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

JULY, 2023

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Kenya

Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
And
OSSREA Kenya Chapter

July 2023
Nairobi, Kenya

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1. Introduction

In Kenya, the idea of social accountability is significant because it has the potential to improve the standard of living throughout the country. This makes it an important concept. The provision of public services in a manner that is both just and efficient can be significantly improved by the utilization of social accountability as a mechanism. In light of Kenya's ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of its public services, social accountability is taking on an increasingly vital role. According to (Muthuri & Gilbert, 2010), increased levels of social accountability can result in improved performance in the public sector, greater transparency, and increased levels of citizen engagement. According to the authors, social accountability can assist in lowering instances of corruption, improving the effectiveness of publicly provided services, and assisting officials in making more informed decisions. According to the findings of the study, social accountability can also lead to a more equitable distribution of public resources and assist underserved groups in gaining better access to services. In addition, the research came to the conclusion that social accountability can result in an increase in public trust in the government and can contribute to the development of a more favorable public opinion of the policies of the government. In conclusion, the authors argue that social accountability has the potential to be an effective means of enhancing the quality of public services in Kenya and that the concept ought to be investigated further and put into action.

In Kenya, putting social accountability initiatives into action presents a number of difficulties that are unique to the country. According to Claasen and Alpn-Lardis (2010), the political and social environment in Kenya is extremely complex, which makes it extremely difficult for initiatives of this nature to be successful. Implementing social accountability initiatives can be difficult in practice due, in particular, to the country's long history of corrupt practices and the lackluster state of its institutions. In addition, the fact that a significant portion of the nation is rural, as well as the absence of access to technology and communications infrastructure, can be a barrier to the efficient implementation of such initiatives. The authors note that Kenya is characterized by a highly divided society with strong ethnic divisions, which can make it difficult to promote a sense of national unity and shared values. In addition, the authors note that Kenya is characterized by a highly divided society with strong ethnic divisions. If initiatives in Kenya aimed at improving social accountability are going to be successful, these obstacles need to be overcome.

It is essential in Kenya to have a system of social accountability to guarantee that public services are efficiently administered and that citizens have access to them. In a study that was conducted in 2016 and published in The Journal of Development Studies, Hickey and King (2015) investigate three potential approaches that could be used to enhance social accountability in Kenya. First, the authors argue that the government ought to assist civil society groups in formulating and enacting social accountability programs by providing assistance in both of these areas. People need a place where they can talk to public officials in a meaningful way, and these organizations can provide that place for them. This will ensure that their problems are fixed, and their rights are respected. Second, citizens need to be provided with the information they require in order to meaningfully participate in the process of decision-making. This can be accomplished by establishing public information systems that are user-friendly, such as websites or public notice boards, which the general public can access easily. Thirdly, the authors argue that the government should implement a method known as "participatory budgeting" so that individuals can contribute directly to the funding of the public services that are most important to them. This system has the potential to increase people's trust in the government as well as their participation in decision-making processes. At the end of the day, the recommendations made by Hickey and King have the potential to assist Kenyan society in becoming more accountable to one another and in ensuring that everyone has access to public services.

In Kenya, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant number of deaths. In order to prevent the virus from spreading further across the nation, a number of preventative measures have been implemented. Taking steps to ensure that the government is held accountable for the actions it took during the pandemic is one of the most important steps that have been taken. Social accountability measures are another one of the most important steps. Throughout the course of the pandemic, the government of Kenya took a number of measures to ensure that everyone was holding themselves accountable. One of these is the establishment of a COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, which will provide financial assistance to those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic. A COVID-19 Response Unit has also been established by the government in order to monitor the implementation of the government's response to the pandemic. This unit was established by the government. Additionally, it is the responsibility of this unit to ensure that the

