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Social Accountability for Social Protection in Malawi

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Accountability...??

- What is Accountability?
- Who is Supposed to be held Accountable during project/programme implementation?
- Where is accountability supposed to start from?

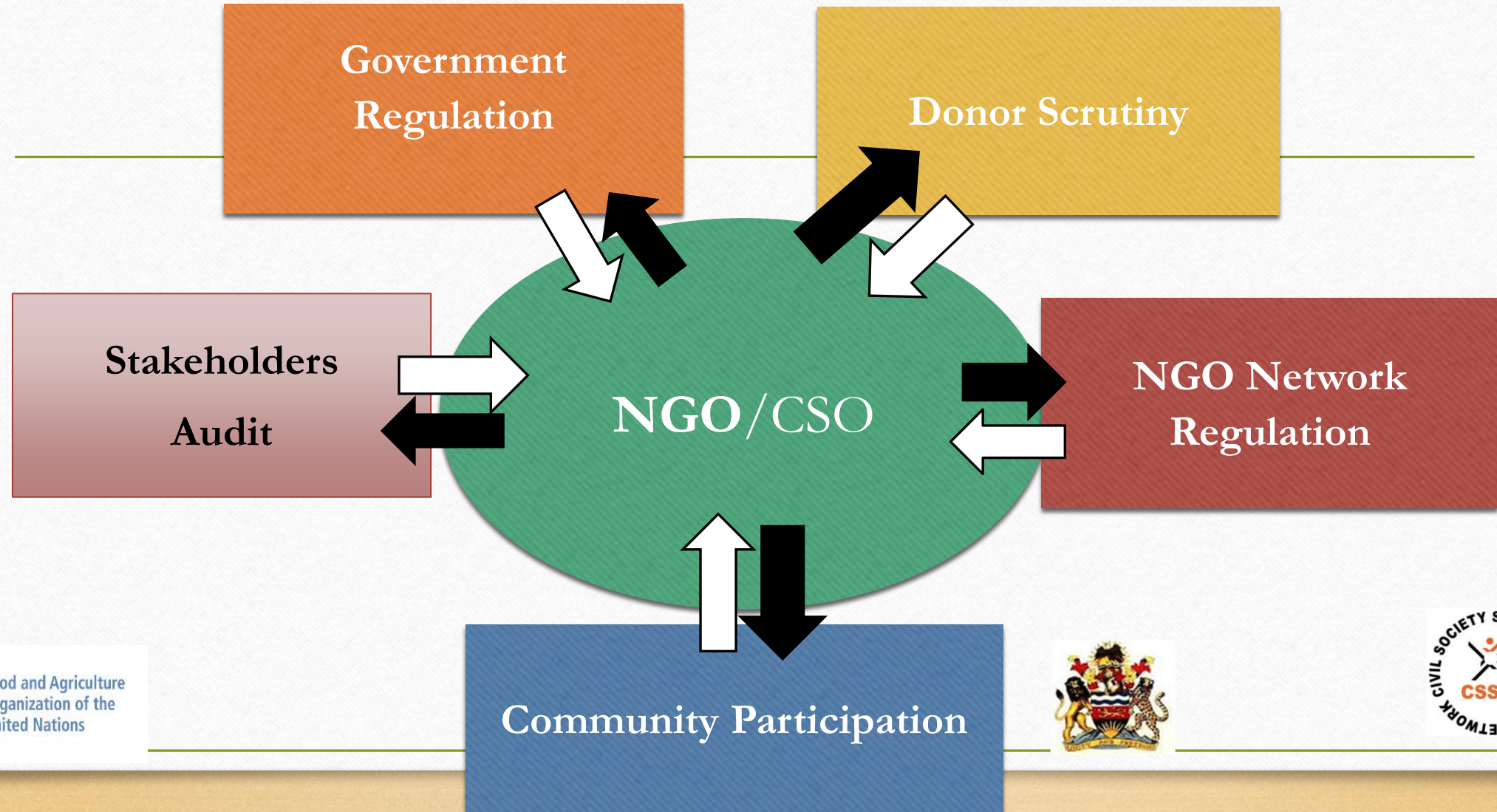
Accountability...??

- Ability to call duty bearers to account, requiring them to be answerable for their policies, actions and inactions, and use or abuse of funds.
- On the supply side, it is about the obligation of duty bearers to inform and explain to their clientele anything about the services they offer.
- On the demand side, it is about the capacity of individuals or organizations (rights holders) to expose and act on sub-optimal performance, deviations from set rules and principles and demand redress of the same.

