



# End line Report of COVID-19 and Youth Question in Africa Project Ethiopia

JULY, 2023



**CCRDA**  
Consortium of Christian Relief &  
Development Associations



Canada 

**End line Report  
Of  
COVID-19 and Youth Question in Africa Project**

**Ethiopia**

**Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa  
and  
Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association**

**July 2023  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	i
Acronyms .....	ii
<b>1. Background to the COYOQA Project .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Objective of the endline study .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1. General Objective .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2. Specific objectives .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Methods and Materials .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1.1. Study Design and Study Population .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1.2. Data collection methods .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1.3. Data processing and analysis .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.1.4. Techniques to enhance trustworthiness .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.2. Ethical Issue .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Findings of Qualitative study .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6. Recommendation .....</b>	<b>12</b>
List of References .....	14
Annex 3 Endline Survey Questionnaire -Qualitative .....	15

## Acronyms

CCRDA- Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association

COVISAF- COVID-19 Vertically Integrated Social Accountability and Advocacy Framework

COYOQA – COVID-19 and Youth Question in Africa

CSO – Civil Society Organization

EPHI - Ethiopian Public Health Institute

IGAD - Intergovernmental Authority on Development

OSSREA - Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa

## 1. Background to the COYOQA Project

The emergence of COVID-19, which has metamorphosed from a small outbreak to a global pandemic and a public health emergency of international concern, has resulted huge socio-economic impacts on poor countries like Ethiopia. Whilst epidemiologists and public health personnel are focused on the devastating health impacts, there is evidence to suggest that the widespread socio-economic and political impact of COVID-19 has adversely affected communities and economies especially among the young people.

Young people in Africa have significant challenges realizing their rights during this period of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are undergoing a lot of challenges such as climate change, state fragility, poor governance, economic and social inequalities and inequities, discriminatory social norms, human rights violations among others. Yet few countries offer opportunities for the youth to participate in political processes or in designing programs and policies that aim at addressing these issues. (1) Also over half of youth policies are not designed to meet the unique needs of young people. (2)

There is increased focus within the development community on governance and its role in achieving better service delivery. Social accountability mechanisms play a key role in improving governance, increasing development effectiveness and promoting empowerment and can be applied to a number of fields and issues. In this regard, young people, women and men aged 15 to 35 years, should be an integral part of social accountability in their countries. Meaningful participation of young people especially the marginalized would strengthen implementation, improve outcomes and fulfill the right of young people to participate in shaping and monitoring decisions that affect them.

However, the existence of many barriers such as persistent gender inequality, youth poverty, limited awareness of youths on policies related to youths, limited involvement of youths in the decision-making processes and in the livelihoods of their communities, limited participation of youths in volunteering programs especially for young women hinder youth's active participation in socio-economic, political and cultural life in Ethiopia. In addition, lack of financial, human and communication capacities constrain youth-led organizations in scaling up youth mobilization. (3)

It is against this background that the project was implemented to generate evidence for policies and actions.

**Project General Objective:**

The project sought to bridge the divide between excluded youth and their governments, and coordinate response using a data-driven, evidence-based approach. It was aimed at improving governance mechanisms by promoting transparency and accountability between communities and their governments.

The project was aimed at developing a COVID-19 Vertically Integrated Social Accountability and Advocacy Framework (COVISAF) to enable the documentation of reliable, contextually grounded local data analysis and rapid feedback to communities and authorities to inform policies and decision making for policy and practice solutions to mitigate the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 and prevent its re-emergence. It also had a plan to provide rapid support to on-going work, to innovate new ways of learning and sharing; and to enhance capacities to inform current and future policy and practice solutions that will strengthen the overall governance of the crisis and its aftermath.

**Project Specific Objectives: The project specific objectives include:**

1. To carry out a comprehensive gender analysis of the current social mobilization of youth in informing, co-designing and supporting COVID-19 pandemic emergency preparedness and response, capacity, key gaps and support needs among IGAD Member States (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda).
2. To build the capacity of male and female Youth Volunteers for Behaviour Change (YOV4BC) in emergency preparedness, response (disaster risk reduction and management) and building resilience to impacts of COVID-19 so that they are well informed, resourced and educated about COVID-19 and its prevention measures.