government is held accountable for the actions that it takes. In addition, a variety of measures have been put into place by the government to ensure that citizens are able to hold the government accountable for the actions that it takes. Among these measures is the deployment of a National COVID-19 Response Team, which has been tasked with disseminating information to the general public regarding the government's response to the pandemic. In addition to that, it is the responsibility of the team to provide the government with feedback regarding the efficiency of its response. The government has also taken a variety of steps to ensure that citizens have access to information regarding the government's response to the pandemic. These steps include implementing a range of different measures. One of these is the creation of a COVID-19 Information Portal, which gives the general public access to information regarding the government's response to the pandemic. The COVID-19 Response Plan, which outlines the government's plans for responding to the pandemic, is also accessible to citizens through the portal. This allows citizens to better understand the government's plans. In addition, a variety of measures have been put into place by the government to ensure that citizens are able to hold the government accountable for the actions that it takes. Among these measures is the formation of a National COVID-19 Response Team, which is tasked with providing the government with feedback on the efficiency of its response. In addition to this duty, the team is tasked with disseminating information to the general public regarding the government's response to the pandemic. The government has also taken a variety of steps to ensure that citizens have access to information regarding the government's response to the pandemic. These steps include implementing a range of different measures. One of these is the creation of a COVID-19 Information Portal, which gives the general public access to information regarding the government's response to the pandemic. The COVID-19 Response Plan, which outlines the government's plans for responding to the pandemic, is also accessible to citizens through the portal. This allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the government's plans. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in Kenya, the government has, as a whole, implemented a number of measures that guarantee social accountability. The government will be held accountable for its actions during the pandemic, and citizens will be able to access information about the government's response to the pandemic, both of which have been designed to be accomplished through the implementation of these measures. Even after the government took action based on the findings of the studies, it was discovered that some citizens did not get any of the services or benefits that the government had promised them.

This is despite the fact that the government took action based on the findings of the studies. As a result of the findings presented here, OSSREA developed a workshop for trainers of trainers that was presented in Busia, Nairobi, and Mombasa during the month of July 2022. This trainer of trainers focused on social accountability, and 45 people, including representatives from the county government and various organizations (need to find out how many organizations), received training from them. During these trainings, skits were performed, and we were able to see that it was necessary to train the CSOs on how to hold the government accountable. This was something that we observed. The endline survey was developed by OSSREA in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the trainers of trainers, and we received responses from 85 different people in the cities of Nairobi, Mombasa, and Busia. It is abundantly clear that community service organizations (CSOs) in other parts of the country require additional training and additional work with them.

2. Findings

2.1 Impact of the Trainer of Trainers

a) Awareness and capacities

The youth-led community service organizations (CSOs) and local leaders in Busia, Mombasa, and Nairobi are becoming more aware of the importance of social accountability. There is still a need for the capacity of the local leaders to be built because they may be aware of the significance of social accountability, but the majority of them feel threatened by the thought of speaking out because it might affect their job security. As a result, they try to instill fear in the youth rather than providing a safe environment for them to thrive in. The training, on the other hand, increased the capabilities of the youth-led CSOs, and as a result, some of those participants went on to train other people themselves.

Public barazas have given the younger generation in Busia more opportunities to hold the county government accountable for its actions. They have made the most of these opportunities to participate in the political process by advising the government to carry out the responsibilities outlined in the constitution. This shows that they are serious about making a difference. Young people in Busia have been made more skilled through the efforts of civil society organizations (CSOs), which have helped them become aware of their rights and their social accountability. The