Accountability at Local Government Level

- **Upward accountability**
- **Horizontal accountability**
- **Downward accountability**

NGO/CSO Accountability



GROUP WORK

- Participants should discuss and share any existing social accountability mechanisms they are aware of in the fisheries field of social protection.
- COME BACK FOR PRENALRY/PRESENTATION

Social Accountability

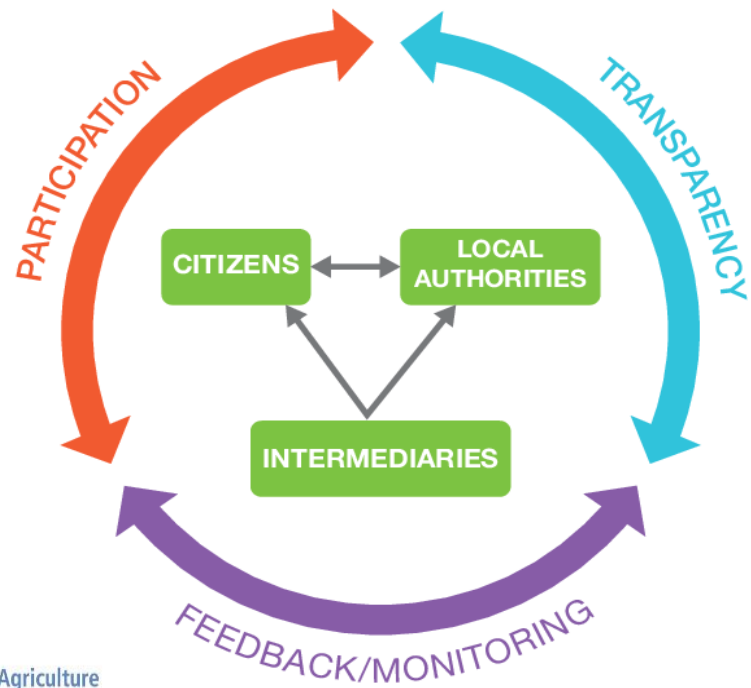
- The broad range of actions and mechanisms that citizens can engage in for purposes of holding the state (represented by public officials and service providers) to account, as well as actions on the part of government, civil society, media and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts
- Social accountability is about a ‘bottom-up’, people-centred approach to demanding accountability from duty-bearers.



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SA framework



Key elements of SA

- **Voice** –of citizens; standards of service delivery; civic competence;
- **Answerability** – Service provider & Beneficiaries; responsiveness
- **Enforceability**- MDAs on LCs; shapes incentives

