

WBI Online Course on Social Accountability Tools  
Module 4: Participatory Performance Monitoring  
Part 2: Social Audit, Procurement Monitoring, other PPM Tools  
3-22 July 2011

**Module on Social Audit**

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Introduction to Module 4 Part 2  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Sunday, 3 July 2011, 10:26 PM

Good day to everyone!

Hope you all had a good introduction to Performance Monitoring, and to the Citizen Report Card (CRC) and Community Score Card (CSC) methodologies from the discussion last week with Bibhu.

My name is Rande Cabaces. I'll be anchoring our last three topics under Module 4. I'm a member of the Learning Team of the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and Pacific (ANSA EAP). We're promoting social accountability approaches for good governance in the region. We're based in Manila, Philippines. My areas of expertise are community development, natural resource management, and networked learning. Some of my colleagues will be joining me in the facilitator seat, and will be introducing themselves, as we proceed with Module 4. So I hope you will all join our discussions this week, and get a chance to meet and interact with them as well.

Here's our rough schedule for the week:

4-5 July Topic 4: Social Audit

6-7 July Topic 5: Procurement Monitoring

8, 11-12 Topic 6: Other Performance Monitoring Tools

A very tight one if you notice. So, I suggest we begin at once. First on our learning agenda is understanding what Social Audit is. We have many good materials on Social Audit here in the WBI platform.

Here's my own "Top Three" list:

- CIVICUS material – A very compact but meaty introduction on Social Audit: what it is, how it is done, what are potential benefits, what are the challenges.
- MKSS material – Provides a detailed description of Social Audit processes and results as carried out in Rajasthan, India by a grassroots organization.

- Abra material – Of course, a familiar case from home. CCAGG is part of our country network partner here in the Philippines.

Share with us your own lists, and what you think about these materials.

But BEFORE we go into that, I'd like us to view a video in Youtube entitled "It's Our Money, Where's It Gone?". It was produced by the International Budget Partnership and features a case of Social Audit in Kenya.

Here's the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2zKXqkrf2E>

After watching the video, try to post here in the discussion forum your thoughts or answers to these questions:

**What did you see or hear from the video that awakened your passion in Social Audit as a social accountability tool? Why?**

Hope to hear from everybody soon!

Randee Cabaces (ANSA EAP)



Re: Introduction to Module 4 Part 2  
by [carolina vaira](#) - Wednesday, 6 July 2011, 11:38 AM

Dear Randee,

Thanks a lot for introducing yourself to our on-line community and for your detailed note. We are confident that participants will be able to better navigate/complete the second part of module 4 by following your advice and guidance.

Thanks again!

Dear Participants,

I would like to encourage all of you to keep moving on the learning process proposed and to start reviewing topics 4 and 5 as well as completing the learning exercises included for the last part of module 4. This week we have the privilege of having Randee and the ANSA EAP team facilitating module 4 (second part) and it would be great to witness a rich south-south knowledge exchange among all of us. There are many great initiatives in this area happening in East Asia that can help you to move your current work on performance monitoring further. At the same time I'm pretty sure that your experience in this field will also help Randee and his team to improve the work they are doing in The Philippines and other countries in the region. Please do share with them your views, good practices and concerns for the benefit of all of us participating in the on-line course.

Please let us know if you have any questions and/or comments.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Warm Regards,

Carolina



module 4 topic 4

by [martin mbendera](#) - Wednesday, 6 July 2011, 12:24 PM

- 1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

The social audit that was conducted by the Kss in India was to monitor the govt policy of minimum wage if really followed by employers. the organisation understood that though the policy was in place the workers were not benefiting from it.

- 2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**

The organisation invited other stakeholders and it gave orientation to the participants on NREGA management and govt document recording payements made under NREGA. It gave the paeticipartnts social audit traing and kits and deployed them to collect information for seven days and the came together to process and analyse the data

- 3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

The audit led to the succesifal campaign for the enactment of the right to infomation law. Other CSOs used the same momentum to demand employment program for the rural poor by 2007. CSOs use the right to information law to obtain gov't documents. The gov't of the state of Andhra recognised social audit as a tool to curb corruption

- 4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

Some of the challenges are that some govt officials are loath to give the information, some of the govt officials intimidate the citizens that the citizens are afraid to give evidence, though the MKSS can obtain the records some of them are badly maintained that they are difficult to decipher.



Re: module 4 topic 4  
by [Randee Cabaces](#) - Wednesday, 6 July 2011, 03:38 PM

1) Good observation Martin. As what our learning materials emphasized, social audit can be a useful performance monitoring tool when there is such a glaring problem in the delivery of public services or implementation of a specific policy or program.

2) Your description of the steps undertaken by MKSS in doing their social audit, I think, highlights the role of: a) networking; and, b) capacity building. In ANSA EAP, we like to say that social accountability involves constructive engagement among stakeholders (especially that between citizen groups and government), and citizen monitoring of government's work. Constructive engagement requires developing competencies in dialogue and collaborative problem-solving. While citizen monitoring requires building capacities in data collection and data use.

3) I think we can draw out one good insight from your answers here Martin: While we're saying that we need an enabling environment (like organized citizens, responsive government, access to information, facilitative cultural factors) to do a social audit, or any social accountability tool for that matter, this is not always a question of which should come first. While there may be minimum conditions for social accountability work to be possible, once done or applied, the tools could actually help open up or further expand the space for constructive engagement and citizen monitoring.

4) Two challenges in doing social audit that you noted here: a) Access to and quality of information; and, b) Direct threats to citizen groups doing the audit especially if there are cases of funds misuse and public officials are involved. These also came out in our video on the Kenyan social audit (by MUHURI). How can we address these? I think we should point out here the importance of developing allies, or so-called "champions", within government who can help us mainstream the values of social accountability and good governance. In the Kenyan experience, the role of the media also became critical in terms of molding public opinion to support the social audit initiative.

Good work Martin!

Thanks,

Randee



Challenges in social audit

by [Randee Cabaces](#) - Sunday, 10 July 2011, 03:28 AM

Dear participants:

I've been doing some reading of my own in connection with our topic here on Social Audit. Essentially, a social audit is a process which involves:

1. Collection and dissemination of information about the government's use of public resources in implementing development programs;
2. Analysis of variance between reported activities or accomplishments and the actual work or results from program, and gathering of stakeholders' feedback on reasons behind such variance; and,
3. Validation of findings from number 2 above and identification of action points in a public forum with all stakeholders.