3. To partner with the youth to take action within their communities through developing and institutionalizing a standardized and harmonized COVID-19 Vertically Integrated Social Accountability and Advocacy Framework for monitoring the IGAD Regional Response Strategy (IRRS) for COVID-19 Pandemic in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.
4. To investigate and track gender differentiated sectoral socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on youth and their communities and document community perceptions and response strategies.
5. To facilitate meaningful policy engagement between male and female youth and policy makers through enhanced national, sub-national and regional knowledge sharing platforms.

### **Research questions**

1. What are the gender differences in the conditions, needs, participation, access to resources and development, control of assets and decision-making between male and female youth in regards to COVID-19 pandemic of the IGAD region?
2. How are the current COVID programmes engaging the youth in co-designing, implementation and evaluation?
3. What are the emerging youth needs in COVID-19 responses, specifically in the three IGAD Member States (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda)?
4. What are the gaps and knowledge bases of transparency, access to and demand for public information by young people on COVID-19 pandemic policies and programmes at national and local levels among IGAD Member States (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda)?
5. What innovative strategies can be used to develop, implement and institutionalize meaningful youth engagement in monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting

methodologies of the IGAD Regional Response Strategy (IRRS) for COVID-19 Pandemic?

6. How can such MLE measures be used to benefit young people at program, community, national and regional levels?
7. How can governments in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia support youth engagement in COVID-19 responses?
8. What strategies can be employed to facilitate meaningful policy engagement between male and female youth and policy makers?
9. How can we enhance national, sub-national and regional knowledge sharing platforms to improve understanding and ensure evidence-based lessons from COVID-19 social accountability are incorporated into policy implementation?

## **2. Objective of the end line study**

### **2.1. General Objective**

The objective of this end line study was to determine the impact of the implementation of COYOQA project on social accountability in light of context specific and meaningful youth engagement in COVID-19 preparedness, response, capacity, key gaps and support needs at the youth, program, and enabling environment level.

### **2.2. Specific objectives**

- Establish outcome level end line results for the COYOQA project
- Examine the current knowledge and practices of youths related to social accountability.
- Inform studies related to youth participation in social accountability
- To identify successful strategies that have contributed in strengthening social accountability



### 3. Methods and Materials

This end line survey employed a qualitative study approach from 09 June 2023 to 16 June 2023 to assess the outcome of the COYOQA project on youth engagement in social accountability related to COVID-19 response.

#### *3.1.1. Study Design and Study Population*

A qualitative study was employed among purposely selected key informants from different governmental and non-governmental institutions that have been addressed through the project interventions.

We have conducted 16 key informant in-depth interviews with respondents in Addis Ababa. From those organizations who were addressed through the project intervention, we included two youths - one who has received capacity building intervention under the project and another co-worker youth who did not receive the training.

#### *3.1.2. Data collection methods*

The data collection method was an in-depth interview. Interviews were carried out by the investigator from 09 June to 16 June 2023. All participants were interviewed face-to-face on one occasion only. All in-depth interviews were audio recorded and notes were taken during interviews to capture emotions expressed verbally or non-verbally.

An in-depth interview-guide prepared in local language was used to guide the interview process. All the interviews were conducted in Amharic. We conducted 16 interviews with key informants from Fikir Lehitsanat Integrated Development organization (2), Kulich Youth Reproductive Health and Development Organization (1), Nifas-Silk/Lafto sub-city, Wereda 6 Youth Center (2), Akaki Kality sub-city wereda 6 Food and Drug Administration Office (2), Addis Ababa Idir Council (2), Addis Ababa Youth Association (2), Ethiopian Orthodox Church Child & Family Affairs Organization (3), and Sheger Child and Family Charitable Society (2).

