
 “Ok start voting”  
 Make this part of the process fun! Get a response from the group, and generate excitement about the voting process.  
 Asking these questions before the vote also helps to minimise group influence as does all voting at once. Chaos and confusion means that people don’t tend to watch each other!



## STEP 6: COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Facilitator should then encourage the participants to reflect on what they see.

*“How did we vote? What do you see?”*

*“Where did most people vote?”*

*“If we were to describe the overall vote of the group, what would it be?”*

Reach an agreement on the groups’ overall vote. Then draw the smiley scale in the Score Card flip chart under the heading “Scores”.



If votes are evenly spread across two scales, eg Bad and Very Bad, you could draw the two scales with a line in between.

*“Why do you think people voted the way that they did?”*

*“What caused people to vote as they did?”*

Seek comments or explanations from the group about why people voted as they did. Highlights and quotes should be recorded on the comments sheet. Suggest to the group that these comments could be shared at the Interface Meeting. Sometimes participants need to be encouraged to provide more explanations and examples to improve understanding of their experiences of service delivery.



When seeking reflections from the group, don't just focus on the majority votes. It can also be very useful to consider the minority votes, in order to understand all perspectives. You don't need to ask who voted this way and why! Instead ask; "why do you think someone voted this way?" This allows anyone to speak, without having to admit to their personal vote.

After discussing causes and explanations for the voting pattern, facilitators can then encourage participants to discuss proposals and strategies to improve service delivery. Write down all the group suggestions on the comments and proposals chart.

Guiding questions to ask might include:

- What can be done now to improve the service?
- What needs to happen to move your votes towards Very Good?
- What can the community do themselves to improve the service delivery?
- What can others do?

**The participants should be encouraged to produce proposals that can be carried out by the community itself, rather than expecting others to do everything.**

**It is important that proposals are written as clearly and specific as possible, so that they will be understood at the Interface Meeting.**

Repeat the above sequence for all of the priority characteristics identified.

- Write the performance measure on the Score Card
- Have a symbol drawn
- Provide the signal for voting
- Participant voting
- Participants' comments and proposals for improvement.

## **STEP 7: PERFORMANCE MEASURES GIVEN**

The standard performance measures should then be introduced to the group in the following way;

*"We have identified a number of standard performance measures which can be used in a number of different places as we work with communities to measure the performance of .....(public service under question). We can collect all of this information and use it to tell a bigger story of public service delivery within this country. This gathered information can hopefully be used to influence government and other stakeholders to improve the basic service delivery".*

Permission should be sought from the participants before voting commences using the standard performance measures. These may often be very similar in wording to performance measures already agreed and voted on by the group. However, it is important that the voting process is repeated using the standard performance measure.

The heading *performance measure given* should then be written below the last performance measure from group. Below this the first standard performance measure should be written.

The same process of Score Card Voting (used for performance measures from group) should then be used for the participants to vote, provide comments and proposals for improvement.

- Write the standard performance measure on the Score Card
- Have a symbol drawn
- Provide the signal for voting
- Participant voting
- Participants comments and proposals for improvement.

## **STEP 8: CLOSING**

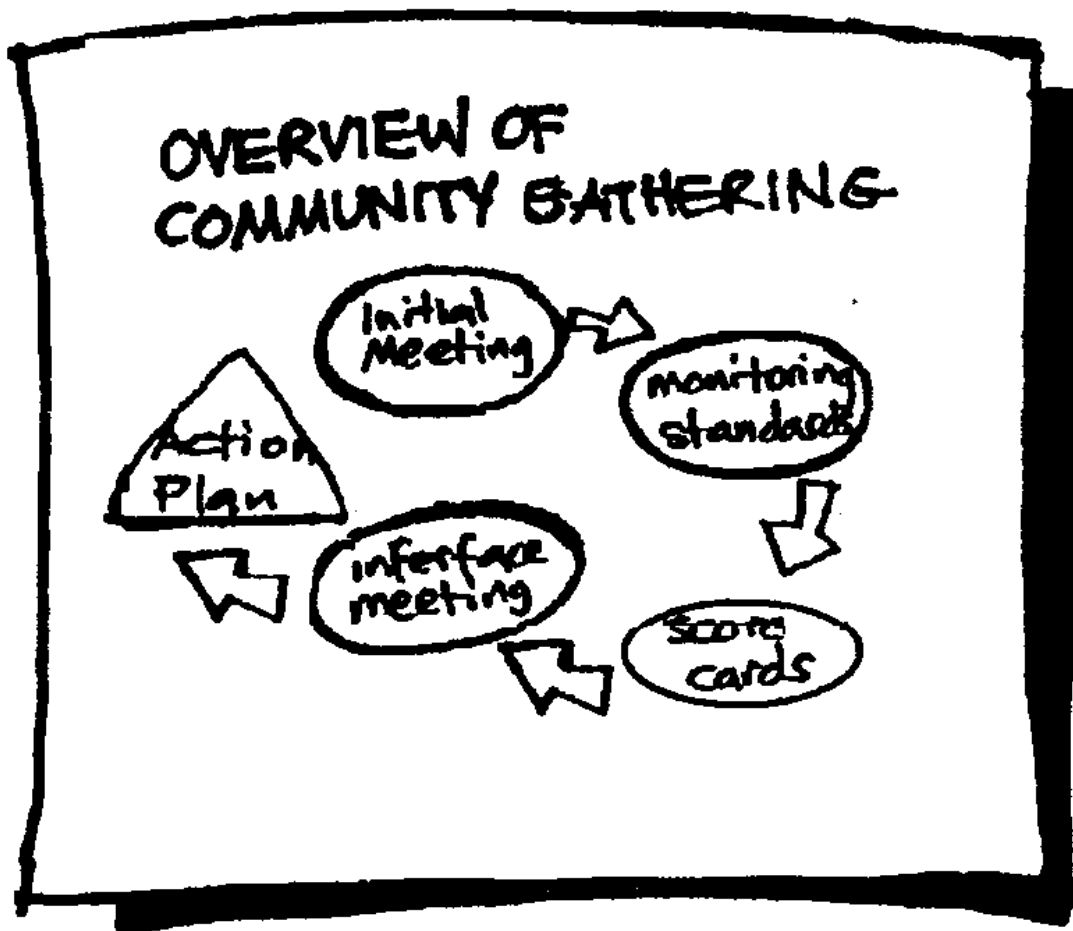
When all the flip charts have been completed, thank the group for their participation and hard work. Explain to the participants that the Score Card flip chart and the Comments and Proposals flip chart will be presented to the Interface Meeting. Ensure that the group is happy with what is recorded and that are willing for these charts to be shown to the larger group. Work with the group to make any revisions if required (such as re wording or clarifying the proposals).

Suggest to the group that there may be some proposals they have identified themselves which they would like to take responsibility for achieving. Work with the group to identify actions, responsibility and timelines. You could use the format as for the Action Plan for the Interface Meeting.