Some issues in using the social audit that I gathered from what practitioners and experts have written about this tool:

- How can we effectively link the social audit process with government's development planning? In ANSA EAP, we usually include planning as an important area for applying the demand-side accountability because in reality, before resource allocations are spelled out in the public budgets, priority sectors, programs and projects are identified in government's development and investment plans. So, this raises issues of scope and scale in doing social audit - i.e., what should its coverage be (in terms of sectors or services) and at what level should it be done (e.g., village, district, national) so we can influence planning processes?
- How do we address issues of access to adequate, relevant and quality information in social audit? Social audits and other public performance monitoring tools often rely on government's own performance monitoring and evaluation systems to come out with verifiable information. These systems are rarely customized to the needs of development programs, so that information on some important performance indicators with regard to such programs are not being collected at all. What are our options in such cases in terms of proceeding with social audits?
- How can we further systematize and possibly improve the social audit tool, especially in relation to our own country contexts? Some studies and experiences for instance have pointed to issues of consistency in the use of the tool - who should be mobilized for the social audit, frequency and quorum requirements in the public consultations, gender balance in doing social audits, what process should be followed during the forum, how should findings and recommendations be reported and disseminated to the public, etc. What is possible in our own settings?

Would love to hear your thoughts and reactions on these.

Thanks,  
Randee



Access to information and laws

by [Martha Kwataine](#) - Monday, 11 July 2011, 06:32 PM

Reading through the case of MKSS, I entirely agree with what Russel said during the first video conference that access to information laws do not necessarily guarantee easy access to information. Malawi is one such country that has been pushing for this law but until now, nothing seems to move forward. It seems that parliament is not willing to have this law in place. If it does, then possibly it is not now. What is the experience like in other countries and what can Malawi do to access information in the absence of this law considering that even in countries with ATI laws, not much difference is felt? Let me hear from your experiences colleagues.

Martha Kwataine



Module 4: Topic 4 Learning Exercise

by [Elizabeth Chiwewe](#) - Monday, 11 July 2011, 06:48 AM

### **Which case study are you analyzing?**

I am analyzing the case of MKSS

- 1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

In this instance a social audit was a participatory process through which community members monitor the implementation of government programs in their community. Special focus was on how funds for specific programs were spent. Their understanding and interpretation of the purpose of the social audit was to find out how funds were spent in the program that was being audited and also whether the program was run according to its set standards.

- 2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**

The organization employed a seven steps methodology in conducting the social audit. The following were the steps:

- **Identifying the scope of the audit**

Here the main focus was to identify the government agency or program that would be audited and the number of years that will be under consideration. Depending on the scope of the audit, the organization may at times audit only specific elements of a government program or agency. Other things that were considered included: accessibility of information, level of involvement from the community, availability of

resources from the coordinating organization, and the existing relationship between government officials and the organization coordinating the audit.

- **Developing a clear understanding of the management of the program**

This step required the coordinating organization to have a clear knowledge of how the program being audited was managed. Other elements that were taken on board in this stage included accountability structure and the flow of program funds of the program that was subjected to the audit.

- **Collecting information**

Information of expenses incurred was very critical for the accomplishment of the social audit. Accounting records, bills showing procurement of materials, documentation of payments and list of workers names were other data sources that were examined in the bid to collect information.

- **Collating information**

This stage involved sorting and presenting information of each project separately.

- **Disseminating information**

After collating the information, several groups of volunteers took the finding to program beneficiaries for verification and feedback. Other activities in this stage included visits to project sites of the program being audited to physically verify the completion of all anticipated steps. This process aided the coordinating organization to build momentum and promote participation for the public hearings.

- **Holding public hearings**

These were open forums where citizens provided feedback on the performance of government programs based on the findings of the social audit. Upon presenting the results, officials from the concerned agencies were also given the opportunity to respond to the findings.

- **Follow up to the hearing**

Here the coordinating organization tried to ensure that action is taken by the concerned agencies after a report of the audit findings and recommendations was prepared.

**3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

Beyond the immediate benefits the exercise would increase accountability and transparency among different government agencies and programs. Officials would know that they are working under the watchful eye of the citizenry. As such they

would try to be as accountable and transparent as possible. Accountability and transparency coupled with an informed and empowered community would lead to the improvement of service delivery.

**4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

Access to information was a problem. Officials felt threatened by the consequences of disclosing the information. They at times threatened or ignored people seeking information. In certain instances they delayed or hid information.

Poor record keeping in government agencies delayed the auditing process or reduced its impact.

Government officials threatened or intimidated villagers to prevent them from testifying at public meetings.

In order to reduce the aforementioned risks and challenges which are rooted in the government agencies there is need to institutionalize social audit processes so that they become recurring activities and not one time experiments. In addition, community members must be centrally involved in the process so as to build ownership that can ensure sustainability of the processes.



Module 4: Topic 4 Learning Exercise  
by [angela samson](#) - Monday, 11 July 2011, 09:59 AM

**Which case study are you analyzing?**

MKSS Undertakes Social Audits in India

**1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

Social audits are participatory processes through which community members monitor the implementation of government programs in their community. In this instance, the process was participatory between MKSS and other NGO in India.

**Purpose:** To analyze government expenditure at the community level and help government agencies accountable for them.

**2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit?**

- training community members on the social audit process,
- accessing information required to conduct the social audit
- helping collate and disseminate information to the community

- documenting the social audit findings and following up with public officials to demand action.

### **Describe the organization's methodology.**

#### **Identify the Scope of the Audit**

This is a first step in social audit to identify the specific programs and agencies that will be selected for audit along with the time frame (number of years that will be under consideration

#### **Develop a Clear Understanding of the Management of Programs**

The programs to be audited are administered by the central government through local offices, by state/provincial government agencies, directly by a local government, or by some combination of these agencies. MKSS examined the administrative structure under which the programs to be audited were managed.

MKSS identified individuals in the community who may have worked on the government projects as they are likely be good sources of information on the documents typically maintained by project managers, such as documents that relate to labor payments and material purchases.