### *3.1.3. Data processing and analysis*

Thematic analysis was carried out. Each in-depth interview was transcribed verbatim by the investigator and one other member of the research team reviewed transcripts for accuracy. Transcripts were first read several times to get an overall picture and then the information was coded from the data. Then, meaningful concepts were condensed and categorized into broad themes.

### *3.1.4. Techniques to enhance trustworthiness*

We tried to improve the rigor of the data through prolonged engagement and member checking. Furthermore, we tried to solicit feedback for the transcripts from few participants, who supported the validity of our transcripts.

## **3.2. Ethical Issue**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Ethiopian Public Health Association. Necessary communication was made with all concerned bodies and permission was secured before the data collection process. The purpose of the study was explained to the key informants and participation in the study was completely voluntary. An informed oral consent was obtained from each study participant before data collection.

## **4. Findings of Qualitative study**

### **Level of awareness and capacity of youth led CSOs and local leaders towards social accountability**

Our finding revealed that the level of awareness towards social accountability (i.e., active participation of the community and especially of youth in designing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of COVID-19 related programs) among youth led CSOs and local leaders was low.

Our study participants have revealed that, generally, there was poor knowledge of social accountability among authorities in government offices and leaders in local CSOs. Also, there was also individual differences in the knowledge and skills of leaders and experts towards social accountability. In addition, in most of the government offices, there were no planned interventions

targeted at improving the knowledge and skill of employees on SA. However, our respondents have acknowledged the existence of some random and unintentional activities related to social accountability. Furthermore, high turnover of authorities in government office has also contributed a fair share for the gap in the knowledge and capacity of employees at government and CSOs toward social accountability.

Respondents have revealed that despite the fact that SA was considered by the government as one of the important approaches as means of ensuring good governance, there was lack of the commitment to take ownership for its implementation.

### **Changes in service quality**

The study identified that no recognizable change in the quality of services delivered to citizens had occurred. Even though, the efforts made by civil servant experts to provide better quality services have been improving from time to time, the high turn-over of staff, especially of government office authorities, along with socio-economic factors, like resource limitation, have adversely affected the progress towards availing quality services.

Our respondents from CSOs have indicated that the quality of services provided at government offices and CSOs have not improved at all due to limitation of resources to hire adequate number of staffs and, thus, workload on the limited number of staff.

### **Change in youth empowerment in terms of voice and space**

Our respondents have indicated that they had not observed any changes in youth empowerment in terms of voice and space provided for them to better voice their concerns about service delivery service performance or corruption regarding public expenditure or human rights violations.

Furthermore, respondents from government offices have indicated that the modus operandi of program implementation at the public sector was a top-down approach in which all the decisions have been made by higher officials leaving the experts and the community as bare executioners and beneficiaries respectively. In addition, lack of willingness and fear of some government officials of getting accountable for their actions was identified by the respondents as one of the reasons why authorities tend to avoid promoting favorable environment for social accountability.

### **Access to information on government budgets**

The study participants have acknowledged that after they received the ToT training on social accountability that was organized and conducted jointly by OSSREA and CCRDA, they were fully equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement the basic principles of SA in a meaningful way in their own respective organizations.

They have also revealed that despite the existence of many underlying barriers prohibiting the practice of meaningful SA activities, they have made some efforts to commence the implementation of SA interventions around their social circles and work environment. However, they have reported that they found it difficult, especially, to establish and integrate working systems and platforms. In addition, our KII respondents have revealed that access to information on government budget was weak.

Out study participants from CSOs have suggested that if social accountability has to be practiced effectively, the capacity of CSO leaders should be enhanced through trainings on SA.

### **Access to information on budgets, expenditure policies and service delivery and gaps in technical capacities is enhanced by the TOT**

Our respondents have revealed that there was no practice of involving youth on budget oversight and related monitoring and evaluation activities among CSOs and government offices. They also suggested that building the capacity of youths needs to be given primary focus before involving them into advanced levels of SA activities like that of budget oversight. They also revealed that access to information was very limited.