## **OUTCOMES:**

1. Participatory discussion about the performance of public service delivery
2. Performance measures for good service delivery
3. Score cards providing group perceptions on the performance of service delivery
4. Highlights of key discussion
5. Proposals for improvement of public service delivery

# I. Overview of Community Gathering process [Flip Chart]



## 2. Smiley Scale [Flip Chart]

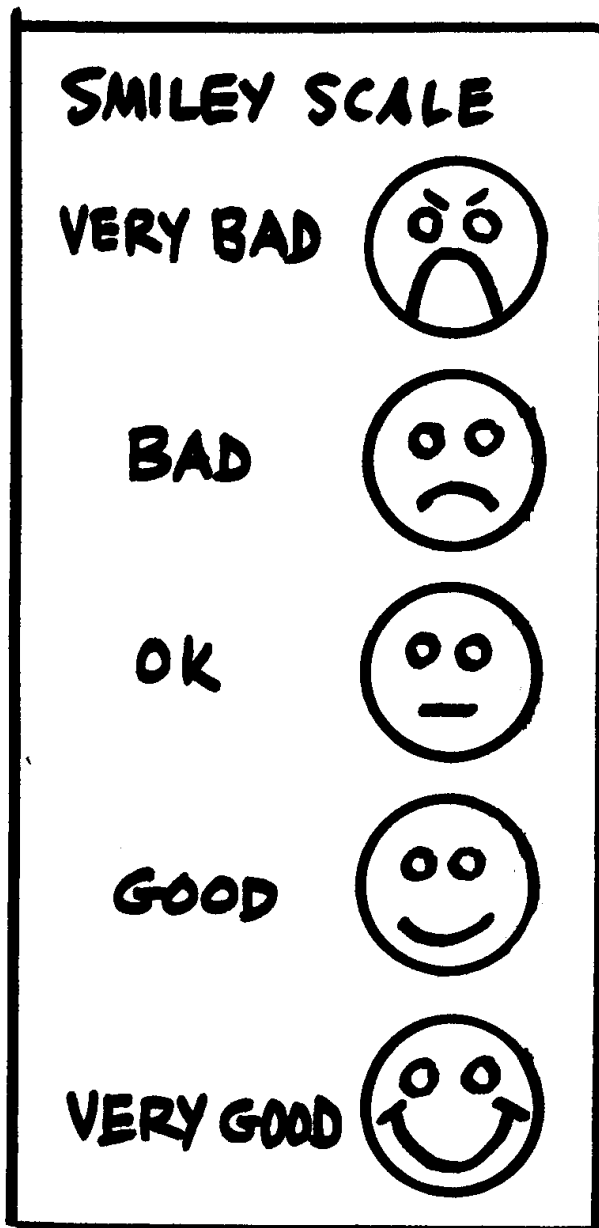


The Smiley Scale sheet should be prepared in portrait format as provided on this page.

Translate the English words to your local language as appropriate.

When drawing the smiley scale for the different Score Card sessions, ensure that the faces always look exactly the same.







One flip chart should be used.



The smiley scale is very useful within a community process since people can easily relate to the (smiley) faces!! You don't need to be literate, and people can easily participate in the process of sharing 'how they feel about the service delivery they receive.

### 3. Practice Voting [Flip Chart]

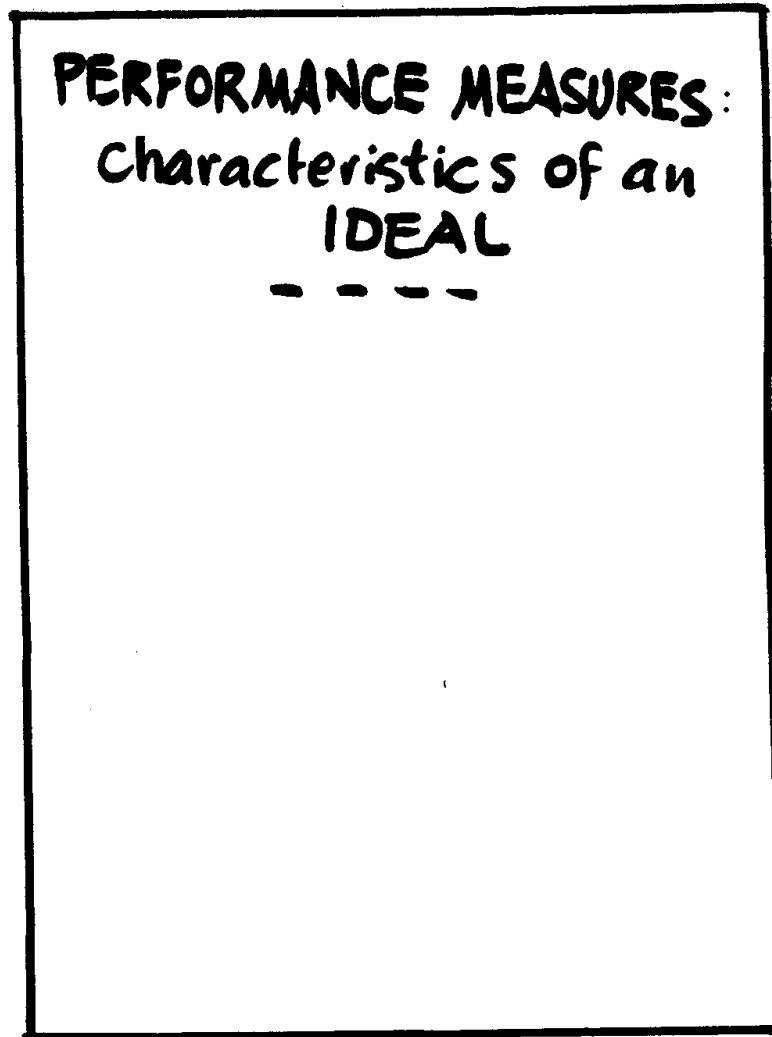
- The practice voting sheet should be prepared in landscape form.
- Ensure that the smiley scales drawn on the sheet look exactly the same as those on the Smiley Scale flip chart.
- The practice sheet does not need to be as big as the Voting Sheet. Two flip charts taped together will be enough.
- You can use different coloured pens to draw the chart to make it more interesting for participants!

PRACTICE PERFORMANCE MEASURE	SYMBOL	VERY BAD 	BAD 	JUST OK 	GOOD 	VERY GOOD 
National football team's recent performance						



#### 4. Characteristics for an ideal... (Flip Chart)

Draw the flip chart in portrait format as shown below.  
Write in the type of public service which is the focus of the Community Gathering.  
One flip chart should be used.



### 5. Score Card (Flip Chart)

This flip chart is used to record the prioritized group performance measures and standard performance measures; including the symbol for each; and with a Smiley Face to represent the overall majority score from the group for each performance measure.

The flip chart records a summary of the focus group views and will be presented and explained during the Interface Meeting.



Draw the sheet in portrait form. You will need to tape a number of sheets together. Between two to four sheets should be used to make sure participants can read from a distance.

Tape this sheet to the left of the Voting Sheet for use during the Score Card session. Ensure that the top rows and headings line up. It is then separated from the Voting Sheet and presented at the Interface Meeting.

Locations - - - - -		Group - - - - -
<b>SCORE CARD</b>		
	Symbols	Scores
Performance Measures from Group		
Performance Measures Given		



## 7. Comments and Proposals (Flip Chart)

Draw the flip chart in landscape format as shown below.

Use at least two to four sheets to make sure participants can read it from a distance.

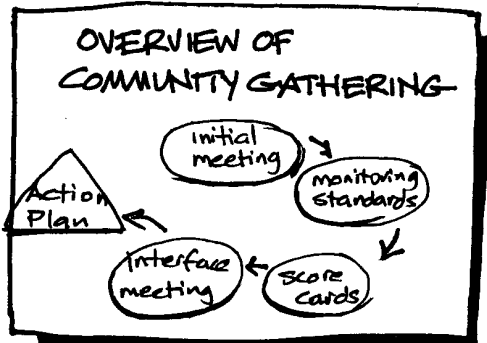
The flip chart records key Focus Group decisions: it is designed to be presented and explained to the Interface Meeting.



You could connect the comments and proposals to the group and standard indicators by numbering the different comments and proposals or writing the indicators above the different sections of the comments and proposals.

Location _ _ _ _ _	Group _ _ _ _ _
<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>PROPOSALS</b>

## OVERVIEW DIAGRAMS



## SMILELY SCALE

**SMILELY SCALE**

VERY BAD 😞

BAD 😞

OK 😐

GOOD 😊

V GOOD 😄

## GROUP INDICATORS

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Characteristics of an IDEAL

.....