capacities of the county government leaders are significantly low, and there is a need for them to be trained on social accountability. This is the case even with the capacities of the youth and CSOs. Youth-led community service organizations (CSOs) in Nairobi are making strides toward social accountability, and the city's young people have a better understanding of their rights and the support they require. This is particularly demonstrated by youth-led community service organizations (CSOs) that are looking for opportunities to dialogue with their respective local leaders in order to address community concerns. In addition to this, they are very active participants in public forums held at the sub county level to petition their local leaders and are very active participants in public forums held to address concerns regarding community development. Nevertheless, the level of awareness of social accountability among the local leaders has a ways to go before it can be considered fully developed. A lack of awareness on the part of local authorities has contributed to a climate of mistrust between the younger generation and those in authority in the community. The majority of leaders have a fear of being threatened, and as a result, they resort to intimidating followers who dare to question their authority. This has demonstrated the need to involve a greater number of community leaders and authorities at the local level in order to raise awareness of social accountability and the best ways to collaborate with youth-led community service organizations (CSOs). Respondents recognized the need for more capacity building for the youth on social accountability because there is still a lot of stigma and discrimination in the service delivery of sexual and reproductive health commodities and services, and youth are unable to access these services. Respondents also recognized the need for more capacity building for the youth on social accountability. The majority of young people are terrified of being labeled as whistleblowers due to the negative impact it has on how they are treated in society afterward as well as the fear of extrajudicial killings that are common for whistleblowers. Despite these challenges, there has been progress made in the manner in which youth-led CSOs in Nairobi collaborate with the city's elected officials.

The young people of Mombasa have participated in public forums and written memoranda regarding the most pressing problems that are currently confronting the community. There has been an increase in the number of interactions as well as the inclusion in public policy. However, the local leaders are not aware of social accountability and believe that the youth-led CSOs and community intend to take their jobs. They also have the impression that social accountability does

not exist. Among the local leaders, there is a pressing need to raise awareness of the importance of social accountability. There has been a noticeable shift in mentality among the CSOs and the local government in Mombasa as a result of the city's newly constructed capacities. The youth-led CSOs have been actively working with the community and local leaders to enhance the quality of service delivery in public facilities, such as the dispensaries in Shanzu, Utange, Junda, and Kongowea. Because of this, the standard of medical care provided in the areas has improved, and the communities are working to ensure that the government is held more accountable for the manner in which it provides these services. In addition, the number of people with disabilities, women, and young people who are included in community projects and initiatives has increased significantly in recent years. The increased capacity is significantly felt with the rise in the youth voice in matters that affect the communities in Mombasa County. [Citation needed]

b) Youth empowerment and an enabling environment

There has been a significant shift in the perspective that young people hold regarding the importance of ensuring that their opinions are taken into consideration and that the government makes steps to guarantee that all members of the community have access to the resources they require. The respondents remarked on how the space and environment had improved, which they found to be beneficial for voicing their issues. It has been observed that the local governments recognize the significance of directly interacting with community-based organizations and civil society organizations (CBOs and CSOs), particularly in the context of collaborative efforts aimed at disseminating vital information within the communities. When it comes to the importance of the opinions of younger generations, the local authorities' points of view have also undergone major shifts in recent years. The respondents pointed out that there is still a need for additional capacity building, particularly among the local leaders and the youth. This is due to the fact that some of them are unable to communicate with their leaders because they do not understand their language or how to approach them.

Nikuze CBO, a youth-led community-based organization in Nairobi, made use of the information it gained from the training to advocate for non-eviction from land that its members believed belonged to the public through peaceful dialogue with the MCA. As a result, the MCA took action and moved the members to public land so that they could continue working on their community

project for the youth. The members of Kamukunji Youth for Peace expressed their concerns to a county officer about the accumulation of waste in their community, and the county officer directed them to the ward administrator and environment officer in the Kamukunji subcounty. At this point, the waste is being collected on time and by going via the appropriate channels. With the Jiongoze initiative, the county youth office collaborated with a community service organization known as SOWED to host a training session on youth empowerment and social accountability. When it comes to social accountability, there is still a great deal of criticism since the vast majority of leaders, and even the youth, regard it as "whistleblowing," which is something that is widely feared. In Mombasa, it is noticed that the youth use their voices to lobby for better services, but there is no action taken by the local administration. One of the respondents mentioned that hooliganism is rewarded instead of organized advocacy. For instance, the assistant county commissioner and his staff regularly hold barazas in order to address concerns regarding the community's safety as well as other topical concerns. The young people attend these meetings and have conversations with the adults in charge, but once the agreements are reached, they are not given any feedback on how to proceed. Youth and members of the community in Ziwa la Ng'ombe got together to denounce the sexual abuse that was being committed against children and to make certain that justice was carried out.