### **Status and nature of youth-led citizen monitoring, evaluation and reporting**

Respondents have indicated that there were no platforms for the implementation of citizen monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in government offices. However, they use the existing structure of peer forum as a social accountability platform for internal monitoring and control purposes.

Besides, government offices have put in place other approaches of ensuring social accountability such as budget notification, citizen joint accountability plans, compliant reception committee,

displays of instructions on how to submit complaints, compliant reception boxes, and popular wing networks operating at the lowest level of administration. However, the implementation has its own challenges including overlooking of reported grievances against staffs.

### **Involvement in developing community Joint Accountability Action Plans (JAAP) with local leaders**

Our respondents revealed that community joint accountability action plans have been tried to be implemented by government offices and CSOs at a partial level through involving the community during planning of annual action plans but not at periodic review meetings.

In addition, government offices have also been practicing other mechanism of ensuring social accountability such as displaying a set of standards for service provision such as the requirements from the community while seeking a particular service as well as the responsibilities of the public servants to provide those services. Moreover, periodical reviewing of the implementation and the status of planned activities based on predetermined action plans has also been cascaded by government offices for internal purposes within offices.

Responders from Fikir Lehitsanat Integrated Development Organization, a CSO operating in Addis Ababa, indicated that there was a practice of involving youths on SA indirectly through an existing platforms like youth forum which has 36 members and made a regular meeting every week on Sunday.

### **Specific social accountability initiatives engaged in after the ToT**

Participants who have received the TOT training have indicated that the training had helped them acquire sound knowledge and skill on social accountability. However, their efforts to put their knowledge on the ground by establishing a formal structure was challenged by various factors obliging them to practice it in an informal way at personal level. Furthermore, they have revealed that they were able to share the knowledge and skills on social accountability that they have acquired from the TOT training.

### **Lessons learnt from social accountability initiatives**

Our respondents have indicated that as a result of the change in their perspectives towards social accountability after the TOT training, they were able to better understand how social accountability was being practiced in the community along with the underlying challenges affecting its effectiveness. In line with this, they have revealed that there was a deep-rooted negligent attitude from the community to demand for quality service and fight the injustice due to poor awareness towards social accountability.

Our KII respondents revealed that the existing SA implementation mechanisms were not successful beyond name in resulting meaningful impact and meeting the intended purpose of practicing SA because no remedial actions had never been taken in response to the complaints and reports brought by the community.

Participants from CSOs indicated that one of the challenges for successful implementation of SA with youths was related to difficulty to access youths to make them participate on workshops and other platforms due to school and other commitments. In addition, our KII respondents have mentioned that youths have weak interest to participate on such activities due to lack of trust towards the government that it would integrate the community's input for decision making.

### **changes have you made or noticed in your working with youth-led CSOs or government service providers**

Our respondents acknowledged that despite their relentless efforts to enable social accountability to get implemented in a better and systematic way around their respective work environments, they were not able to do significant changes due to structural and sociocultural barriers. However, they have revealed that they have been involved at a personal level in less sensitive areas of SA activities such as promotion of environmental sanitation.

Our KII respondents have suggested that much needs to be done on the community, especially, on families and youths towards enhancing awareness on social accountability, on creating a sense of belongingness in the community where they live, and on enhancing the understanding that everybody has a responsibility to contribute to making their environment better and just for all.

Furthermore, respondents have indicated that there were no legal restrictions to implement SA. However, there was no plan and allocated budget for activities related to SA. They indicated that they have passed the knowledge and skills that they have acquired from the TOT training to their colleagues.

They further suggested the importance of utilizing the opportunity of social media for the purpose of SA along with building trust between the government and the community.

## 5. Conclusion

The end line study found out that there is low level of awareness towards social accountability among youth led CSOs, local leaders, and youths. However, there were no planned interventions targeted at improving the knowledge and skill of employees on SA.