## PRACTICE VOTING

PRACTICE PERFORMANCE MEASURE	Symbol	😊	😐	😞	😄	😞
National football team performance	😊					

## SCORE CARDS

Location _____ Group _____

**SCORE CARD**

PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM GROUP	Symbols	Scores
PERFORMANCE MEASURES GIVEN		

## VOTING SHEET

Location _____ Group _____

**VOTING SHEET**

😊	😐	😞	😊	😊

## COMMENTS & PROPOSALS

Location _____	Group _____
COMMENTS	PROPOSALS

## WHAT YOU NEED FOR SCORE CARDS

### SUMMARY

1. Prepare materials and resources
2. Prepare flip charts
3. Organize venue
4. Mobilise facilitation team
5. Determine participants
6. Facilitation of the Interface Meeting:
  - Step 1: introductions, purpose and process
  - Step 2: Monitoring Standards presentations
  - Step 3: Score Card presentations
  - Step 4: Action planning
  - Step 5: Closing and celebration



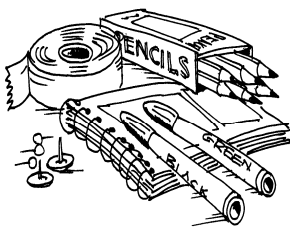
### Definition and purpose

The participants who have attended the Monitoring Standards and Score Cards sessions are then brought together in one large meeting to present the outcomes of these sessions, and to discuss and build together an action plan to improve the delivery of the public service.

The main objective of this meeting is the sharing of information (monitoring standards, users and providers assessments) and the preparation of an action plan, which includes responsibilities and time lines.

This session of the Community Gathering process is the key to ensuring that community voices are heard and are taken into account by power holders, and that definite practical measures are taken to improve the service delivery.

### 1. Prepare materials and resources



Flip charts should be prepared in advance (see below).

- a) Overview of the Community Gathering process
- b) Comparison Score Cards flip chart
- c) Action Plan flip chart
  - Tape to post the flip charts on the wall
  - Marker pens (at least 5 in different colors)
  - Spare flip charts



## **2. Prepare flip charts**

A series of flip charts need to be prepared before the Interface Meeting

- a) Overview of the Community Gathering process
- b) Comparison Score Cards flip chart
- c) Action Plan flip chart

The flip charts are illustrated at the back of this Guidance Note.

Flip charts from the Monitoring Standards session and flip charts from each Score Card Process must also be available for use during the Interface Meeting.

1. Monitoring Standards chart
2. Score Cards
3. Comments and Proposals sheet



Ensure that the Interface Meeting venue has enough hanging space for all of the flip charts. You could pin them on the walls, or the side of a building, or you could make a 'hanging line' with some string to pin them on. All flip charts need to be displayed as they are presented. They are then used to prepare the action plan.

## **3. Organise Venue**

You need a large enough venue to accommodate all participants. The location should be comfortable, out of the sun or rain, quiet and away from distractions. The venue must include a wall large enough to pin the charts up and record the group interactions in front of the group.

## **4. Mobilise the facilitation team**

Facilitation of the Interface Meeting is a challenging job. Facilitators will need to manage difficult group dynamics as community and service provider views are brought together. They need to create a safe environment for people's views to be heard. At the same time they will need to ensure that the participants commit to proposals and take responsibility for actions. A team of facilitators should be used to facilitate this session. Facilitators should take turns to lead the various steps and facilitate group discussion, as well as the preparation of the Action Plan.

## **5. Determine participants**

Decisions on who to invite to the Interface Meeting are very important. You need to bring together all key stakeholders. Participants of the Monitoring Standards session as well as Score Card sessions should all attend. Service providers should attend as well as government officials, both administrative and political.

You should expect between fifty to one hundred (or even two hundred!) participants.

### **Community participants**

Participants of the Monitoring Standards and Score Card sessions should attend. Other community members, who use the service, but did not participate in the Score Card sessions can also attend.

It is important that any community based committee associated with the public service also attend.



Special attention should be made to make sure marginalized groups actively participate in the Interface Meeting.

The facilitator should make special efforts to ensure that the voices of those not normally heard are heard!!! Make sure there is a balance of gender. If necessary use participatory strategies to make sure children can participate.

### Service Providers

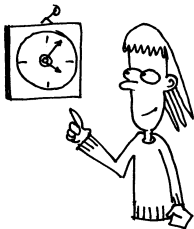
It is critical that service providers attend the Interface Meeting. Ensure that as many as possible attend. It is especially important that Managers and leaders attend, as they are often responsible for leading any reforms and improvements to service delivery that may be decided by all stakeholders during this meeting.

### Government representatives

Representatives of both the administrative and political arms of government should attend. Representatives of line ministries at district or municipal level should be invited as well as local political members, representatives and/or committee members of local government.

Invite those who hold positions of power and influence, since they are often able to commit to proposals and action during the meeting. It is also an important opportunity for them to hear the voices of community members regarding the delivery of public services.

### **Duration**



The interface meeting is the most critical session of the Community Gathering process. It is critical that you allow enough time for the Interface Meeting. Between 2- 5 hours is recommended.

The best part of the day to meet is usually mid morning to early afternoon.

This is the time when all of the information is brought together, a space and opportunity for discussions are provided and decisions for action and responsibilities are made. All of the other sessions lead to this point. If this meeting is rushed, the other sessions might have been a waste of time, and a wasted opportunity!!

A one day Interface Meeting could start mid morning, the actual meeting could go for about 4 hours and end with participants eating lunch together and celebrating their achievements with song and dance.





## 6. Facilitation of the Interface Meeting



### Step 1: Introductions / Purpose / Process

The lead facilitator should start by introducing the facilitation team and the purpose and process of the Community Gathering to the group. Explain this process builds on the preparatory work that has been going on within the community.

Explain again the Community Gathering process and its purpose.

*The Community Gathering aims to empower communities to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are provided at the local level”*

Introduce the purpose of the Interface Meeting to the group.

*“The main objective of the Interface Meeting is the sharing of gathered information (monitoring standards, users and providers assessments) in order to discuss and build together an action plan to improve the delivery of the public service.”*

Explain to the group the different focus groups formed as part of the process, when they met and how the information from these groups will be used as part of the Interface Meeting.



Celebrate the participation of individuals present. As the different sessions are described by the facilitator, invite participants of the Standards Monitoring session and various Score Card sessions to stand and be acknowledged by others with a round of applause.

### Step 2: Monitoring Standards Presentations

A representative from the Monitoring Standards should present their flip chart to the whole group.

Opportunity should be provided for participants to provide feedback and comments and to ask for more explanations about the Monitoring Standards chart. The presenter and/or participants of the session should have time to share such explanations.

At this stage, only allow questions of clarification: delay opportunities for discussion and decisions about what action to take until a later stage in the meeting.

### Step 3: Score Card Presentations

A representative from each Score Cards group should take turns to present their flip charts to the whole group.

A member of the facilitation team should then present a summary in the Comparison Score Card flip chart. This chart provides an easy reference of group assessments and compares the views expressed across different user and service provider groups.

SAMPLE COMPARISON CHART X HEALTH CENTRE				
Indicators	Symbols	Outpatients	Pre-Natal Patients	Service Providers
PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM GROUP				
Availability of drugs		☹️		☹️
Staff friendliness		☹️	☹️	
PERFORMANCE MEASURES GIVEN				
S-1 Quality of staff		😊 - 😊	😊	😊
S-2 Overall satisfaction with the service		☹️ - 😊	☹️	😊



Strong facilitation is required to ensure that a positive and constructive tone is maintained throughout the discussion. Negative comments should be acknowledged, but personalized abuse should be discouraged.

At all times, the focus should be on respectful listening to the perspectives of others, and joint searching for constructive solutions to identified problems.

Dialogue between service providers and service users should be encouraged. Ways of working together in the future should be promoted.

The responsibility of government officials (both administrative and political) and their ability to act should also be encouraged.

