THE POTENTIAL OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR IMPROVING ACCESS TO QUALITY FP/RH SERVICES

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Presentation at the 15th General Membership Meeting of the RHSC

October 24th, 2014
What is social accountability?

Efforts of citizens and civil society to scrutinize and hold duty bearers (politicians, government officials and service providers) to account for providing promised services, actions that most often take place at the sub-national or community level.
Types of SAcc Interventions

- Participatory Budgeting
- Public Expenditure Tracking
- Community Report Cards
- Citizen Report Cards
- Social Audits
- Citizen Charters
- Health Committees
- Information Sharing & Campaigns
- Complaint Mechanisms

Courtesy of Population Foundation of India
Why Focus on Accountability?

• Accountability is an essential element to ensuring aid effectiveness

• Accountability has become increasingly important in the FP/RH field

• SAcc holds great promise for improving FP/RH services, but significant evidence gaps remain
Social Accountability: What are the Lessons for Improving FP/RH Programs?
Review of SAcc in FP/RH programs

• Builds on a history of community involvement

• Limited literature specific to FP/RH (16 case studies)

• Evidence on effectiveness and impact has yet to be adequately demonstrated
Promising evidence on effectiveness and impact of FP/RH SAcc intervention—Tanzania

- By tracking policy implementation, staffing patterns at 24 intervention facilities increased by 33% after 4 months*

Experts Consensus Points

• SAcc interventions are more than just applying tools, they are complex political processes

• Social accountability models must be adapted to reflect FP/RH issues

• More realistic expectations are needed on the outcomes SAcc interventions can achieve within limited timeframes

• There is a need to identify and measure minimum conditions required for successful SAcc interventions
What is Unique about SAcc for FP/RH?

• Much Potential
  – Applies to specific FP/RH issues
  – Operationalize rights based approaches

• Reservations
  – Balancing private and public
  – Role of incentives for SAcc
Moving Forward: Issues for the FP/RH Community

• Specific knowledge gaps remain in understanding the applicability of SAcc to FP/RH

• A diversity of methodologies are necessary to best capture the varied outcomes of SAcc approaches

• There is a need for better documentation of existing programs
The Evidence Project is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of cooperative agreement no. AID-OAA-A-13-00087. The contents of this presentation are the sole responsibility of the Evidence Project and Population Council and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

The Evidence Project uses implementation science—the strategic generation, translation, and use of evidence—to strengthen and scale up family planning and reproductive health programs to reduce unintended pregnancies worldwide. The project is led by the Population Council in partnership with INDEPTH Network, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Management Sciences for Health, PATH, Population Reference Bureau, and a University Resource Network.

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