The study identified that there were some random and unintentional activities related to social accountability being implemented by government offices and CSOs. However, despite the fact that SA was considered by the government as one of the important approaches as means of ensuring good governance, there was lack of the commitment to take ownership for its implementation.

The TOT training on social accountability organized and delivered by OSSREA and CCRDA to trainees from government offices and CSOs have resulted in improvement in the knowledge and skills of the participants. However, their efforts to actualize the implementation of social accountability in a systematic way around their respective work environments had encountered various challenges related to structural and sociocultural barriers.

The major barriers for meaningful implementation of social accountability were limited knowledge, experiences, and willingness of government and CSO leaders on the issue, lack of trust of youths in the existing structures, limitation of resources, and weak social accountability culture. Overall, there are no recognizable change in the quality of services delivered to citizens. Moreover, no changes were observed in youth empowerment in terms of voice and space provided for them to better voice their concerns about service delivery service performance or corruption regarding public expenditure or human rights violations.

The endline study revealed that the modus operandi of program implementation at the public sector was a top-down approach in which all the decisions have been made by higher officials leaving the experts and the community as bare executioners and beneficiaries respectively. In addition, some authorities tend to avoid promoting favorable environment for social accountability because of lack willingness and fear of getting accountable for their actions.

Government offices and CSOs have a practice of involving the community during planning of annual action plans but not at periodic review meetings. Likewise, few CSOs have a practice of involving youths on SA indirectly through an existing platforms like youth forums. Nevertheless, there is no practice of involving youths on budget oversight and related monitoring and evaluation activities among CSOs and government offices. In addition, access to information was very limited.

In general, there are no platforms for the implementation of citizen monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in government offices. However, there is a practice of utilizing existing structures like peer forum as a social accountability platform for internal monitoring and control purposes. Furthermore, government offices have put in place other approaches of ensuring social accountability such as budget notification, citizen joint accountability plans, complaint reception committee, displays of instructions on how to submit complaints, complaint reception boxes, and popular wing networks operating at the lowest level of administration. Yet, the implementation has its own challenges including overlooking of reported grievances against staffs.

The study found that, overall, there are no legal restrictions to implement SA. However, CSOs and government offices did not plan as well as allocated budget for activities related to SA.

## **6. Recommendation**

In recommendation, civil societies and government need to work together coordinating their efforts to enhance the awareness of the community in general on social accountability. Likewise, if social accountability has to be practiced effectively, the capacity of CSO leaders and government officials should be enhanced through trainings on the issue.



All actors need to engage the community, especially, youths in all phases of their project starting from designing, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The government is expected to work on gaining the trust of the community. Similarly, building the capacity of youths needs to be given primary focus before involving them into advanced levels of SA activities like that of budget oversight.

Furthermore, much needs to be done on the community, especially, on families and youths towards enhancing their awareness on social accountability, on creating a sense of belongingness in the community where they live, and on enhancing the understanding that everybody has a responsibility to contribute to making their environment better and just for all. In addition, the opportunity of utilizing social media for the purpose of SA needs to be tapped well.

## List of References

1. Fund UNP. UNFPA Adolescents and Youth Strategy. 2013.
2. Youth Policy Press. The State of Youth Policy in 2014. 2014.
3. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Key Issues affecting Youth in Ethiopia 2018 [Available from: <https://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/youth-issues-in-ethiopia.htm>].

## Annex 3 End line Survey Questionnaire -Qualitative

### COYOQA KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### Background Information

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of organization (Governmental, NGO, CSO, CBO, FBO, and Other Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