### Step 4: Action Planning

The Facilitator should refer participants back to the proposals suggested by each of the Score Card sessions, as well as information from the Monitoring Standards. Ensure that all these sheets are displayed together. Note similarities and differences from the different flip charts. Seek clarification from focus group members if required. Facilitate discussion on the proposals suggested. Small group discussion may help here. Encourage participants to identify the proposals they feel should take priority. Write a list of priority proposals on a flip chart. Ensure that you gain consensus from the group, and that there is commitment to carry out these reforms.

Once you have a shortlist of proposals transfer the proposals to the first column of the action planning sheet and complete the rows, providing detail of the action to be taken, expected results, who is responsible for carrying out the action (you can also add who will monitor that the action has been carried out!) as well as the timeline.

ACTION PLAN				
ACTION	WHO WILL DO THIS	BY WHEN	RESOURCES/ SUB-ACTIVITIES	WHO MONITORS

### Step 5: Closing and Celebration

This Interface meeting is a very important moment in the Citizen and Action process. Besides discussing and building the action plan, it provides the community with the opportunity to share the results of the work carried out together. The facilitator should strongly reinforce the understanding that the prepared Action Plan belongs to both citizens and government, it is their responsibility to make sure that the proposed changes are carried out.

At the end an opportunity should be provided to evaluate the whole process, its weaknesses and strengths. Request from the group any thoughts on what they liked or didn't like about the whole Community Gathering process.

The meeting should be closed in ceremony and celebration of achievements. Thanks should be provided to participants, organizers, providers of food and refreshments. Indeed to anyone who helped!

The meeting could end with a celebration of food, song and dance and community spirit and commitment to working together.☺

### OUTCOMES:

1. Increased dialogue and mutual understanding between service users and service providers
2. Commitments for action made to improve the delivery of the public service, inclusive of responsibility and deadlines
3. Thanks and celebrations

## I. Comparison Score Cards (flip chart)

This is a comparison chart to present the voting results of all the Score Card sessions. For standard performance measures, where all groups voted on the same criteria, and for group performance measures that happen to coincide, the results of the different groups should be placed side by side to allow a comparison of how the different groups have scored and/or assessed the facility or project, as in the example below.

The flip chart should be prepared in portrait format. To ensure that all participants can view the chart, it is best to tape at least two charts together.

SAMPLE COMPARISON CHART X HEALTH CENTRE				
Indicators	Symbols	Outpatients	Pre-Natal Patients	Service Providers
PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM GROUP				
Availability of drugs		☹		☹
Staff friendliness		☹	☹	
PERFORMANCE MEASURES GIVEN				
S.1 Quality of staff		😊 - 😊	😊	😊
S.2 Overall satisfaction with the service		☹ - 😊	☹	😊

### Action Plan (flip chart)

The chart should be prepared in landscape format. It is best to pin 2 – 4 sheets together, to ensure that all participants can read the chart and participate.

ACTION PLAN				
ACTION	WHO WILL DO THIS	BY WHEN	RESOURCES/ SUB-ACTIVITIES	WHO MONITORS

## OVERVIEW DIAGRAMS



## COMPARISON SCORE CARDS

SAMPLE COMPARISON CHART				
Indicators	HEALTH CENTRE			
	SMH	Outpatients	Perinatal Patients	Seating Provider
PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM GROUP				
Availability of staff		😊		😞
Staff friendliness		😊	😊	
PERFORMANCE MEASURES GIVEN				
Quality of staff	😊-😊	😊	😊	😊
Overall satisfaction with service	😊-😊	😊	😊	😊

## MONITORING STANDARDS

Monitoring Standards			
Area _____	Venue _____		
Type	Standard	Actual	Comment
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	

## ACTION PLANNING

ACTION PLAN				
ACTION	WHO WILL DO THIS	BY WHEN	RESOURCE/SUBACTIVITIES	WHO MONITORS

## SCORE CARDS

Location _____		Group _____	
SCORE CARD			
Performance Measure from group		Score	Scores
Performance Measure Given			

## WHAT YOU NEED FOR INTERFACE MEETING

**Community Gathering****RECORD KEEPING****5.7****Introduction**

The information recorded on the flip charts during the Community Gathering is owned by the Community. They should keep the flip charts. They can be kept by a head teacher, school management committee, responsible parent or a student committee. In some pilot programs they have been posted in the head teachers' office following a Community Gathering. However, often they are folded up and put into a cupboard never to be seen again! They are not used, and more importantly, the information is lost to the community.

It is therefore important to record the information shared during the Community Gathering on recording sheets so that it can be used in efforts to improve services and influence policy beyond the Community Gathering.

**What gets recorded?**

Recording sheets (attached as Annexes) have been prepared to record information generated during:

- Monitoring Standards session
- Score Card sessions
- Interface Meeting.

The recording sheets fit on an A4 page (they can be enlarged to A3 if required). The recording sheets follow the same format as the flip charts used during the different sessions. They also note other information about the session including the date and time the session took place, number of participants, location of the meeting and the name and type of public service being assessed. The name of the person recording the information is also noted in case there is a need to follow up.

**When is the information recorded?**

It is best to note the information on recording sheets during the actual sessions. One member of the facilitation team should be given the role of recording the information. This saves time and the need to follow up once the session has concluded.

Where it is not possible to record during the session, it is suggested that the recording sheets are completed soon after the end of the session.

**Who completes the recording sheets?**

A member of the facilitation team or the Citizen Voice and Action working group should complete the recording sheets. They should sit at the back or side of the room, copying the information recorded on the flip charts once it has been agreed and confirmed by the group.

The recorder should not disturb the facilitator or group during the session. They observe quietly. The recorder should be introduced to the group at the start of the session so the group's permission to record the information can be asked. The group should be told the purpose of recording the information.

It's often best to start in pencil so that if you make a mistake you can easily correct it!

Have some spare sheets available.



### **Using the recording sheets**

There are a number of benefits gained by using the recording sheets:

#### Easy to use:

- The A4 sheets are easy to manage and can be easily filed and stored
- They can be posted on walls for public display and viewing
- They can be easily copied and provided to various stakeholders, especially those responsible for actions, as well as service users, service providers, the facilitation team, World Vision and its partners.
- Information from the recording sheets can be entered easily into the Citizen Voice and Action database.

#### Transparency:

- The recording sheets offer an opportunity to strengthen the transparency of the process if the recording sheets (or a simplification of them) are posted in a public place, such as the public service (school, health centre or town hall) all community members, including those present during the sessions, are able to see the outcomes and assess progress towards achieving the action plans.
- Increased transparency strengthens accountability as the action plans are carried out. Community members, together with service providers, can hold those responsible to carry out actions.

We can think about the use of the recording sheets in terms of the core elements of Citizen Voice and Action; *information, voice, dialogue and accountability*. The recording sheets provide an opportunity to strengthen these core elements.

**Information:** to feed back the outcomes of the Community Gathering, both to participants as well as other members of the community and stakeholders. They increase access to, and the sharing of information.

**Dialogue:** to increase the potential for dialogue between the various stakeholders to the public service. If the recording sheets are posted publicly, they provide a prompt for further community discussion.



**Voice:** to strengthen community voice, especially when the results of the Community Gathering are shared beyond the community to stakeholders who can influence changes at the local level. The information from the recording sheets can be used as part of advocacy reports and can link local to national level action. (See Section 7 for more details).

**Accountability:** to strengthen accountability of those responsible to implement the action plan, especially when the action plan is shared widely.