At Busia, the young people took part in a variety of public engagements and activities, including the MTEF public participations. The health facility in Amukura was upgraded to a subcounty hospital, which improved the effectiveness of the provision of medical care to the local community. After the election in 2022, there was a significant increase in the number of young people holding political seats in the county, particularly in the seats reserved for MCA and women MPs.

3. Budget Information

Before the president gave a breakdown of how the money that was received during Covid 19 was utilized in one of his speeches, the youth at the local government level were not aware of how the funds were utilized in the counties; this was the greatest challenge that the youth faced. Getting access to important information on the budgets and how the money that was received during Covid

19 was utilized. The OSSREA wanted to know whether or not the young people can now access this information and whether or not the TOT helped them have a better understanding of how to gain access to this vital data.

It is clear that the youth-led CSOs in Mombasa acquire the information they need via the CSO networks in which they participate. The young people pointed out that even though they have access to this information, there is still a gap in the authenticity of the budgets that they are given because some of the budgets that they are given are not necessarily what was presented at the county assembly. Even though they have access to this information, there is still a gap in the authenticity of the budgets that they are given. Because of this, the youth-led CSOs have created relationships with high-level authorities, who share accurate reports with the youth-led CSOs so that they may study the data and educate the community about the significance of actively engaging in budget public participation forums and barazas.

The younger generation in Nairobi has simple access to the county government's website, where all of the necessary information regarding the city's budget is posted and readily available. CSOs that are led by young people make it their mission to educate young people about various budgets and the causes for which they may advocate, particularly with regard to the County Development Fund. Because of this, there has been a rise in the number of people in the county who have benefited from the bursary fund.

The information regarding the county's budget is easily accessible to the younger population in Busia. It may be found on the website of the county. During public involvement events hosted by the county government and CSOs, this information is also distributed physically in the form of printed copies. There is still a significant knowledge gap among young people regarding the information on budgets, how to understand that information, and how to fight for the kinds of services that are necessary for them.

There is a continuing need to build the capabilities of young people when it comes to analyzing information about budgets and learning how to properly advocate for the changes that young

people want to see in the world. In addition to this, the community leaders at the local level need to be educated on the significance of disseminating this information to the community members.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation.

Community score cards, citizen report cards, social audits, and budget analysis are some of the instruments that can be used to monitor and evaluate social accountability in the communities. Other methods include social audits and community score cards. The TOTs received training on how these tools may be utilized to collect information and keep their local officials responsible, particularly when it comes to budgeting at the county level. Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that the tool that is utilized the most frequently is the community score card. The reason for this is that it is simple to comprehend, simple to implement even for youth who have not received training, and inclusive, allowing both youth and local leaders to communicate and share their perspectives.

In 2004, the national government of Kenya introduced the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System for the purpose of allowing Kenyans to monitor the execution of all of the policies, programs, and projects that are administered by the government. Everyone in Kenya has access to this platform known as the Performance Management Tool for Outcomes, which may be found online. Even with the availability of this technology, only a small percentage of Kenyans are aware of its relevance. The fact that not all of the information is made available to the general public is another thing that is very clear from the platform.

At the level of the counties The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Busia made use of the Public Expenditure Tracking tool in order to monitor the expenditures made by the government. Additionally, the social audit, which increased the public interest for the youth, prompted the CSOs to inquire about the opinions of the communities regarding the quality of services and expenditures. Igula dispensary, which was operationalized after advocacy efforts by the community, the construction of Morukarisa maternity, and the refurbishment of Sisenye dispensary all enhanced service delivery to the communities that reside near these facilities. As a result of the use of these tools, the communities improved service delivery in Igula dispensary, which was operationalized after advocacy efforts by the community.

A great number of businesses are still getting acclimated to the idea of monitoring and evaluation, and the vast majority of these organizations have taken action to either receive additional training or to hire staff members who are already familiar with the topic. To ensure that citizens have access to all of the information that they require in order to develop well-informed advocacy programs and projects, the government needs to make additional information accessible through the platform that it has developed.