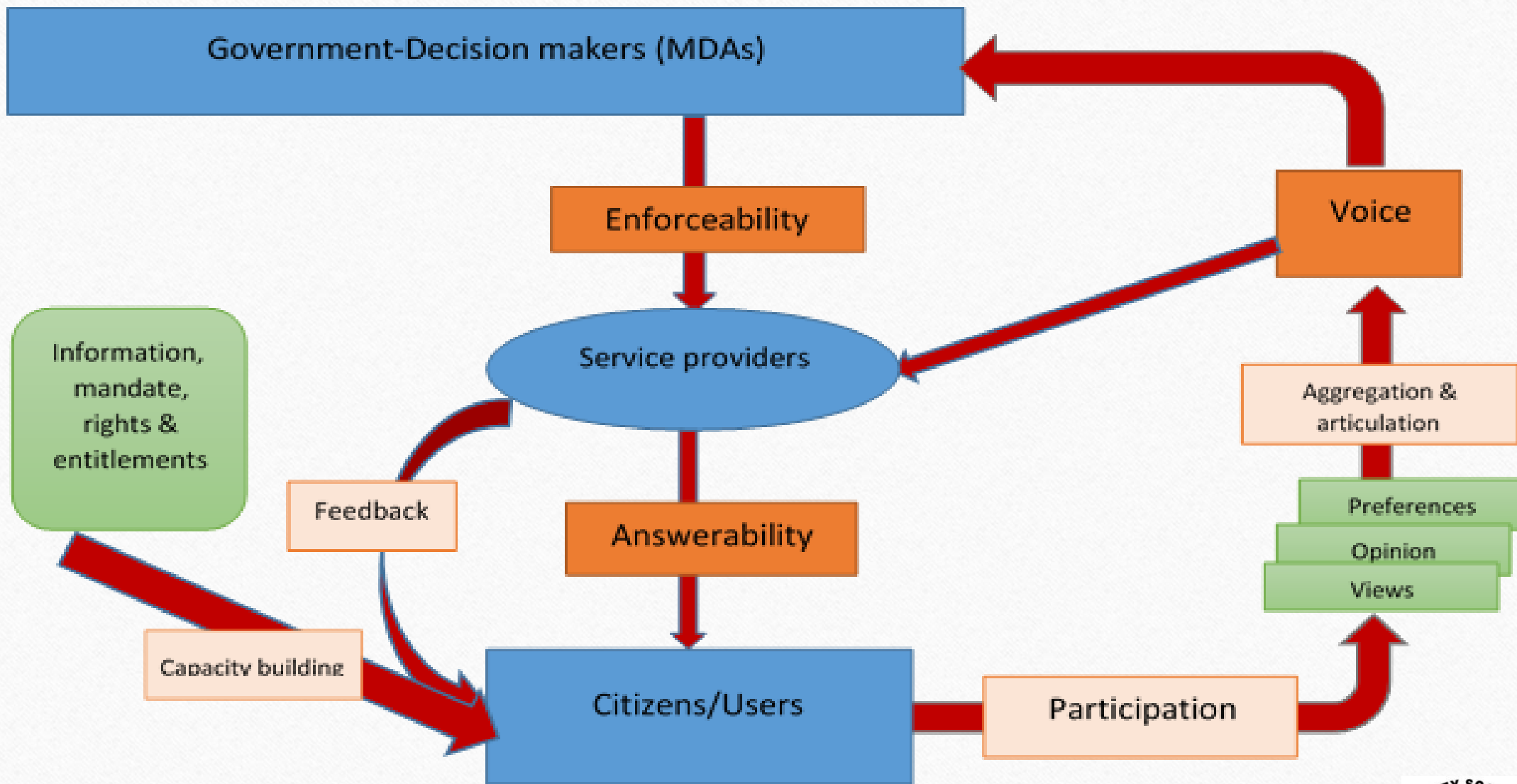


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GROUP DISCUSSION

- PARTICIPANTS INTO GROUPS
- Identify the challenges and gaps that exist in social accountability in their community.
- Participants to brainstorm and suggest ideas for improvements
- Appoint spokespersons from each group to present their findings.



Categories of Social Accountability Mechanisms for Social Protection

- **Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRM)** – enable submission and redress of complaints; includes helpdesks, complaints boxes, hotlines, SMS and web-based systems
- **Community-based Committees**
- **Structured collective mechanisms:** Social audit (Ground-truthing); Community score card (FGD); Citizen Report Card (Survey);

GROUP WORK

LIST DOWN COMMUNITY STRUCTURES
AND COME BACK FOR PRENALRY/PRESENTATION

Open the floor for questions and answers
where community members can seek
clarification or express their thoughts.

“Summary” Summary of Findings



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Availability & Effectiveness of GRM

- Help desks, often represented by the service provider, are available but their effectiveness vary greatly based on the specific delivery frameworks for the SP program – feedback is slow or not forthcoming
- Hotlines are isolated, often supported by third parties, mostly for SCTP and SMP; anonymity issues
- Suggestion boxes common for SMP but supported externally
- GRM not institutionalized for PWP – unsettled delivery framework; cycles; side payments
- GRM not institutionalized for VSL
- Traditional chieftaincies much more resorted to than ward councillors
- ** GRM must be supply –side driven

Availability & Effectiveness of Community Committees

- Community committees exist in different shapes and guises within and across social protection programs;
- Committee are often part of the service delivery framework (implementation) so their oversight role is limited or compromised;
- Effectiveness of committee undermined by conflicts of interest, 'costly volunteerism; collusive practices;
- GRMC for PWP are not very well known in the communities and are not used;

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- VDCs are slow but they generally speak out on accountability issues – ghost workers in Kasungu; reluctant to act on cases involving chiefs – ghost workers in Zomba; No feedback loop to beneficiaries –in Dedza;
 - PMC for PWP prone to elite capture and repurposing;
 - Student Councils for SMP but effectiveness varies with exposure and latitude given to them;

Availability & Effectiveness of Structured Mechanisms

- Social audits are untested in the field of social protection but there are experiences in other sectors such as construction – CoST Malawi;
- Citizen Report Card are also unexplored in social protection but there are experiences of service satisfaction surveys; High potential;
- Community score cards – nascent (MASAF 3); high potential

Voice

- Low interest and uptake of NGOs and CSOs in accountability for Social protection;
- Low knowledge of delivery frameworks of each social protection programmes by NGOs/CSOs and media – so cant pin down points of engagement for social accountability;
- Absence of standards of service delivery against which frontline service providers can be held ;
- Social protection largely understood as ‘governmental charitable acts rather than citizen entitlements’

Answerability...

- District Council responsiveness is constrained by the absence of mechanisms of direct engagement with District commissioners, Directors of Planning and Development and Council Service Committees on one hand and citizens or social protection programme beneficiaries on the other.
- Council answerability is also perceived to be affected by collusive relations between the District managers and those responsible for service delivery
- Media and Civil Society interest and engagement with District Council in the field of social protection is still low. Consequently, the supply of accountability by Councils is low as there are insufficient incentives or public pressure to demand accountability or to name and shame errant service providers.

Enforceability

- Supervision visits
- No explicit and codified standards of service delivery for social support programmes.
- There are also perceptions of the existence of bureaucratic solidarity rings between MDA at central level and service deliverers at council level which undermines social accountability and disadvantage beneficiaries.
- Transfers of personnel that undermine accountability
- Deficit of people-centred whistle blowing mechanisms to the central government on malfeasance in the delivery of services.
- Neither is there an investigative framework that MDAs can deploy to follow up on reports of malfeasance and other vices in the delivery of services – But LGI is in the pipeline

Recommendations - Voice

- Orientation/Sensitization of media and NGOs on MNSSP, programme by programme
- Sensitization or training of public servants on Social Accountability
- MDAs responsible for programmes must develop 'STANDARDS' of service delivery to enable social accountability
- Civic education on the state-citizen foundation of social protection programs

Recommendations ...

- NGOs and CSOs to explore opportunities for structured mechanisms for social accountability

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