#### **Obtain Information on Programs Under Audit**

MKSS required access to a large number of documents, including accounting records (such as cash books, wage rolls, and bills for materials purchased), technical project records (such as the project engineer's measurement books and contract specifications), and managerial records (such as fund utilization certificates, which the program manager issues when the project is completed). They did this in collaboration with NGO which supported them in accessing information to conduct social audit.

#### **Collate Information**

MKSS collated project information into matrices that clearly summarized the different kinds of information obtained from project records. One matrix, for example, was based on information from labor rolls that identified cases of fraud in which workers were recorded as working on two different project sites on the same day.

#### **Distribute Information**

MKSS made copies of the project documents and matrices and took them into the villages in which public hearings were held.. During MKSS audits, copies of labor rolls have proved a source of excitement as residents identified names of dead or fictitious people. Similarly, bills from local companies for expenses incurred in a project can be identified as false by residents who state that no such firm exists in their community.

#### **Hold Public Hearings**

Public hearings were carried out by MKSS with much fanfare to make them interesting for local communities. The following set of people were involved in the hearing so as to insure that the voices of all participants are heard and recorded and gave opportunities for relevant officials to explain their actions before community members.

#### **Follow-up to the Hearing**

MKKS finally conducted the following:

The findings of the public hearing were transformed into an effective advocacy campaign that can address both specific instances of mismanagement and broader policy considerations regarding transparency and accountability. A formal report on the social audit were prepared after the hearing, and copies sent to relevant senior government officials, the media, and other groups engaged in the campaign. The report also recommended specific steps against errant officials and policy changes to improve the delivery of government services. MKSS then try to ensure that action is taken on the audit findings. Government agencies could slow to respond to an audit's results and may require external pressure.

**3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

**Outcomes and benefits:**

- Thousands of demonstrators joined MKSS in demanding that Rajasthan enact a law giving citizens the right to information
- The legislature passed such a law in 2000
- India's Parliament passed a national rights to information in 2005
- MKSS and several other civil society groups used the momentum from the right to information campaign to demand an employment entitlement program for the rural poor.
- A unique feature of the Act is that state governments are encouraged to organize social audits, using the techniques adopted by MKSS, to monitor the program's implementation.

**This exercise by MKSS could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc in different ways as follows:**

The right to information is a potent weapon for a wide variety of civic groups. For example, a 2004 convention organized by the National campaign for People's Right to Information presented 39 workshops on the impact of the right to information on issues such as maintaining essential food supplies, corruption, the adverse impacts of economic globalization, and the disappearance of citizens as a result of state security actions.

As of 2007, civil society organizations in approximately half a dozen Indian states were using the right to information law to obtain government documents on NREGA implementation and organize social audits of NREGA-funded activities in their communities. The exercise helps in curbing corruption in the implementation of rural employment programs.

**4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

**Some risks and challenges:**

**Access to information;** Government officials who are guilty of financial mismanagement are loath to give information that may incriminate them, and may

refuse to respond to requests made under the right to information law or may obfuscate, delay, or hide information.

Even when MKSS can obtain records, in some cases they are **badly maintained** and difficult to decipher.

**Poor record keeping practices** in government offices can significantly delay the audit and reduce its impact. In addition, government officials sometimes intimidate and even threaten villagers to prevent them from testifying in public forums (they regard them as confidential). In such situations, residents may hesitate to air their grievances about government programs.

### **Risk mitigation**

The social audit process must be incorporated within the government budget process if it is to realize its full potential. Only then will local residents have a regular opportunity to hold the government accountable for its implementation of public programs.



Re: Module 4: Topic 4 Learning Exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Friday, 15 July 2011, 08:37 AM  
15.07.11

Hi Angela:

Quite interesting insights and observations here from your review of the MKSS experience on the social audit process. Let me outline and expound more on some of these points:

- I'm glad that you were able to highlight in your enumeration of the social audit process the importance of engaging with front line officials of the implementing government agency - the ground-level service providers. These people have detailed knowledge of program operation and of the information being collected in relation to program implementation and monitoring. Though we have mentioned the value of getting the buy in and cooperation of higher level officials on the social audit process, the success of the citizen audit itself will also depend a lot on the openness of these program implementers on the ground.
- Good observation about MKSS's social audit initiative having that effect of expanding the space for citizen monitoring and engagement in terms of pushing for policies that could provide a more enabling environment for such initiatives (like a law on access to information). We had similar discussions within the ANSA EAP team recently regarding our potential involvement with a capacity building project for CSOs in conflict-ridden areas of the Philippines. While we're saying that we need some basic conditions for social accountability work to happen, we realized that initiating such work may actually help transform the environment - help raise awareness of public officials on the value of social accountability mechanisms and engagement with citizens.

Thanks for this sharing Angela. I certainly gained a lot of insights by reflecting on your ideas. Perhaps the other participants can also share their thoughts on your answers to our learning exercise. That kind of exchange would help us to enrich further our learning on the social audit process.

All the best,  
Rande



Re: Module 4: Topic 4 Learning Exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Friday, 15 July 2011, 08:37 AM

15.07.11

Dear Elizabeth:

At the outset, I'd like to say that these are very good answers Elizabeth. I think you had an excellent grasp of the social audit as a social accountability tool. If I may add a few points to your observations and reflections:

- I like to think that the overarching purpose of MKSS's initiative was to improve delivery of the NREGA. Auditing of program implementation and results based on set standards of performance, for me, was just the first phase and take off point for the equally critical phase of identifying problem areas in the systems of the implementing agency in Dungarpur and finding solutions to such issues. The latter phase was embodied in the public forum to present results from the audit, and in subsequent meetings between MKSS and the Dungarpur agency. As we often say in ANSA EAP, citizen monitoring is just one side of the social accountability agenda. The other side is constructive engagement (i.e., dialogue and collaborative problem-solving) towards addressing governance issues.
- In our experience in the EAP, framing performance monitoring this way - improving government's work, helping government to find solutions to problems, engaging constructively towards improving the performance of government agencies - helps in allaying fears of public officials about citizen monitoring. It emphasizes the fact that such monitoring is not meant to just throw dirt on their performance, or embarrass them to the public, but is really aimed at helping them improve their work and even their public image. This is especially true in the case of the social audit and other similar social accountability tools that provide this mechanism for immediate giving of citizen feedback and government responses.

