



MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY INITIATIVE: PROMOTING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEMAND FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

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Good governance is an underlying condition for the formulation of effective and efficient public policies, programs, and services. It implies a social contract and adherence to rules and laws that enable improved interaction between government and constituents on transparency, accountability, and participation. Good governance is equitable and inclusive, responsive and consensus-oriented.

Governance reforms rank high on the development agenda of many MENA countries, particularly in regard to public service delivery. This has supply-side implications for service providers, and demand-side implications for service users. However, experience to-date suggests that citizen participation in public programs or services is underdeveloped in many countries of the region due to: (a) limited knowledge about the benefits and mechanisms of citizen participation; and, (b) over-centralized political and economic systems that hamper citizens and other non-state actors in holding governments accountable.

Social Accountability: As part of the Bank's Governance and Anti-Corruption (GAC) work, Social Accountability, a key component of the demand side of good governance, encompasses

initiatives that focus on citizens as the ultimate stakeholders and strengthens the Bank's traditional work on the supply-side of governance. The latter mainly focuses on public sector issues.

Social accountability approaches aim to improve the performance of public services, user satisfaction, and value for money. This can be done through analytical work, interventions, sensitization efforts, increased citizen consultations, and participation by and capacity building for NGOs, the media, local communities, and the private sector.

The LSDI Pilot Program in MENA: The MENA Local Service Delivery Initiative (LSDI) looks at specific aspects of the demand-side of governance: enhancing the performance of public services in the education sector in Morocco and Egypt, the water sector in Yemen and the primary health sector in Egypt.

This note highlights lessons learned thus far from the four LSDI pilot programs outlined below:

A. Morocco: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation for Education Service Improvement: The Morocco pilot was initiated in early 2010 to improve the performance of rural primary schools within the framework of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH)². The pilot introduced a community scorecard methodology in six primary schools to promote partnership between state agencies, school staff and communities in monitoring school performance.

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² The INDH is the largest Community Driven Development (CDD) operation in the region. For more see: www.indh.gov.ma

Results of pilot activities include:

- Improved prospects for student reading and comprehension skills;
- Increased enrollment and retention rates;
- Identification and resource mobilization for pre-school education in three new schools;
- Improved community ownership, social solidarity and collective action in all target areas through regular community groups’ meetings and maintenance of the schools (e.g., improved physical appearance of four of six target schools, refurbished school libraries).

Success of the Morocco pilot can be explained by four interrelated factors:



B. Yemen: Social Accountability for Service Improvement in the Water Sector: The pilot aims to enhance the performance of the Sana’a Local Corporation (water utility) and increase the satisfaction of its customers.

While the pilot cannot address Yemen’s structural water crisis, it aims to develop coping mechanisms for dealing with:

- Unpredictable water availability;
- Weak accountability relationship between utilities and customers (e.g. customers don’t pay for low quality services, no customer service, illegal connections).

The initiative is jointly implemented by the Government of Yemen, GTZ, the Bank, and the Water Sector Support project (WSSP).

Results of pilot activities include:

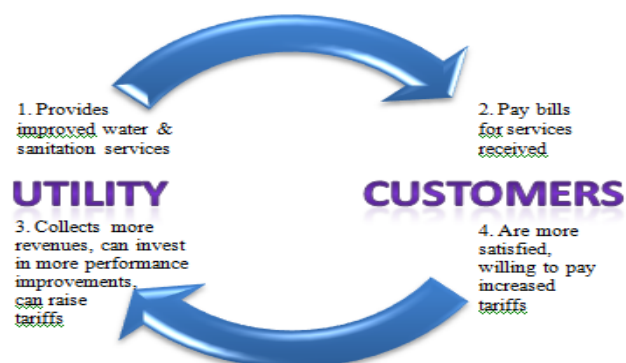
- Communication and outreach gaps of the utility have been assessed and a Communication Strategy has been developed for utility staff and for customers, which is currently being rolled-out. As a result, water distribution schedules are now aired daily on Sana'a Radio, new water tariffs are printed on utility bills, utility information leaflets are distributed to the 86,000 utility customers, and the increase in utility responsiveness to customer complaints has resulted in a 50% reduction in complaints.
- Physical investments include the installation of water filters in schools to raise awareness of water saving and safety; and air-release valves and pressurized water-meters to enhance network efficiency and allow for consumption-based billing.

A customer satisfaction survey will be conducted to solicit feedback and suggestions regarding utility performance, communication and outreach. It will use the 2009 Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA) as baseline.

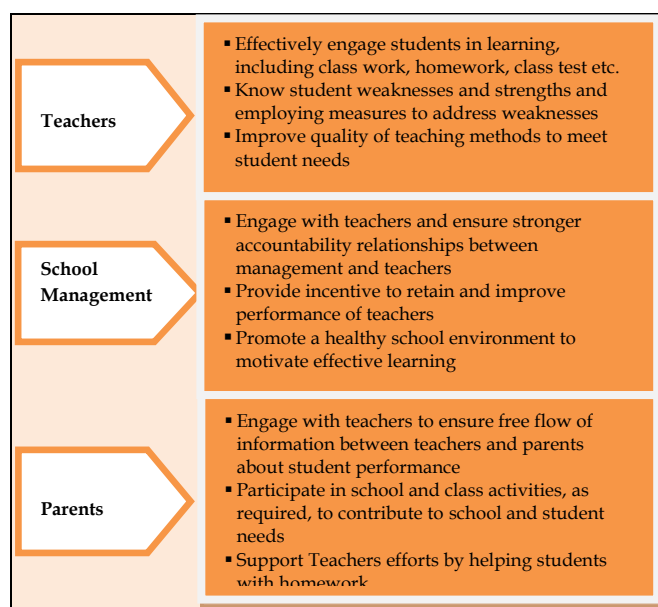
Scale-up options are currently under considerations by WSSP for other cities.

