

**Tech Driven Social Accountability for Results Project: Social Accountability Clearing Platform,
22nd July, 2016**

Introduction



ICTs can create a cost effective interface to engage multiple stakeholders, particularly citizens and duty bearers for greater accountability and effective public service delivery. These tools remove spatial constraints to citizens' participation in governance and come at little cost to them. The Penplusbytes' OSIWA funded "Tech

Driven Social Accountability for Results" project, designed to equip citizens with usable information, methods, online and mobile based platforms as well as face-to-face interventions would enable citizens in the beneficiary districts to monitor relevant policies and actively engage duty-bearers to demand for better service delivery.

On 22nd July, 2016, Penplusbytes organized a *Social Accountability Clearing Platform (SACP)* that brought together relevant civil society organizations and state actors. They included SEND-Ghana, Centre for Democratic Development, IMANI-Ghana, STAR-Ghana, the Institute Local Government Service, the World Health Organization, SNV, Africa Centre for Energy Policy, Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, Ghana Integrity Initiative, and the media, among others, to deliberate on the latest trends in using ICTs in the social accountability space.

Among other things, the engagement created avenue for knowledge sharing for the successful execution of the project; set the tone for the creation of a *community of practice* around social accountability for increased advocacy for better service delivery; identified key priority areas for intervention; and documented lessons on social accountability in Ghana.

Welcome: Executive Director of Penplusbytes, Mr Kwami Ahiabenu II



For **Penplusbytes**, an important area of focus is the use of technology in governance. The aim is to allow citizens to participate in the governance process and hold government actors to account. Social accountability is viewed as a process and it is imperative to bring everybody on board. The reason for the SACP is to share ideas, complement efforts but not to duplicate them. The big issue about democracy is for the results to be manifested in people's day-to-day lives. Democracy should

conserve the country for the citizens. The journey must mean something, reflect in the lives of the people and guarantee them a better future.



The facilitator, Dr Esther Ofei-Aboagye, former Director of the Institute for Local Government Studies, taking participants through the aims and objectives of the event

State of Play: Cosmos Kwame Akorli, Programme Manager, Governance & Technology



Ghana's transition to democracy in 1992 was met with excitement. Today, however, many Ghanaians are dissatisfied with growing inequality and lack of transparency and accountability in public life. This makes social accountability, which is about the actions that citizens, communities, media and civil society can use to monitor and hold public officials to account very critical for effective and responsive public service delivery.

ICTs in Social Accountability: Jerry Sam Jerry Sam, Director of Programmes @Penplusbytes

ICT is now a key tool for development and should be used by Ministries, Departments and Agencies. They



must widely be applied in all aspects of development, including social accountability. The advent of online, Mobile, SMS, Interactive Voice Response, Mobile app, and social media platforms must complement the existing social approaches. This would give impetus for increased citizens' participation in the development process at all levels. Under the

“Tech Driven Social Accountability for Results”, the ICTs would be used to enhance citizens' participation and demand for accountability, pro-actively and in real time.

Case Study: Global Partnership for Social Accountability, George Osei-Bimpeh, Country Director, SEND-Ghana



A key thrust for any social accountability initiative is to start with policy sensitization in order to promote citizens' understanding on policy issues and equipping them with monitoring tools for the budget. Such initiatives must help the implementing entity to deliver in ways that meet citizens' expectations. Social accountability actions must therefore complement government's ongoing efforts – what are the

existing gaps in government's systems?

CDD-Ghana Experience with Social Accountability: Dr. Franklin Oduro Deputy Director & Head of Research and Programs

An entry point for social accountability comes from a thematic angle. At CDD-Ghana, all interventions



have aimed at creating spaces for participation and engagement from the demand and supply sides. Over the years, the organization has learnt that knowledge and understanding on the part of both citizens and duty-bearers cannot be assumed as there are still issues arising from lack of information sharing, channels of engagement, availability of feedback mechanisms and citizens' awareness of these.

IMANI-Ghana's Town-Down Approach to Social Accountability, Mr Brian Dzansi



IMANI Ghana's approach to social accountability relies on a top-down mechanism which draws on information, evidence, public support, advocacy and citizens' mobilization for change. Under this approach, information is analysed and simplified for citizens' use for effective engagement with public officials.