Good work Elizabeth! Many thanks!

Warm regards,  
Rande



Re: Access to information and laws  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Friday, 15 July 2011, 02:50 PM

16.07.11

Hi Martha:

Let me just say first that I'm glad to be part of this online course and to have this opportunity of exchanging information and ideas with you and the other participants. I'm learning a lot on good governance and social accountability work from these interactions. As we always say in ANSA EAP, one good way of learning social accountability is to have these exchanges of knowledge and experiences with other advocates and practitioners.

Excellent points about access to information. I do agree that having a law or clear-cut policy is not always a guarantee for the availability of government information. In many cases, a policy like this has to be contested, negotiated and monitored to ensure that it is implemented or observed on the ground.

Having said that, I also believe that not having an access to information law or policy should not stop us from monitoring government's work or performance. In the Philippines, citizen groups have done participatory planning, alternative budgeting, budget analysis, expenditure tracking, procurement monitoring, report cards, score cards and social audits, both at the national and local levels, despite the fact that our Congress have yet to pass a freedom of information law.

Some strategies employed by citizen groups to get around this absence of a clear policy on access to public information:

- Citizen groups like the Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Governance (CCAGG) started out with whatever information that the government provided about its projects, usually in the mass media. For instance, when government boasted in the newspapers of some twenty successful infrastructure projects in the region where Abra is located, CCAGG volunteers armed with just cameras went to the supposed project sites and inspected the work that was actually done. And the results were glaring: school buildings that were reported as fully completed were just bare walls and roofs in reality (windows and doors were not installed); bridges that literally led to nowhere; or roads left unfinished. The pictures provided evidences of actual project performance.
- A more common strategy was to develop contacts or champions within government itself. These would be heads of departments or agencies, their technical or operational staff, middle-level officials and front line personnel who believe in the value of citizen participation for good governance. Citizen groups often are able identify such officials from their pronouncements and track record on particular issues. In some cases, citizen groups invite them to public forums, dialogues or learning activities where they can get to know these officials better, level off on certain issues with them, and secure their commitment to provide some information about public programs or projects. Proper framing of what citizen groups intend to do with their monitoring work is crucial in these initial engagements. Public officials have to be

convinced and assured that the information they will provide will be put into good use  
- to find solutions to governance problems.

Hope these helped. I'm sure the other participants in the course have a lot more experiences or insights to share on this issue.

All the best,  
Randee



Re: Access to information and laws  
by [Martha Kwataine](#) - Friday, 15 July 2011, 04:54 PM

Hi Randee,

I really find your experience rich and rewarding. It is good to learn from how Phillipines is doing it. Sometimes we fail to do much as we are busy fantasizing of how easy our work will be once the Access to Information law is enacted. I am sure as an organization we can begin to strategize on how best to empower our local structures to monitor government projects. As i said earlier on, at the District level, the assembly does post information on the funds they received and how the funds were used. That could be the entry point. We will only need to get cameras and pilot that in one district. The successes and lessons learnt could be used to inform the deisgn of the interventions before replicating the same.

Once again, thatnks for the feedback

Martha



Module 4, Topic 4 Exercise  
by [Victor Maulidi](#) - Tuesday, 12 July 2011, 04:21 AM

**CASE STUDY ANALYZED : MKSS Undertakes Social Audits in India**

***Q. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?***

**A.** In the MKSS case, Social Audit was understood as a participatory process in which the community members and interest groups monitored implementation of government programs under the National Rural Employment Guarantee in their community.

**Overarching purpose:** To analyze, government expenditure at the community level and demand transparency and accountability from government agencies in relation to the entitlements which the community was supposed to receive or access.

***Q. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.***

**A.**

**1. Identification of scope for the audit:**

A total of 800 people from various backgrounds were targeted. The audit focused on the funds spent on Dungapur community in India under the NREGA, which entitles every rural household to 100 days of government employment at the minimum wage.

**2. Development of Clear understanding of management programs:**

As noted this involved a two-day training for all participants on the NREGA's management, government documents on NREGA's payment records, among other things. This helped participants learn skills and understand the NREGA, its standards. It would have been difficult to undertake a social audit on something that is not clearly understood.

**3. Data Collection:**

For seven days data collection was done and the participants divided in groups of 20-25 provided with a Social Audit kit went out to meet many of the 140,000 workers. It is notable that the data collection was done vis-à-vis the standards of the NREGA programme. The NREGA standard requirements were: payment of minimum wage, provision of first aid kits and drinking water at work sites, organization of day care services for working mothers and; availability of program records at work sites to facilitate spot checks during program implementation. Among others, data collected showed that there were many infringements such as non-payment of minimum wages, poor work site facilities, laborers paid much less than the minimum wage of 73 Indian rupees. All this was in violation of the NREGA standards.

**4. Collation of information/packaging information:**

Project findings were collated into matrices that clearly summarized different kinds of information obtained from project records one of which illuminated the cases of fraud whereby workers were recorded as working on two different sites on the same day.

**5. Distribution of information:**

The gathered and collated information was distributed together with copies of e.g. labor rolls. This was superb as it allowed residents to verify for themselves things like the fictitious names and names of dead people that were appearing as working on the sites.

**6. Hold public hearings:**

Findings of the audit were presented to stakeholders during a public forum. It is encouraging that in the MKSS case community members openly pointed out malpractices such as corruption, mismanagement of funds, etc. Better still, to some

extent the public officials admitted wrong and went ahead to give back funds they had stolen

## **7. Follow-up to the Hearing**

This involves the transformation of the findings into an effective advocacy campaign to address specifically identified gaps, problems and also provide recommendations to build up transparency and accountability

***Q. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.***

**A.** Outcomes and Benefits: These included the following:

Enactment of the law giving citizens the right to information

The emergence of political will to support social audit processes: The acknowledgement of government that social audits are a good tool in dealing with corruption and thereby encouraging the same in various communities

Preservation of financial resources as public officials in other instances returned the funds they had stolen

***Q. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?***

**A.** Risks and Challenges involved

Not easy to access information even in the presence of the Access to Information law.  
Government officials hiding information or delaying its provision

Government threatening and intimidating villagers and thereby preventing them to testify in public

Badly maintained records which are difficult to decipher or make sense of

The poor record keeping which delayed the social audit process



Re: Module 4, Topic 4 Exercise  
by [clement masangano](#) - Thursday, 14 July 2011, 04:30 PM

**Which case study are you analyzing?** MKSS Social Audit, pages 21-30

- 1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

The audit was about analyzing government expenditures on a programme called “The rural employment guarantee programme which entitles to rural people access to employment at a minimum wage for 100 days.