No	Question
<b>Awareness</b>	
1	What is the level of awareness of Social Accountability among youth-led CSOs and local leaders?
<b>Capacities</b>	
2	<p>Have the capacities of the youth-led CSOs and local leaders in SA been built? What shows (changes). The following are some of the responses we hope to get;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change of attitude towards each other</li> <li>• Inclusion in public policy</li> <li>• More interaction between CSOs and local government</li> <li>• Development of community action plans budgets</li> <li>• Attendance of joint accountability summits</li> <li>• Government being responsive and effective changes in service delivery when youth-led CSOs bring to their attention</li> <li>• Service providers providing feedback to CSOs on issues raised</li> <li>• Transparency on public expenditure enhanced (shared information)</li> <li>• Youth formation of coalitions on SA</li> <li>• Do we have more citizens using government services more than private facilities?</li> <li>• Satisfaction of CSOs of services provided</li> <li>• Improvement in service delivery (Give examples)</li> <li>• Friendlier staff who provide more explanations</li> <li>• Staff call community members back if they are not available</li> <li>• Easier to receive civil documents (gov documents)</li> <li>• Local leaders (service providers do not discriminate between rich and poor).</li> </ul>
3	Is there any change in services/ equality of services delivered to citizens in your community?

4	In your view, have you observed a change in youth empowerment in terms of voice and space provided for them to better voice their concerns about service delivery service performance or corruption regarding public expenditure or human rights violations?
<b>Budget Information</b>	
5	Do you have enhanced access to information on government budgets? (budget literacy and information awareness?)
6	To what extent is access to information on budgets, expenditure policies and service delivery and gaps in technical capacities is enhanced by the TOT? Using relevant examples in your locality, explain (eg Made youth aware of their rights and local leaders and service providers aware of their mandates and this has empowered youth-led CSOs to demand for services from local government).
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	
7	What is the status and nature of youth-led citizen monitoring, evaluation and reporting in your organization? What specific monitoring and evaluation tool are you using? (eg social audits, scorecards, PET). Why did you choose it? Why has this tool been the most effective? (eg Score card – gave youth-led CSOs an opportunity to address local service providers, informing them of their needs and addressing inadequacies in the current services. Conversely local service providers got an opportunity to listen and understand the priority need of those they serve).
<b>Action Plans</b>	
8	After the ToT, have you or your institution been involved in developing community Joint Accountability Action Plans (JAAP) with local leaders on any issue in your community? Explain? (eg JAAP – formalization and culmination of local service providers capturing the priority needs of youth-led CSOs and their communities. How many JAAPs have been held? On what issues? Was there media coverage? (Like village barazas on a pertinent issue) or Member of Parliament meetings on public participation or even the national government).
<b>SA Initiatives</b>	
9	What specific social accountability initiatives have you engaged in after the ToT? What things did you do things differently? (eg knowledge sharing for policy-decision making, public participation for implementation of a community project etc)
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	

10	What key lessons have you learnt from social accountability initiatives in your community or your institution?
<b>Enabling Environment</b>	
11	Considering the ToT for youth-led CSOs and local government officials, is there change in provision of an enabling environment for social accountability? eg do we have checks and balances on government expenditure, do youth-led CSOs allowed to provide oversight on budgets allocated, Is the rule of law enforced for youth to engage in public participation. Do laws commit to providing youth-led CSOs to provide oversight to funds and resources/ Do citizens question the state? Does the law allow freedom of expression?
<b>Access to Information</b>	
12	All government officials and other service providers have service charters which are displayed in their offices. Is information for citizens produced and shared openly according to these guidelines?(budgets, procurement laws, public contracts, recruitment of staff etc)? Is media and youth-led CSOs allowed to oversight corruption in government institutions? Give local examples.
<b>Changes and Suggestions</b>	
13	After your training in social accountability, what changes have you made or noticed in your working with youth-led CSOs or government service providers(Is there change in inclusiveness, allocation of resources, or change in attitude towards each other, engagement of youth has shifted from passive to active participants, youth are more knowledgeable about their rights/mandates and capabilities and demand for them; local leaders are more willing to collaborate with youth-led CSOs in public policy discourse; local leaders have better understanding of their responsibility of accountability to citizens; youth-led CSOs have learnt how to document better quality memorandum for dialogue; the youth-led CSOs have changed their approach to policy development-use advocacy instead of activism)

**The End**

**Thank You!**