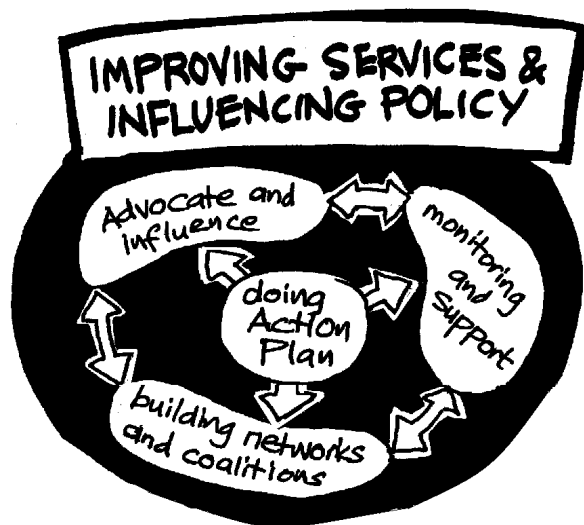
### **Citizen Voice and Action database**

A web-based database is being developed which will offer a national (and international) system to capture information generated through Community Gatherings. The recording sheets will be used to enter data into the database. The database will hold all this information, and will also provide a useful system to produce reports for individual Community Gatherings as well as regional and national reports. The database will be of great value in linking local to national level action. (See Section 7 for more details).

Information on the database will be available soon, together with an 'Operator Manual' to guide users understand how to use it.

## Improving services and influencing policy OVERVIEW

6.1



The preparation of an action plan to improve the performance of service delivery is an important outcome of citizen engagement via the Community Gathering, and of Citizen Voice and Action in general.

An action plan to improve services and influence policy is decided by citizens and government together. Each action plan will be different since each will be specific to the local situation, desired change, interest and commitment expressed by the stakeholders.

The third phase of Citizen Voice and Action describes what is involved in *doing the action plan*. The plan should result in both improved public services and influence on policy. It should describe activities or processes that will help achieve the action plan. Learning from current pilot programs has helped to identify useful and important processes and activities that contribute to achieving the action plan.

These processes and activities often merge together as the action plan is put into place. Any process or activity selected should be in response to the local situation and progress in achieving it.

Experience from pilot programs shows that there are three essential kinds of processes and activities:

- (1) building networks and coalitions
- (2) advocacy and influencing
- (3) monitoring and support.

Together these combine to create a strong and supportive environment to enable the action plan to be achieved.

- Without *building networks and coalition*, there would be little or no collaboration between stakeholders and potential partners. This would encourage duplication and ineffective advocacy.
- Without *advocacy and influence*, change may not result since improved services require the action of other stakeholders, such as service providers and local, regional and national government.

- Without *monitoring and support*, it would be hard to know what action is required to achieve the action plan. Monitoring progress identifies areas where further action is needed or where problems need solving.

It is most important to remember that citizens lead the process of doing the Action plan. The role of World Vision and its partners is to support citizens in fulfilling their desired change (as expressed through the action plan). It is impossible to provide step-by-step guidance for this phase of Citizen Voice and Action because World Vision and its partners need to be flexible and responsive in their actions, based on each different and unique situation.

These Guidance Notes therefore provide only limited guidance, and have been developed based on experience to date. As practice and learning continues to emerge, the Guidance Notes will be further developed.



## Improving services and influencing policy **DOING THE ACTION PLAN**

6.2

### SUMMARY:

1. Strategy to achieve the action plan decided
2. Mobilise stakeholders
3. Carry out plans
4. Monitoring and support



### 1. Putting the plan into action

The Action plan describes changes committed to as a result of engagement via the Community Gathering. It describes agreed actions to take, who will do them, by when, the resources or activities required and who will monitor achievement.

Once the Community Gathering has finished the plan is put into action!

- Those responsible for actions start to act
- Working groups or sub groups are formed
- Connections with relevant stakeholders are made
- Plans and strategies are developed to achieve the actions committed to.

### 2. Local ownership and leadership

Carrying out the action plan is led by citizens themselves, the users of the service and other relevant stakeholders – those who volunteered or committed themselves during the Community Gathering!

Progress to achieve the actions should be monitored by others in the community. Their names should also be recorded on the action plan. It is important to ensure accountability and responsibility for the actions to be met!



Why not display the action plan in public at the public service itself or at another public place such as the town hall? This will ensure transparency and accountability of those responsible to carry out the actions. It will also encourage participation of the general community in the process to improve services and influence policy.

## **DOING THE ACTION PLAN IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WORLD VISION OR ITS' PARTNERS!**

Though individuals may be recorded on the action plan as taking responsibility for the achievement of specific actions, it is suggested that sub committees or groups are formed to support their delivery. A group will make working towards the goal easier and it will stimulate others to become involved in achieving the action plan.

### **3. Types of actions**

There are many different types of actions that could be taken - too many to list! And of course actions will depend on the local situation, desired change, interest and commitment expressed by the stakeholders. However actions can be categorised in a number of different ways.

#### Responsibility to act

Different types of stakeholders can take responsibility to carry out the action plan, such as:

- Citizens (users of the public service)
- Service providers
- Community and service providers together
- Government officials, either political and administrative
- External stakeholders, such as CBOs or NGOs.

Normally different stakeholders will work together to achieve the plans.

Action plans often include citizen action to influence or demand a response from power holders or influence policy makers such as government staff or politicians. It is therefore critical that monitoring the action not only includes the demand (from citizens) but also the response (from government).



Encourage action and responsibility of citizens to improve the service delivery themselves.

Citizens who require others to do everything for them, while they do nothing are not empowered!

Responsibility for improving services should be viewed as a joint effort between citizens, service providers and government.

#### Time line for action:

Some actions decided can be done straight away following the Community Gathering; others may longer.

It is important to consider the time frame for action:

- Short term
- Medium term
- Long term.

Actions which can be achieved within the short term are those which are usually within the capacity of the citizens, (the users of the service) to do themselves. For example, a commitment to provide lunch time porridge to primary school students is an action that can bring a quick response. Parents and teachers can put this into action immediately.



Other examples of immediate action may include behaviour change or practice by service users and service providers. For example, parents may commit to send their children to school on time. Teachers may also commit to start classes on time.

Another example is where health staff commit to change their behavior towards community members who visit the health centre and to seek more collaborative ways of working with the community.

Actions which might take longer to achieve are usually those that require other stakeholders beyond the public service to respond. These might include government response to citizen demands for the provision of standards, already defined within public policies, to be provided. For example, this could include agreed ratios of teachers to students. How the government responds will determine whether the actions are achieved, and more importantly, whether services are improved. Citizen action to ensure response from power holders and influence makers is critical.

For actions that may take a longer time to achieve, it is important to make sure that:

- the action is broken up into manageable parts each with clear goals
- strategies are developed to maintain the interest of the community
- participation and engagement of citizens in the action is increased through the process
- ongoing monitoring identifies progress and can highlight when problem solving is needed to keep progress on track.

#### **4. Monitoring Progress**

Documenting actions taken and progress made to achieve the action, are very important to the monitoring process. They help identify when progress is slow and alternative strategies might be required to achieve the actions.

Those responsible for carrying out actions, should be encouraged to keep records of action taken, progress made and responses from other stakeholders. This is especially helpful in following up stakeholders who fail to respond to citizen demands!

It is important to report back regularly on progress in achieving the action plan with the various stakeholders, especially those involved in the Community Gathering and users and service providers of the public service.

### **Celebrate achievement of action plans**

Celebrate success! When actions are achieved, and services are improved, celebrate the achievement. Citizens should take the lead in sharing their success with the broader community, especially the users and providers of the public service. Events could be planned to share the action taken and what has been achieved. These could be formal or informal, whatever the citizens think most appropriate to their local situation.

### **Contributors to doing the action plan**

The remaining part of this Section describes processes or activities that can support the achievement of the Action Plan. These are not essential but can prove very helpful in achieving the Action Plans. Though citizens are responsible for achieving the Action Plan, World Vision and/or its partners can provide encouragement and backup support as required. These following sections describe how World Vision and its partners can provide encouragement and facilitate the building of networks and coalitions, advocacy and influence together with monitoring and support.

#### **OUTCOME:**

1. Strategy to achieve action plan decided
2. Mobilise stakeholders
3. Carry out plans

## Improving services and influencing policy **BUILDING NETWORKS AND COALITIONS** 6.3

### **SUMMARY:**

1. Identify potential organisations, agencies or groups to build networks or coalitions to support achievement of action plans
2. Build actions together



A network describes a number of individuals and/or different groups that come together to share information.