The organisation understood the audit as a process that would be done and lead by communities themselves with them facilitating the whole process specifically where it was necessary to do so.

- 2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization’s methodology.**

The methodology taken was the conventional one that involves the following stages below but the organisation approached the whole exercise in a manner that ensured that the communities themselves were in the driving seat of the exercise as well as being inclusive.

Step 1: Identify the Scope of the Audit

Step 2: Develop a Clear Understanding of the Management of Programs

Step 3: Obtain Information on Programs Under Audit

Step 4: Collate Information

Step 5: Distribute Information

Step 7: Follow-up to the Hearing

- 3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**
  - o The enacting of the right to information
  - o Launch of the right to employment for rural communities
  - o Insitutionalisation of Social Audits into government programmes

**4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

- Availability of credible information was a big challenge
- Threats towards participants from those individuals that felt could be implicated as a result of the process



Re: Module 4, Topic 4 Exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Sunday, 17 July 2011, 12:01 PM

17.07.11

Hi Clement:

I like the way you framed your answers to questions 1 and 2 - about the need for people and community to be in the driver's seat during the whole social audit process. I remember we also had an interesting discussion on a similar point during the video conference - how to ensure community's involvement in tools like the Citizen Report Card (CRC) that seem to rely more on the role of technical experts in designing the survey and survey instruments, collecting the data and processing the results.

The social audit may not be as technical as the CRC. But the same question may be asked: how do we ensure that it is able to harness the participation of citizens, and really serve their interests? It is interesting to note that one challenge raised with regard to social audit is that on having a more systematic approach to gathering, analyzing and presenting the data. What is coming out from all these is that we may need to balance ensuring community participation and achieving some rigor in the audit process.

Would be glad to hear from you and the other participants in the coming days about this issue. Good work Clement!

Warm regards,  
Rande



Re: Module 4, Topic 4 Exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Friday, 15 July 2011, 01:31 PM  
16.07.11

Hi Victor:

Nice to hear from you. Thanks for posting your answers!

Some thoughts that emerged from reading your postings:

- The data collection process that you described, wherein the MKSS social auditors gathered information on actual program accomplishments based on performance standards set by NREGA implementers, reminded me of the input tracking matrix in the community score card. Can you recall Bibhu's presentation on this during the video conference? It's this table showing entitlements of citizens or communities - the kind and quantity of services that they should be getting from a program or agency. Those doing the community score card process are then supposed to validate on the ground whether such entitlements actually exist. Which brings to mind the question of whether there are in fact similarities between the CSC and social audit. If this is indeed the case, what then are essential differences between the two social accountability tools?
- Very good observation about what happened during the public hearing or forum in the social audit - community members came out to provide testimonies or evidences against public officials whom they accused of some wrongdoings with regard to implementing NREGA. Some of these public officials in fact did acknowledge their faults and even returned the money they stole from the program. This is the kind of very direct citizen feedback and response from government that we mentioned in earlier comments to the other participants. While this represents a real case of citizens being able to demand accountability from power holders in government, there's also the risk of people being so empowered as to take justice into their own hands. This has in fact happened already in some cases of social audit application in other areas in India with some community members physically attacking local officials whom they've identified as being involved in corrupt practices. So, one challenge in social audit is how to effectively manage that process of engagement between citizens and government people, and how to ensure that the openness of government to the process will continue.

Do let me know what you think about these points. Good work Victor!

Cheers,  
Rande



Module 4 topic 4\_exercise  
by [Emma Mwiinga](#) - Wednesday, 13 July 2011, 03:46 AM

Which case study are you analyzing?  
MKSS Undertakes Social Audits in India

1. **Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

The initiating organisations MKSS interpreted Social audits as participatory processes through which community members monitor the implementation of government programs in their community. The audit focused on program funds spent in Dungarpur under India's recently enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which entitles every rural household to 100 days of government employment at the minimum wage.

The MKSS social audits were two folds. In that, These social audit identified many infringements, such as non-payment of minimum wages, late wage payments, and poor work site facilities for the Workers. And it also sensitized the rural workers with information of the NREGA, which they were not aware about. The programs to be audited may be administered by the central government through local offices, by state/provincial government agencies, directly by a local government, or by some combination of these agencies.

Any organization coordinating a social audit should examine the administrative structure under which the programs to be audited are managed.

**2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**

**Methodology**

Non-governmental organizations can provide important assistance to a community undertaking a social audit by (1) training community members on the social audit process, (2) accessing information required to conduct the social audit, (3) helping collate and disseminate information to the community, and (4) documenting the social audit findings and following up with public officials to demand action.

**Steps Involved**

**Step 1: Identify the Scope of the Audit**

This Stage includes Identifying the specific programs and agencies that will be selected or involved in Social audits. Determine the information needed and its availability, the government departments to involve, resources needed.

**Step 2: Develop a Clear Understanding of the Management of Programs**

organizations coordinating a social audit at this stage should examine the administrative structure under which the programs to be audited are managed. For instance determining whether the programs to be audited may be administered by the central government through local offices, by state/provincial government agencies, directly by a local government, or by some combination of these agencies.

**Step 3: Obtain Information on Programs Under Audit**

At this stage the organization coordinating the audit will require access to a large number of documents, including accounting records (such as cash books, wage rolls, and bills for materials purchased), technical project records (such as the project engineer's measurement books and contract specifications), and managerial records (such as fund utilization

certificates, which the program manager issues when the project is completed). It is important to document the types of records the government maintains when executing a project.

#### **Step 4: Collate Information**

Once information is obtained, the coordinating organization must work with local volunteers to sort through it and prepare individual project files presenting pertinent information in an accessible format.