Other Expected Outcomes:

- Improved utility performance and revenues
- Improved customer satisfaction and bill payment.



A. Egypt: Community Scorecard to Improve Quality Performance of Schools: Widening inequalities between rich and poor in access to quality education has prompted the Ministry of Education to lead a broad-based decentralization effort in the country. The Community Scorecard (CSC) to Improve Quality Performance of Basic³ Schools is an experiment to test whether community-based monitoring can influence school management quality in primary school. The intervention is based on the hypothesis that improving the accountability of teachers positively impacts student performance. Three key stakeholders contribute to the accountability equation in the education sector:



Results of pilot activities include:

- Community scorecards are being implemented in 100 primary schools (50 control, 50 treatment) in all districts (seven) of the Ismailia Governorate to: (a) improve effectiveness of students’ academic learning; and, (b) promote greater accountability of school management. An impact evaluation, to be conducted over the coming months, will assess the degree to which community participation influences student academic

³ In Egypt, “basic” schools refer to primary schools.

learning and accountability of school management.

- The pilot’s launch phase is completed, and included one orientation workshop, several training of trainers in English, step-down training of social workers and facilitators in Arabic. Focus group discussions at school level led to the development of action plans that are now under implementation.
- So far, the pilot has shown that: (i) schools with participatory School Improvement Plans (SIPs) are more likely to achieve their targets; (ii) students perform better at school if parents have information about their children’s learning outcomes; (iii) schools with active participation of the Board of Trustees (BOTs) are better managed; (iv) addressing school management issues is paramount to improving students’ academic learning outcomes.

Other Expected Outcomes:

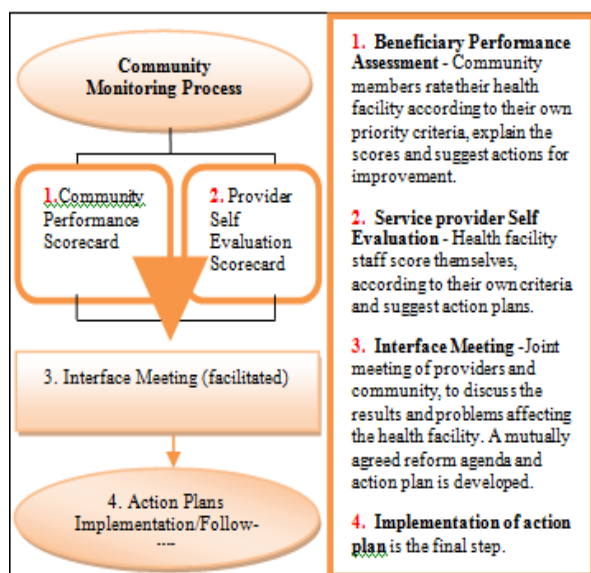
- Improvement in academic performance of 3,000 students through collective monitoring of target students in the impact evaluation test.
- Improved responsibility, transparency and accountability of school management (50 schools, 300 teachers).
- Expanded capacity and knowledge of in-country stakeholders on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation tools for improved service performance.

B. Egypt: Community Monitoring Process for Improved Quality and Utilization of Primary Health Care in Alexandria and Menoufia: This pilot builds on the findings of a study on the Egypt Health Sector Reform Project (1997-2008), which revealed that despite significant investments in infrastructure and quality assurance, health care services are affected by low utilization levels, caused - among others -by poor accountability of providers to patients and limited knowledge of health care services benefits.

The pilot aims at improving the quality of service delivery and the level of user satisfaction through: (i) improved citizen and community monitoring

of health services; and, (ii) improved user-provider relations through systematic user feedback.

The main activities of the pilot include:



LSDI Lessons Learned: The lessons learned from LSDI so far include:

- Identifying correct entry points for good governance and accountability work, that strengthen the social contract between citizens and government, is critical. Improved *local service delivery* has proven to be an effective one.
- Sound understanding of the socio-economic, institutional and political context is decisive.
- Promotion of social accountability must be strategic, context-specific, flexible, and involve strong stakeholder partnerships.
- Working in partnership with a *range* of government and non-state actors (e.g., central and sub-national government, civil society, donors) helps to leverage broad-based support for LSDI programs.
- Effective capacity building and awareness raising programs represent a key driving force for an effective DFGG agenda in MENA.

LSDI Challenges:

- Limited capacity and knowledge of social accountability approaches in the pilot

countries contributed to high transaction costs for capacity building (methods and tools) for implementing agencies government staff, CSOs and community members.

- Lack of local champions for social accountability approaches in the pilot countries required significant resources to sensitize and mobilize stakeholders and affected the timely implementation of the LSDI pilots.
- Government sensitivity to social accountability remains the most visible challenge to any demand-side of governance work in the region, but there is momentum for change.
- Mainstreaming social accountability approaches into operational work requires innovative approaches, flexible timelines, and concerted stakeholder efforts.

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