

Visit Report

Uganda & Kenya July 7-15, 2013

George Cheriyan and Om Prakash Arya visited Kampala, Uganda to facilitate a 'Methodology Training Course on Social Accountability Tools' with Advocate Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) as part of a consultancy agreement with ACODE. After completion of the assignment in Kampala, they visited Nairobi on July 13-14, to visit CUTS Nairobi office to orient the team on SAc tools & approaches.

Training on Social Accountability Tools for ACODE

Since gaining independence from the UK, Uganda has experienced nearly four decades of political instability. Coups, dictatorships and ensuing power struggles slid the country into economic and social decline, and human rights abuses abounded. In 1995, a new constitution established Uganda as a republic. However, the country's institutions of democratic governance remain weak and neither participatory, transparent, nor accountable to an informed public. This situation has resulted in poor service delivery, severe social sector issues, and a decaying faith in democratic systems. Despite these challenges, Uganda held its first multiparty general elections in 2006 and has built a framework for decentralisation that will encourage both political participation and institutional accountability.



Various organizations are working to improve governance in Uganda despite weak democratic system. Advocate Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) is one of them. ACODE organised a training programme on social accountability for their senior staff and also for the senior staff from their partner organisations working in various parts of the country at the district level during July 09-12, 2013. The training was attended by 27 participants including key officials from ACODE and its partner organisations based in various districts of Uganda. George Cheriyan and Om Prakash Arya were the resource persons.

Proceedings

The training programme commenced with an inaugural session which included the brief introduction of participants and the organisations as well. The resource persons also got an opportunity to understand the expectations of participants from the training programme. Cheriyan introduced CUTS and its work spread over the countries of Asia and Africa. Dr Arthur Bainomugisha, Director of ACODE also shared his curiosity to learn not only about governance and accountability but also from the fast pace growth happening in several sectors in India.



The inaugural session was followed by three technical sessions on the day I namely ‘*An Introduction to Governance & Accountability*’, ‘*Comparative Analysis of Social Accountability Tools & Approaches*’ and ‘*Approach and Examples of Engaging Citizens to Improve Governance and Results*’. The objectives of these sessions were to introduce the concept of governance and accountability and various social accountability (SAc) tools. The sessions were facilitated jointly by Cheriyan and Arya. The participants showed enthusiasm in learning about the variance in the scenario of India and Uganda and put forth several questions which were suitably answered.



To develop the comprehensive understanding about the tool Citizen Report Card (CRC), an elaborate session on ‘*Citizen Report Card: A Powerful Tool for Improving Service Delivery*’ was taken describing the purpose, concept, components, steps etc. Various examples were cited and a breakout session was organised for conducting exercise and formulating strategy of CRC in a given context. Followed by the session on CRC, sessions on ‘*Disseminating Findings and Advocacy for Improving Service Delivery*’ and ‘*Developing and Implementing Projects, Studies and Evaluations by*

Applying Social Accountability Tools’ were deliberated. The day was concluded with the screening of documentary based on CUTS experience of community monitoring in the health sector.

The first half of the third day of the training programme was utilised for delivering the concept of Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) along with the examples of PETS from Uganda and India under the session *Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)*. The participants appreciated the tracking of expenditure and food grains in the CUTS project on Mid-day Meal scheme. The rest of the day was utilised for learning steps of community score card (CSC) and breakout sessions to conduct simulation exercises.





On the IV day of the training programme, final simulation exercise of major steps of CSC, i.e. Interface meeting and then session on follow up or repeat score card process was taken. The feedback from participants was collected on the execution of the programme and evaluation sheets were filled by participants. The participants also provided their verbal feedback on the

training programme that was appreciative and encouraging. The certificates were distributed to participants in the valedictory session where both CUTS and ACODE exchanged felicitations.

Visit to ACODE

Cheriyana and Arya also visited the office of ACODE and met with other officials including Deputy Executive Director. They also met with colleagues of (HEPS-Uganda) which is a Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development that advocates for more access to affordable services. It was a part of Transparency and Accountability Programme (TAP) of Results for Development Institute (R4D), Washington and Cheriyana had met him during TAP Peer Review workshop in Washington DC. The purpose of the meeting was to further strengthen the partnership and explore the possibility of work in Africa.

Highlights: The training programme was successful (*indicated by the participants during final evaluation*). The visit to Africa was meaningful for CUTS when it is putting its endeavour towards spreading and strengthening the governance programmes in the African continent where scope for such work is high. The event was also important for establishing partnership with ACODE which is an organisation of similar nature.

Orientation for CUTS ARC, Nairobi on Social Accountability Approaches

Cheriyana and Arya visited CUTS Nairobi office on July 13, 2013 after completing the assignment in Uganda to orient the team on SAC tools. Governance is one of the programme areas of CUTS ARC and to strengthen this, the team needs capacity building. CUTS ARC is also executing one social accountability intervention where skill to implement tools was required. With this



purpose, the visit was planned annexed to the trip to Uganda.



Cheriyana made presentations to develop the understanding of the team especially on SAC and how various tools can be utilised for different purposes in different contexts. The presentation was followed by questions/discussions in order to grasp the

concept. He also provided his idea to implement the project on SAC in hand and build profile of the Centre.