A coalition describes an alliance among individuals and groups, where they cooperate in joint action, each in their own self-interest. The alliance can be temporary and only formed because it helps each party!

### **Continual building of networks and coalitions**

An important part of Citizen Voice and Action is the building of networks and coalitions. During part of the first stage of Citizen Voice and Action, enabling citizen engagement, building networks and coalitions was an important step (Section 4.5).

This 'building' process continues through the whole process, and is especially important as citizens seek improved services and policy change.

### **Strengthening citizens' voices**

Those responsible for carrying out the action plan will often need to build support around their actions. Networks and coalitions can be very useful in building this support.

Through the establishment of networks and coalitions, citizens' voices are strengthened as they combine with others. They may be strengthened through sheer volume, becoming a critical mass of citizens demanding action, or through strategic alliances with a powerful group or organisation, which has influence towards power holders. Citizens become powerful when they build networks and coalitions in both these areas!

Networks and coalitions also help citizens influence decisions beyond the local level. This is critical, as this is often where decisions that affect basic public services are made.

Networks and coalitions connect citizens within the local level as well as with other citizen groups at (governance) levels beyond the community, such as state and national levels.



Networks and coalitions can be built both within (internally) and outside (externally) of the community.

### **Internal networks and coalitions**

Examples of networks formed within community include:

- new groups being formed (individuals coming together to share information), such as the government development officer meeting with the school management committee to share government programs.
- existing groups working together, such as health management committees working with school management committees to advocate to government for reforms to the delivery of services.

### **External networks and coalitions**

In order to influence changes in service delivery and policy, it is useful for citizens and citizen groups to network and form coalitions with groups outside of their communities as well.

Citizen Voice and Action becomes strengthened as citizens connect with broader social movements beyond their community enabling them to make broader demands for action. There are many social movements existing within countries that citizens can connect to, such as coalitions around child well-being and social accountability.

Social movements can also be formed at district or regional level. For example all school management committees within a whole district could agree to work together to influence policy change.

Networks and coalitions are useful to influence power holders and duty bearers. There is power and strength in influencing change when the people are more organised, work together effectively and the mobilised population is too large to ignore. 😊

### **OUTCOME:**

I. Networks and coalitions formed to support action plans, improve service and influence policy

## Improving services and influencing policy **ADVOCATE AND INFLUENCE**

6.4

### **SUMMARY:**

1. Identify duty bearers and power holders
2. Build plan of action to advocate and influence
3. Carry out



### **1. Duty bearers and power holders**

Improving services and influencing policy often requires the action of duty bearers and power holders, most often the government. Though citizens may identify the need for action, it is rarely within their power to carry this out. They depend on the responsiveness of the government to act in order to achieve desired changes.

### **Citizen Voice and Action**

Citizens can use their individual and collective voices to advocate to duty bearers and power holders and influence change through these stakeholders. It is through their persistent demand for change, as expressed through their voice and action, that duty bearers and power holders listen and respond. Of course a response is not always immediate, and often there may be no response at all. But in many circumstances citizen voice and action has resulted in major changes within our world and individual countries.

Section 2.1 describes advocacy in more detail.

### **2. Strategic Action**

Advocacy and influence can often be long term with little initial response by duty bearers and power holders. Advocacy and influence require stamina and commitment to achieve results.

It took 56 years for the British based Anti-slavery Campaign to end slavery!  
Persistence pays off!

It is important to identify the right people to target as part of your actions. It may be useful to conduct exercises to understand power, in order to identify the right targets for advocacy and influence. Recognize that you may not need to target the most powerful; sometimes it is easier to advocate first to another power holder, changing their views, so they can then advocate on your behalf. This is why mapping power holders and influence makers around the change that

you want to happen, can be so important. (See Section 2.7 for more information on understanding power).

It is sometimes easiest and best to start by advocating to power holders or duty bearers who are closest to the community level. Let them advocate on your behalf to influence others who make the decisions. For example, advocate to your local MP who can then advocate at the national level for changes to the public policy.

Building networks and coalitions can provide important strategic advances in advocating and influencing for change. There is power and strength in influencing change when the people are more organised, working together and the mobilised population is too large to ignore. 😊

### **Continued community action**

It is often difficult to maintain community energy and commitment for long-term campaigns, especially when the government or power holders are unresponsive. It will be important for active citizens to continue to motivate others to maintain the pressure for change. Continued citizen education will be important as part of this process. Creating opportunities for citizen mobilization beyond the community gatherings will also be important as part of the advocacy and influence campaign. Opportunities for citizen mobilization and action will depend on the local situation but may include meetings, rallies, marches, petitions, raising the issue in the media or visits to local MPs and other influential stakeholders in the community.

### **Celebrate success**

We can't stress this enough. When actions are achieved, and services are improved, celebrate the achievement! Share the success with everyone that made it happen. Acknowledge and celebrate the action of the duty bearers or power holders that made the change happen. Ensure that the broader community are aware of their actions. Celebrate the participation and commitment of ordinary citizens. Encourage continued active and empowered citizenship and collaboration between stakeholders for continued change and improvement.

### **OUTCOME:**

1. Duty bearers and power holders respond to citizen voice to improve services and influence policy.

## Improving services and influencing policy **MONITORING AND SUPPORT**

6.5

### **SUMMARY:**

1. Monitor progress of achieving action plan and report back to stakeholders
2. Identify support as required to achieve action plan
3. Provide support to achieve action plans
4. Celebrate success



### **1. Monitoring progress**

Monitoring and support of community members and groups is necessary in order to achieve the action plans to make sure that services are improved and policy influenced.

Creating long term sustainable change is not easy. It is expected that power holders and duty bearers will be responsive to the voice of citizens. Often they respond, but this is not always the case.

Monitoring and support serves a number of purposes:

- to motivate those carrying out the actions
- to see that planned actions are happening
- to see that the strategies used are effective and helping to achieve the planned action
- to enable problem solving if obstacles prevent the actions from being achieved
- to report back progress to the community and users of the service.

Monitoring will encourage the use of regular updates, report backs and feedback loops. All of these are useful to maintain citizen interest and commitment, which is often hard to sustain.

Perseverance to achieve long term, sustainable change is often difficult to maintain. Starting with 'quick wins' – changes that happen easily to improve the services, is a good way to encourage initial citizen action and to build momentum for longer-term action.

Documenting actions taken and progress made are very important to the monitoring and support process. Those responsible for carrying out the actions, should be encouraged to keep a record of what they are doing and the responses and results of their action.

Regular reporting back of progress encourages other stakeholders, participants and the general community.

## 2. Trouble shooting, flexibility and responsiveness

Monitoring activities helps those involved to know whether their activities are working! If plans are not being achieved, monitoring helps identify the need for alternative actions. As part of the process, trouble shooting and problem solving are often needed as citizens come up against obstacles to achieve the change they desire. Alternative strategies or actions, connecting with other groups as part of networks or coalitions; are examples of ways to achieve the change required. Flexibility and responsiveness to the local situation are important qualities to have for all citizens involved.

## 3. Ongoing support

It is not only WV staff and partners who can provide monitoring and support. Other community members should be encouraged to provide ongoing monitoring and support to their fellow community members. CBOs and other groups within the community should be held responsible to provide monitoring and support.

## 4. Celebrate success

There is a saying that ‘success breeds success’. Sharing and celebrating achievements with the broader community and other stakeholders is really helpful to continue to motivate citizen action to improve other services and influence policy.

### **OUTCOME:**

I. Progress in achieving action plan monitored, support identified and provided.

## Introduction

We know that improving services and influencing policy often requires efforts beyond the local level. Those with the power and authority to make and influence decisions for positive change often hold positions which are above the local level where the service is provided.