MKSS collated project information into matrices that clearly summarized the different kinds of information obtained from project records. The coordinating organization could also prepare simple charts that illustrate the amount of construction materials that might be required to construct typical infrastructure projects in a community.

#### **Step 5: Distribute Information**

Next, the coordinating organization should make copies of the project documents and matrices and take them into the villages in which public hearings are to be held. Several teams of volunteers should go from house to house, sharing information from the project files. Meetings with residents who have worked on, or live next to, a particular project can be especially illuminating.

#### **Step 6: Hold Public Hearings**

Public hearing where community stakeholders of the social audits meet together to discuss the findings of the Social Audits.

#### **Step 7: Follow-up to the Hearing**

The findings of the public hearing must be transformed into an effective advocacy campaign that can address both specific instances of mismanagement and broader policy considerations regarding transparency and accountability. A formal report on the social audit should be prepared after the hearing, and copies should be sent to relevant senior government officials, the media, and other groups engaged in the campaign. The report should also recommend specific steps against errant officials and policy changes to improve the delivery of government services.

### **3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

- Emergence of political will to support social audits
- The Social Audits led MKSS in demanding that Rajasthan enact a national right to information law giving citizens the right to information in year 2000.
- MKSS and several other civil society groups used the momentum from the right to information campaign to demand an employment entitlement program for the rural poor.
- The government of the state of Andhra Pradesh recognized the importance of social audits in curbing corruption in the implementation of NREGA programs and encouraging accountability

**4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

- Access to information proved to be a challenge. The government officers who are the main keepers of information involved in the Social audits may not be very willing to make information or participate as they may be afraid to be implicated or the findings of the Social Audits may affect them.
- Lack of properly maintained records which may be difficult to decipher or make sense to suit the needed information for the social audits. Poor record keeping practices in government offices can significantly delay the audit and reduce its impact.
- Government feels threatened of social audits as such they frustrate the process of social audits. For instance the government officials may not make available the needed information too CSOs conducting social audits or government officials sometimes intimidate and even threaten villagers to prevent them from testifying in public forums.
- The social audit process are not incorporated within the government budget process as suchr they do not realize its full potential.



Re: Module 4 topic 4\_exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Sunday, 17 July 2011, 12:28 PM

Hi Emma:

Nice to hear from you! And good work on our learning exercise. You have very comprehensive answers here, especially on the social audit process. I noticed that you outlined the roles of the facilitating organization. That pushed me to reflect on some questions:

1. If these are the possible functions of the facilitating organization, what do you think are the necessary competencies that individual members should have, and what are the capacities that an organization (like MKSS) should develop in order to effectively perform this facilitating role within the whole social audit process?
- Based on these required competencies and capacities, what do you think are the chances or potentials of your own organization in initiating and handling a similar social accountability exercise? Are these present now within your organization? What can your organization do to strengthen its own capacities in initiating or implementing social accountability?

Let me know your thoughts on these, okay? And I hope the other participants can also share with us their own ideas on these issues.

Excellent work! Thanks!

All the best,  
Rande



Module 4 Topic 4 Exercise  
by [magreth henjewe](#) - Wednesday, 13 July 2011, 03:14 AM

**Which case study are you analyzing?**  
MKSS Undertakes Social Audits in India

**1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

Social audit was interpreted as a participatory process through which community members are directly involved in monitoring implementation of government programs in their respective areas. The main purpose is to identify leakages and use this information to demand their rights, and promote transparency and accountability in management of program finances.

**2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**

Steps involved in construction social audits included:

i. Definition of the Scope of the Audit process i.e. identification of specific programs and agencies to be audited.

- MKSS social audit focused on program funds spent in Dungarpur under India's recently enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which entitles every rural household to 100 days of government employment at the minimum wage

ii. Identification of 800 individuals to participate in the social audit exercise

iii. Capacity Building/orientation of Social Audit Participants

iv. Data collection from every village and worksite where the program was operational. This was done by groups of 20-25 participants for seven days

v. Collation of data/information collected which showed fraud cases

vi. Dissemination of audit findings to stakeholders in public forums

**3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

i. MKSS Social Audit has influenced the State of Rajasthan and the national government of India to enact the right to information law.

ii. Promoted community participation in monitoring implementation of government projects.

iii. Improved working relationships and communication between NGOs, the community and government officials.

- iv. Increased government and community understanding of the importance of social audits in curbing corruption.
- v. Empowered the local community to exercise their freedom of expression
- vi. It has helped government and entire community to identify service delivery problems
- vii. Emergence of political will to support social audit and take part in community forums

**4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

- The presence of Access to Information Law did not necessarily guarantee access to government documents. Government officials who are guilty of financial mismanagement refused to give out information that may incriminate them, and may refuse to respond to requests made, delay, or hide information.
- Poor records keeping practices in government offices which significantly delayed the audit and reduce its impact.
- Community members may hesitate to openly air their grievances in public forums for fear of being victimized (they are sometimes intimidated and threaten by government officials)



Re: Module 4 Topic 4 Exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Sunday, 17 July 2011, 12:50 PM

Hi Magreth:

Thanks for sharing with us your answers to our learning exercise on the social audit process. I hope you found the MKSS case informative and useful to your own work. That's actually where I want to take my reaction to your post:

- Social audit is probably one of the more straightforward performance monitoring and social accountability tool we have right now - we help the community gather information about government's work, we present this information to government, we engage and follow up government to act on the issues identified. What do you think are the prospects of carrying out such a process in your own context, or in the case of your own organization? Can you imagine doing a social audit in your case?
- What are the things that you would need to consider if you're going to do a social audit project? How would you start with the process? What are there now in your immediate environment that can help or facilitate your work? What could hinder your work? Is there anything that you'd want to change in the MKSS's social audit methodology for it to better suit your needs and contexts?

Well, that's all for now. Let me just say that you've done a good job with our learning exercise for this module. Hope to hear from you again!

Thanks!