5. Action Plans and Initiatives

Following the training, a number of youth-led CSOs have been involved in the development of joint accountability action plans to address community concerns such as youth employment, insecurity, infrastructure, the high cost of living, poor service delivery, and the development of the budget at the county levels. The youth are bringing issues to the attention of the government as well as the county governments by leveraging the platforms provided by social media and encouraging public participation.

The current Governor of Nairobi, Hon. Johnson Sakaja, has made significant progress toward engaging the city's youth, communities, and local leaders in dialogues about how to improve life in the county for its residents[1]. These dialogues are taking place in Nairobi. He has made it quite apparent that he desires for the initiatives and activities that are being carried out under his county government to be totally accountable to the citizens of Nairobi. As a consequence of this, it has provided the villages in the county with the impetus to challenge the authority of the regional leaders. It has also urged local leaders to ensure that they are more accountable to the people in their respective communities. During the public engagement on the CIDP 2023-2027 that took place in Busia, a joint accountability action plan was developed to assist the communities in determining which expenditures should have precedence on the budgets of the county government. There were approximately 20 JAAPs held in Busia to assist in advocating for the reduction of

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[1]https://nairobi.go.ke/we-all-have-a-responsibility-to-make-nairobi-work-says-sakaja-as-he-met-multi-sectoral-teams-at-city-hall/

hurdles to the growth of the agriculture industry, tax policies, and the provision of water for agricultural use.

The vast majority of responders, on the other hand, have not organized themselves into Joint Accountability Action Plans; rather, they are engaging in individual efforts to advocate for improved services in their areas.

6. Lessons Learned

The importance of maintaining positive relationships with community leaders while also involving members of the community is one of the most important takeaways that the TOTs can take away from this experience. They are able to hold meetings and dialogues at the grassroots level because they take the appropriate approach and use the appropriate channels. They also realized that in order to bring the youth of the community together, share information, work toward development, and encourage participation, it requires intention and proactivity on the part of the adults. However, despite their best efforts, there are still some misconceptions about the local leaders, particularly the police and politicians, who appear to be unapproachable or incompetent. This is especially the case. In addition, there is a significant knowledge gap regarding social accountability among service providers.

The respondents gained the knowledge that since the community is the ultimate beneficiary of the projects and programs that are being carried out, it is vital to pay attention to what the community has to say and try to comprehend its requirements before carrying out any project. The results of service delivery are significantly improved when citizens are involved.

The Constitution of Kenya from 2010 stipulates that every citizen has the right to have their voice heard by the national government. Citizens are afforded the protection necessary to exercise the constitutional rights guaranteed to them when they call for improved service delivery. Citizens have access to a communal platform where they can congregate and hold the government accountable for issues relating to the delivery of services and the protection of human rights.

There is power in knowledge, and in places where knowledge is encouraged, governments pay attention to the requests of their citizens and take appropriate action. The most important thing that we have realized is that social accountability is more successful when capacity building of community formations is at the core of the initiatives. When citizens have their capacities increased, they are more likely to act on issues from a position of information, which ultimately results in change being realized.

7. Conclusion

There is a significant demand for an increased number of capacity building forums to be held on the topic of social accountability for all of the youth and local leaders in the county. This will ensure that young people exercise their constitutional rights to use their voice and give their opinion on issues that directly affect them. This will also ensure that constitutional rights are respected. In addition to this, it is necessary for the government to make use of its platform in order to guarantee that it is current with the information that the people of the country require regarding the policies, budgets, and projects that it is currently carrying out. It is also essential for the government to hold additional public participation forums where the communities can air out their grievances and implement methods of ensuring that the promises made by the leaders are fulfilled. These forums should be held as frequently as possible. Instead of using social media platforms to spread propaganda and engage in political activity, the government should use these platforms to gather information about the types of complaints that young people have.

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