Moving action from local to national level is a core part of the third phase of Citizen Voice and Action, *Improving Services and Influencing Policy*, and is an essential part of creating positive change. Because it goes beyond local community-led activities, linking local action to national level action is included here as a separate section.

Linking local action to regional actions (district, provincial or municipal) and with national level efforts is an emerging and essential part of Citizen Voice and Action. Promoting national level advocacy and influence are an essential part to improving services and influencing long term policy. Linking these efforts to community-based action can be very powerful.

The core elements of Citizen Voice and Action - *information, voice, dialogue and accountability* – all have considerable potential to be strengthened further through linking local level action to national action.

**Information:** for information from the community to be shared with those in power and for those in power to likewise provide information back to the community, in an open and transparent manner.

**Dialogue:** to increase the potential for dialogue between the various stakeholders to the public service, and to increase mutual understanding.

**Voice:** to enable the voice of ordinary citizens to reach and be heard by those with power and influence to make positive change.

**Accountability:** to strengthen the accountability of those responsible for public services to the users of the services.

## Action plans and complementary action

Linking local level action to higher level action is often necessary to make sure action plans can be fulfilled. An action plan might include petitioning the District Education Officer for extra teachers. This may involve writing a letter which will be taken in person by a delegation visit to their office. The delegates can meet with the Officer to share their concerns and request for actions. Efforts at the national level, for example to meet with the Minister for Education, are often beyond the reach and capacity of community members. Initially this might be done on behalf of the community by World Vision staff and their partners, while the capacity of the community is built so they can take on these activities themselves in the long term.

Action taken at higher levels is often complementary to action plans and initiatives at the local level. The issues raised at a national level are also usually broader than an issue raised in any one Community Gathering site. Since national issues are usually broader, they are likely to be relevant to a number of local areas.

For example, a Community Gathering may have raised the issue of poor in-service training. This may be an issue that is raised in many local sites. A partner organisation, together with World Vision may choose to take this issue to the Ministry of Education as a national advocacy issue, but their case will be strengthened because they can highlight their concerns by connecting them to local level voices.

### Linking local to national and types of action

The various types of advocacy described in Section 2.1 (who leads the advocacy) are relevant when linking local actions to national level action.

The types of advocacy described included advocacy ‘by’, ‘with’ and ‘for’.

Advocacy ‘ <b>for</b> ’ the poor: representative	Advocacy ‘ <b>with</b> ’ the poor: accompanying	Advocacy ‘ <b>by</b> ’ the poor: transformational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- speaking on behalf of the poor</li> <li>- <b>beneficiaries</b> are passive</li> <li>- little to no participation</li> <li>- power is obtained for them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- organizing the poor to speak for themselves</li> <li>- role is more <b>active</b>, but who takes the lead is still blurred</li> <li>- more active participation</li> <li>- power is obtained together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- facilitating and empowering the poor to initiate action themselves</li> <li>- <b>citizens participate</b> and take the lead</li> <li>- leadership of advocacy</li> <li>- power is obtained by citizens themselves</li> </ul>

Wherever possible, efforts should be made to enable citizens to lead their own advocacy at national level (*advocacy by*). But often this may not be possible. For example, the travel distances involved may be considerable, there may be language barriers, community members may lack the confidence and capacity to engage with senior officials, and in addition senior officials may be reluctant to engage directly with community members!

World Vision staff, together with its partners may engage in ‘*advocacy with*’ or ‘*advocacy for*’ as part of national level action and agendas. This may include the use of local community generated information which is then shared and exposed at the national level, raising the voices of community to a national level. This can be done in collaboration with others or individually.

Over time, efforts should be made to facilitate and empower ordinary citizens to initiate action themselves.

Local to national level  
action

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

7.2

Pilot programs which have used Citizen Voice and Action have highlighted the importance of local contributors to effective advocacy. Remember to encourage good use of these contacts as efforts are made to link local to national level action.

Other effective elements for successful national advocacy work include:

- Partnerships, collaboration, and networking – effective networking
- Research and information – providing clear, accurate and well researched evidence
- Civic education – producing information and resources that can educate and encourage greater public awareness
- Policy influence – providing opportunities for effective dialogue with policy makers
- Promotion of good governance – citizen empowerment and participation
- Capacity development – recognition and use of local resources and ongoing support
- Focused advocacy – making sure that efforts are appropriate and well targeted.





**Introduction**

It is very important to remember that national level action depends on what comes out of local level initiatives. It should be led by citizens and should complement their desire for change.

The role of World Vision and its partners is to support citizens in fulfilling their desired change (as expressed through the action plan). Because of this, it is hard to prescribe action for World Vision and its partners. It is not possible to provide step-by-step guidance. We simply know that we need to be flexible and responsive since each situation is different and unique.

**Appropriate and context specific**

Advocacy efforts and action should be specific and appropriate to the local situation. For example, marches are regularly held in Brazil, raising local issues at a higher level by targeting the municipal government responsible for providing public services. Marches in other situations might not be appropriate and instead formal or informal meetings with government officials, writing letters and 'backroom' advocacy (using personal contacts to gain influence) are all useful approaches that might be more appropriate.

**Focused advocacy**

We highlighted the need for focused advocacy in Section 7.2. This can not be over emphasized. It is vital to know exactly what your issue is, what you are asking for, and how you will know that it has been achieved. These questions are very important. Consider carefully imaginative ways to express or frame your advocacy intervention linking local to national level advocacy.

Understanding power and context are also essential as part of focused advocacy. Knowing who are the targets of your action, is essential to reaching successful outcomes. Refer to Section 2.7 for details and resources to conduct an analysis of this.

It is useful for a strategy to be developed which will inform all the actions. Often the results will only be reached in the long-term. It is also useful to plan short-term and medium plans and goals to provide encouragement along the way.

Some simple questions might include:

- **what** are we trying to achieve (this could be in either the short or long-term. However, make the requested long-term change clear first, and then examine if the short-term changes we seek will actually build towards it)?
- **who** are the main social actors that we are trying to influence?
- **how** will we go about this (given our existing activities and the strengths of ourselves, partners and other agents)?¹⁶

¹⁶ Ros David cited in Chapman & Wameyo 2001 Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy, A Scoping Study,

It is important to build on what you already have. This might be an educated and mobilised mass of citizens ready to act. It might be an existing network or coalition that can be encouraged to take on the issue on behalf of the citizens. Use all opportunities as the situation unfolds.

### **Initiatives**

This section includes ideas which provide opportunities to for link local to national level action. This is not a complete list but just provides some ideas:

These include:

- policy engagement
- data analysis, preparation and dissemination of reports
- networking and coalitions
- complimentary activities, such as the use of media.

These can all be used as complimentary strategies to *improve services and influence policy*.

Tactics used to carry out national level advocacy campaigns can be employed. But always remember the benefits of using the information generated by communities through the Community Gathering.

You may also be able to use information gathered earlier in the process, such as the country context assessment carried out in *Organisation and Staff Preparation*

### **Policy engagement**

Influencing policy requires strategic and detailed input. Policy does not change easily. In order to influence policy a detailed appreciation of how policy is made in the first place needs to be gained. Using information gained through the *Country Context Assessment* (Section 3.4) will be an important start in understanding the opportunities and constraints in influencing policy. Work our first with the community exactly what they want to see changed. This will then guide decisions about what action is needed, how you do it, and who needs to be targeted and approached.

Understanding and working within the current system and structures will be necessary when attempting to influence policy. You will need to ask some important questions to determine the value of taking particular actions. Some questions are noted in the text box on the next page.

Wherever appropriate, citizens themselves should be encouraged to participate. However, this is not always realistic and appropriate, particularly when engaging with policy makers. Sometimes this can be done by representative bodies that engage. Often it will be World Vision, alone or with its partners, or as part of coalitions, that take on this responsibility.