Cheers,  
Rande



Module 4 topic 4 exercise  
by [Martha Kwataine](#) - Monday, 11 July 2011, 06:28 PM

### **Which Case Study are you analyzing?**

MKSS undertakes Social Audits in India

**1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

In the MKSS case, social audit was interpreted as a participator process in which community members monitored implementation of government programs under the National Rural Employment Guarantee in their own communities. The overall purpose of the exercise was to analyze government expenditure at the community level and demand transparency and accountability from government agencies

**2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**

- Identification of scope for the audit: A total of 800 people from various backgrounds were targeted. The audit focused on the funds spent on Dungapur community in India under the NREGA' which entitles every rural household to 100 days of government employment at the minimum wage
- Development of Clear understanding of management programs: This included a two-day training for all participants on the NREGA's management, government documents on NREGA's payment records, and, the actual social audit techniques that participants were to use. During the orientation, participants also developed communication skills for the social audit such as songs , puppet shows and street plays.
- Data Collection: Divided into 20-25 people per piece, participants were provided with a social audit kit to collect data. The data collection exercise took place for 7 days. Every village and work site where NREGA programs were being implemented were visited. A total of 140,000 workers who benefited from the interventions were interviewed to ascertain if the programs were implemented according to the NREGA rules. The NREGA standard requirements were: payment of minimum wage, provision of first aid kits and drinking water at work sites, organization of day care services for working mothers and; availability of program records at work sites to facilitate spot checks during program implementation. Among others, data collected showed that there were many infringements such as non-payment of minimum wages, poor work site facilities, laborers paid much less than the minimum wage of 73 indian rupees. All this was in violation of the NREGA guidelines.

- Collate information/pack information: the project findings were collated into matrices that clearly summarized different kinds of information obtained from project records
  - Distribute information: MKSS distributed copies of labor rolls to residents of the villages. The labor rolls were a cause of excitement especially as they identified from the list fictitious or names of dead people
  - Hold public hearings: MKSS presented the findings of the audit to stakeholders during a public forum. During the forum, speakers openly and boldly described instances of corruption, inefficiency in use of public funds, and poor planning within public agencies. The impact of the public hearing was that in some audits, officials admitted wrong doing and handed over to the panel adjudicating the hearing the resources they had stolen.
- 3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

#### **Outcomes and Benefits**

Officials handing over funds they had stolen

Hearings to build momentum around Right to Information in India yielded fruitful results. For instance, in 2000, a law was enacted in Rajasthan that gave the right to citizens to information on NREGA programs

In 2005, India passed the national Right To Information Law. Right to Information is a potent weapon for a wide variety of civil society groups. The RTI campaign that emanated from the social audit also led to the enactment of the NREGA act which entitles rural households a total of 100 days of government employment at minimum labor. The NREGA encouraged state governments to organize social audits using the techniques of MKSS.

Thus, beyond the immediate benefits, the exercise has the potential of creating a culture of transparency and accountability through the institutionalization of the technique within government institutions.

- 4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

#### **Risks and Challenges involved**

Difficulties in accessing information even in the presence of the Access to Information law. Thus, there is no direct correlation between access to information and presence of Access to Information Laws

Government officials guilty of financial mismanagement reluctant to give information that may incriminate them- they refused to give information or completely hide the information

Some records were badly maintained and difficult to decipher

The poor record practices in government offices significantly delayed and reduced the impact of the social audit

Some government officials intimidating villagers from testifying in public forums. As a result, villagers feared to air out their grievances about government programs. This is also applicable in Malawi where Health Facility Advisory Committee members are threatened with withdrawal of health services from them when they need them. They are often accused of undermining the health service providers e.g. who do you think you are?? Why were you speaking the way you did in that meeting? These are just some of the statements that villagers are faced with from government officials after a public forum thereby stopping them from expressing themselves freely in another forum



Re: Module 4 topic 4 exercise  
by [Rande Cabaces](#) - Monday, 18 July 2011, 10:28 AM

Hi Martha:

Very comprehensive and detailed answers to our learning exercise. I noticed that you were also able to compare our case with your context in Malawi. This is a good thing because it means you are now able to relate lessons from social accountability initiatives from other places to your own experiences.

Your experiences with adversarial reactions of public health service providers in Malawi reminds me of the responses of civil engineers and other so-called "technical experts" involved in road construction and infrastructure projects of the government here in the Philippines. When citizen groups under Bantay Lansangan (or Road Watch) project were starting their monitoring activities, these engineers and experts were also not cooperative and cast serious doubt about the idea of ordinary citizens monitoring their work. They even cited the many years they spent in college mastering their chosen field, compared with competencies of citizen monitors who did not finish grade school.

But Bantay Lansangan people were able to get the commitment of the regional heads of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). They signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Bantay Lansangan Project to integrate citizen monitoring into their work as part of the department's efforts toward good governance. I should not fail to mention that before this, citizen groups did some kind of scorecard. And DPWH was ranked as one of the most corrupt national government agency in the country. So, there was some pressure on the leadership of DPWH to improve its image with the public. And perhaps they saw the engagement with Bantay Lansangan as one way to do that.

Armed with the MOA from the department's bosses, BL monitors proceeded to develop their own simplified monitoring instruments based on the DPWH's own guidelines and in consultation with other engineers and experts outside of government who were more sympathetic to the idea of citizen participation. So, the BL volunteers were able to monitor

road projects, discover anomalies, file appropriate corruption cases, and provide suggestions on how to improve implementation of road projects. In due time, they were thus able to prove to their detractors among government's technical staff that indeed, ordinary citizens can monitor if guidelines and information are put into a form they can easily understand. DPWH's public image improved during the next cycle of the score card because of actions linked to citizen monitoring.

Hope you can draw some lessons from this story. Here's a link to a video on the Bantay Lansangan initiative:

<http://sac101.ning.com/video/bantay-lansangan-initiative>

Keep on posting!

Warm regards,  
Ranee



Re: Module 4 topic 4 exercise  
by [Martha Kwataine](#) - Monday, 18 July 2011, 01:53 PM

Ranee:

Thanks for the examples in Phillipines. I am actually excited with this course. Funds willing I would like to pilot one of these tools in one of the project areas. We really need communities that are empowered to monitor not only value for money but also the quality of the services. For sure politicians may at first feel jittery because they benefit from manipulating their constituents. It is easier to lead people who are ignorant- at least from the politicians perspective.

Let us keep in touch

Martha



Re: Module 4 topic 4 exercise  
by [delphina nyalaja](#) - Wednesday, 20 July 2011, 03:49 AM

Which case study are you analyzing?

MKSS undertakes in social Audits in India.

- 1. Based on what you read, explain what s social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overraching purpose of the social audit?**

- In the MKSS case, Social Audit understood as a participatory process in which the community members and interest groups monitored implementation of government programs under the National Rural Employment Guarantee in their community.
- 2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**
- Identify the scope of the Audit
  - Develop a clear understanding of the management of the management of programs
  - Obtain information on programs under Audit
  - Collation information
  - Distribute information
  - Hold public hearings
  - Follow up to the hearing
- 3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability to service delivery framework, civic participation.**
- Helps the existence of political will to support social audit activities
  - promoted community participation in monitoring the implementation of government projects.
- 4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How if applicable audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**
- Poor record keeping practices - In government agencies delayed the auditing process or reduced its impact
  - Access to information was the problems.
- In order to reduce the problems in social audit must be cooperate with the government.



Modul 4 - topic 4  
by [kidani magwila](#) - Wednesday, 20 July 2011, 06:25 AM

### **MKSS Social Audit in Dungarpur district**

1. Analyse Programme funds spent in Dungahar district under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)  
The organisation understood the magnitude of Government's failure to pay the legally required minimum wages to workers employed by public works programmes.
2. The Organisation conducted a 2 days orientation with information on NREGAs management, and payment records. They then develop a communication skills used for social audit, such as songs, shows and street plays. Then participants were divided into a

group of 20-25 with the Social Audit Kit and spread out across the district. Therefore the use of empowered community members is their methodology.

3. The benefits and success

- Legislature passed a law 2000 on the right to information.
  - The Government enacted NREGA which entitles every rural household to 100 days of minimum wage employment from the Government.
  - The Government adopted MKSS designed kit to monitor its implementing programme
- The social audit process done has raised awareness to the larger community on their rights and the can question the implementation of the programmes that are initiated for improving their wellbeing therefore they can demand for information and question for justification of the misconducts.

4. Challenges are when the government officials threaten the villagers not to testify in the public forums, therefore their a need to mainstream social audit process in government budget process. Poor record keeping by the government department. Therefore the results from social audit process recommends on the improvement of record keeping and transparency of the public documents.



Assignment Module 4 Topic 4: Social-Audit  
by [mathias kafunda](#) - Thursday, 21 July 2011, 11:00 PM

**Mathias Burton Kafunda**

Assignment Module 4 Topic 4: Social Audit: MKSS Undertakes Social Audits in India

Which case study are you analyzing?

MKSS Undertakes Social Audits in India

**1. Based on what you read, explain what a social audit was in this instance. How did the initiating organization understand and interpret the overarching purpose of their social audit?**

Although the Social Audit in this case implied a mere examination of costs and finance to analyze government expenditures at the community level and hold government agencies accountable for them, the central concern was more specific and limited in scope as it was used by civil society and government agencies to manage a particular project; to improve delivery of the NREGA. The initiation was understood as participatory and corrective.

**2. What were the activities or steps involved in constructing a social audit? Describe the organization's methodology.**

In general, the MKSS Social Audit included six main steps: a) defining objectives; b) identifying stakeholders, b) collecting and analyzing data, c) disseminating information, d) holding a public hearing, and e) follow-up and reporting.

**Steps:**

- There was a clear definition of objectives and the relevant agency or project (NREGA) to be subjected to audit.
- All relevant stakeholders were identified. Stakeholders were a mix of government actors, service providers, representatives of civil society organizations, and project beneficiaries. Special consideration was given to include marginalized social groups.
- The gathering of information included a combination of different methods for obtaining data; such as interviews, surveys, quality tests.
- Dissemination of information- The information exchange provided an opportunity for publicizing the social audit and building civic momentum; such as through the distribution of labor rolls to residents of the villages.
- Public hearing- which were open to all citizens and conducted in the presence of concerned authorities and stakeholder organizations.
- Following the public hearing was a written up that resulted in an effective advocacy campaign that can address both specific instances of mismanagement and broader policy considerations regarding transparency and accountability.

**3. What were the outcomes and benefits of conducting a social audit? Beyond immediate benefits, think about how this exercise could impact the overall environment for transparency and accountability, the service delivery framework, civic participation, etc.**

- a) One important outcome in the case of MKSS was the generation of information that was perceived to be evidence-based, accurate and impartial.
- b) Another outcome was the raised awareness among beneficiaries and providers of local services regarding the NREGA.
- c) Furthermore, the social audits permitted stakeholders to better influence the behavior of the government (returning of the money) and monitor progress; which in turn increased accountability and, eventually improved public sector performance.

**4. What were some of the risks and challenges involved? How (if applicable) did the actors involved in the social audit mitigate risks and overcome these challenges?**

Collecting and analyzing data often proved difficult  
Officials frustrating the willingness of public engagement  
Service providers were reluctant to provide the enabling environment for social audit.  
As a way of mitigating these challenges MKSS's leadership took up the matter with the Chief Minister.



Final Project and Course Extension

by [monovithya kem](#) - Wednesday, 13 July 2011, 02:28 PM

Dear Participants,

First, we'd like to thank all of you for actively participating in the forums as well as our video conferences, in particular the last one held today which served as a discussion for Module 4 and a preparation for the final project - presentations from today's conference will be posted here for your reference.

As outlined in previous communications, the final project is **required** from all participants to complete the course and receive a certificate. A "Final Project Template" in PowerPoint format will be sent to you to complete. Please note you will not be asked to give a presentation on the final project, you will need to post the final project on this platform to share with fellow course participants in order to receive feedbacks from them and the facilitators. Other details on the project will be emailed to you shortly.

Lastly, please be informed that the **course is being extended until July 22, 2011**. Taking into consideration the suggestions from some of the participants, we have decided to continue the course for approximately one more week to provide enough time for all participants to catch up on course readings and to finish all the assigned learning exercises. Our facilitators are still available until July 22 to answer any questions you may have as you complete the rest of the course.

Thank you once again for taking your time to be part of this course to learn with one another, it has been a refreshing experience for us to learn with you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Mona