The use of other initiatives already noted in this Section will be important supports for policy engagement. The preparation of reports, evidence and accurate data to support your

argument will be essential. Sympathetic media coverage, which raises your agenda into an issue of national importance, will be even better!

### **Assessing entry points: questions about policy engagement**

Although a key advocacy goal is to create opportunities for citizen's groups to directly engage in policy processes, their engagement does not always result in changed policy decisions. It is easy to believe that access to policy makers will translate into influence, but in practice this is rarely true. Policy makers sometimes create opportunities to educate citizens about the choices they have made to appear consultative and deflect public criticism. But actually they may have no intention of changing their agendas! For this reason, many activists or development practitioners worry about being 'co-opted' by policy engagement. Some NGOs that work closely with governments are criticised for losing their independence and connection with people at the grassroots, particularly if working with government starts to consume all their energy and time.

Deciding when and how to engage with policy processes is not straightforward or simple. Many different factors have to be considered and weighed against each other. Once the decision is made to engage, it must be reassessed continuously as the process unfolds. A plan to engage should include the option to disengage if the political costs start to outweigh the benefits. Among the many questions to explore and revisit periodically are:

- Is the policy space 'created' or 'invited'? If you come to the decision making table as a result of political pressure generated by your efforts – a created space – you may be in a stronger position to influence policy choices. In contrast, when policy makers invite citizens' groups into the policy process, creating meaningful opportunity for change will often involve demonstrating your power once you get there, which many groups find very difficult.
- What are the opportunity costs of engagement? How much time and resources will the meetings, research and other activities consume? What alternative activities could have benefitted from that time and resources?
- Are you making, or likely to make, a real impact on policy priorities and choices? As groups involved in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers have seen, influencing a policy document does not necessarily have a real impact on policy. It may be the first step in a long process of change, or it may be a waste of time.
- Can the policy opportunity be used to educate people about their rights and the political process, and to build your constituency for the long-term? Although you may not have a real impact on policy, the opportunity to engage may stimulate dialogue and give your organising efforts increased focus, public visibility and credibility. However, people often expect something more concrete from the process than learning and organising, and so can become disillusioned.
- Will the policy opportunity translate into real change on the ground? If the opportunity to engage leads to new programmes, new opportunities and new resources, then the

risks of engaging will certainly be worthwhile.

While these questions can help you to think more deeply about the benefits and risks of engagement, there is no substitute for strategic, critical thinking. As groups engage with power, they should be vigilant and may need to remind themselves to whom they are ultimately accountable in order to make sure the process is worthwhile.

From Action Aid International (2005). *Critical webs of power and change: Resource pack for planning, reflection and learning in people-centred advocacy*  
[Shortened from Lisa VeneKlasen with Valerie Miller 2002 page 208]

### **Data analysis, preparation and dissemination of reports**

The data analysis and presentation that is done at the time of the community gathering itself is called *primary data analysis/presentation*. Other forms of analysis that will be done later by the WV National Office and or its Partners for advocacy purposes, is called *secondary data analysis/presentation*. This may include written papers, memos to politicians, newspaper and media articles.

Secondary data analysis and presentation requires systematic data collection during the Community Gatherings using the recording sheets. This data is then transferred into the Citizen Voice and Action database and stored and combined with other data for analysis. Data collected from Community Gatherings can be analysed and presented in several ways: the choice depends to a large extent on the local situation. What is presented here are a few examples of the kinds of secondary analysis that can be done. The facilitating team, together with World Vision staff and its partners needs to decide which one will be most useful and which most clearly shows the kind of data that has been collected. Several visual aids can be used which will present the data in a simple and clear manner.

- Ranking of facilities based on performance
- Tracking the performance of facilities/services over time
- Analysis of discrepancies between standards and actuals (variance analysis)
- Comparison of performance across regions

Of course the data analysis is only one part of the report writing. You will need to combine the data analysis with a narrative that holds the attention of the audience and argues a strong case for action and change.

Some critical elements in writing the report include:

- Knowing who your audience is and understanding what will motivate them into action
- Knowing the expectations of the audience in terms of their understanding of valid and credible data. Many government departments will not view a report (and its argument for change) as credible without a robust and comprehensive sample size.
- Including stories and real voices from the community that provide reality and a personal connection.

## Networking and coalitions

We have seen the importance of networks and coalitions in all stages of the Citizen Voice and Action approach, especially as we start to *'Enable Citizens to Engage'* and in *'Improving Services and Influencing Policy'*. Working with networks and coalitions is essential as local level action is linked to higher level action, especially at national level.

There is potential for local groups to connect with associations, networks or coalitions at a regional or national level. This will strengthen their voice, their action and capacity to influence policy. Wherever possible World Vision and its partners should seek to connect local groups with existing bodies. If you find they don't exist, why not create them! As Citizen Voice and Action expands to more communities, there is potential for empowered and citizens to work together as mobilised citizens, taking local issues themselves to the national level through their own networks and coalitions.

At the national level, World Vision and or its partners can also gain strength from joining with others in networks and coalitions focusing on the national agenda. Networks and coalitions can be formed at many levels, linking different levels as well as multiple stakeholders.

## Complimentary activities

With all of the above initiatives to link local to national level action, citizens' voice and action can be strengthened through actions which compliment these initiatives. These include, but of course are not limited to:

- use of the media – extremely powerful in strengthening citizens' voices and gaining wider attention
- the mobilisation and use of citizens in public ways – such as handing over the report with a mass of people and media coverage, peaceful marches or demonstrations
- symbolic actions.

Be creative! Use anything to impress on power holders and influence makers that this call for action comes from an empowered and active citizenary who are demanding change – ***improved services and policy change.***

## **ANNEX I      MONITORING STANDARDS RECORDING SHEET**

<b>Date of Session:</b>	/ /	<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Facility Name:</b>		<b>Facility Type:</b>	
<b>Number of Males/Females/Total:</b>	/ /		
<b>Facilitators:</b>	1.	2.	3.
<b>Recorded by / Date:</b>	/	<b>Start time:</b>	<b>End time:</b>
<b>Remarks/Comments:</b> (use extra sheet if needed)			

### **MONITORING STANDARDS:**

TYPE OF INPUT	STANDARD	ACTUAL	COMMENTS






TYPE OF INPUT	STANDARD	ACTUAL	COMMENTS

## **ANNEX II      SCORE CARD RECORDING SHEET**






<b>Date of Session:</b>	/      /	<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Facility Name:</b>	/	<b>Facility Type:</b>	
<b>Number of Males/Females/Total:</b>	/      /		
<b>Facilitators:</b>	1.	2.	3.
<b>Recorded by / Date:</b>	/	<b>Start time:</b>	<b>End time:</b>
<b>Remarks/Comments:</b> (use extra sheet if needed)			






### **SCORE CARD:**

Is the Vote Gender-Disaggregated?: Yes ☐ No ☐ (If No, record under “M” columns)

Performance Measures from Group	Score decided by Group.										
	(draw)										
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F



Performance Measures from Group	Score decided by Group.										
	(draw)	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F

Performance Measures Given	Score decided by Group.										
	(draw)	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F

**COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS** (Use reverse side if required)

* Align comments and proposals with performance measures

COMMENTS	PROPOSALS

## **ANNEX III INTERFACE MEETING ACTION PLAN RECORDING SHEET**

<b>Date of Session:</b>	/ /	<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Facility Name:</b>	/	<b>Facility Type:</b>	
<b>Number of Males/Females/Total:</b>	/ /		
<b>Facilitators:</b>	1.	2.	3.
<b>Recorded by / Date:</b>	/	<b>Start time:</b>	<b>End time:</b>
<b>Remarks/Comments:</b> (use extra sheet if needed)			

### **INTERFACE MEETING ACTION PLAN:**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO WILL DO THIS</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>	<b>RESOURCES / SUB ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>WHO MONITORS</b>

ACTION	WHO WILL DO THIS	BY WHEN	RESOURCES / SUB ACTIVITIES	WHO MONITORS